

SOLOMON WRIGHT PUBLIC LIBRARY

MATERIALS DE-SELECTION POLICY & PROCEDURES

1. **POLICY OVERVIEW:** Weeding materials from the collection is as vital to the health of the Solomon Wright Public Library as adding new titles. Each item, through its quality, reliability, current usefulness and appearance, must earn its place on the shelf, and contribute to the reliability, reputation and attractiveness of the Library. Systematic weeding is an integral part of collection development, pointing out opportunities to strengthen the collection.

2. **RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE COLLECTION:** Final authority for the determination of the policies in this document are vested in the Library's Board of Trustees. They have delegated the responsibility of implementing this policy to the Library Director. It is the function of librarians to select and to withdraw library materials and to advise on their use. Recognizing that sensitivity to the needs and interests of the community is essential to the development of library collections, the Solomon Wright Public Library welcomes advice and suggestions from the community, trustees and authorities in various fields. Librarians, however, are responsible for judging the needs of their collection and community, and they must make the final choices. Weeding should be done without bias by individuals, whose personal preferences or interests will not dominate their work. Librarians are expected to include in the collection, when available, materials that reflect all sides of controversial questions.

3. **WEEDING CRITERIA:**

3.1. General Considerations: Every title requires individual judgment. Each item is considered from the standpoint of its value to the community as well as in relation to other items on the shelf. Materials are candidates for de-selecting if they are factually inaccurate, worn or damaged, superseded by a truly new edition or a much better resource on the subject, of no discernible literary or scientific merit, unused, and/or are irrelevant to the needs or interests of the Pownal community. Duplicate titles no longer in demand should be withdrawn. Duplicate formats will not necessarily be retained. The availability of materials through the interlibrary loan network allows items of limited appeal to be weeded and space given to more useful material; and some collection areas, especially those of a more technical nature, will be weeded more heavily as a result of content updates available on the Internet.

The following sections, roughly divided by Dewey Classification range, will show a special coding in the form of a ratio. These formulas are intended as broad guidelines only, and the Solomon Wright Public Library recognizes there will be many exceptions to these "rules." The first number refers to the age of the material, or the number of years since the item's latest copyright date. The second number refers to the maximum number of years without usage. An "X" in the place of a number indicates that no clear default number of years is applicable. The

term “MUSTIE” refers to the weeding guidelines outlined in *CREW: A Weeding Manual for Modern Libraries*, and stand for:

Misleading : The information is inaccurate or out of date.

Ugly : The materials are worn, tattered, or mildewed.

Superseded : When a title has been replaced by a newer edition, newer format, or newer title.

Trivial : The material is not well written.

Irrelevant : Of no interest to the community.

Elsewhere : The same information is available in another format or title, or is readily available through interlibrary loan.

The presence of any MUSTIE criteria may qualify a book as a candidate for weeding.

3.2. *000 (General)*: The availability of online resources for general information look-ups makes encyclopedia sets less a core resource than previously; therefore these sets are not considered a high priority to the Library.

3.3 *100 (Philosophy and Psychology)*: (15/10/MUSTIE) Collection should keep abreast of popular topics in psychology. The value of materials on philosophy is determined mainly by use.

3.4. *200 (Religion and Mythology)*: (15/10/MUSTIE) The collection should have something up-to-date on each religion represented by a church, synagogue, or other assembly in the Pownal area, provided such materials are available. Generally the shelf life for items in this range is ten years except for areas of rapid change.

3.5. *300 (Social Sciences)*: (10/10/MUSTIE) Materials on government and economics should be replaced by new editions as available. Unless they have an historical approach they are of little use after ten years. Materials on finance, opportunities for wage earners, self help, college guides, career guides, and educational testing may be outdated sooner. Materials on customs and etiquette may have a longer shelf life depending on whether the subject matter is consistent with current ideas. Materials on folklore may be kept well beyond ten years, depending on condition.

3.6. *400 (Linguistics and Language)*: (10/5/MUSTIE) Collection should retain dictionaries and grammar instruction for languages being (or likely to be) studied or spoken in Pownal. Materials supporting English for speakers of other languages may be more aggressively weeded.

