Introduction to Omeka & Dublin Core

Dipa Desai, Kasya O'Connor Grant, Sara Morrell HIST 7251: Topics in Public History

> Prof. Jessica Parr Spring 2024, February 15th



Workshop Agenda

- Introduction: what is Omeka and what are digital archives?
- Review and discussion of digital projects built with Omeka
- Introduction: Dublin Core
- Demonstration: Omeka S Sandbox
- Omeka best practices and assignment

Slides available at http://bit.ly/sp24-parr-hist7251-omeka



Introduction to Omeka



Introduction to Omeka



- Developed by the <u>Corporation for Digital Scholarship</u> (CDS), a non-profit started in 2009 at the <u>Roy</u> <u>Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media</u> at George Mason University.
- CDS maintains and funds a host of open access tools for researchers and cultural heritage institutions including: <u>Zotero</u>, Trophy, PressForward, Sourcery, and Omeka.

What is Omeka?

- Omeka is a web publishing platform for items, exhibits, and collections
- Designed with scholars, librarians, educators and archivists in mind,
 Omeka emphasizes the role of metadata in archiving and curation
- Omeka offers the ability to contextualize items & bring them into conversation with one another
- Omeka makes it easy to create and update metadata using **Dublin** Core standards



Versions of Omeka

There are three different versions of Omeka, each with their own benefits for different types of audiences, institutions, and users.

Omeka.net: version of Omeka that includes a free and priced plan options, including support *and* hosting by Omeka (CDS).

Omeka Classic: version of Omeka built for individuals or educators where each site requires a different installation, including separate hosting (domain/URL).

Omeka S: version of Omeka for institutions managing a sharable resource pool across multiple sites or other collections and resources.



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Properties of Omeka

Like other web-publishing platforms (like Wix or WordPress), different versions of Omeka come with customization features, like **plugins** and **themes**.

- Plugins: pieces of software that add new features or functionality to existing applications.
- **Themes**: foundational design of a website, including typography, color palettes, layout, header and footers, backgrounds, etc.



Digital Archive Vocabulary

- **Collections:** a group of items arranged around a particular subject.
- **Exhibits**: pages created to showcase archival items or collections around subjects, to tell a story or narrative, or convey a specific message. Materials are accompanied by interpretive text.
- **Metadata**: fields or types of data that provides information about or describes data, like the fields "author," "title," and "place of publication" for a book in a library catalog system.



Group Activity: Explore and Discuss Omeka Projects



Example Omeka Projects

Many projects use Omeka to organize, describe, and exhibit archival materials. Here are a few examples we will be looking at today:

- Colored Conventions Project: https://omeka.coloredconventions.org/
- Texts of Taste: http://www.textsoftaste.com/

Other Omeka projects to explore:

- The Pattern Maker's Vice: https://patternmaker.omeka.net/
- Round the Globe: Travel Routes of Children's Literature: https://roundtheglobe.omeka.net/



Colored Conventions Project

The <u>Colored</u> <u>Conventions Project</u>

(CCP) is a digital humanities project led by students, faculty, and librarians featuring a digital archive of the Colored Conventions meeting notes, but also exhibits, curriculum, and more.





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Texts of Taste

Texts of Taste is a digital archive created by Avery Blankenship, a PhD Student at Northeastern (English Department). The archive hosts annotated, marked-up, and otherwise notated 19th-century American recipes and cookbooks.



Discussion Questions

- What metadata fields did these projects use?
 - Are any surprising to you?
- How did the metadata fields differ across the projects?
- How the projects use of Omeka differ?



Dublin Core



Metadata Standards: Dublin Core

Metadata Standards: a shared system used by projects and institutions to structure and understand data, including principles and rules for implementing the description and categorization of data.

<u>Dublin Core:</u> first created in 1995, this standard includes elements to describe items in information systems and is used by many groups.



Dublin Core Specifics

- Dublin Core was created to support open cultural heritage data.
- It is designed to be simple and flexible, which has both advantages and disadvantages.
- Fields include: title, contributor, creator, date, subject, description, format, identifier, language, publisher, relation, rights, source, and type.



