

WEEDING

WHY DO IT?

- Create Space – Useful workspace is more valuable than unused books and free space will be needed for new books.
- Save Time – Patrons are pressed for time and so are you. Make finding material easier and quicker by removing the unneeded.
- Increase Appeal – People are judged by appearance and so are libraries. Make sure yours is judged positively by getting rid of the unattractive.
- Enhance Reputation – Make sure the public can count on you for reliable and up-to-date information. Get rid of the outdated.
- Monitor collection – Spot books in need of repair and identify lost or stolen books. Then make sure you repair the damaged and delete the missing from the catalog. Keep that catalog up to date; your patrons will appreciate it!
- Know Thyself – Continuous weeding will help you familiarize yourself with what you have, AND, what you don't. Fill in the holes accordingly.

Remember:

“LESS IS MORE”

Factors to Consider When Weeding:

For All Materials:

Date
Author
Publisher
Physical Condition
Additional Copies
Other books on the same subject in the collection
Expense of replacement
Shelf-time (i.e. time spent on the shelf without circulating)
Relevance of the subject to the community

For Juvenile and Young Adult Materials, also consider:

Format
Reading level
Current interest in the subject matter
Jacket art (contemporary vs. outmoded)

Retain materials of local interest, i.e. works by local authors, local history materials, works with local settings.

Have a Policy

The Board should approve a written weeding and discard policy to guide those handling this day-to-day activity. This policy can be added to the library's selection policy. The selection policy should also contain a gift policy that allows the librarian to accept, decline, or dispose of books at his/her discretion.

Samples:

WEEDING: Materials that no longer meet the stated objectives of the library (including those that have become damaged or obsolete) will be systematically withdrawn on a continual basis according to the accepted professional practices in the publication, *The CREW Method*. Disposition and replacement of library materials so weeded will be at the discretion of the library director, subject to all relevant provisions of the Charter of the Town of _____, and the statutes of the State of New York.

DONATIONS: The _____ Library is pleased to accept gifts and/or memorial gifts from patrons. Gifts are gratefully and willingly accepted as long as no restriction is placed upon their use. Acceptance of gifts (of books and other library materials) will be determined by the library manager on the basis of their suitability to the library's purposes and needs in accordance with the library's stated materials selection policy. Use or disposal of all gifts materials will be determined by the library manager. The library has the right to discard any gifts in poor physical condition. Gift values will not be appraised for income tax purposes.

STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS

1. Select the shelves to be weeded for this session.
2. Get the appropriate drawer from the shelf list catalog, or a computer printout of the section, (NCLS can supply this), a colored pencil, and a discard stamp or permanent marker.
3. Examine each item in turn, checking for physical condition, circulation dates, copyright date, and appropriateness for your collection.
4. Compare each item to the **MUSTIE** formula listed in the CREW guidelines (attached) for the subject area you are weeding.

The formula 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)
3. The third refers to the presence of various negative factors, called MUSTIE factors.

MUSTIE – factors that can mark a book for weeding:

- M** Misleading (and/or factually inaccurate)
U Ugly (worn and beyond mending or rebinding)
S Superseded (by a truly new edition or by a much better book on the subject)
T Trivial (or no discernible literary or scientific merit)
I Irrelevant to the needs and interests of your community
E Elsewhere (i.e. interlibrary loan)

Example Formula: 8/3/MUSTIE

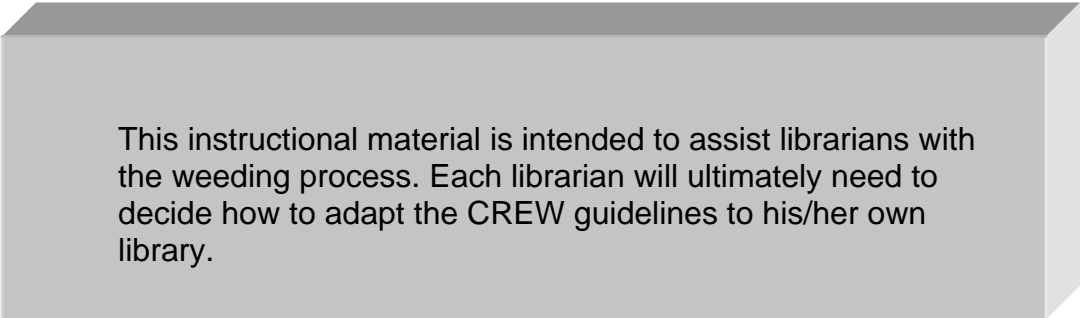
“Consider a book in this class for discard when its latest copyright is more than 8 years ago; and/or, when its last circulation use was more than 3 years ago: and/or when it possesses one or more of the MUSTIE factors.”

