

AM 300 Library Collections

AM 310 Materials Selection

Revised 6/97

I. Responsibility for Selection

- A. Ultimate responsibility for selection of library materials rests with the Executive Director, who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Metropolitan Library Commission.
- B. The Executive Director delegates to staff members the authority to interpret and apply these policies in developing the library collection.
- C. All staff members assigned responsibility for selecting library materials are expected to apply these policies and their professional knowledge and experience in making decisions.
- D. The Director of Materials Selection and Management and the Materials Selection Office's professional staff lead the selection process, reviewing and evaluating new books and other materials. They regularly communicate with public service and other staff regarding special, local, community needs.
- E. All library staff members are instructed to monitor and consider requests for materials not available.
- F. Customer requests for and comments on materials are invited and considered. (See attachments, "Library User's Request for Materials" and "Comments on Library Materials and the Internet".)

II. Selecting for a Diverse Audience

- A. The library recognizes that some library materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some persons; however, selections will not be made on the basis of any anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the work in serving the diverse interests of Oklahoma County citizens.
- B. The library will not knowingly add or retain materials that are judicially determined to be illegal under Oklahoma law.
- C. The library does not set an arbitrary or single standard of literary quality to select its materials but seeks to provide a collection of materials to satisfy a public varying in formal education, social background and taste.
- D. The system selects a wide range of fiction and non-fiction, whether serious or amusing, realistic or imaginative, timely or historical, that accurately and honestly attempts to depict or explore the human condition.

AM 300 Library Collections

AM 310 Materials Selection

Revised 6/97

- E. Materials are not excluded from the collection solely on the basis of coarse language, frankness or descriptive passages or topics considered by some to be offensive. The library has a responsibility to protect the rights of all readers.
- F. Library materials will not be marked or labeled to show approval or disapproval of the contents, and no materials will be sequestered except rare and scholarly items of great value, such as the "Oklahoma Collection," to protect them from damage or theft.
- G. Responsibility for the reading interests of children rests with their parents and legal guardians. The library's selecting of materials for adults will not be inhibited by the possibility that the materials may come into the possession of children. Each library agency maintains a collection of materials for pre-school and elementary school-aged children, but the children are not restricted to those collections and they have access to the total library collection.

III. Criteria and Sources for Selection

- A. Each piece of material or work shall be considered on its own merits and its relation to its intended audience. All additions to the library collection, whether purchased or donated, shall be evaluated on anticipated usage and must meet two or more of the following general criteria:
 - 1. Appeal to the interests and needs of individuals in the community.
 - 2. Vitality and originality.
 - 3. Contemporary significance (timeliness).
 - 4. Literary, artistic or graphic quality.
 - 5. Degree to which its style of presentation entertains or pleases.
 - 6. Skill and competence of the work's creator and producer (publisher) in fulfilling their intent or purpose.
 - 7. Degree to which it provides viewpoints and subject coverage of special interest to the local community.
 - 8. Accuracy, authenticity, thoroughness and documentation.
 - 9. The appropriateness of the format to the content.

AM 300 Library Collections

AM 310 Materials Selection

Revised 6/97

- B. Reviews in professionally accepted periodicals are important sources for materials selection. Citations in professionally accepted bibliographies, indices, booklists and useful, subject-oriented publishers' catalogs and by local or national media are considered. Evaluations of review copies by professional library staff are also considered. In the absence of published reviews, staff may request evaluation of titles by local persons with expertise in the subject matter covered by the material.
- C. Requests from customers for the library to buy specific titles or material dealing with specific subjects are evaluated carefully. When there is enough demand or interest in a title or subject, an item with unfavorable reviews may be purchased unless the subject is already adequately covered.
- D. Specialized materials of limited community interest are not ordinarily purchased.

Customers making requests for such materials may be referred to other local library collections or invited to use this system's inter-library loan service.

Supplementary materials for students and information for specialists are provided in a limited number of fields; however, the library will avoid unnecessary duplication in subject areas which are the special prerogative of other community resources.

Textbooks and workbooks are purchased only when the information also serves the general public or is unavailable in other form.

Materials that are intended to market products and services are not added to the collection.

