



BOOK AND AUDIO VISUAL SELECTION

Preamble

This has been written to serve the needs of the schools of the Portage la Prairie School Division. The library performs many important functions in the School Division's overall program. Although the function of the library is to implement and support the educational program of each school, the library must also serve as a centre for recreational and leisure reading. The instilling of patterns of reading enjoyment remains one of the primary goals of any library institution.

Philosophy and Objectives

The objectives of this divisional policy are to see that our libraries provide a variety and abundance of materials from all media to support and enrich the school curriculum, to stimulate cultural development, to motivate students to read, and to provide the teaching staff with important professional materials.

The book selection policy of the Portage la Prairie School Division affirms the policy as laid out in the School Library Bill of Rights. This bill maintains that the responsibilities of the school library are:

- To provide materials which will enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities, and maturity levels of the pupils served.
- To provide materials which will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and ethical standards.
- to provide background information which will enable pupils to make intelligent judgements in their daily life.
- To provide materials on both sides of controversial matters so that young citizens may develop under guidance the practice of critical reading and thinking.
- To place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of materials of the highest quality in order to assure a comprehensive collection appropriate to the users of our libraries.

Delegation of Authority in Selection

The ultimate responsibility for all materials selection belongs to the School Board but it usually delegates the responsibility for purchasing to its library staff who have professional training in selection. In our Division, this responsibility is divided amongst the Librarians according to their abilities and interests.



Personnel Involved in Selection

Students, faculty, administration, and Library staff are all involved in the selection process. Recommendations for purchase are usually accepted in writing only on a standard Library order card. A collection survey is to be distributed annually which allows for a continuous evaluation of our collections. Through the use of this survey, we can determine whether we have overstocked a section, need additional books in a section, or if we have to weed books from an area.

Use of Selection Tools

Since one of the primary duties of the Librarian is to select materials for the Library, the use of professional selection tools as selection aids is essential. Because of the size of our collections a variety of selection aids is used. These include the Senior High School Library Catalog, Booklist, Book Review Digest, Fiction Catalog, A.A.A.S. Science Booklist, Guide to Reference Books, and the Wilson Library Bulletin. With emphasis on Canadian materials the following selection tools are used: Quill and Quire, Journal of Canadian Fiction, Canadian Library Journal, Canadiana, and Tamarack Review. In reference to non-print materials the following guides are consulted: Audio, Learning, Canadian Audio Visual Review, AV Instruction, Film News, Media and Methods, and Schwann Record Guides.

Personal selection by Librarians or Teachers is another means of selection. However an effort shall be made to find a written review of all materials entering our libraries. Such a policy will ensure only highly recommended works, at the appropriate reading levels, will reach our shelves.

Criteria for Selection

GENERAL CRITERIA

When selecting a book to be placed in the Library, the following criteria are generally applied:

- a) Does the book widen the experience of the student, enrich his life, or fill some personal need?
- b) Does the book contribute directly or indirectly to the educational purposes of the school?
- c) An attempt is made to provide materials which feature different levels of difficulty with a diversity of appeal and points of view.



SPECIFIC CRITERIA

The following criteria are applied to the selection of all books:

- a) Purpose of the book
- b) Reputation and significance of the author
- c) Timeliness and relevance
- d) Importance of the content to the collection
- e) Authority in handling of the subject
- f) Price
- g) Quality of the writing
- h) Quality of the illustrations
- i) Recommendations in reviews or booklists
- j) At no time will an author's work be excluded from the stacks because of his race, religion, or national origin

Controversial Areas

RELIGION

Materials in the library must be broad, tolerant, and impartial. Selections are made with an attempt to maintain a recognition of all religions while specializing in none. Religious books of an obviously denominational nature whose primary purpose is to present one sect as superior to another are not purchased or accepted in our libraries.

IDEOLOGIES

The library makes available source materials of any ideology or philosophy which is an important aspect of society in general.

SEX EDUCATION

Our libraries stock a variety of sex information books. These would include books on pregnancy, birth, and contraception (Middle and Senior Years). The attempt in this area is to provide clear, sound information, which should be made available to adolescents, but to avoid books which contain detailed or explicit information regarding sexual relations.

OTHER CONTROVERSIAL MATERIALS

The use of profanity or of frankness in dealing with sex may be inappropriate, but when a book opens a clearer vision of life, develops an understanding of other people or breaks down intolerance, these virtues must be weighed against the possible harm done by some regrettable work or passage in the book, particularly where taste rather than morals is offended. Books in this category are usually read by one or more of the Librarians before being placed upon the shelves.



Restricted Shelves

The Library subscribes to the belief that all materials purchased are equally available to everyone. Restrictions, labeling, or other devices which could prejudice the reader are not condoned. Such restrictions will cease to be necessary when the selection procedures outlined above are in place.

Procedure for Handling Complaints

Complaints concerning Library materials have been relatively few in this area. However, a pattern of increasing pressures brought on by concerned citizens who demand the removal of books from Library shelves is discernible. When such pressures arise a clearly stated procedure for handling complaints would be in place. The following approach when handling a complaint is to be used:

- a) Criticism must be presented in writing and directed to the Principal of the school involved.
- b) The statement must contain specific information as to the author, title, publisher, and the reason for the criticism, giving specific references to those aspects or sections of the book to which there is an objection.
- c) The statement must be identified and signed so that a reply may be given.
- d) The material will be reviewed in light of the objections by a committee appointed by the Superintendent's Department.
- e) The report of the committee should be forwarded to the Superintendent's Department and to the School Board for action.
- f) The decision of the Board shall be sent in writing to the complainant. A standard form for handling complaints is available. (Instructional Materials Complaint Form) (See KFA)

Gifts

Books that are received by the Library as gifts are evaluated just as new purchases are evaluated. The Library reserves the right to dispose of gifts through the regular weeding procedures.

The collection is constantly being evaluated and materials that are not implementing, enriching, and supporting the curriculum are removed from the collection. The criteria for removal are:



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- a) There is considerable duplication in little used areas.
- b) Materials are no longer useful to curriculum needs.
- c) There are duplicate copies where need is not a factor.
- d) Materials are too badly worn or damaged to justify repair.

When a book is removed from the Library collection it may:

- a) Be sent to other Division schools where the curriculum demands.
- b) Be donated to the City Library, mission schools in Canada or other countries, the Children's Book sale, Teachers, students or parents. Books in this category are to be stamped "discarded".

Sets, Multiple Sets, and Paperbacks

Sets of materials or books are not purchased until the need for such a purchase is demonstrated. Paperback purchasing is becoming more and more prevalent as the paperback copies provide extra copies of well read titles. A maximum of five copies of hardback edition will be bought if the need is demonstrated. Sets of reference books or class textbooks shall be purchased as textbooks, not as library books.

Revision of the Selection Policy

Interested individuals and groups are invited to submit recommendations for revision.