5. Inventory the holdings. For books that are being kept, make a check mark with a colored pencil on a consistent spot such as the verso or the upper right hand corner of the title page. Make a corresponding mark on the shelflist card or printout for that book. This lets you know the book has been inventoried. If you are using a printout, and the book is to be deleted, put a “D” across the entry. Do the same thing when books that were not on the shelf when the weeding occurred are returned. Books still unchecked on the list six months after weeding may be assumed to be lost or stolen, and should be deleted from the catalog.

7. Fill out an NCLS database up-date form (Form 62) and attach it to the shelflist cards for the books being deleted. If a shelflist card is missing, record the bibliographic information on a piece of paper and attach. Stamp each book with the discard stamp or put a slash across the library’s name with a permanent marker. Submit the up-date form and shelflist cards (or bibliographic information) to NCLS so the catalog can be updated.

8. Also submit a Form 62 for any books on your shelves that are not in the NCLS database (the online catalog). If you do not have shelflist cards to attach, you can submit an Additions form instead.

9. Box up discards immediately so they do not get accidentally re-shelved!



This instructional material is intended to assist librarians with the weeding process. Each librarian will ultimately need to decide how to adapt the CREW guidelines to his/her own library.

Adapted from: The CREW Method: Expanded Guidelines for Collection Evaluation and Weeding. Belinda Boon, Texas State Library, 1995

This document last revised:
3/06/03
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CREW Guidelines by Dewey Class for MUSTIE

- 004(Computers)** 3/X/MUSTIE
Works on computers and software are seldom useful after three years, but may be kept longer if there is strong community demand.
- 010 (Bibliography)** 10/X/MUSTIE
Discard after ten years for the date of copyright.
- 020(Library & Information Science)** 10/3/MUSTIE
Discard all that do not conform to current, acceptable practice
- 030(General Encyclopedias)** 5/X/MUSTIE
Stagger replacements sets over a seven-year period (e.g., replace Britannica in year one, World Book in year three, Americana in year five, then a new Britannica in year seven); one new encyclopedia set at least every five years. Older sets may be sold or circulated, but withdraw circulating sets after no more than eight years.
- other 000's** 5/X/MUSTIE
Except trivia which may be kept indefinitely or until no longer considered useful or interesting.
- 133 (Paranormal Phenomena)** 15/3/MUSTIE
Should be kept until worn, although it will be necessary to replace lost titles every so often since this category includes the popular topics of fortune telling, dream interpretation, and astrology.
- 150 (Psychology)** 10/3/MUSTIE
Try to keep abreast of new and popular topics, especially the 158's (self-help). Replace works on clinical, comparative, and developmental psychology with five to eight years.
- 160,170 (Logic)(Ethics)** 10/3/MUSTIE
Value determined mainly by use. Replace worn classics with attractive trade paperback editions.
- 200 (Religion)** 10/3/MUSTIE or 5/3/MUSTIE
Use 10/3/MUSTIE except for areas of rapid change, which are 5/3/MUSTIE. (This area is difficult to weed because (a) the items are often donated and librarians fear criticism, and (b) religious works SEEM like they should be treated exceptionally, but they should not be.) Try to have something up-to-date on each religion represented by a church, synagogue, or other assembly in the

community or region, as well as something on the well-known modern sects such as Hare Krishna. Include timely and comprehensive information on the six major international religions: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Taoism.

300 (Social Sciences)

See that controversial issues are represented from all viewpoints and that information is current, accurate, and fair.

310 (General Statistics)

2/X/MUSTIE

Almanacs are seldom of much use after two years; add one, discard one every year, to keep only last three years in the collection. If possible, keep one copy in reference and one in the circulating collection for any year. Otherwise, copies from past years may be transferred from reference to circulating when superseded by new editions.

