**Gloucester Lyceum & Sawyer Free Library  
 Collection Development & Deselection Policy**

**Collection Development**

The Gloucester Lyceum and Sawyer Free Library’s mission is to cultivate connections across our community, power imaginations, inspire learning and provide a free, welcoming space for all. One of our main activities in achieving that purpose is to develop a collection of material that is relevant and useful.

Goals of Material Selection

* To maintain a well-balanced and broad collection of materials for information, reference and research.
* To support the democratic process by providing materials for the education and enlightenment of the community.
* To provide recreational resources.

Responsibility for Collection Development and Deselection

Final authority for the determination of the policies in this document are vested in the Corporation.  They have delegated the responsibility of implementing this policy to the Library Director. Collection development and deselection decisions are the responsibility of the Library Director. The Library Director shall delegate on-going tasks of collection development and deselection to Sawyer Free Library staff as appropriate. The Library Director has the final authority regarding the contents of the collection.

Collection Development Process

Librarians use a variety of tools to aid in awareness and selection of materials, including such sources as professional review journals, popular print and broadcast media, bookstores, electronic interest groups, publishers’ catalogs, purchase alerts, and patron and staff recommendations. In addition to professional review journals and other sources cited, the children and teen department staff refer to educational standards such as the [Curriculum Frameworks for the Massachusetts Department of Education](http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/)**,** as well as the [Common Core State Standards](http://www.corestandards.org/)in selecting materials. Award-winning materials are also given high consideration.

Librarians exercise judgment, experience, and expertise in the application of the following Criteria for Materials Selection, making acquisition decisions as objectively as possible. Evaluation of a work includes the entire work, not just individual parts of the work. A work’s overall contribution to the collection is a critical determinant for acceptance or rejection. No single criterion can be applied to all materials, and various criteria carry different weights in different circumstances. Contextual considerations – budget and space availability, interlibrary loan availability – also shape the selection process.

Criteria for Materials Selection

The library considers all acquisitions, whether purchased or donated, in terms of one or more of the following:

* Level of funding for materials
* Informational and recreational needs of users
* Appropriateness for specific audience
* Local demand
* Current usefulness or interest
* Authority and accuracy
* Importance as a record of the times
* Relevance to the existing collection’s strengths and weaknesses
* Availability of material through other sources including network transfers, interlibrary loan, and digital resources
* High standards of quality in content and format
* Recognition by literary awards
* Price and availability
* Format, durability, and ease of use
* Suitability of format for subject and user’s needs
* Relevance to the history and specific interests of Cape Ann

Scope of the Collection

The library provides materials and services that reflect the diverse educational, literacy, informational, recreational, and physical ability needs of its users. While trying to serve the academic needs of students in the community, the main focus of the collection is general readership.

The library provides access to content through print, multimedia and technology. The library recognizes that content and medium should be suitably matched, and that library patrons have different learning styles and preferences for how they receive information. Therefore, the library provides materials in a variety of formats, including, when appropriate:

\* Print – such as hardcovers, paperbacks, magazines, and newspapers  
\* Non-print – such as audio and video formats, and microforms  
\* Digital resources – such as on-line databases; digital books, recordings, and images; digital historical archives; and the Internet.

Because the library functions in a rapidly changing society, it is flexible about changes in communicative material, both in form and style of expression. Materials in alternative formats are judged in terms of the Criteria for Materials Selection.

Self-published material:

Every attempt is made to acquire titles by Cape Ann authors that are published by mainstream publishers and fit the Material Selection Criteria. Titles by local writers that are self-published are generally not added to the collection unless there is a compelling reason to do so (valuable local content, high local interest). Preference will be given if the work, or other works by the author, have been professionally reviewed. Local authors often donate their self-published books to the library. If the donated book does not otherwise meet the Material Selection Criteria, we will add the donated title to a book sale.

