

A. Principles of Material Selection

1. The Library collection is designed to serve the whole community. The Library is responsible for providing materials to residents and taxpayers of all ages, backgrounds, and opinions. The Library's role is to provide materials which will allow individuals to freely access information.
2. The Library collection, taken as a whole, will be a diverse source of information, representing as many viewpoints as possible. The Library, as a tax-supported institution, neither encourages nor discourages any particular viewpoint.
3. The Library recognizes that many library items are controversial and that any given item may offend a patron. Selections are not made on the basis of any anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the work in building balanced collections and serving the interests or needs of the library users.
4. Only parents and legal guardians have the right and responsibility to guide and direct the reading, listening, and viewing choices of their own minor children. The Library does not stand in the place of parents (in loco parentis).
5. The Library acquires materials representing various points of view. Some of the materials may be offensive to individuals or groups for reasons such as, but not limited to, individual perceptions of social, economic, and political ideas, profanity, religious viewpoints, the background of the author, or the kind of information provided. Works normally are not excluded because of language or explicit text or illustrations if they meet the selection criteria stated in the Library's Collection Development Policy.
6. The choice of library materials by users is an individual matter. While individuals may reject materials for themselves, they cannot exercise censorship or restrict access to lawful materials for others. The Library does not remove materials because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
7. The Marion County Public Library does not keep, acquire, or purchase material that violates Florida Statute 847.001(10) definition of "obscene".

In support of these principles, the Library offers a collection of materials that is diverse, inclusive, and is considered constitutionally protected. If a court having jurisdiction over Marion County Public Library System decides that any material in the collection is not constitutionally protected, such material will be removed.

B. Selection Criteria

In general, the Library's policy is to purchase materials which satisfy the clientele of the Library; however, it is recognized that library resources are not unlimited. Selection of materials must be consistent with budget allocations. Resource sharing with other libraries and electronic and other methods of information access are valid and necessary ways of meeting library user needs but should not be used as a substitute for quality, system-wide collection development.

Factors considered when adding specific material to the Library collection include:

1. Quality of writing, design, illustrations, or production
2. Clear and age-appropriate presentation and readability for the intended use
3. Suitability of format or physical form for library use
4. Current collection composition and importance of subject matter to the collection
5. Observed or anticipated community interest
6. Contemporary or historical significance in general or to the local community
7. Authoritativeness
8. Accuracy of information
9. Comprehensiveness of treatment
10. Appearance of title in authoritative bibliographies or indexes
11. Author's reputation, qualifications, and significance as a writer, composer, illustrator, etc.
12. Reputation and standing of publisher/producer
13. Value of resource in relation to its cost
14. Space required relative to the value the item contributes to the collection
15. Scarcity of material on the subject
16. Representation of important movements, subjects, genres, or trends of local, regional, or national significance
17. Availability of material elsewhere in the area

Additional criteria are considered when selecting materials available in electronic formats.

1. Ease of use of the product
2. Accessibility to multiple users
3. Access to needed equipment
4. Enhancement of the print equivalent (if any) in terms of speed, flexibility, or general utility
5. Continued access to retrospective information when necessary or desirable
6. Reduction of space requirements over print products
7. Reduction in number of copies of a print source when purchased for multiple locations
8. Technical support

An item need not meet all of the criteria to be selected.

C. Gifts and Donations

The Marion County Public Library System welcomes monetary donations for the purchase of library materials as well as donations of books and other materials by individuals or organizations. Donated items are subject to the same selection criteria as applied to materials which are purchased. Donated items not added to the collection will be disposed of according to established guidelines.

D. Selection Responsibility

Authority and responsibility for the selection of library materials rest with the Library Director who operates within the framework of approved policies. Selection duties may be delegated to qualified staff members who, because of their education, training, or experience, have the knowledge to select items.

The selection of items for inclusion in the Library collection is an informed and interpretive process of discernment involving:

1. General knowledge of the subject and its important literature
2. Familiarity with the materials in the collection
3. Familiarity with the needs and anticipated, expressed or observed desires of the community
4. Critical examination of current production of materials in the subject or genre
5. Published and authoritative reviews
6. Pertinent bibliographical publications
7. Publishers' advertisements or announcements
8. Awareness of current trends in thought and culture

The Library encourages members of the public to suggest titles and subjects for purchase consideration. Suggested titles and subjects must meet collection objectives and selection criteria to be added to the collection. Titles not purchased may be obtained through resource sharing with other libraries, electronic retrieval, or other means.

E. Collecting Levels / Guidelines

In selecting materials for the public library collection, the existence of a variety of types of works and the need to satisfy readers of differing tastes, interests, purposes, and reading abilities are recognized.

Although the Library supports the formal educational pursuits of members of the community, it does not function as a substitute for public or private college or school libraries. The Library does not normally choose textbooks or college and post-graduate level materials that are highly specialized.