320 (Political Science)

5/3/MUSTIE

Use 5/3/MUSTIE for topical books; historical materials are judged more on the basis of use, and you can go by: 10/3/MUSTIE

330 (Economics)

5/3/MUSTIE

Update items available in revised editions. Be aware of radical changes in statutes, regulations, or general climates for a particular type of investment. Well-known authors with no newer books available and items intended as histories of a particular era may be retained if MUSTIE factors are acceptable.

340 (Law)

10/X/MUSTIE

Replace when more current data becomes available. Never keep superseded editions, even on heavily used topics like divorce or child support.

350 (Public Administration)

10/X/MUSTIE

Keep up-to-date; replace when state and federal administrations change or constitutional reforms occur.

360 (Social Services)

5/X/MUSTIE

Discard career materials after five years; older reference copies may be circulated. Pay close attention to revisions in standard test books (GED, ACT, etc.). Some may be retained for 10 years or longer if certain sections have not changed.

370 (Education)

10/3MUSTIE

Keep historical materials only if used. Discard all outdated theories; check with a teacher or principal if in doubt.

390 (Customs, Etiquette, Folklore)

Folklore, Customs 10/3/MUSTIE
Keep standard work; weed according to use
Etiquette 5/3/MUSTIE
Keep only basic, up-to-date titles

400 (Language)

10/3/MUSTIE
Discard old-fashioned and unsightly textbooks and outdated school grammars. Need only stock dictionaries for major foreign languages (e.g., French, Spanish, Italian, German), and any other languages being studied or spoken in the community. Dictionaries: 5/3/MUSTIE

500 (Natural Sciences)

5/3/MUSTIE
Carefully evaluate anything over five years old, except botany and natural history. Replace worn classics or significant historical works with new editions. Pay particular attention to the physics, environmental issues, and astronomy sections. Keep basic works of significant historical or literary value, such as Charles Darwin's classic Origin of Species, or Michael Faraday's Chemical History of a Candle. Replace worn copies with new editions.

510 (Mathematics)

10/3/MUSTIE
Replace older materials on algebra, geometry, trigonometry, and calculus with revised editions. Discard most titles covering slide rules and the "new math" of the 1960s.

550 (Earth Sciences)

X/3/MUSTIE
Geology books on specific regions, especially local, should be kept indefinitely, or until superseded by newer editions. All general materials should be replaced when new developments occur in the field (e.g., theories about continental drift and plate tectonics have been revised in recent years). Field guides for amateur fossil, gem, and rock hunters can be kept for up to 20 years if physical condition allows, unless the area described has changed dramatically through man-made developments and/or natural events.

570 (Life Sciences)

10/3/MUSTIE

580 (Botanical Sciences)

10/3/MUSTIE

600 (Technology, Applied Sciences)

5/3/MUSTIE

610 (Medicine)

5/3/MUSTIE
(For Anatomy and Physiology, which change very little, use X/3/MUSTIE.) Keep only the current year plus one previous year (one reference, one circulating) of PDR and other prescription and over-the-counter drug directories, replacing when new editions become available. For materials on fast changing fields of research such as AIDs, genetic, cancer, and infertility use: 2/X/MUSTIE.

630 (Agriculture)

5/3/MUSTIE

Keep up-to-date; be sure to collect information on the newest techniques and hybrids if you serve farmers or ranchers. Keep the Yearbook of Agriculture for the last ten years; earlier if in demand, but be wary of those with outdated and potentially harmful ideas, such as pest control using DDT.

635 (Horticulture)

10/3/MUSTIE

General gardening books may be useful for up to 20 years, so circulation is the main weeding criteria. Books about propagation of specific flowers or plants are considered outdated after 10 years. For materials that discuss the use of pesticides and chemicals use: 5/3/ MUSTIE

640 (Home Economics)

5/3/MUSTIE

Be strict with old sewing and grooming materials in which styles change rapidly. Keep cookbooks unless little used; replace worn popular titles.

649 (Child Rearing)

5/3/MUSTIE

Keep abreast of changing trends and new theories; replace worn standards like Dr. Spock's Baby & Child Care with newer editions.

670 (Manufacturing)

10/3/MUSTIE

Keep books on old clocks, guns, and toys since these items are often collected. Also keep works on tools, farm implements, etc. that are still used in your community.

Other 600's (Also Business)

5/3/MUSTIE

Technology is making such rapid advances that any materials over five years old are to be viewed with suspicion; especially those dealing with drugs, space technology, sex education, radio, television, medicine, and office skills. (Check to see if resources contain any information of historical value). One major exception: repair manuals for older cars and appliances should be kept as long as such items are generally kept in your community; replace when they become filthy or worn from use.

