

“Access to a Legacy”

**John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum / John F. Kennedy
Library Foundation
National Archives and Records Administration**

Link to website: <http://www.jfklibrary.org/NR/exeres/96F69B19-E032-4FC8-B09C-E7F83797626E,frameless.htm?NRMODE=Published>

Link to example HTML file:

<http://www.jfklibrary.org/Historical+Resources/Archives/html-JFKPOF-028-007.htm>

Link to documentation: <http://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/DataDictionary.pdf>

The Digitization Initiative is primarily concerned with the development and use of standards and guidelines to facilitate digitization.

We adhere to Dublin Core (DC) to standardize our descriptions, using the 15 main elements, some modified, plus additional “local” elements. The Dublin Core metadata elements are stored in an XML document. We also create an HTML document to provide a human-readable version of the encoded XML document. Both documents are attached digitally to each scanned object they describe.

For the majority of textual collections, we describe at the file level. Choosing this level of description provides a practical compromise between broad, collection-level description and the time-consuming practice of item-level description: Library staff is able to digitally process materials more quickly while still providing rich metadata at a granular level. File-level access in the digital world also replicates the JFK Library research room experience, where researchers access materials at the box and folder level. The essential experience of looking through a folder of archival materials is maintained, as is the context of the materials.

All audiovisual components in our collections are described at the item level to ensure that we provide access to them in the digital world. We also create item level descriptions for textual items that have audiovisual components (i.e. a letter accompanied by a photograph) to provide further contextual information that may not otherwise be captured. In adding these rich descriptions to audiovisual materials, we are adding value to the digital files.

The first collection chosen for digitization is the President's Office Files, which were the every day working files of President Kennedy as they were maintained by his secretary. This collection consists of approximately 94,000 textual records, plus photographs and sound recordings. The physical preparation, scanning, quality control and description of this collection is well underway, with our digital objects being stored in a digital asset management system, or "dark archive." The library plans to make this material available on the web in the near future.