3.7. *500 (Pure Sciences)*: (10/6/MUSTIE) Mathematics, general biology, natural history and botany have a shelf life of ten years, but other sciences may be dated much sooner as new research supersedes earlier data. Basic works of significant historical or literary value, such as Darwin's *Origin of Species* should be kept indefinitely.

3.8. *600 (Applied Sciences and Technology)*: (7/3/MUSTIE) Technology is making such rapid advances that material over seven years old should be viewed with suspicion - with obvious exceptions. Repair manuals for older cars and appliances should be retained as long as such items are generally used in Pownal. Materials on clocks, guns and toys may be kept beyond ten years since such items are often collectable. Cookbooks, unless unused, also enjoy a much longer shelf life. Materials on health (except anatomy and physiology) and home economics become dated much sooner as style and technique change rapidly.

3.9. *700 (Arts and Recreation)*: This range generally enjoys a relatively long shelf life, and most items may be kept, especially histories of art and music, until worn and unattractive. Materials on crafts (X/10/MUSTIE) may be retained if they contain basic technique and the illustrations are not too dated. Materials on photography (10/10/MUSTIE) should be checked for outdated technique and equipment. Materials on sports (10/10/MUSTIE) should be weeded if they deal with personalities no longer of interest.

3.10. *800 (Literature)*: (X/X/MUSTIE) Keep basic materials, especially criticism of classic writers. Discard works of writers no longer read or discussed in literary histories (such as poetry, drama, essays or letters). Discard minor writers no longer read in area schools, unless there is an established demand among non-students.

3.11. *900 (History and Geography)*: (15/10/MUSTIE) Materials on history generally enjoy a longer shelf life than most of the collection. The main factors include demand, accuracy of facts, and fairness of interpretation. Personal narratives and war memoirs of World War II, the Korean War, and the Indochina Wars may be weeded in favor of broader histories of these conflicts, unless the author is a local person, or the item is cited in a bibliography as outstanding in style or insight. Dated viewpoints should be discarded. Materials on travel (5/5/MUSTIE) become dated much more rapidly, however personal narratives of travel (10/10/MUSTIE) enjoy a somewhat longer shelf life, especially if they are of high literary or historical value. All local material and accounts in which local people have participated should be kept.

3.12. *Biography*: (X/6/MUSTIE) These items are shelved separately in the Children's, Young Adult and Adult collections. Unless the person treated is of permanent interest or importance, biographies may be weeded as demand stops. This applies especially to ghost written biographies of faddish celebrities. Poor quality biographies of major celebrities should be replaced with better ones if funds permit.

3.13. *Adult Fiction*: (X/10/MUSTIE) Discard works no longer popular, especially second and third copies or old best sellers. Retain works of durable demand or high literary merit - good,

non-topical, well-written novels appealing to universal concerns will continue to circulate for many years.

3.14. *Large Print*: (X/5/MUSTIE) Use parameters from the standard print collections.

3.15. *Mass Market Paperback*: (X/1/MUSTIE) Because of the low price and lesser quality paper used in production the mass market paperback collection is more aggressively weeded.

3.16*. *Children's Fiction*: (X/10/MUSTIE) Discard items where the format and reading level are no longer appropriate to the current interest level of the material; topical fiction on dated subjects; abridged or simplified classics to be replaced by the original; second and third copies of series books no longer popular.

3.17*. *Children's Non-Fiction*: Use the same criteria as adult but looking especially for inaccuracy and triviality, the more common faults of over-simplified children's non-fiction.

3.18*. *Young Adult Fiction*: Use the same criteria as children's fiction.

3.19*. *Young Adult Non-Fiction*: Use the same criteria as adult non-fiction.

3.20. *Periodicals*: (6mo/X) Because of space restrictions, back files of magazines are generally no more than six months, and newspapers are kept generally no more than two weeks. Exceptions to this practice include magazines in the fields of genealogy and local history which may be retained in longer runs as necessary in response to demand.

