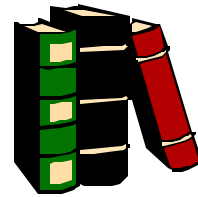
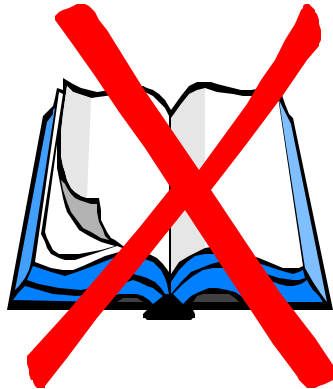
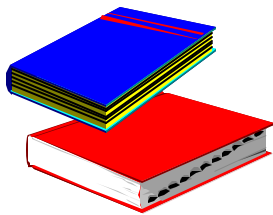




Weeding As A Part of Collection Development

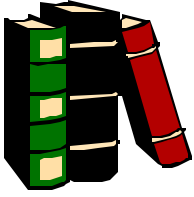


"In the futile attempt we all make to tidy up our lives and our surroundings, nothing is more difficult than throwing out a book.

I can't even bring myself to throw out a terrible book. I have all I can do [to] throw out a magazine."

Andy Rooney, 1984. (In Andrew A. Rooney, "Casting Out Books," *Pieces of My Mind*.) Reprinted in *Weeding Library Collections*

ISLMA
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WHY WEED?

- Relevance
- Reliability
- Currency
- Appeal
- Circulation
- Turnover Rate
- Cost
- Space

WHY IS IT SO HARD?

- Emphasis on numbers
- Professional work pressures
- Public displeasure
- Sacredness of the collection
- Perception that it is subjective
- Conflicting criteria

Criteria for Weeding School Library Media Centers

Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning.

(ALA Editions, 1998) p. 90-91

"The Collections of the library media program are developed and evaluated collaboratively to support the school's curriculum and to meet the diverse learning needs of students."

Goals for school library media specialist:

Collaborate with teachers and others to develop and publicize policies that govern selection and deselection of resources..."

Develop and direct a continuous collection development and evaluation process that focuses on regular, collaborative assessment of teaching and diverse learning needs and the formats and resources to meet them.

Linking for Learning: the Illinois School Library Media Program Guidelines. (ISLMA, 1999) p. 32

Information Access Component #4: "The library media program includes and organizes appropriate resources that support and extend the curriculum and provide the most appropriate and advanced technologies for accessing and producing information related to the learning needs of all members of the learning community."

Basic level:

The collection is reasonably up-to-date and has been weeded

Proficient level:

The organized collection is current, regularly weeded, and meets the curricular and recreational needs of students.

References

Manning, Patricia. "When Less is More: Cultivating a Healthy Collection" *School Library Journal*, May 1997.

O'Dell, Charli. "Confused About Fusion? Weed Your Science Collection with a Pro." *School Library Journal*, October 1998.

Slote, Stanley J. *Weeding Library Collections: Library Weeding Methods*, 4th edition. (Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited) 1997.

The SUNLINK Weed of the Month Club <http://www.sunlink.ucf/weed/>

WEEDING STRATEGIES

Get past the "someday man will be on the moon."

Begin with a collection development policy

Do a curriculum map what is actually being taught

Look at a one or two year cycle of use

Use the statistics from your automated system to see patterns of use

Consider the demographics of the community and school

Look at the geography of the area

When in doubt, weed with a pro

Change the cataloging and use it as a primary source

Help faculty, administrators and parents understand why you are weeding by sharing examples with them.



Dewey Class	Comment 1	Comment 2	Comment 3	Replacement
000 GENERALITIES Encyclopedias (Specialized Encyclopedias)	20% changed each year	Old edition may become circulating edition	Print and online are not the same-- especially illus	5 years Keep until a new edition
100 - PHILOSOPHY Philosophy Psychology Curiosities & Wonders Parapsychology & Occult	Consider applicability to curriculum	Keep/replace curiosities and wonders depending on use and curriculum	Most unscholarly dated after 10 years	On condition and applicability to curriculum Philosophy -10 Psych - 10 Pshych texts -5
200 - RELIGIONS Religion	Dates slowly	Keep what is appropriate for clientele - esp. saint books	Should have basic information on many sects, etc.	Weed items which are clearly propaganda
300 - SOCIAL SCIENCES Almanacs & Yearbooks	Replace annually with new volume	May keep old ones for assignments - not on open shelves		No more than 5 years old
Politics & Economics	Look for old addresses and contact information	Look at historical use	Generally weed not current	5 - 10 years
Commerce & Career information	Are computers part of the career; does the career still exist?	Look at illustrations	Are women and men both represented in the career?	5 - 10 years
Sociology, communities, classes and races	Look at nomenclature	Look at diversity of lifestyles & issues.	What is "future"? "modern"?	5 - 10 years
Customs/Costume (may be 700)	Look for a diversity of cultures.	Look at holidays, costumes; are new ones represented?		Keep as long as condition permits
Etiquette/Manners	Mention of email?	Look for kid friendly versions	Dating customs	Weed older editions
Folklore	Keep standard works			Keep as long as condition permits
400 - LANGUAGE Dictionaries	Language changes	Computer words/DVD/CDs		Weed every 10 years

