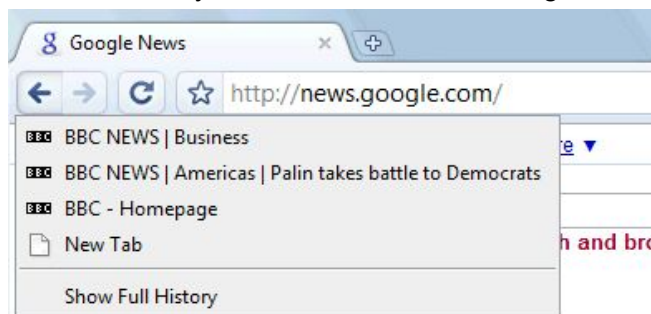# Computer Terms

Back Button: This arrow is found at the top of most browsers. When you click on the back arrow, it takes you back – in order – through all of the web pages you've seen.

Browser: Software, such as Google Chrome, used to find information on the Web

CD-ROM Drive: Allows your computer to read CDs, DVDs, and sometimes Blu-Ray (Compact Disc-Read Only Memory)

CPU: The computer's brain. Interprets and carries out instructions (Central Processing Unit)

Desktop: The screen that appears after you have logged in to a computer. This screen displays things such as: icons, files and shortcuts.

File: The generic word for an application, document, control panel or other computer data (Types of files: system files, document files, text files, data files, music files.)

File Sizes:
1024 bytes = 1 KB (kilobyte)
1024 KB = 1 MB (megayte)
1024 MB = 1 GB (gigabyte)
1024 GB = 1 TB (terabyte)
1024 TB = 1 PB (petabyte)

In practical terms, file sizes can be roughly estimated* as follows:
1 byte is one keystroke.
A 1 page Word document is about 29 KB.
1 minute of .mp3 audio is about 1 MB.
1 .jpg 5" x 3" image is about 800 KB.
A 2 minute video in 1080p is about 2 GB.

*The size of a file depends on the quantity and quality of data it contains. File size can vary significantly.
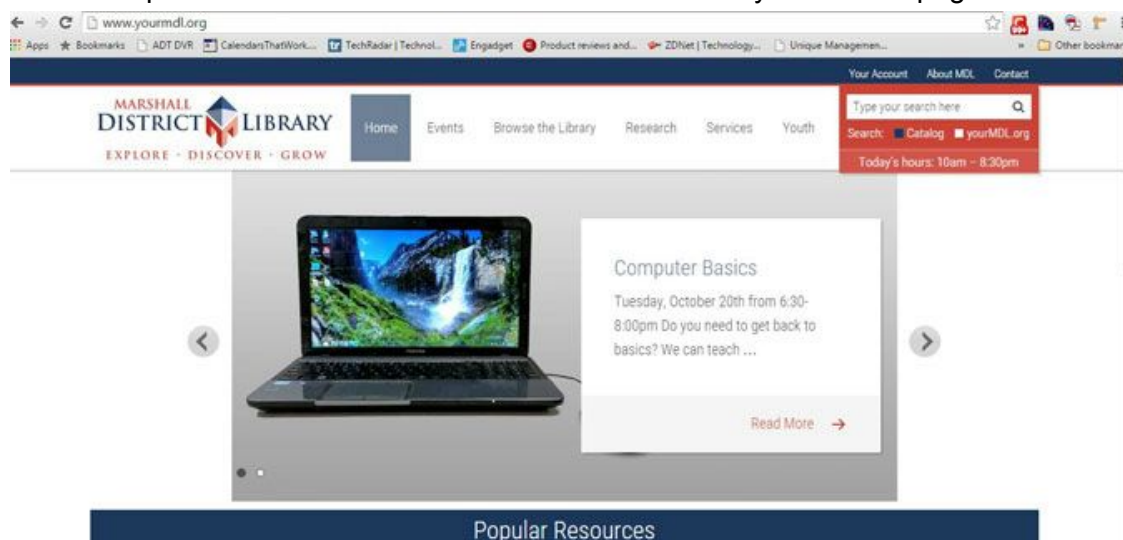
Hard Drive: Stores Operating System software, application software, and other files.
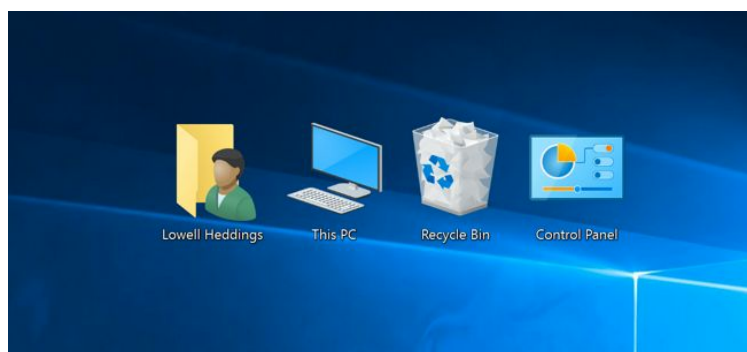