Dublin Core Best Practices

- All the fields are optional, so you can choose which you want to use to describe the items in your archive; be strategic about which fields you select!
- It is essential to have consistency in metadata fields across your items: both in which you select and in how you fill those in (for instance, you don't want to have "Firstname Lastname" in half your "creator" fields and "Lastname, Firstname" in the other half)



Tool Demonstration: Omeka S Sandbox



Key Omeka Terms

- **Items:** the different individual files, artifacts, books, or discrete pieces of data added to Omeka.
- **Item Types**: different categorizations given to items in Omeka that can include things like text, still image, person, email, building, etc.
- **Exhibits**: pages created to showcase archival items or collections around subjects, to tell a story or narrative, or convey a specific message in interpretive text.
- **Exhibit Pages:** website pages on Omeka for different exhibits, complete with different formats including gallery, text, file, etc.
- Tags (Omeka Classic): a description "marker" added to items that is used in web-based approaches for managing information across collections and exhibits in Omeka.



Omeka Demonstration: Sandbox

To get a feeling for Omeka, we will be using the Omeka S sandbox, a free platform that Omeka provides to explore the tool: http://dev.omeka.org/omeka-s-sandbox/login

This sandbox allows users to test the functionality of Omeka before creating an account. It is reset three times a week.



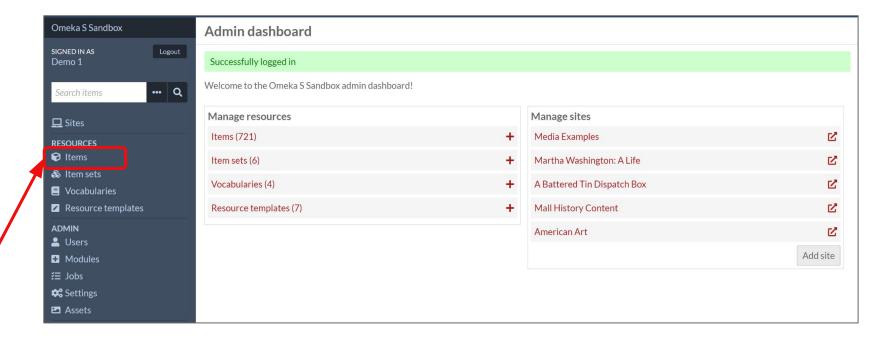
Omeka Sandbox Login

To access the Omeka Sandbox login, you will need to login with one of the three accounts listed. Here is the sample login information:



