BACKGROUND: For fifteen years during the 1970s and 1980s it was editorial practice to require a General works caption in the classification schedules if any subtopics appeared under a topic. This practice resulted in a layout in which topical captions are unnumbered and are followed by a numbered General works caption and numbered subtopics, e.g.,

Casting
454    General works
454.2  Fly casting

In 1988 this practice was changed, and General works captions were eliminated under most conditions. The decision to make that change was based on an early draft of the proposed MARC classification format and on assumptions about how the format would handle hierarchy in classification records. As the format evolved into the version that was provisionally approved in 1990, these assumptions proved not to be true, and it became apparent that General works number and captions will in fact be needed in order to create proper hierarchical displays of classification information online. As a result, the pre-1988 practice has been reinstated.

1. General rule. Provide General works captions for a topic whenever there are any subtopics or form numbers indented hierarchically under the topic. Examples:

Animal products
1950 Periodicals, societies, etc.
1955 General works

Casting
454    General works
454.2  Fly casting

Building and construction industry
For building laws, see KJC6155
6786 General works
6788 Contracts and specifications (IV)
          Including liability

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1. Examples:  (Continued)

   Research.  Experimentation
   1027.8    General works
   1027.9.A-Z  By region or country, A-Z

   Rural renewal
   435    General works
   By region or country
   United States
   440    General works
   441.A-Z  By region or state, A-Z
   442.A-Z  Local, A-Z
   443.A-Z  Other regions or countries, A-Z

2. “Including” notes. Do not add any other topic to a General works caption line.  Do not provide an “including” note or other notes describing usage under a General works caption.  If such notes are needed, locate them under the topical caption under which the General works number is indented.  Examples:

   Exceptional children
       Including subnormal and supernormal children
   3950    Periodicals.  Societies
   3955    Congresses.  Conferences, etc.
   3965    General works

   [not]

   Exceptional children
       Including subnormal and supernormal children
   3950    Periodicals.  Societies
   3955    Congresses.  Conferences, etc.
   3965    General works.  Subnormal and supernormal children

   [not]

   Exceptional children
       Including subnormal and supernormal children
   3950    Periodicals.  Societies
   3955    Congresses.  Conferences, etc.
   3965    General works
       Including subnormal and supernormal children

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