Hardware: Any physical component that makes up part of the computer. (mouse, keyboard, processor, hard drive, etc.)

Homepage: The first thing you see when you come to a website, or the opening page of a website. It provides information about the site and directs you to other pages on the site.

Icon: The small picture that represents a software program on the computer or an action the computer can perform.

Link (or hyperlink): A highlighted or underlined feature on a web page that, when clicked, will take you to another web page. A link most often appears as underlined words or an image. One way to tell if something is a link or not: whenever your cursor turns into a pointing hand, the image or word you are pointing to is a link.

Operating System: The software that supports a computer's basic functions, such as scheduling tasks, executing applications, and controlling peripherals. Examples include Windows 7, Windows 8.1, Windows 10, Mac OS X Yosemite, and Ubuntu. The operating system is the "boss" program that organizes and directs all of your other programs. It is also the environment in which your programs live and operate. Different operating systems serve the same general purpose, but will look different and may accomplish tasks differently.
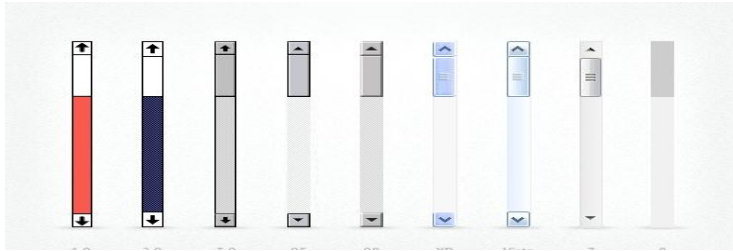

RAM: Internal memory that a computer uses to store information and instructions while the computer is operating. (Random Access Memory)

Scroll Bar: A narrow, rectangular bar on the right edge (and sometimes, the bottom edge) of a web page that lets you move the page to see more of the information it contains. The scroll bar

on the right moves the web page up and down, and the scroll bar on the bottom moves the web page right and left.

Search Box: A small rectangular blank space on a web page where you can type in a word or phrase to look for information. Clicking on the button near the search box (or hitting the Enter key on the keyboard) will take you to a webpage that lists relevant results, which you can click on for more information.

Shortcut: A type of icon which lets you launch a program quickly, without having to search for it. Often placed on the Windows desktop for convenience. Usually has a small arrow in the bottom lefthand corner, to show it is a shortcut rather than the program itself.

Software: Programs and other operating information used by a computer. (Google Chrome, Microsoft Office, Antivirus Software, operating system)

Web Address: The address for a website. (URL stands for Uniform Resource Locator.) U.S.-based web addresses usually start with the letters www (for World Wide Web) and end with a dot followed by letters that indicate the type of website it is:

.com = commercial enterprise or business

.edu = educational institution

.gov = government agency

.mil = military agency

.net = another ending for a commercial website

.org = non-profit organization

An example of these would be YourMDL.org or Google.com

USB Flash Drive: a portable device that stores files.

Website: A location on the World Wide Web (and Internet) that contains information about a specific topic or topics. A website usually contains multiple **web pages** with different types of information about the topic.