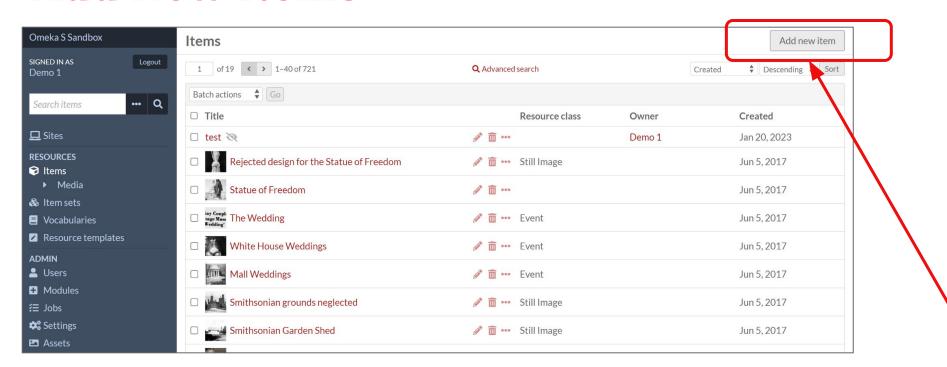


Navigating Omeka S Sandbox





Add New Items

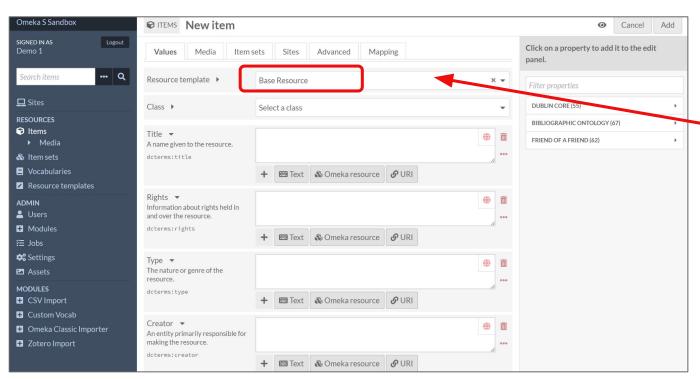




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New Item Interface



NOTE: There are a lot of different template options for adding new items. For the purpose of today's exploration, please choose the **Base Resource** Template.

You can look through the different templates if you are interested, but we are primarily getting familiar with thinking about describing items with metadata as a introduction exercise.



Your Turn!

Log into to the Omeka Sandbox: http://dev.omeka.org/omeka-s-sandbox/login.

Use one of the following logins:

Email: omekasdemo1@example.com

Password: omekasdemo1

Email: omekasdemo2@example.com

Password: omekasdemo2

Email: omekasdemo3@example.com

Password: omekasdemo3

Add items to your Omeka Sandbox and keep track of the metadata for each item. Consider:

- What metadata fields are surprising to you?
- What are the challenges in understanding metadata fields?
- What are some interesting observations you had in working with this tool?



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Versions of Omeka

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Omeka S: version of Omeka for institutions managing a sharable resource pool across multiple sites or other collections and resources.

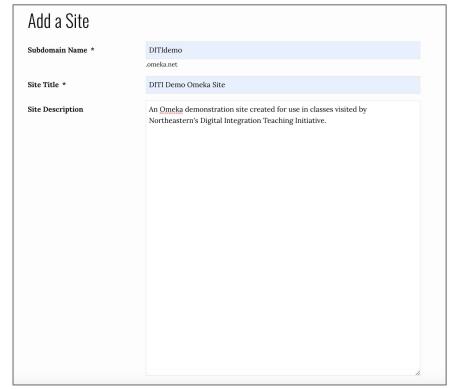


Omeka.net Step-by-Step Tutorial



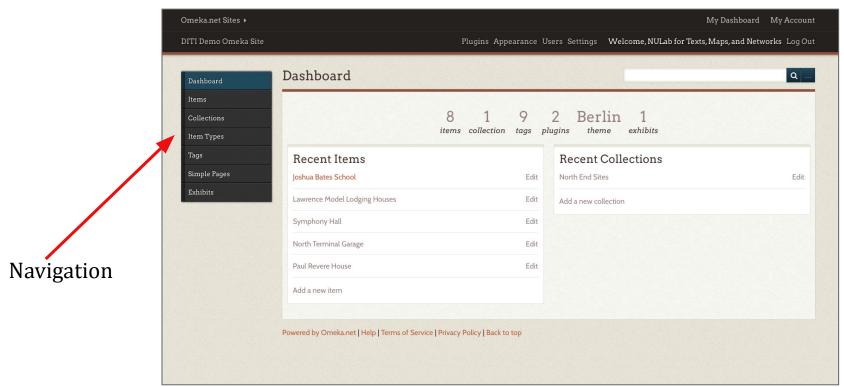
Creating Your Omeka Account

- Go to: https://www.omeka.net/signup
- Choose a trial plan
- Click on the activation link sent to your email
- Then, under "Add a Site," enter a subdomain name (for the URL), site title, and site description
- Once you create the site (with the trial on Omeka.net) you can't set it to private. But you can control whether individual items, exhibits, or pages are private. We will learn how to do that soon!





Omeka Dashboard





Adding Items

- Under the "Items" tab, click "Add an Item"
 - You can upload multiple files for one item
 - You can choose whether to make an item public or not
 - You can edit items once they are added
- Then, add metadata!







