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# Weeding with the CREW Method

Originally developed by  
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Texas State Library and Archives  
Commission

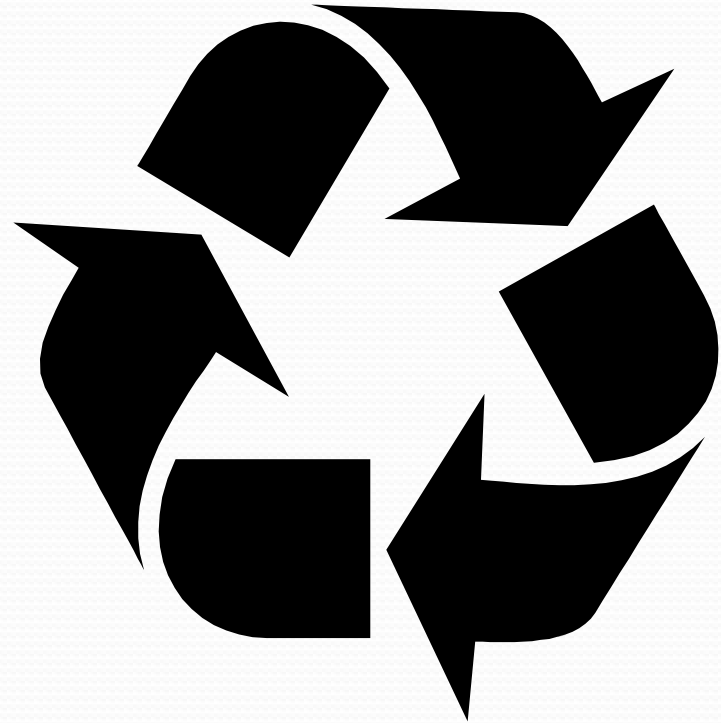
# The CREW Method

Continuous

Review

Evaluation

Weeding



# Six benefits of weeding:

- Saves space.
- Saves time.
- Makes the collection more appealing.

- Enhances the library's reputation.
- Provides a continuous check of the collection's condition.
- Provides constant feedback on the collection's strengths and weaknesses.

# Before you weed:

- Consider your library's materials selection policy and goals for the collection.
- Evaluate your collection.
- Consider available funds.

# What to weed?

- Materials of poor content.
- Materials of poor appearance.
- Unused materials.
- Topics no longer within your library's goals.

# The MUSTIE Guidelines

M = Misleading

U = Ugly

S = Superseded

T = Trivial

I = Irrelevant

E = Obtained Elsewhere

# The WORST Guidelines

W = Worn out

O = Out of date

R = Rarely used

S = System headquarters can supply (or you can easily get it elsewhere)

T = Trivial

# Checklist of weeding factors

For all materials, consider:

- Date
- Author
- Publisher
- Physical condition

# For all materials, consider:

- Additional copies
- Other books on the same subject
- Expense of replacement
- Shelf-time (without circulating)
- Relevance to your collection goals

For juvenile and young adult materials, also consider:

- Format
- Reading level
- Current interest on the subject
- Jacket art
- Standards for NM School Libraries

## For periodicals, consider:

- Current use
- Indexing available (such as *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature* or your online periodical database)
- Space available
- Microforms available

# Do not weed:

- Local history
- Works by local authors
- Works with local settings
- Works that support your school's curriculum

# Do not weed:

- Volumes of sets and series with special merit
- Award-winning books: Caldecott, Newbery, Land of Enchantment Book Award
- Older reference works augmented by (not superseded by) later editions

# Encouraging hesitant weeders: Why we resist weeding.

- I don't want to have empty-looking shelves. I feel irresponsible throwing out *perfectly fine* books.
- I'm too busy with more critical library tasks.

- If I weed this book, someone will ask me for it tomorrow.
- This book may be rare and valuable.

- If I weed a book that hasn't been used, isn't that admitting I made a mistake in selecting it?
- Isn't weeding an irresponsible destruction of public property?

# Overcoming resistance to weeding:

Is the item “earning” its rent on my shelves?

If I lost this item in a fire or flood, would I replace it?

Weeding is a responsible thing to do since children need reliable, accurate, and relevant information.

It's better to lack books than to have bad information.

It's okay to have a weeding buddy to help give me perspective on my collection.

“Libraries exist to make information available, not to warehouse unused books.” --Jeanette Larson

Remember “KISS”

Keep It Simple, Sweetheart!

Don't spend too much time  
or energy deciding whether  
or not to keep something.

# The CREW Method in Ten Steps

1

2

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*Step One:*

**Make weeding a part of your  
selection policy.**

## 3.15 SELECTION AND EVALUATION OF MATERIALS FOR LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER

3.15.1 Materials are selected and deselected by qualified representative personnel, consisting of librarians, teachers, coordinators and administrators.

