



## Weeding School Library Collections Frequently Asked Questions

**Q** What is weeding?

**A** Weeding is the process of re-evaluating resources in the library collection and removing items that are worn out, have outdated or inaccurate information, or no longer serve the learning needs and reading interests of students at the school. The weeding process is a planned, systematic, and thoughtful activity, and a critical part of collection development. The WRDSB's *Selection of Educational Resources* guideline (2021) sets out expectations for weeding, so that library collections remain current, equitable, relevant, and appealing.

**Q** What are the benefits of weeding?

**A** Weeding ensures that:

- The collection adheres to criteria in the WRDSB guideline document *Selection of Educational Resources*
- The collection is current, relevant, and appealing
- All areas of the collection have been evaluated for equity issues, bias, and stereotyping
- The collection appears refreshed, making it more appealing to developing readers and researchers, increasing circulation
- Current and reliable resources are easier to locate
- Strengths and weaknesses of the collection and areas of need can be assessed through a subsequent professional gap analysis

**Q** How do you decide what should be weeded?

**A** Library professionals frequently use the CREW (Continuous Review, Evaluation and Weeding) Method as a framework for weeding. The model provides specific criteria for weeding, captured in the acronym MUSTIE. Resources should be weeded if they are:

<b>M</b>	<b>Misleading:</b> Factually inaccurate; obsolete information; contain racial, cultural, or sexual stereotyping.
<b>U</b>	<b>Ugly:</b> Refers to the physical condition of the book, including outdated appearance, wear and tear, dirty or moldy, and beyond repair or not worth repairing.
<b>S</b>	<b>Superseded:</b> The resource has been superseded by a newer edition or a more current resource or information format.
<b>T</b>	<b>Trivial:</b> No discernable literary, scientific or educational merit. Does not engage today's readers. Poorly written or presented.
<b>I</b>	<b>Irrelevant:</b> No longer serves the needs or interests of the school community.
<b>E</b>	<b>Elsewhere:</b> Difficult to maintain a useful collection on the topic. More comprehensive collections are available from other sources.

**Q** What happens to weeded materials?

**A** When an item is weeded because:

- a newer edition is available
- its content no longer supports the curriculum
- it has not been in demand and has not circulated or been used for a significant period of time
- the targeted audience of the resource is no longer part of the school (ie, French immersion)

The resource may be offered to another area in the school or another site within the board, if other current selection criteria are met.

When an item is weeded because:

- its content is outdated, inaccurate or irrelevant
- its content can no longer be supported by current selection criteria
- it is worn or damaged beyond repair

The resource may *NOT* be offered to another area of the school or another site within the board. These discarded materials are recycled.

**Q** Can we donate weeded items? Surely someone could make use of them!

**A** The donation of resources weeded from the school library collection or from other areas of the school is **not recommended**.

- If information is outdated or inaccurate or the resource is in poor condition, it is not appropriate for our children, nor is it appropriate for any other children.
- Materials selected for our schools may not meet the needs of children from other cultures in terms of language or cultural appropriateness.
- Most book donation charities will not accept used or discarded books.
- Charities typically prefer new books or cash donations that can be used to select resources most appropriate for the needs of the receiving community.

**Thank you for your support in ensuring that the school library collection remains current, equitable, relevant, and appealing.**

It does not matter how many books you have, but whether they are good or not.

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