IV. Special Collections

The Metropolitan Library System established and maintains special collections of materials under the provisions of administrative procedures adopted for these purposes. Such collections are established to meet special needs in serving the community; some of the factors around which a collection may be organized are:

- A. Subject content (examples: local history, mysteries)
- B. Format (examples: magazines, video)
- C. Accessibility for a special audience (examples: large print, foreign language)

AM 300 Library Collections

AM 310 Materials Selection

Revised 6/97

V. Format

The library system selects materials in formats that are most appropriate to meet community needs. These formats include:

- A. Microform
- B. Audio recordings
- C. Video recordings
- D. Printed books
- E. Printed magazines
- F. Printed newspapers
- G. Electronic databases
- H. Any other format appropriate to current use patterns

VI. Video Selection Guidelines

A. Non-fiction/Non-theatrical Videotapes

Definition of non-theatrical videotapes: General interest non-fiction and short fiction works produced for the education and home video markets, including items such as documentaries, how-to, self-paced learning and instruction, travel, music, health and fitness, dance, theater, inspiration, etc.

Non-theatrical videotapes are purchased when the format provides a useful way of presenting information to a customer. Titles are acquired in all general subjects. The library system collects educational and/or instructional materials such as self-help, do-it-yourself, and informational appropriate for groups; documentaries, dramatic and musical performances, holiday materials, short features and videotapes of interest to children and families.

Non-theatrical titles are selected from published reviews, lists of recommended films published by recognized authorities, catalogs of respected publishers and from in-house review of the films. Selection is based on the following criteria:

- Timeliness

AM 300 Library Collections

AM 310 Materials Selection

Revised 6/97

- Accuracy of factual content
- Quality of technical production
- Usefulness for the intended audience
- Present and potential relevance to community needs
- Balance in the point of view presented

Materials for children should be useful and relevant to their everyday needs, interests and activities. Special emphasis is placed on a child's developmental needs for stimulation of imagination and mental growth. Concept films, folktales, fairytales and films highlighting children's activities are emphasized in children's videos.

B. Entertainment/Feature Videotapes

Definition of feature videotapes: Full-length dramatizations including foreign and U. S. produced contemporary films and classics.

The library will provide entertainment feature films for adults and children that are established classics, major award winners, film versions of books and important representative films from other countries.

Several categories of films are considered for the feature film collection:

- Major prize winners: New York Film Critics, Academy Awards, international film festival awards, (Dances With Wolves, Annie Hall)
- Established classics: Films that are recognized as important and that are judged to have stood the test of time, considered here to be a minimum of twenty years old, (Casablanca, Citizen Kane)
- Film versions of important works of literature (Red Badge of Courage, Romeo and Juliet)
- Titles from the "Best Films" lists that are periodically published by critically-recognized journals and reviewers, (Silence of the Lambs, Manchurian Candidate)

AM 300 Library Collections

AM 310 Materials Selection

Revised 6/97

While films in these categories will be considered, the final selection will be based on judgment of the film's overall merit, using several specific criteria. To be acquired, a film will meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Be of present and potential relevance to community needs
- Provide insight into human and social needs
- Provide high quality performances
- Be produced with technical skill
- Be an outstanding example of artistic expression
- Be an important cultural artifact

C. Customer Suggestions and Gifts

Customer requests for purchase of video recordings are invited and considered. These requests will be evaluated using the criteria given above.

VII. Major Categories of the Materials Collection

A. Adult Reading Level

1. Non-fiction: Selection of these materials, in any format, is governed by the General Criteria. The library attempts to acquire materials representing diverse points of view on current and historical questions and controversies, including legal, constitutional, political, economic, medical, ethical, religious, social, sexual, and other issues. Inclusion of material representing a particular belief, opinion, or point of view in the library's collection does not constitute endorsement by the library.
2. Fiction: Selection of these materials, in any format, is governed by the General Criteria.

B. Juvenile Reading Level

1. Non-fiction: The library maintains a collection of nonfiction appropriate for a wide variety of age levels and reading levels. Selection of these materials, in any format, is governed by the General Criteria. Materials may be purchased to support the local education/school curriculum needs of children, or to meet the informational and recreational needs they may have individually. The library attempts to acquire materials representing diverse points of view on current and historical questions

AM 300 Library Collections

AM 310 Materials Selection

Revised 6/97

and controversies, including legal, constitutional, political, economic, medical, ethical, religious, social, sexual and other issues and subjects of interest to children. Inclusion of material representing a particular belief, opinion, or point of view in the library's collection does not constitute endorsement by the library.

