

# Materials Selection Policy

Waterford Township Public Library

## OVERVIEW

The Waterford Township Public Library believes there shall be no censorship, for the freedom to read freely from a variety of sources is essential to a democracy. The Waterford Township Public Library subscribes to the selection principles for books and other library resources contained in the [Library Bill of Rights](#) adopted by the American Library Association, and the [Freedom to Read Statement](#) endorsed by the American Library Association Council and the American Book Publisher's Council. All materials added to the collection shall be judged on the content as a whole, not by detached excerpts. Personal behavior of the creator of any material shall have no bearing on the selection of the material. There shall be no limitation in Library services because of age, race, color, religion or national origin, sexual orientation or gender identity, or physical limitations.

Maximum effort shall be directed toward maintaining a standard of excellence in materials selection for all segments of the community, striking a balance between public demand and diversity of material. Factual accuracy, effective expression, significance of the subject, sincerity and responsibility of opinion are acceptable criteria for a high standard of quality. The interest and current needs of the community, the individual merit of each item, and the library's existing collection, budget and services are the main factors in selection. The Director, with the aid of the library staff, shall be free to use her or his judgment in the selection, retention and withdrawal of materials within the provisions of the selection policy.

## I. BOOK SELECTION

The following current reviewing aids will be consulted as appropriate: *Booklist*, *Library Journal*, *School Library Journal*, *Publisher's Weekly*, *New York Times Book Review*, *Kirkus Book Reviews*, and *The Horn Book Magazine*. Recommendations and reviews in subject-oriented journals will also be consulted, along with recommendations by other library or subject-area professionals.

The following general criteria will be applied to each item of material being considered for addition to the collection:

### GENERAL SELECTION CRITERIA:

1. The author's reputation and significance as a writer.
2. The importance of the subject matter to the collection.
3. Scarcity of material on the subject, both in the collection and in publication generally.
4. Timeliness or permanence of the book.
5. Accuracy and authoritativeness.

6. Appropriateness for, and ease of use by, the intended audience.
7. Reputation and standing of the publisher.
8. Community demand
9. The price
10. Physical quality
11. Availability of material elsewhere within an accessible local, regional or state network.
12. Amount of physical preparation necessary for addition to the collection, including availability in the catalog of circulating titles in The Library Network's shared automation system.

In addition to these general criteria, specific criteria for differing age level materials are given below.

## ADULT BOOKS

Both non-fiction and fiction books shall be selected to meet informational and recreational needs. The Library will ordinarily need to devote a somewhat larger proportion of the budget to non-fiction as there are many more subject areas to be covered and the prices are greater. The selection of non-fiction will depend upon factual accuracy, usefulness and compatibility with community needs, and collection development needs. The Waterford Township Public Library shall attempt to approach full coverage in the area of local history and much that is written about Oakland County and the State of Michigan for its permanent collection. The Library shall identify other areas of strong community interest, such as genealogy, job searching, do-it-yourself guides, etc., and provide for coverage in these areas in its collection development plans.

Adult fiction shall be selected on the basis of literary merit, significance of and need for the book in the collection. Community demand will also play a strong role in determining emphasis upon the works of specific authors.

Various book formats shall be provided to meet the needs of different segments of the community and shall include large print and paperback as well as standard print.

## TEEN BOOKS

Due to space and budget constraints, a small nonfiction area will be maintained as part of the Teen collection. Additional Teen non-fiction needs will be met by materials in the Adult and Children's nonfiction collections. Subjects relating to contemporary or historical social issues such as abortion, drug abuse, and sex instruction and education shall not be overlooked due to their potentially controversial nature; rather such material shall be purchased for various levels of maturity and for parents to use with teens.

The Library shall provide a separate fiction collection for teens. Selection of the books shall follow the general guidelines, plus the specific selection criteria outlined for materials published specifically for this age group, as well as suitable adult materials.

## CHILDREN'S BOOKS

Literary merit and validity of theme whether it be fantasy, history, sports, or contemporary life are deemed of prime consideration in the selection of juvenile fiction. Fiction plays an important role in the learning experience of a child through its ability to introduce a wide range of experiences which otherwise may never be encountered by the child. In terms of non-fiction, subjects relating to contemporary or historical social issues such as abortion, drug abuse, and sex instruction and education shall not be overlooked due to their potentially controversial nature; rather such material shall be purchased for various levels of maturity and for parents to use with children. An effort shall be made to obtain only material that is authoritative and up-to-date. Where there is a question concerning validity, books or materials will be researched in professional reviewing sources or referred to other knowledgeable professionals for evaluation.

Neither in subject material nor in quantities purchased is the children's collection school or curriculum oriented. Books are chosen for their individual values for individual children. Because of varying backgrounds and abilities of children, a wide range of sophistication and reading levels must be covered so that each child may challenge and enjoy his capabilities to the fullest. Exposure to a broad selection of informational and recreational materials is a good way to stimulate the desire to read and grow intellectually. Final responsibility for an individual child's selection of library materials shall rest with the parent or guardian.

## GIFTS

The Waterford Township Public Library reserves the right to use gifts of materials in a manner in keeping with its collection and with its selection policy. Materials presented to the Library are not actually free as there is the cost of sorting and selecting, cataloging and preparing them for circulation. Materials considered unsuitable for the collection will be placed in the Friends of the Library book sale or discarded.

