

MATERIALS SELECTION**GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:**

The Blackwater Regional Library is a public institution supported by local taxes, state and federal funds, and endowment. Its fundamental goal is the provision of free and easy access to recorded information within the limitations of space and budget.

The selection of books and related materials necessary to achieving this goal is directed by the following objectives:

- ◆ To facilitate continuing education, both formal and informal
- ◆ To supply sources of information in all fields of knowledge
- ◆ To provide practical and vocational information that will improve occupational capabilities
- ◆ To meet the basic informational needs of the community
- ◆ To encourage the development of reading skills
- ◆ To encourage informed discussion of contemporary problems by providing materials on different or innovative cultures, experiences and thinking
- ◆ To support the educational, civic and cultural activities of groups and organizations
- ◆ To encourage intellectual, aesthetic, creative and spiritual growth
- ◆ To promote the use of books and other library materials for recreation and enjoyment
- ◆ To encourage maximum use of the collection by the greatest number of persons
- ◆ To support the democratic process by providing materials for the education and enlightenment of the community

RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION:

The initial responsibility for materials selection lies with the professional staff of the library. All staff members and the general public may recommend materials for consideration. Selection of materials for the adult collection is not restricted by the possibility that children or adolescents may obtain materials their parents consider inappropriate. The ultimate responsibility for materials selection, as for all library activities, rests with the Library Director.

The library encourages parents to have an active and responsible interest in their child's selection of materials. The library does not act in loco parentis regarding the selection or display of library materials. Library materials are not marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents. No book or other item is sequestered, except for the purpose of protecting it from injury or theft.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

Selection Principles: To build collections of merit and significance, materials must be measured by objective guidelines. All acquisitions whether purchased or donated, are considered in terms of the principles listed below. An item need not meet all of them in order to be acceptable.

Materials are evaluated on the significance of the entire work rather than individual parts.

The following principles will guide selection:

- ◆ Contemporary significance or permanent value
- ◆ Accuracy
- ◆ Reputation and/or authority of author, editor, or illustrator
- ◆ Literary merit
- ◆ Relation to existing collection and to other materials on subject
- ◆ Price and availability
- ◆ Format and ease of use
- ◆ Scarcity of information in subject area
- ◆ Attention of critics, reviewers, media and public

Selection Aids: The following standard selection aids are used:

- ◆ Booklist
- ◆ Kirkus
- ◆ Library Journal
- ◆ New York Times Book Review
- ◆ Publishers Weekly
- ◆ Rolling Stone
- ◆ School Library Journal
- ◆ Publishers' catalogs and bibliographies prepared by various libraries and subject authorities are also used.

MATERIALS REQUIRING ADDITIONAL CRITERIA:

Children/Young People: In choosing books and related materials for children and adolescents, the same principles are applied as in the selection of adult materials. More thought, however, is given to age as a determining selection principle. Materials must be suitable in reading level, interest level, and treatment of subject to the age of the intended audience.

Curriculum Related Materials. Although school and academic libraries in the library region have primary responsibility for providing materials to their students, the Blackwater Regional Library will supply supplementary reading and reference materials. Textbooks may be purchased for the collection when they supply information in areas in which they may be the best or only source of information on the subject. They are not duplicated to satisfy the demands of a specific school or academic course.

Gifts. A gift for the library collection may consist of materials or of funds for the purchase of materials. Funds may be given for acquiring materials recommended by the library staff or for the purchase of specific items suggested by the donor. When the library receives a cash gift for the purchase of materials, the selection will be made by the librarian in consultation with the donor. The library encourages gifts not earmarked for specific items in order to permit the most flexible use of the donation for the enrichment of the collection.

Gift additions must meet the same selection criteria as purchased materials. In some cases, titles are received or purchased which could not have been acquired from library funds because of budget limitations. If gifts of marginal value are being offered, processing costs and use of shelf space are considered before the gift can be accepted.

Gifts are subject to the following limitations:

- ◆ The library retains unconditional ownership of the gift
- ◆ The library makes the final decision on its own use or other disposition of the gift

- ◆ The library reserves the right to decide the conditions of display, housing, and access to the materials.

Local History. The library, through its local history collection, preserves books and source materials which document the history of its service area and provide a record of current happenings therein. Local history material may be acquired even though it does not meet other selection criteria.

Microforms. Microforms are acquired to augment the periodicals and newspaper collections, to save space, and to provide specialized materials not otherwise available.

Newspapers. Newspapers are selected to meet reference and research needs, to provide current information, and to satisfy casual interest in current events.

Pamphlets. Pamphlets are defined as unbound, free or inexpensive materials which are not catalogued and which are normally organized in a subject file. They are especially useful for providing information on how-to-do-it techniques, vocations, travel, subjects of local interest, current issues, and fields in which few books are available. Pamphlets are selected from the *Vertical File Index* and other reliable sources.

Periodicals. *Periodicals are purchased to:*

- ◆ Supplement the book collection
- ◆ Provide material not yet available in book form
- ◆ Provide recreational reading
- ◆ Aid in book selection
- ◆ Furnish professional reading for the staff

Periodicals selected are:

- ◆ Those which are considered authoritative and objective
- ◆ Those indexed in the standard periodical indexes
- ◆ Those of local interest
- ◆ Those frequently in demand

MAINTAINING THE COLLECTION:

Duplication: Duplication of materials at each branch, station, and on the bookmobile is governed by a combination of demand, historical value, and/or perceived need in a community. Current popular books are duplicated to meet demand by renting copies for limited periods of time.

Reference Collection: As the headquarters of the regional system, the Walter Cecil Rawls Library in Courtland attempts to provide a non-circulating reference collection of superior quality and usefulness. Due to budget and space constraints, smaller reference collections will be maintained at the branch and station libraries.

Discarding: The discarding of materials is selection in reverse. Systematic withdrawal of materials, which are no longer useful in maintaining an active, accurate collection, is necessary. Library materials are discarded for one or more of the following reasons:

- ◆ Irreparable damage
- ◆ Obsolescence
- ◆ Insufficient use
- ◆ Space available for housing materials

Replacement: A replacement is an item purchased to take the place of an identical title previously in the collection. It is the library's policy not to automatically replace all materials withdrawn because of loss, damage, or wear. Need for replacement in each case is judged by two factors:

- ◆ Existence of adequate coverage of the subject, especially if more current material is available
- ◆ Demand for the specific title

Reconsideration: Once an item has been accepted as qualifying under the selection policies and rules, it will not be removed at the request of those who disagree with it unless it can be shown to be in violation of these policies and rules. There is a formal procedure for the reconsideration of materials. (See Material Reconsideration Procedure) The Director is available to discuss the interpretation and application of these selection principles.

MATERIAL RECONSIDERATION PROCEDURE

If a person complains about an item in the library's collection, the staff member available should establish the specific nature of the complaint with the patron. If the patron wishes to have the material formally reconsidered with respect to its place and purpose in the collection, the staff member should:

- ◆ Provide a copy of the **Materials Selection Policy** and point out reconsideration section.
- ◆ Provide a **Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials** form if, after reading the **Materials Selection Policy**, the patron still wishes to register a formal complaint.
- ◆ Assure the patron that the material in question will be reviewed by the Library Director
- ◆ Assure the patron that he/she will receive a letter from the Director describing the results of this review.
- ◆ Give the completed **Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials** and the material in question to the Director
- ◆ Give the patron's copy of the form to the person requesting the reconsideration.

The Library Director will appropriately notify the Library's Board of Trustees of the decision made in the case for a Request for Reconsideration.