Adding Metadata

- Dublin Core vs. Item Type Metadata
 - Dublin Core is the basic information that will be relevant across items
 - Item Type Metadata is additional information that is likely to be relevant for specific item types (e.g. duration for moving images, or subject line for emails)

Add an Item

Item Type Metadata Files

Tags

Dublin Core

- You can add additional input fields (for both types of metadata)
- Formatting text in metadata fields
 - If you click "Use HTML" you will get more formatting options
 - You can also enter basic HTML to make formatting edits that are not available in the default editor; for more information on the HTML editor, visit this page.



Adding Files to Items

- You can add multiple files to an item
- If you have more than one file, you can drag the order of files to change which one appears as the key image

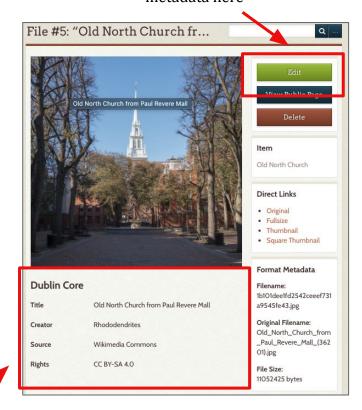




File-Specific Metadata

- You can add metadata for the files that you attach to your items
 - In this instance, the item is Old North Church, the <u>building</u>, and the file attached to the item is the <u>image</u> of it
- File metadata does not appear automatically. Once you upload an image, you need to click "edit" to get to the metadata.

Edit file-specific metadata here



File-specific metadata



Organizing Items: Tags and Collections

- Items can have multiple tags, but they can only have one collection
- Origin: Tagging is more of a webfocused approach to managing information, whereas collections are from physical archiving, where every item needs a single collection



Adding and Editing Tags

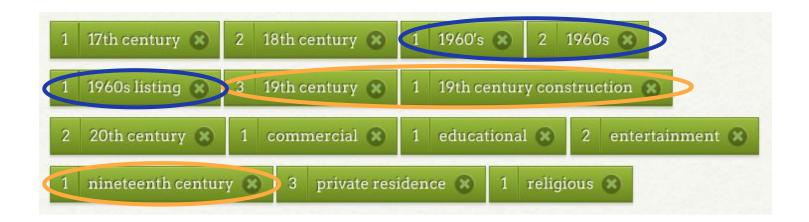
- You tag items through editing an item
- You edit tags through the "tags" tab





Editing Tags, continued

Make sure your tags are consistent!





Adding Collections

- Unlike tags, you create a collection before adding items to it
- Adding a collection is a lot like adding an item
 - Under the collections tab, click "Add Collection"

- Browse Collections (1 total)

 Items

 Collections

 Item Types

 Tags

 Simple Pages

 Exhibits

 Browse Collections (1 total)

 Add a Collection

 North End Sites (Private)

 Edit
- Remember: items can only belong to one collection
- You can choose whether to make a collection public or not with these boxes



View Public Page

Delete

Public Featured

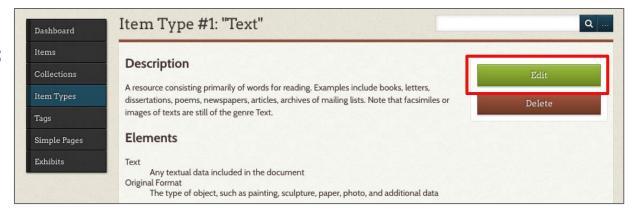
Adding Collections





Item Types

- **Item types** are the different categorizations you can assign to an item. These include text, still image, person, email, etc.
- You can edit item types by clicking on "edit," under the Item Types tab.
- There, you can edit the **description** of an item type and its elements.
- Elements are the different attributes of an item type.





Editing Elements for Item Types

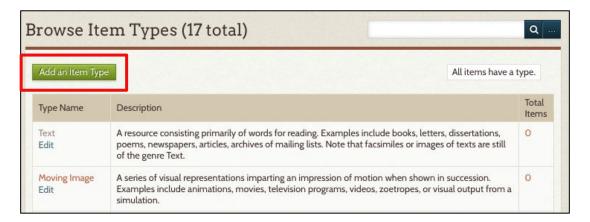
- You can add existing elements from a list or create new ones
- You can also remove the default elements for an item type (but make sure you think carefully before doing this!)