3.15.2 Materials are selected and deselected by actual examination of the material from reviews or from recommended bibliographies or lists of materials.

*Step Two:*

**Gather usage statistics of  
your library's collection.**

*Step Three:*

**Include weeding into the  
year's work calendar.**

<i>Collection Type</i>	<i>% of Collection</i>	<i>Weeding Time Estimate</i>	<i>Weeding Pattern</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>Month to weed</i>
Non-print: Music, DVD, CD-ROM, etc.	1		Annual	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Easy Books, First third	25		Annual	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Easy Books, Second third	*		Annual	x	x	x	x	x	x	
EasyBooks, Final third	*		Annual	x	x	x	x	x	x	
J Fiction, First third	*		Annual	x	x	x	x	x	x	
J Fiction, Second third	*		Annual	x	x	x	x	x	x	
J Fiction, Final third	*		Annual	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Juvenile Non-Fiction 000s	5		2 year odd		x		x		x	
Juvenile Non-Fiction 100s	2		2 year odd		x		x		x	
Juvenile Non-Fiction 200s	2		2 year odd		x		x		x	
Juvenile Non-Fiction 300s	10		2 year even	x		x		x		
Juvenile Non-Fiction 400s	6		2 year odd		x		x		x	
Juvenile Non-Fiction 500s	10		2 year odd		x		x		x	
Juvenile Non-Fiction 600s	10		2 year even	x		x		x		
Juvenile Non-Fiction 700s	5		2 year odd		x		x		x	
Juvenile Non-Fiction 800s	5		2 year odd		x		x		x	
Juvenile Non-Fiction 900s	20		2 year even	x		x		x		
Professional collection			Annual	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Juvenile Reference			Annual	x	x	x	x	x	x	

\*Fiction and/or Easy makes up 25% of the entire collection.

## *Step Four:*

**Gather the necessary supplies.**

- Reports
- Your CREW formulas
- Post-it notes and pens
- Apron
- Cloth for dusting

## *Step Five:*

**Study the subject area in the section you are weeding as a whole, then examine each item in turn.**

The first number refers to the years since the book's latest copyright date.

X/X/MUSTIE

The second number refers to the maximum permissible time without usage.

The acronym refers to the presence of various negative factors: MUSTIE or WORST.

*Step Six:*

**Check the library's holdings.**

## *Step Seven:*

**Check the pulled books  
against standard indexes.**

- Children's Core Collection
- Middle & Junior Core Collection
- Senior High Core Collection

[www.hwwilson.com](http://www.hwwilson.com)

## *Step Eight:*

**Mend, discard, or replace with newer editions the items you have weeded.**

*Step Nine:*

**Replacement checking  
and ordering.**

## *Step Ten:*

**Display low circulating, high quality books that would benefit from better exposure.**

# Who has weeding responsibility?

- Although staff and volunteers can help with some of the steps in weeding, the library media specialist makes the final judgment on what is weeded.

# What do you do with the weeded materials?

- Sell
- Donate
- Trade
- Recycle
- Destroy

# **Weeding and Decluttering: Helpful Books and Websites**

## **Books:**

**Clutter's Last Stand: It's Time to De-Junk Your Life!** by Don Aslett

**Organizing from the Inside Out** by Julie Morgenstern

**Time Management from the Inside Out** by Julie Morgenstern

**Stop Clutter from Stealing Your Life: Discover Why You Clutter and How You Can Stop** by Mexico Mike Nelson

**Too Much Stuff: De-Cluttering Your Heart and Home** by Kathryn Porter

**Let Go of Clutter** by Harriet Schechter

**Simplify Your Life: 100 Ways to Slow Down and Enjoy the Things That Really Matter** by Elaine St. James

## Websites:

### **Standards for New Mexico School Libraries**

[http://nmla.org/docs/NM\\_Task\\_Force\\_for\\_School\\_Library\\_Standards\\_RevMar04.pdf](http://nmla.org/docs/NM_Task_Force_for_School_Library_Standards_RevMar04.pdf)

### **SUNLINK Weed of the Month Club**

[www.sunlink.ucf.edu/weed/](http://www.sunlink.ucf.edu/weed/)

### **CREW Method of Weeding Manual**

[www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/pubs/crew/](http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/pubs/crew/)

**FlyLady.net: Your personal online coach to help you gain control of your house and home** [www.flylady.net](http://www.flylady.net)

Weeding done imperfectly still  
benefits my library.

Progress, not perfection.

I can do anything for 15 minutes.

## Parting words of encouragement

“I know no rules for discarding that eliminate possibility of error. We all make mistakes, but most of these mistakes I am convinced stand on the shelves.”

Gladys Allison, the author of  
*Suggestions on Discarding*  
published in 1938.