500 - PURE SCIENCE	1/2 info changes every 5 years	Look for out-of-date and unsafe science fair material	Keep bio dictionaries in case people not in newer editions	Generally 5 year maximum
Mathematics & computers	Ages slowly	Keep computer books current	Do kids have older machines at home? May need older instructions	Logic & math 10 years
Astronomy	Stargazing does not change	Planets, solar system changing rapidly		Weed after 3 years -- everything before 1995
Physics				5 years
Weather & Climate	Should discuss use of computers in prediction	Hole in the ozone	Satellites for prediction?	5 years
Chemistry	Has correct number of elements			3 - 5 years
Geology	Field guides date slowly	Weed if use term "continental drift" and not "plate tectonics" or if earth is not 4.6 billion years		3 - 5 years
Dinosaurs	Mention feathered, warm blooded, meteor extinction	Mention discoveries since 1980?	Look at illus -- not all reptilian sauropods	5 - 10 years
Zoology	Should list 5 kingdoms	Endangered species		All prior to 1986
Microbiology	Newest findings on viruses	Bacteria living in extreme conditions		5 years
600 - APPLIED SCIENCES Medicine	AMA recommends keeping only 3 years	Diets, nutrition, calorie count	Look at pharmaceutical drugs and illegal drugs	Check the association, ie. diabetes, heart, etc. if in doubt; most too old at 10- generally 5 years

Agriculture/Plant culture	Look at pesticides	Farm equipment illus		5 - 10 years
Technology	Look for use of computers	How are TV, radio shown?		No more than 5 years
Cars, Trucks, Motorcycles	Historical value only	Modern cars?	Are they the cars kids are buying?	5 - 10 years
Manufacturing	Are guys stoking furnaces?	Use of computers & robotics	Global and trade	5 - 10 years
Electronic communications	More than a hint at PC's	Use of computers in many fields		5 years
Space Exploration	Must cover Mars and Venus missions	Space station?		3 - 5 years
Cookbooks	Mention microwave?	Check food handling and safety information	See "medicine" for special diet information	3 - 5 years
700 - THE ARTS Photography	Look for newer techniques	Digital cameras/ computers		Weed based on condition and use - no more that 5 years
Sports and Games	Out-of-date bios	Look at age of rulebooks, coaching, and equipment	Replace as interests change	Condition, use and accuracy 5 - 10 years
Music	Out-of-date bios of pop figures	Songbooks are hard to replace	Keep basic titles	3 - 5 years (pop music)
Art	Basic histories do not date	Look at illustrations		Weed b/w illustrations

Architecture	Keep as fits curriculum			Keep local
Sculpture/Painting Drawing	Look at techniques			Keep if well illustrated
Decorative Arts	Price guides date	Interior decoration dates in 5 years	Consider curricular use	5 years or as condition and use.
800 - LITERATURE				
Companions	Finite size means some info dropped in newer editions			Become dated in 10 - 15 years Keep if deleted content still needed
Anthologies/Criticism	Are authors in curriculum			Keep based on use
Plays/ Motion pictures	In curriculum Older bios	Popularity has waned		Keep based on use Keep works by local authors
900 - HISTORY				
General and Old World	Look for accuracy of facts and dated viewpoint (ala white man's burden)	Look at photos and illus for bias	Is this a primary source	What is the latest date covered in textbook?
Country books	Check names	Look for "euro"	Look at Berlin Wall, Soviet Union	5 - 10 years
Travel guides	Prices/modes of transportation			3 - 10 years
U.S. History	Look for accuracy of facts and dated viewpoint (ala colored, Negro, Black, Afro-American)	Look at photos and illus for bias	Who is the last president listed? (Clinton?) Be careful "all"	5 - 10 years
State seals, flags, etc	Color illus?			Keep based on condition
Geography	Watch for country name changes	Look at how local customs are portrayed		3 - 5 years

Atlases	Keep one or two for historical purposes	Prefer an historical atlas		3 - 5 years
Biography	Keep if the subject is of permanent interest	Consider link to curriculum and to demographic	Update famous people with new thinking about them	Condition, use, and reliability
Fiction, Picture Books and Story Collections	Old fashioned dated titles or illustrations or if not circulated	Replace classics and heavily used titles		5 - 20 years

REMEMBER

All mistakes can be corrected so don't panic.

Market your collection so that books can be used and find their users.

Your library is a growing organism so keep weeding so the "weeds" don't take over and obscure the good stuff.

Keep repeating to yourself: "I can't keep it all. I am not the Library of Congress."

Merle Jacob,
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Chicago Public Library
ILA Conference October, 19, 2001