Adding New Item Types

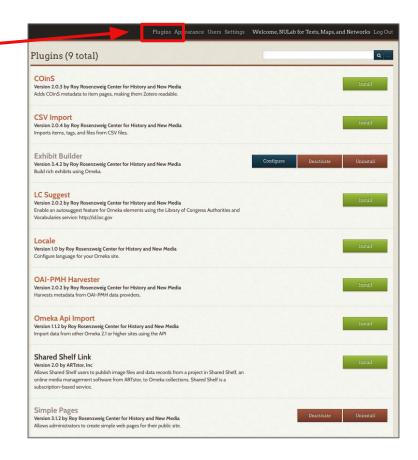
You can add completely new item types by clicking the "Add an Item Type" button, giving the new item type a name and description, and adding elements to it (either existing or new).





Plugins

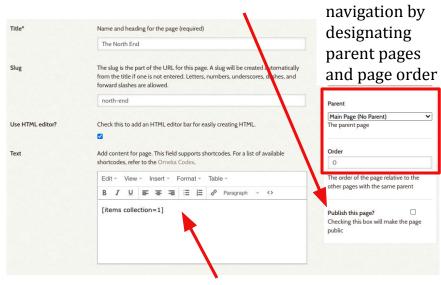
- To create simple pages and exhibits, you first need to install these plugins
- Click "Plugins" in the top menu and install Simple
 Pages and Exhibit Builder



Creating Simple Pages

- **Simple pages** allow you to create web pages for your digital archive
- To add a page, click "Add a Page" under the "Simple Pages" tab. You can then add a title and edit the slug
- You choose items for your page by entering **Omeka shortcodes** into the text box (you can also use the text box just for text). A complete list of shortcodes can be found <u>on the Omeka website</u>, but useful ones include:
 - [items collection=1]
 - [items item_type="still image"]
 - [items tags=commercial,educational]

You can choose whether to make the page public



This shortcode indicates that we want all items in Collection 1 to be included on this page

Establish



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Creating Exhibits

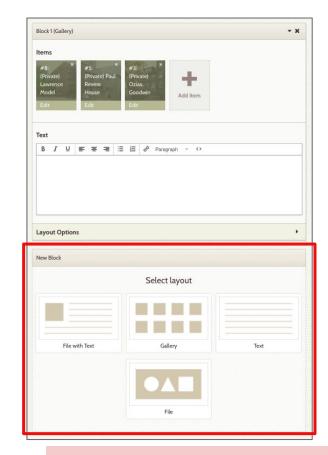
- **Exhibits** are a more robust way to provide access to (and curate!) the contents of your archive. Exhibits are composed of pages (which in turn showcase items).
 - o To add an exhibit, click "Add an Exhibit" under the Exhibits tab
 - From here, you can give the exhibit a title, a slug, a credit line, and a description. You can also apply tags and choose a theme and cover image, and decide what you want the starting page to be.
- You can add existing pages to your exhibit or create new ones
- Even when you are adding an existing page to your exhibit, you can only establish the layout of items on the page through the Exhibits tab





Exhibit Pages

- The contents of exhibit pages are organized by blocks
- Layout options for blocks are: file with text, gallery, text, and file.
- Once you choose your layout option for a block, you can select the items to include
- Although some of the layout options display thumbnail images, you are curating the item, not the attached file(s), in your exhibit

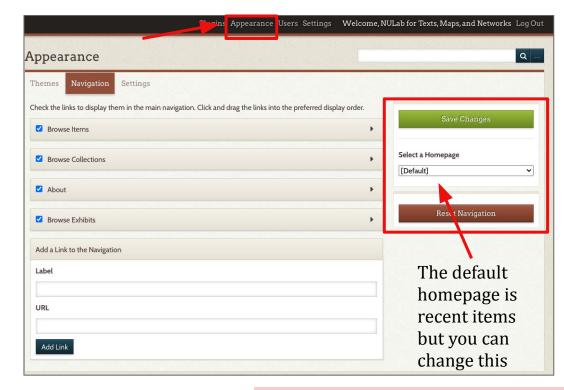




Themes and Site Appearance

Under the Appearance tab in the top menu:

