

These slides illustrate an online version of the ETDE/INIS Joint Thesaurus. This tool organizes the descriptors by scientific or technical fields and subfields, then by type of concept (process, characteristic or feature of something, natural object, principle, &c.). The tool also offers a way to find all descriptors that include a particular word or initial part of a word.

The first 11 slides show how someone looking for information about extrasolar planets might use the website to find appropriate descriptors. Slides 1-4 show how the user could find the high-level descriptor “Planets” under the subject “Astrophysics” and the descriptor type “Natural Objects and Entities”. Selecting the descriptor “Planets” in the first panel puts an abbreviated wordblock for “Planets” in the second panel (slide 5). From this wordblock, one can collect any of the terms in it to a list in the third panel (slides 6-7).

Clicking on a descriptor in the second panel brings up the abbreviated wordblock for that descriptor (slides 8-9). Descriptors may be collected from these other wordblocks, and added to the current list in the third panel; individual terms may also be removed from the third panel, as when a newly-found descriptor turns out to represent a search concept more accurately than one already in the list (slides 10-11). Once the user is satisfied with the list of search terms, he may use the “Submit” button to send the list to a keyword field on an appropriate search page—in OSTI’s case, either the Information Bridge or the Energy Citations Database. Alternatively, an indexer could use the same setup to collect a set of descriptors to label a document; for this purpose, the Submit button could point to a metadata form.

The list of descriptors can be cleared by clicking the “Clear Your List!” link (slides 11-12). Refreshing the screen puts the page back into its default start mode, “Search Categories” (slide 13).

Clicking “Search for Terms” in the first panel brings up a text box (slide 14) to type a string of characters into (slide 15). Clicking “go” then brings up all descriptors that contain a word or phrase that begins with that string of characters (slide 16). The descriptors appear in groups: first the descriptors that begin with that string, then those whose second word matches the beginning of the string, then those whose third word matches the beginning of the string, and so on. Within each group the descriptors appear alphabetically. Wordblocks of selected descriptors can be seen in the second panel, and thence be collected and submitted to search engines or metadata forms, just as in the “Search Categories” mode (slides 17-21).