745 (Decorative Arts)

X/3/MUSTIE

Retain basic technique books if well illustrated; replace worn and dated materials. Keep all materials on the history of interior design that are in acceptable condition. Discard general home decorating ideas after 10 years unless the decorating style becomes established as a distinct aspect of American interior design (e.g., "South-western," or "high-tech"). Keep stamp and coin catalogues up-to-date. Historical treatments of ancient, foreign, and commemorative coins may be kept indefinitely, unless the focus is market valuation, then keep no more than five years.

770 (Photography)

5/3/MUSTIE

Check closely for outdated techniques, and especially outdated equipment' if in doubt, check local photography club or buffs.

790 (Recreation)

10/3/MUSTIE

Discard and replace as rules and interests change.

other 700's

X/X/MUSTIE

Keep all basic materials, especially histories of art and music. Replace with new editions when they become worn and unattractive.

800 (Literature)

X/X/MUSTIE

Keep basic materials, especially criticism of classic writers. Discard any works of minor writers no longer read in the local schools, unless there is an established demand among the non-student population. Make a point of keeping files of assignments or reading lists from local schools, and check any discards against these lists. Asking local teachers to act as subject specialists when weeding this area is an excellent way to improve interaction within the community.

910 (Geography and Travel)

5/3/MUSTIE

For guidebooks (such as the Fodor series) and for descriptive or scientific geography. Some may wish to stagger orders so that no guide is more than two years old. Use 10/3/MUSTIE for personal narratives of travel, unless of high literary or historical value.

other 900's

15/3/MUSTIE

Main factors: demand, accuracy of facts, and fairness of interpretation. Consider discarding personal narratives and war memoirs of World War II, the Korean Conflict, and Indochina War, in favor of broader histories of these conflicts, unless the author is a local person, or the book is cited in a bibliography as having an outstanding style or insight. Discard dated viewpoints (e.g., the McCarthy Era "World Communist Conspiracy" theory of modern history). Retain some older Revolutionary War materials if local schools assign annual reports on the subject (e.g., many schools participate in the annual DAR writing contest).

B or 92 (Biography)

X/3/MUSTIE

Unless the person treated is of permanent interest or importance, such as a U.S. President, discard a biography as soon as demand lessens. This rule especially applies to ghost written biographies of faddish celebrities. Poor quality biographies of major figures should be replaced with better ones, if funds permit. Biographies of outstanding literary value, such as Boswell's Life of Johnson are to be kept until worn.

F (Fiction)

X/2/MUSTIE

Discard works no longer in demand, especially second and third copies of past bestsellers. Retain works of durable demand and/or high literary merit, but

replace worn copies with new editions; a nontopical, well-written novel appealing to universal concerns will continue to circulate at a moderate rate for many years.

E Fiction (Picture Books) X/3/MUSTIE

Evaluate all materials carefully using MUSTIE as a guide. Discard any not suitable for library use, including those with inferior bindings or any trite commercial publications that feature popular characters created merely to sell a product. Children’s literature is a large part of the publishing industry; with the wealth of quality titles available, there is no excuse for keeping books with inferior stories or artwork in this section.

JF (Juvenile Fiction) X/2/MUSTIE

Except award books and those on school reading lists (e.g., John Newberry Award, Coretta Scott King Award, Bluebonnet lists). Older, worn editions should be replaced when possible with newer hardcover or paperback editions with contemporary cover art. Evaluate closely for outdated styles, artwork, and mores, or prejudiced viewpoints. Discard if format and reading level are not appropriate to the current interest level of the book. Discard topical fiction on dated subjects and abridged or simplified classics in favor of the original, unless needed for slow or reluctant readers.

YA (Young Adult) Fiction 3/2/MUSTIE

Very popular titles can be kept longer. Keep current; any item that has not circulated within two years may be considered “dead” and removed. Discard YA fiction with outdated illustrations, story lines, or subjects. Replace older classics (e.g., The Pigman by Zindel; The Chocolate War by Cormier) with newer hardback or paperback editions.

J and YA Nonfiction

Use adult criteria for each Dewey category, but look especially for inaccuracy and triviality, which are common faults of over-simplified children’s nonfiction.

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This document last revised:

3/06/03

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