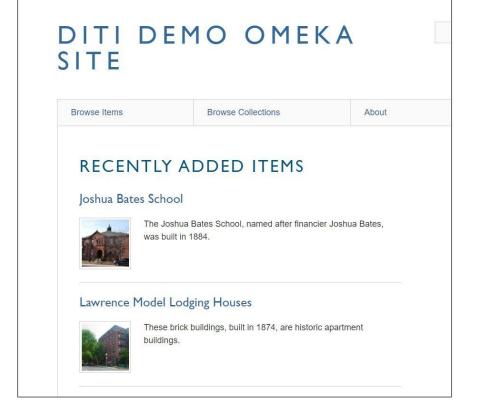
- "Themes" allows you to choose a visual theme
- "Navigation" allows you to control the main menu bar
- "Settings" offers some display choices, including how metadata appears and how thumbnails work





Demo

- Boston from End to
 End: NHRP sites in
 Boston's North and
 South Ends
- Note: this is a demo of Omeka basics, not an actual archive project!





Omeka + Archival Project Best Practices



Website Hosting

- Paid versions of Omeka include **hosting** and support of maintenance on the CDS servers.
- Omeka.net includes a free "trial" account to build a single page with limited themes and plugins, but uses the same code as Omeka Classic without a time limit.
- Hosting is important because it is integral to site sustainability, maintenance, domain URL, project identity.
- **Reclaim Hosting**: an organization used by many academics for web hosting with domain registration. Plans are lower costs with high customer support to be accessible for students.



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Reclaim Hosting

Reclaim Hosting: founded in 2013, this organization provides educators and institutions an easy way for students to control and own their domains and web hosting for digital projects/identities. There is still a cost for hosting and paid plans, but it is specifically made to be accessible for students.

- Reclaim Hosting has a discord and very communicative customer support, working to empower educators and projects with public facing, open access projects to own and control their work.
- Supports popular applications including: WordPress, Omeka, Scalar, Drupal, phpBB, Canvas, and more. (Over 100+ applications!)



Data Privacy and Maintenance on Omeka

- Omeka Services collects certain data about you, site visitors, and digital content stored on their platform. It is good practice to review the <u>Omeka privacy policy</u> to know how this data is used, stored, and managed.
- Omeka is *not* meant for long-term preservation without maintenance. Curators are responsible for updating materials on Omeka following version upgrades.



Digital Accessibility

- Omeka S includes accessibility features for both the front end and back end. See their <u>Accessibility Statement</u> for more details
- Externally-developed themes and digital content may not be accessible for assistive tech users. Review the accessibility of your digital archive to make sure users can access archived materials.
- See our <u>DITI Handout on Accessibility in Digital Content</u> for resources and tips to make sure your digital archive meets web accessibility standards.



Adding alt text

Alt text is a description of an image that conveys the image content, meaning, and context. This descriptive text is attached to the image file metadata. For more information see the Northeastern Library Guidelines for alt text.

People with low or no vision can use assistive technology like screen readers to hear the alt text description of digital images. When a screen reader reaches the image, it will read aloud the alt text description.



Adding alt text

You can add alt text to the file metadata, such as the image file title or description.

Fill in the Title or Description field when you add an image, sound, or video file. Write a description of the image. For audio and video files, write a transcript of what is said, as well as describe the content, context, and purpose of the audio or video file.



Your Turn!

Set up your subdomain and Omeka site for your account. Then, try the following:

- Adding 2 or 3 items
- Creating a collection and adding items to that collection
- Tagging items
- Editing an existing item type
- Creating a new item type



Questions?



Thank you!

