

Approved October 2023

Materials Selection

The Mattoon Public Library collects materials for the purpose of serving the needs of the Mattoon community.

Selection of Materials:

The staff of MPL is responsible for selecting materials for inclusion into the library. Materials may include books, periodicals, newspapers, electronic resources, audio materials, and visual materials. Materials are primarily selected from reviews in professional and popular journals and magazines, publisher's catalogs, and annual lists of recommended titles. Patron requests are also given priority. Donated items may be added at library staff discretion.

Criteria for Selection:

The library staff is responsible for collection of materials for MPL, using the following guidelines.

- Usefulness to the collection.
- Quality of content, expression, illustration and format.
- Popular demand or timeliness.
- Professional reviews and bibliographies.
- Authority and competence of the author.
- Local or regional connection of author or contents.

Scope of Collection:

The Mattoon Public Library offers a diverse collection, balanced with different viewpoints, contemporary significance and permanent value with varying complexity that reflects its community. The Mattoon Library Board of Trustees adopts the American Library Association Bill of Rights and Freedom to Read.

Reconsideration of Library Materials:

The Mattoon library, its Board and its Staff is cognizant that collecting a diverse selection of materials may result in the occasional item that a patron may deem inappropriate for the collection. Requests for reconsideration may be made by registered patrons in writing to the library director. Requests still in dispute after consideration by the library director are taken to the library board at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

Weeding:

In the interest of maintaining a timely and informative collection, MPL recognizes that it is necessary to continually evaluate its collection and remove items that are no longer current or useful. Deselection of

materials (or “weeding”) removes obsolete or outdated materials and will allow for the collection of newer, more accurate items.

Items will not be removed solely due to unpopular beliefs, nor will books be removed without consulting the weeding guidelines, with the exception of an item being damaged beyond repair.

Library staff will be responsible for the deselection of materials, with consultation from the library board.

General Guidelines:

- The number of years since the item’s publication date- is it still accurate and timely?
- The number of years since the item last circulated- is it no longer meeting the needs of our public?
- Misleading and/or factually inaccurate items should be removed.
- Items that are torn, damaged, moldy, or in otherwise poor condition will be removed.
- Items that are superseded by a new edition will be removed, once the new edition is purchased.
- Items that have no discernible literary or scientific merit will be removed.
- If multiple copies of a book exist, the multiples will be removed once the popularity of the book no longer demands it.
- Works of local authors shall be retained but may be removed and put in Local History Center if the author is no longer living or writing.
- Works related to local history shall be retained.
- MPL is not currently set up to house rare and fragile materials. Some historical documents have been professionally reproduced to allow for public display.

American Library Association Freedom to Read Statement

The Mattoon Public Library subscribes to the ALA Freedom to Read Statement, which follows:

1. It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those which are unorthodox or unpopular with the majority.
2. Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation contained in the books they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what books should be published or circulated.
3. It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to determine the acceptability of a book on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.
4. There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.
5. It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept with any book the prejudgment of a label characterizing the book or the author as subversive or dangerous.
6. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people’s freedom to read, to contest encroachment upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large.

7. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmation responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a bad book is a good one, the answer to a bad idea is a good one.