## MEMORIAL BOOKS

The Library accepts donations toward the purchase of memorial or commemorative books. Library staff will select the title in accordance with the donor's wishes regarding the subject specified. The Library may accept a donation for a specific title if the title meets collection needs and selection policy standards. An identifying book plate shall be placed inside the front cover of each memorial or commemorative book.

## WORKS BY LOCAL AUTHORS

Books for this small special collection are those written by authors from Waterford Township, Michigan or adjacent communities, or are set in Waterford Township, which are self-published and not included in standard review sources noted previously. Such items will be handled as follows.

1. The copy to be considered is donated to the library in a format that enable circulation, ease of use and durability.

2. Inclusion in the Local Authors collection within 120 days upon evaluation.
3. The library will follow our materials selection policy for inclusion in regards to accuracy, readability and likely interest to more borrowers than the author's own family and friends. Such items will also be subject to this policy's stipulations for exclusion and retention of library materials.
4. The library will not provide professional reviews, promotion, or marketing of an author's work, whether the item is included or excluded.

## II. NON-BOOK MATERIALS SELECTION

Non-book materials, including downloadable eContent, shall be considered an integral part of the library collection. They shall be provided to add dimension to the book collection and also to provide alternative methods of access to information and recreation. Standards of quality are the same as that set up for the library collection as a whole.

### PERIODICALS

The Waterford Township Public Library shall subscribe to periodicals to meet both informational and recreational needs of adults, teens, and children. Periodical titles shall be reviewed annually to insure maximum usefulness to the public, taking into consideration the year's budget and the following criteria:

- community interest
- accuracy and objectivity
- accessibility through indexes in online databases
- need as a reference source
- recommendation from professional sources
- price

Our library's focus on the general reader precludes the addition of specialized journals to the collection: such specialized journals are available at special, academic and larger public libraries in the tri-county area. Articles from such journals are readily available through online databases and downloadable eContent platforms the library subscribes to as well as local, regional and state interlibrary loan networks in which the Library participates.

Back runs of periodicals shall be kept for indexed titles and for a select number of heavily-used, subject-related titles. No attempt shall be made to house extensive historical back runs either in microform or in paper copies, rather back runs will be held for the purpose of providing access to current information in frequently searched periodicals.

## NEWSPAPERS

The Library shall subscribe to selected local, metropolitan and national newspapers for news, current affairs and business information. Limited back runs of paper copies of the most frequently consulted papers will be maintained, along with more extensive microform back runs of selected indexed newspapers.

## III. NON-PRINT MATERIALS

The library shall meet both recreational and informational needs through the provision of various formats of non-print materials. The exact formats provided may change as patron use patterns and technology itself changes but the standards for selection shall remain constant and shall reflect the same criteria used for print materials.

### SOUND RECORDINGS

Various formats shall be provided as long as they remain useful to the public. Sound recordings shall consist of both music and spoken word to meet recreational, instructional and educational needs of community members of all ages and abilities. The following reviewing aids will be consulted as appropriate: [Rolling Stone.com](http://RollingStone.com), [Pitchfork.com](http://Pitchfork.com), [Metacritic.com](http://Metacritic.com), [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com)

### VISUAL RECORDINGS

Various formats shall be provided as long as they remain useful to the public. Documentary, instructional, and educational visual recordings for all ages shall be provided to complement the Library's total collection. Sources used for selection include *Video Librarian*, *Library Journal*, and *Booklist*.

Video recordings, e.g. feature films, television shows, and the like will be selected to complement the print fiction collection in terms of the basis of recognition conferred in the nomination for, or achievement of, major awards (e.g. Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Golden Globe), inclusion in festival selections (e.g. Cannes International Film Festival, Sundance Film Festival), winning rankings in surveys/polls (e.g. Sight and Sound, American Film Institute). Selection tools reflecting popular demand, include [IMDb.com](http://IMDb.com).

### ONLINE SERVICES

The Library shall provide educational, informational and instructional database access for use by the patrons remotely and on the Library's public access computers. Selection shall be based on reviews in professional journals, online sources, subject-oriented periodicals or sites, and recommendations from other librarians and educators.

## OTHER NON-BOOK MATERIALS

The Library may also provide selected materials that constitute a “library of things” for circulation or in-library use, taking budget and space considerations as well as appropriateness to the Library's overall statement of purpose into consideration in the selection of all materials of this type.

## IV. BASIS FOR WITHDRAWAL

The reasons for weeding materials from the collection are lack of space, poor physical condition, and outdated information. Occasionally it is necessary to weed materials which have been revealed to be potentially harmful in recommendations of materials or procedures, as in the case of cleaning compounds or science experiments. The primary goal of all weeding is to keep the collection current, attractive, and usable.

Standard lists shall be consulted and community needs and the Library's statement of purpose shall be kept in mind before discarding any material which is not in poor physical condition or obviously out-of-date. Materials serving the purposes of the Library, meeting criteria for selection, and related to an existing need or interest, shall not be removed from the collection because of pressure by a group or individual.

## V. CITIZEN REQUEST FOR EVALUATION OF MATERIALS

Requests from the public to evaluate library materials deemed from an individual or group point of view to be questionable for any reason shall be presented to the Director in writing on a form obtainable from the Library. Only requests in writing shall be reviewed by the Library Advisory Committee. The materials shall remain available to the public until a decision, and recommendation to the Township Board, is made. A subcommittee may be organized by the Director for the review of specific materials.