Library materials for all ages, in a variety of formats, are selected in these areas:

1. **Fiction**– The Library recognizes the importance of fiction in providing insight into the human situation, in contributing to education and entertainment, and in affecting individual attitudes. The Library's collections include representative fiction of the past and present. Many genres are represented including, but not limited to, contemporary, historical, and regional fiction; mystery and suspense; horror; science fiction; fantasy; humor; romance; westerns; adventure stories; and short stories.

Heavy emphasis is placed on providing works that are widely advertised or in continuing demand because of their timeliness, their conversion to film, their appearance on television or because of the popularity of the author's other works. Classics of literature, popular best sellers, and works of note by first-time authors are also included.

2. **Biography** –Special attention is given to biographies or autobiographies about well-known people from all walks of life, from the earliest times to the present and local people, and the pioneers of this geographic area.

Materials, in a variety of formats, are provided for the general, non-specialist library user in the following Dewey areas:

1. **000 Generalities** – Includes bibliographies, library science materials for professional development, encyclopedias, unexplained phenomena, and practical and theoretical computer science materials.
2. **100 Philosophy** – Includes metaphysics; paranormal phenomena; psychology; ethics; logic; ancient, medieval, oriental, and modern western philosophy.
3. **200 Religion** – Includes sacred books and historical, evaluative, and inspirational materials related to them, as well as works addressing the concept of God; good and evil; immortality and evolution; biblical studies; and Christian theology, history, and doctrine. Materials are also provided about atheism, agnosticism, humanism, and other ethical and religious material outside the traditional religious mainstream.
4. **300 Social Sciences** – Includes statistics, political science, economics, public administration, social issues, education, commerce, and customs, etc. Popular and standard reference materials are purchased on the subject of law. Special emphasis is placed on fairytales and folklore for children.
5. **400 Language** – Includes general works on language and linguistics in English and other languages. Dictionaries in the major modern world languages are purchased along with introductory grammar and usage manuals.
6. **500 Pure Sciences** – Includes mathematics, astronomy, physics, chemistry, earth sciences, paleontology, life sciences, animals, and plants. Special emphasis is placed on science project materials for children.
7. **600 Applied Sciences** – Includes medical sciences, engineering, agriculture, home economics, business, chemical technology, manufacturing, and building. Materials useful to the lay person are purchased including, but not limited to, subjects such as drugs, diseases, diet, preventative medicine, sex education, gardening, automobile maintenance and repair, and building skills. Special emphasis is placed on science project

materials for children.

8. **700 The Arts** – Includes fine and decorative arts, visual arts, civic and landscape arts, architecture, sculpture, painting, graphic arts, photography, music, sports, and performing art. Sheet music is not acquired. Collections of musical scores are acquired on a limited basis.
9. **800 Literature** –Essays, poetry, drama, and selected works of criticism on these forms are included, but exhaustive literary criticism on any author is not maintained. Collections of speeches, essays, and humorous writings, anthologies of short stories, writing manuals, and plays and poems in both single-author volumes and anthologies are also added. Emphasis is given to British and American literature, but representative works of the literature of other countries is collected to a limited extent in translation. Special attention is also given to works which are the recipients of recognized awards. Material written in languages other than English are added on a limited basis. Special emphasis is placed on joke and riddle books for children.
10. **900 Geography and History** – Includes geography, travel, and history with heavy emphasis on American history. Current events are considered in determining additions in the areas of history and travel. Special emphasis is placed on United States history and geography for children.
11. **Youth Collections**
 - a. **Children’s Collection** – Materials are selected according to the general selection criteria already stated. In selecting materials for children, the Library’s objective is to expand the child’s reading ability and reading enjoyment. This is accomplished by making available a broad collection of print and non-print materials that satisfy the diverse informational, recreational, and cultural reading needs and abilities of children from infancy through the age of 13.
 - b. **Young Adult Collection** – Emphasis is on popular browsing materials, primarily paperbacks and periodicals, as well as on materials which appear on school reading lists. These materials are specially selected to meet the recreational interests of this age group. Non-fiction of special interest to young adults is added to the adult non-fiction collection.
12. **Audiovisual Collections** - Due to changing technology and the resulting shift in patron demand, collection emphasis is shifting from cassette to CD and/or DVD format. The addition of new formats will be evaluated as they emerge.
 - a. **Spoken Recordings** - The fiction area includes contemporary and classic fiction with an emphasis on contemporary works. The nonfiction collection covers a range of subject areas including best sellers, instructional, and self-improvement topics.
 - b. **Musical Recordings** - Emphasis is on classical, more well-known vocal and instrumental works from baroque to modern. The collection is not meant to be a

comprehensive collection, and is mainly expanded via donations. Additions to the collection may also include folk, jazz, reggae, new age, show tunes, world music. Music intended for the pre-school and early elementary age library user is emphasized.

