

WEEDING YOUR COLLECTION FOR CIRCULATION SUCCESS

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Winnefox Library System





REASONS FOR WEEDING (CULLING, DESELECTION)

- To save **SPACE**
- To save **TIME**
- To make the collection **MORE APPEALING**
- To **ENHANCE YOUR LIBRARY'S REPUTATION** for reliability
- To provide a continuous check on the **NEED FOR REPAIRS**
- To provide feedback on the collection's **STRENGTHS** and **WEAKNESSES** in meeting community needs and library mission



OBSTACLES TO WEEDING

- Procrastination
- Staff resistance
- Negative reactions of users and administration
- Reluctance to admit selection mistakes
- Time consuming
- Cost
- Fear
- “Anything is better than nothing”
 - Angela's example



BEFORE WEEDING

- Become familiar with the library's materials selection policy
 - Make weeding part of that policy
- Become familiar with goals for the collection and your strategic plan or mission – why do we have what we have?
- Read shelves
- Evaluate the collection
- Run a statistics report
- Go to the shelves!
(especially if you're new)



WHAT TO WEED - THE CREW METHOD

The CREW formulas given here for the various Dewey classes are offered as 'rules of thumb' based on opinions in the professional literature and practical experience.

- **C**ontinuous
- **R**evue
- **E**valuation
- **W**eeding

The formula in each case consists of three parts:

1. The first figure refers to the years since the book's latest **copyright date** (age of material in the book)
2. The second figure refers to the maximum permissible **time without usage** (in terms of years since its last recorded circulation and assuming that the item has been in the library's collection for at least that period of time);
3. The third refers to the presence of various negative factors, called MUSTIE factors, which will influence the weeding decision.

Example: Biographies – 10/3/MUSTIE



WHAT TO WEED - IS IT MUSTIE?

The MUSTIE Guidelines

M = Misleading

➤ **W**orn out

U = Ugly

➤ **O**ut-of-date

S = superseded

➤ **R**arely used

T = Trivial

➤ **S**upplied elsewhere

I = Irrelevant

➤ **T**rivial or faddish

E = May be obtained Elsewhere



WHAT TO WEED — QUICK & DIRTY

- Books and materials of poor appearance – MUSTIE
- Poor content – outdated, inaccurate, biased
- Duplicate copies
- Older single title authors
- One book wonders
- Obscure or ephemeral titles –
Ask Angela about Tyra Banks and Kim Kardashian
- Series books when most titles are missing
- Simplified/abridged classics
- Older editions of NF if newer editions are owned
- Topics no longer within the priorities of the collection



WEEDING CRITERIA

- Date/Author
 - When was it published/added to collection
 - Is the author still read or likely to be read
- Publisher
- Physical Condition/ Visual Appeal
- Additional copies
- Other books on the same subject – if you got rid of this book, can you still meet the need; does this book meet the need or does it need to be replaced
- Current Interest



WEEDING CONSIDERATIONS

- Library's role in the community
- Needs and demands of users
- How a particular item relates to others on the same subject
- Available Funds
- Cooperative agreements with other libraries
- Library considered an archive or local history center?
- Relying on ILL for discards



THINK TWICE - DO NOT WEED

- Local history items
- Works by local authors IF the items fit within your Collection Development Policy and local needs and inter
- Works with local settings IF the items fit within your Collection Development Policy and local needs and interests



STEPS FOR WEEDING (AFTER) – REPAIR, REPLACE, DISPOSE

- Repair items
- Order replacements
- Promote with displays
- Dispose – recycle, donate, or sell
 - REMOVE FROM CATALOG
 - Mark withdrawn





CREW IN 10 STEPS

1. Make weeding a part of your policy
2. Build weeding into the year's work calendar
3. Shelf read area to be weeded – remove misshelves
4. Generate circulation stats and sort to weeding criteria
5. Gather your supplies – stats, sticky notes, pens, etc
6. Review the whole section for MUSTIE items
7. Inventory and pull books on weeding list
8. Check items on list and make note of next steps
9. Repair, replace, or discard
10. Set up displays

WHEN TO WEED

- Build weeding into the year's work calendar
- Use a spreadsheet or word document to track what has been weeded and when
- Weed children's materials AFTER summer reading
- No circling item when on display and it still didn't go out – weed it
- Ongoing – see a MUSTIE item – Weed it
 - Know who decides if it should be replaced with the same or similar item
 - How is that tracked/communicated for future purchase



WHEN TO WEED

- Month 1** Overview
- Month 2** CREW Manual
- Month 3** Adult Non Fiction 000, 100, 200
- Month 4** Adult Non Fiction 300, 400
- Month 5** Adult Non Fiction 500, 600
- Month 6** Adult Non Fiction 700, 800
- Month 7** Adult Non Fiction 900, biography, reference
- Month 8** Fiction A-M
- Month 9** Fiction N-Z
- Month 10** Children's: Picture Books
- Month 11** Genre Fiction and graphic novels
- Month 12** E-books and non print

	A	B	C	D
28				
29	EASY READERS	DATE OF LAST WEED:		
30	Board Books			
31	Picture Foreign Language			
32	Book Kits with CD			
33				
34	HOLIDAY	DATE OF LAST WEED:		
35	Valentine's Day			
36	St. Patrick's Day			
37	Easter			
38	Halloween			
39	Thanksgiving			
40	Christmas			
41	Chanunkah			
42	Kwanzaa			
43				
44	PICTURE BOOKS (condition, 2 yrs)	DATE OF LAST WEED:		
45	a-b			
46	c-d			
47	e-f			
48	g-h			
49	i-j			
50	k-l			
51	m-n			
52	o-p			
53	q-r			
54	s-t			
55	w-x			
56	y-z			
57	Picture Book Series Bin: Disney, Disney Princess, Thomas, Barbie, Nickelodeon, Etc.			





WEEDING RESPONSIBILITY

- Consider who gets to make the final call on weeding decisions.
- The library board should be educated in what weeding is and why it is done.
- All frontline staff should know how to respond to weeding questions or concerns from the public.



DON'T ...

Becky Hall



- ✓ Make your weeded books a problem for someone else
- ✓ Pile them somewhere in the library for someone to trip over
- ✓ Keep hundreds in the attic or basement just in case someone objects
- ✓ Bring hundreds to the landfill

DO ...

- ✓ Sit down with staff and trustees and explain the process
- ✓ Save samples of the most blatant examples of materials that should not be in the collection
- ✓ Make weeding an ongoing process
- ✓ Check city or county policies on items paid for with tax dollars



LEARN MORE & RESOURCES CITED

- **CREW Manual** [Microsoft Word - Crew Manual with 2012 Addendum.doc \(texas.gov\)](#)
- [Selection, Weeding, & Reconsideration Policy Toolkit](#) from American Library Association
- [North Dakota State Library](#) – sample weeding spreadsheet, webinars, and weeding resources
- [“Weeding Without Worry”](#) American Libraries, May 2016
- [“The Art of Weeding”](#) Library Journal, June 2015
- [“Little House, Big Problem: What To Do with “Classic” Books That Are Also Racist”](#) School Library Journal, May 2020
- **Additional Training Videos**
 - [Weeding 101](#) (North Dakota State Library, 2017) – 5 minutes
 - [Weeding Basics](#) (State Library of Iowa, 2023) - 60 minutes
 - [Weeding Youth Collections](#) (State Library of Iowa, 2023) - 60 minutes
 - [Data-Driven Weeding](#) (State Library of Iowa, 2023) - 90 minutes