3.21. *Local Document Repository*: These documents by design cover issues with widely varying life spans in local interest and impact. Although consideration will be given to the possible long-term historical importance of these documents, the Solomon Wright Public Library cannot and will not provide a permanent archive of the materials. All documents accepted for the public information repository are accepted with the understanding that the Library Director will determine when these documents will be deaccessioned. Criteria for this decision will include the amount of use the document received, the currency and local relevance of the issue it concerns, the available library space, the format of the materials, and the local availability of the information at another location. The Solomon Wright Public Library will make no attempt to return documents to the agency of origin.

3.22. *Audio-Visuals*: (X/3/MUSTIE) Worn out or damaged, rarely used, trivial and faddish are the general criteria taken into consideration when weeding audio-visual items. The Library no longer supports VHS or cassette recordings.

3.23. *Scores*: (X/3/MUSTIE) Condition and missing parts are the primary considerations when weeding scores. The availability of multiple copies and the popularity of the work are also contributing factors.

3.24. *Local History Department*: The collections housed in the Local History section of the Solomon Wright Public Library are part of the heritage of Pownal and are not to be viewed as capital for reinvestment. The materials themselves and/or the subject areas they represent have permanent value to the community and are made available to the general public on a limited basis for serious research on local, genealogical and/or historical issues. The historical and informational value of the items in the Local History Department is more important than visual appeal. The materials in these collections are intended for research and therefore do not circulate to the public

4. **FREQUENCY OF WEEDING:**

Weeding should not be a major project undertaken once every several years or when there is no longer room to shelve the materials. The collection as a whole should be reviewed systematically. One section at a time, each book should be considered individually, keeping in mind the general selection criteria and the terms in the above section on weeding criteria. Some sections will require more frequent review than others.

5. **DISPOSAL:**

5.1. *Sell*: Many books discarded from the library are sold through periodic book sales.

5.2. *Recycle*: While not as "profitable" as selling the items, this option can generate the best public relations when discarded materials are passed along to other agencies (i.e. libraries, schools, day care providers, nursing homes, social service providers, jails, third world countries, etc.).

5.3. *Destroy*: Generally reserved for the worst books that no one wants or would buy at the book sales, while this option requires the least effort, it can generate bad public relations because readers may be shocked that the library would throw away "good books."

5.4 *Requests for Purchase*: Occasionally the Library will receive a request from a reader to be given the opportunity to purchase or otherwise acquire a book or item from the library's collection when that item is withdrawn. Because of the volume of materials the library must handle it is unreasonable to assume the library will accommodate such requests, nor will such requests impact the library's decision whether an item should be withdrawn. Persons making such requests are advised to check the used book sales.

*A note on Children's and YA materials:

"Juvenile and young adult materials should be weeded with additional criteria in mind, including format, reading level, current interest in the subject matter, and jacket art and illustrations. Outdated illustrations and cover art can be the kiss of death for juvenile materials. Remember that to your young patrons, 15 years is a long time ago—before they were born. Anything that looks dated will continue to sit on the shelves until it gathers dust or is pulled by a dutiful children's librarian. Fortunately, the covers of classic titles like *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* and *A Wrinkle in Time* continue to be updated periodically by publishers, presenting a contemporary face to current readers.

Children and teens are marvelous resources for clues about what topics are currently of interest to these age groups, but even topics like break dancing, which recently has enjoyed resurgence in popularity, won't attract teens to books published in the early 1980s depicting dancers wearing short shorts and knee socks with hair wider than their shoulders. They're far more likely to request a DVD showing the latest dance steps. Likewise, perennially popular topics like sports will suffer if your collection still retains books featuring unknowns (to today's youth) like Joe Namath, Gordie Howe, Rudy Tomjanovich, and Dr. J." (Boon)¹

¹ Boon, Belinda, MLIS, PhD. "MUSTIE - OLC Small Libraries - WordPress.com." 4 May. 2009, <https://olcsmalibraries.wordpress.com/tag/mustie/>. Accessed 20 Nov. 2019.