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The OSU Library participates in the creation and maintenance of the emerging global digital library by digitizing and sharing electronic information.

The OSU Library Electronic Publishing Center, founded in 1996, will pursue this vision by expanding and enhancing access to published and unpublished materials of interest to the academic community and general public, especially those unique to OSU or the State of Oklahoma.

**Importance of Digitization**

By digitizing the unique documents in special collections and archives, we make them available to a larger audience. Researchers no longer have to travel to the place where the document is held; the document can come to them. People who would never have access to or be allowed to handle rare documents can actually use these historical artifacts in their studies.

Furthermore, digitization provides a format in which the information may be viewed without damaging the original documents. Years of use and natural decay can quickly render a document unusable to the general public. Through digitization, however, the actual document is better preserved while still disseminating the necessary information to a much greater audience. (See Figures 1 and 2).

**How Do We Digitize?**

Digitizing documents is not a quick and easy process. There are many steps involved, as illustrated in the chart to the right. Every project is different, but the four basic stages include:

- **Stage 1.** Select material
- **Stage 2.** Convert normal text into electronic text
- **Stage 3.** Format electronic text for the Internet
- **Stage 4.** Create website for access and navigation

(See Figures 1 and 2).