WEEDING THE SCHOOL LIBRARY

The Counterpart to Selection

Why Weed?

It does not matter how many books you may have, but whether they are good or not.

— Epistularum Morales
Lucius Annaeus SENECAD B.C.-65 A.D.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION


California School Library Information
www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/lb/index.asp

Norfolk Public Schools, VA Library Media Center Handbook
www.nps.k12.va.us/aaa/media/manual/

Sunlink Weed of the Month Club
http://www.sunlink.ucf.edu/weed/

MUSTY *

M Misleading Can occur more rapidly in technology than mythology. Look for:

- “Dated” popular fiction
- Obsolete information
- Books containing racial, cultural or sexual stereotyping

U Ugly Refers to the physical condition of the book.

- Antiquated appearance
- Worn-out, frayed, dirty
- Unable to mend

S Superseded There may be newer copies available.

- Duplicate copies
- Almanacs, yearbooks, encyclopedias superseded by newer editions

T Trivial Look for appropriateness for the collection. Check for poor writing, inaccurate information, an inappropriate interest or reading level for students.

Y Your collection has no use for the book. It is irrelevant to your curriculum.

* Coined by the American Library Association in cooperation with the Texas State Library, 1976
WEEDING THE
COLLECTION

DEFINITION
Weeding is the removing of materials from a library collection in a systematic and deliberate way. It is an ongoing part of collection development, a planned and thoughtful action that will ensure library materials are current and enticing.

DEVELOP A WEEDING POLICY AND CRITERIA
A part of the district selection policy should include a plan for weeding the school library collection. This weeding policy should include a justification, rationale, a plan for teacher evaluation of materials being considered for discard and a process for disposal.

The following criteria should be considered in developing such a policy:

- **Copyright**: a clue to look more carefully at the content.
- **Content**: look for relevance to the needs and curriculum of the school.
- **Physical condition**: look for ease of repair. Is there sufficient time and staff to complete major repairs?
- **Number of circulations**: including last circulation. If not circulated for 5-10 years determine why.
- **Superseded**: is there newer information available?

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**INFORMAL WEEDING**
An ongoing process that often occurs as materials are checked-in or checked-out.

**FORMAL WEEDING**
A planned process that is not superseded by informal weeding. A rotation schedule can be established allowing for systematic weeding over time.

**COPYRIGHT**
These are *suggested* copyright markers to consider. Utilize other criteria as well as these guidelines.

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**Biographies**: flexible

**Fiction**: 10 years

**Encyclopedia**: 5-7 years

**Reference**: evaluate on individual basis

**Periodicals**: 5 years

**Almanacs/Yearbooks**: 3 years in reference, 3 additional years in circulation

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**CONSIDER KEEPING**
- Classics, award winners
- Local History
- Annuals & School Publications
- Titles on current reading lists
- Out of print titles that are still useful
- Biographical Sources

**PROCEDURE**
- Design a plan that includes a schedule and a goal for the weeding process.
- Schedule weeding during an uninterrupted time.
- Have post-its, carts and boxes available.
- Look at each book and apply your criteria.
- If pulling the book, note the reason and place on a cart for mending or in a box for disposal.
- Remove records from circulation system.