- c. **Video Recordings** - Entertainment feature titles for juveniles and informational videos for juveniles and adults are added. A varied and limited selection of old classics and foreign films are also available. Film or television versions of works originating in print may also be included. Informational titles may include such popular subjects as travel, sports, exercise, science and science experiments, parenting, cooking, documentaries, arts, hobbies, and home repair.
- d. **Software** - is not acquired for circulation.

13. Special Collections

- a. **Reference** – The reference collection contains materials that cover the entire range of the Dewey Decimal Classification System providing current information on all subjects and historical information in areas where previous questions and experience indicate that it is likely to be in demand. The Reference collection also contains a collection of catalogs from Florida colleges and universities, and Florida telephone and city directories. Selection of reference materials for various library divisions and locations is coordinated so that no unnecessary duplication will occur, and so that the content of each reference resource is appropriate to the needs and educational level of its users.
- b. **Florida Collection** – The primary emphasis is on fiction and non-fiction materials of significance to the local geographic area, standard titles pertaining to the state at large, and materials by prominent or emerging Florida authors.
- c. **Genealogy** – A limited general collection of materials about the Southeastern United States is maintained. Florida census records are always acquired. Southeastern census records are acquired through gifts or as funds permit.
- d. **Vertical File** – The vertical file collection augments other library collections with pamphlets, clippings, fliers, pictures, and other materials of local interest.
- e. **Large Print** - The large print collection is primarily a duplication of titles already in the Library in standard type. Classic literature, popular and genre fiction make up the fiction collection. The majority of nonfiction books consists of biographies, travel memoirs, self-help, medical, humor, and assorted other popular works.
- f. **Paperbacks** – The paperback fiction and non-fiction browsing collection is a broad-based collection emphasizing general fiction, romance, mystery, science fiction/fantasy, westerns, and limited popular non-fiction.
- g. **Periodicals** - The collection includes popular magazines and newspapers in a broad range of subject areas including a particular focus on periodicals and newspapers of Florida and limited acquisition of noteworthy national newspapers.
- h. **Lifelong Learning** - This collection includes basic grammar, reading, writing, phonics, vocabulary, and math non-fiction materials, high interest/low

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vocabulary novels, print and non-print English as a second language materials, and easy reading materials in the areas of life skills, religion, math, science, and social studies.

14. Limited Acquisition

- a. **Municipal and County Documents** – The Marion County Public Library System does not serve as an archive for local government. Selected documents are added to the collection when appropriate as to content, scope, level, and demand.
- b. **Manuscripts and Rare Books** – No attempt will be made by the Library to purchase or collect rare books, manuscripts, or archival materials. All donations will be subject to the selection criteria and collecting guidelines sections of this policy.

F. Collection Maintenance

1. **Weeding** - The Library system withdraws materials that are no longer of value to the collection. Exceptions to the criteria listed below may be made for material of local historical significance, material with a local setting, material written by a local author, or standard titles that cannot be replaced. Withdrawn materials may be discarded, given to the Friends of the Library organizations for resale, given to an appropriate non-profit organization, or recycled. The last copy of any title is withdrawn only when it is certain that it no longer has any value to the collection.
 - a. **General Collection** - An item is considered for discard when it is:
 - i. Obsolete or outdated
 - ii. Worn beyond use
 - iii. Damaged
 - iv. No longer circulating and/or used for reference purposes
 - v. One of many copies of a formerly popular title
 - vi. Unable to be used because equipment on which the material is used is unavailable or in poor operating condition
 - b. **Serials, Periodicals, and Standing Orders** - Reasons for canceling subscriptions may be identical to those for withdrawing books. Some of the unique reasons for withdrawing these titles include:
 - i. Declining quality of the publication
 - ii. Prohibitive increases in subscription prices in proportion to use
 - iii. Lack of coverage in indexing or abstracting services
 - iv. Availability in another format, such as an electronic format
 - v. Lack of appearance in professional bibliographies, such as Katz's Magazines for Libraries
 - c. **Replacement of Library Materials** - Withdrawn materials are not automatically replaced. Replacement is considered in relation to adequate coverage in a specific subject area, availability of more current or better titles, suitability according to the selection criteria outlined in this policy and demand for the title.

- d. **Duplicate Copies** - Duplicate copies of certain titles are appropriate in cases of consistently heavy demand. Duplication should not occur to such a degree, however, that it adversely affects the breadth or scope of the library's collection.

G. Materials for People with Disabilities

In accordance with patron needs and the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Library provides materials for citizens with disabilities. Materials are judged by the same standards of content and format that apply to other materials purchased by the Library.