If you have any questions, contact DITI at nulab.info@gmail.com
DITI Office Hours: https://calendly.com/diti-nu/

We'd love your feedback! Please fill out a short survey here:

https://bit.ly/diti-feedback

Developed by: Juniper Johnson, Dipa Desai, Talia Brenner, Adam Tomasi, Sarah Connell, Patrick Murray-John, Kasya O'Connor Grant, and Sara Morrell

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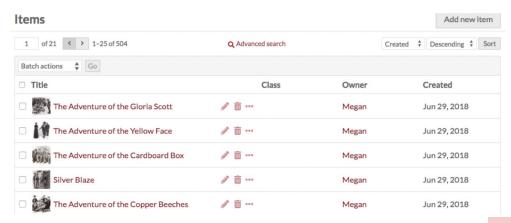


Omeka S Reference Slides



Items

- Items are the building blocks of the Omeka system.
- In Omeka S, items can be made available to you from the system administrator, and you may add items to your own site.
- Items are listed in the Items tab (one box icon), found on the left-hand navigation of the administrative dashboard.

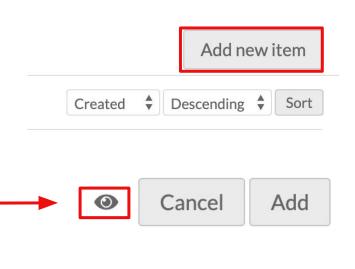




Adding Items

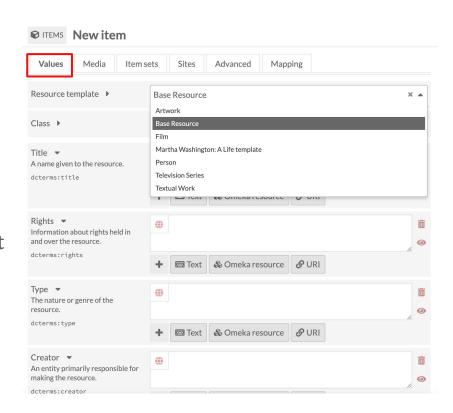
- Click the Item Sets tab from the left navigation of the dashboard. Then the "Add new item" set button on the right hand side of the screen.
- You can choose whether to make an item public or not
 - You can edit items once they are added
- Then, add metadata!





Adding Metadata

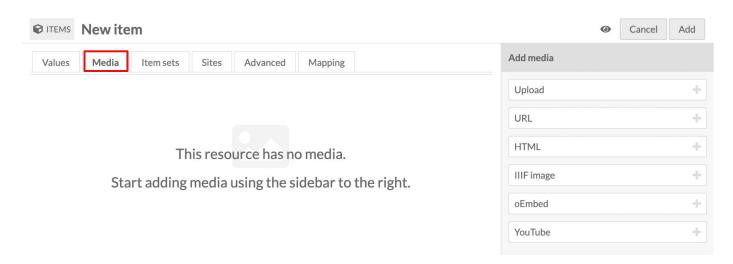
- You may add text, a resource from the installation, or an external link in each field.
- Dublin Core vs. Item Type Metadata
 - Dublin Core is the basic information that will be relevant across items
 - Item Type Metadata is additional information that is likely to be relevant for specific item types (e.g. duration for moving images, or subject line for emails)
- You can add additional input fields (for both types of metadata)





Adding Media

- Media can only be created by adding them to an Item. Media cannot exist independently.
- To add media includes uploading a file, or directly attaching content with oEmbed, YouTube URLs, IIIF URLs, or writing HTML.





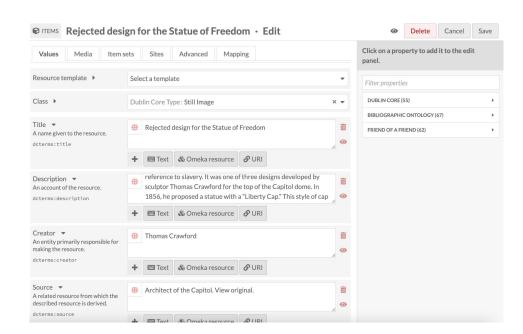
Resource templates

Resource Template: If you are working as part of a class, you may have a class template created for you. This template will provide the metadata items you're expected to fill out for your item. Choose that template under Resource template - select a template. If there is no template, you can still add metadata fields manually.



Editing Items

- Start by clicking on the item's title and then clicking the Edit button in the upper right-hand corner of the screen.
- You can edit the item's description and its attributes.
- To cancel out of editing, click the Cancel button in the upper right corner.
- To delete an item, click the Delete button.



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