2. Fiction: The library maintains a collection of fiction appropriate for a wide variety of age levels and reading levels. Contemporary and historical fiction is selected which interprets life in an honest and realistic way and which contributes to a better understanding of the world. Selection of these materials, in any format, is governed by the General Criteria.
3. Classifications: Material appropriate for the juvenile reading level can extend from preschool age through 9th grade. Classifications used within the juvenile reading level are the following:
 - Easy: Material is classified "Easy" when it includes a story designed to be read to children of preschool age or older or when it is a picture story with few or no words. It is not necessarily easy to read. An "Easy" may be either fiction or nonfiction. Printed material in this category is profusely illustrated and usually is oversized. When text is present, the print may be standard or oversized. "Easies" are shelved in the children's area of the library.
 - Reader: Material is classified "Reader" if the reading and interest levels are appropriate for children in Kindergarten through 2nd grade or for any children learning to read. It may be either fiction or nonfiction. A "Reader" generally has a controlled vocabulary and short sentences. The wording may be repetitious. The length is usually short, 30-40 pages, and the storyline or plot is simple. There are numerous illustrations and the print is usually large. "Readers" are shelved in the children's area of the library.
 - Tween Fiction: Fiction material is classified "Tween Fiction" if the reading and interest levels are appropriate for children in grades 2-4. The length is usually less than 100 pages. A "Tween Fiction" title usually has more illustrations than Juvenile Fiction titles, but fewer than Reader or Easy titles. "Tween Fiction" is shelved in the children's area of the library.
 - Juvenile Fiction: Fiction material is classified as "Juvenile Fiction" when the reading and interest levels are appropriate for children in grades 4-7. "Juvenile Fiction" is shelved in the children's area of the library.

AM 300 Library Collections

AM 310 Materials Selection

Revised 6/97

- Tween Nonfiction: Nonfiction material is classified as "Tween Nonfiction" (TNF) when it has a reading level, format and interest level appropriate to children in grades 2-4. This is not a rigid classification, but can be extended to include younger and older readers. Generally, printed material in this area will be less than 100 pages in length, contain numerous illustrations, have large print and have wide margins. "Tween Nonfiction" is shelved in the children's area of the library.
- Juvenile Nonfiction: Nonfiction material is classified "Juvenile Nonfiction" (JNF) when it has a reading level, format and interest level appropriate to children in grades 4-9. This is not a rigid classification, but can be extended to include younger and older readers. "Juvenile Nonfiction" is shelved with the adult nonfiction material.

C. Young Adult (YA) Reading Level

The term "Young Adult" refers to young people in grades 7-12. This is not a rigid classification, but can be extended to include younger and older readers. Any title selected for the Young Adult collection must meet the General Criteria governing materials selection and meet the needs of the intended audience.

Contemporary and historical fiction is selected which interprets life in an honest and realistic way and which contributes to a better understanding of the adolescent and adult worlds. "Young Adult" fiction is shelved in a separate Young Adult collection area.

To be selected for Young Adult collection, titles should normally be recommended specifically for this age group in at least one professional review. Where an adult title is of specific interest to YA audience, it will be considered for addition to the young adult collection. It is possible for some titles to be in the adult or juvenile as well as young adult collections.

D. Uncataloged Paperback Books

In response to the popularity of both the mass market paperback format and the many titles which are not available in other formats, the library maintains a large collection of mass market paperback books, including both fiction and nonfiction titles. Separate paperback collections are maintained for adults, young adults and children. Because of their relatively low cost and ephemeral nature, these paperbacks are not cataloged.

In response to public demand, the library purchases paperback titles, which have substantial, demonstrated popular appeal to library customer but may not be critically reviewed. Series and genres of fiction (e.g. mystery, romance,

AM 300 Library Collections

AM 310 Materials Selection

Revised 6/97

intrigue, inspirational, western, science fiction, etc.) for which there is established demand are emphasized. When available, reviews or annotations of paperback titles are examined prior to purchase. Paperback editions of cataloged titles are purchased to help meet heavy demand.