

**Prince William Public Libraries**  
**Library Policies**  
**Materials Selection Policy**

Approved by the Library Board of Trustees May 26, 2022

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**Materials Selection Policy**

**A. Mission Statement**

A mission of the Prince William Public Libraries (PWPL) is to acquire, organize, and provide access to information and materials to meet the educational, social, informational and recreational wants and needs of the citizens and residents of Prince William County and the City of Manassas.

**B. General Selection Policy**

Within budgetary limitations, PWPL purchases materials of current and permanent value in all subjects of interest to the community. Consideration is given to current demand as well as future community wants and needs. PWPL refers residents to other libraries when appropriate and acquires many materials for patrons from other libraries throughout the country through its Interlibrary Loan service.

PWPL supports public, private and homeschool curricula by providing broad collections to assist users with term papers, science fair projects, regularly assigned projects, and by providing classic and contemporary titles often included on reading lists.

Materials can be sequestered. Responsibility for a minor's use of library materials rests with the minor's parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

PWPL is responsible for maintaining well-balanced collections. The presence of an item in the PWPL collection does not represent an endorsement of any theory, idea, or political view contained therein.

PWPL will reconsider any material in its collection once a calendar year upon written request of a library patron in accordance with its Reconsideration Procedure.

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**C. Responsibility for Selection**

Ultimate responsibility for materials selection rests with the Library Director, who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Library Board of Trustees. The Director delegates selection responsibility to the Assistant Director for Materials Services and appropriate Materials Services staff.

**D. Criteria for Selection**

The decision to acquire a specific title is based on factors such as: quality, usefulness, demand, currency, format, and price. Usefulness – the need for each item in relation to the rest of the collection and to the various interests of the community – is the primary factor in selection. Materials suggested for purchase by PWPL patrons are given due consideration if they meet selection policy guidelines and can be purchased within budget limitations. In addition to the criteria used in selecting print materials, factors considered when evaluating non-print materials include: technical quality, durability, accessibility in the case of downloadable items, and equipment required for use.

Materials are evaluated as a whole and not on the basis of a specific chapter or passage. Due to the volume of print and non-print materials produced today, the selectors in the Materials Services Division cannot read, preview or purchase all items available. Therefore, the selection of materials is based on reviews in professional journals and sources, standard bibliographies, publisher's catalogs and knowledge of the author's expertise. Selectors also consider the reputation of the publisher or producer and the authority and significance of the author, director or composer.

The DVD collection offers titles for entertainment, instructional, educational, and informational purposes.

**E. Gifts**

Gifts are subject to the same selection policy as are purchased items.

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Supersedes 8/26/2021; 3/20/2015; 10/27/2005; 1/5/1998