Children and Teens

The children’s collection focuses on highly recommended books and materials for children from infancy through elementary school as well as their caregivers and educators.While seeking to promote children’s literacy, as well as to serve the academic needs of students in the community, the main emphasis of the collection is general readership. The children’s collection centers on highly recommended picture books for preschoolers and on popular reading and the information needs of children of school age. The teen collection serves young people from seventh through twelfth grades. The Sawyer Free Library cooperates with the public school system so that their respective services may complement each other. Library staff strives to assemble materials that support the curriculum and respond to the homework needs of students through elementary, middle and high school.

The children’s collection is selected with an emphasis on books and materials that inform, encourage, challenge and inspire children in the achievement of literacy, exploration, and enjoyment of the world.

The Library maintains a collection selected for teens as a bridge to the adult collection. Selected materials address the interests and issues specific to this age group. An effort is made to provide titles that appear on school reading lists.

Gifts and Donations

The library evaluates all gift materials, including memorials and honoraria, according to the Criteria for Materials Selection. Not all donations are recommended for addition to the collection. A special bookplate with an appropriate inscription may designate accepted material. If a donation is integrated into the collection, the library reserves the right to decide the conditions of display, housing, access, and withdrawal of the material. See the Material Donation policy for more detail.

Controversial Materials: Intellectual Freedom

The Gloucester Lyceum and Sawyer Free Library does not promote particular beliefs or views. Rather, it provides a resource for the various opinions which apply to important, complex, and controversial questions, including unpopular and unorthodox positions. Language, situations, or subjects that may be offensive to some community members does not necessarily disqualify material for inclusion in the library collection. See the [Reconsideration of Material Policy](https://www.sawyerfreelibrary.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Reconsideration-of-Library-Materials-Policy-Amended-December-2022.docx) for more detail.

**Deselection**

In order to maintain a collection that is current, reliable, in good condition, well used, and which relates to the needs and interests of the residents of Gloucester, materials are withdrawn on a systematic and continuing basis. Materials are withdrawn when they are judged to be dated, inaccurate, seldom used, in poor condition, or otherwise not in compliance with the Criteria for Materials Selection.

Need for Deselection

The addition of titles necessary to maintain a healthy, viable collection necessitates the withdrawal of others. It is a disservice to users to keep items that contain inaccurate or dated information or are in bad condition. Each item, through its quality, reliability, current usefulness and appearance, must earn its place on the shelf and contribute to the reliability, accessibility and attractiveness of the library. To keep the collection current, materials must be reevaluated on an on-going basis, at which time decisions will be made using the latest edition of The CREW METHOD: Expanded Guidelines for Collection Evaluation and Weeding for Small and Medium-Sized Public Libraries as a guide.

Criteria for Deselection

Librarians exercise judgment, experience, and expertise in the application of the following Criteria for Deselection, making withdrawal decisions as objectively as possible. Evaluation of a work includes the entire work, not just individual parts of the work. A work’s overall contribution to the collection is a critical determinant for retention or withdrawal. No single criterion can be applied to all materials, and various criteria carry different weights in different circumstances. Contextual considerations – budget and space availability, interlibrary loan availability – also shape the deselection process.

Deselection criteria include:

* Dated, superseded, obsolete or stereotypical information
* Frequency of circulation
* Physical condition of material
* Number of copies
* Physical capacities of the library
* Subject strengths and collection needs
* Availability of current published material on a subject
* Changes in media formats
* Availability through inter-library loan or through digital format

Items in a series may not of necessity be kept as a complete set.

When in question, materials may be checked against standard bibliographic sources such as *Fiction Catalog, Public Library Catalog, High School Catalog, Children's Catalog, American Library Association Guide to Reference Books,* and other guides viewed by the general library profession as authoritative and appropriate for a public library collection.

Materials that have special consideration for retention:

1. Local history, art, and genealogy
2. Writings by Cape Ann authors
3. Items related to local topics, for example fisheries or quarrying
4. Items related to art instruction and artists
5. Items that have been recognized by literary awards
6. Items for which there is a user request for retention

Disposal of Deselected Materials

Items in fair condition may be placed in a book sale. Efforts will be made to recycle books when appropriate, but items will be disposed of at the discretion of the Library Director.

Approved by the Library Board November 28, 2023