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## 'Misérables' No More

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TUESDAY MAY 10, 2022

## 'Misérables' No More

By Joan Milligan and Jan Moyer

Do you type in “The” when you are looking for a title in the catalog? If you think about how many titles must start with “The,” looking through a list including “the” could become tiring. To avoid this, bibliographic records are coded to skip past it.

For English titles, it doesn’t matter whether you include “The.” The library software will find what you want.

Unfortunately, when you’re looking for something in another language, the library software is no help at all. If you typed in “Les Misérables” — the “les” being “the” in French — you’d get no results. Only the search “Misérables” would have gotten you what you wanted. This common problem often led people on campus to request interlibrary loans for titles we already have.

No more!

The library staff has updated more than 22,000 catalog records so that their titles will be found with or without the definite article. We updated records for the four most common non-English languages in our collections: French, German, Italian and Spanish. This involved identifying all titles beginning with any of 13 words that mean “the”: la, le, l’, les, der, die, das, il, i, gli, el, los, and las.

So, go ahead and search for the operetta *Die Fledermaus* and the Vatican newspaper *L’Osservatore romano*. Now you’ll find it!

## DEFINITE ARTICLE TRIVIA

Test your “the” fluency using the gallery below.

— *Joan Milligan is special collections cataloger for the University Libraries. Jan Moyer is a catalog management specialist for the University Libraries.*

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# Question

## 1

1/6

Which article from the above list is used in three languages?



### Q:

Which article from the above list is used in three languages?

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