



Collection Development Policy

Preston Public Library's Collection Development Policy guides the selection and continuous evaluation of the collection to reflect the Library's mission. Ultimate responsibility for the collection rests with the Library Director and the Board of Trustees.

The Library provides library materials in a variety of formats that meet one or more of the following criteria:

- are responsive to community needs and relevant to residents' lives;
- empower citizens to explore diverse opinions and conduct research on topics of interest;
- inspire people to learn, create, and discover;
- highlight the history and culture of the town of Preston;
- remain committed to serving the people within the Library's area service including people of every age, education, race, background, personal philosophy, religious belief, occupation, sexual orientation, gender identity, economic level, ethnic origin, and human condition.

I. Procedures

A. The collection contains information on a variety of subjects and views, and it is organized to provide access to patrons within the limitations of space of the collection and budget of the Library. As the library for the Town of Preston, the Preston Public Library seeks to provide current, popular, or well reviewed materials, as well as classic and enduring titles.

B. The Library has adopted the American Library Association's guidelines for public access to information:

- [Library Bill of Rights](#)
- [Freedom to Read](#)
- [Freedom to View](#)

C. The Library strives to provide materials reflecting a variety of perspectives, with emphasis on new and popular materials. Not all criteria must be met, and no one criterion will be decisive. Additional criteria may be used to select materials for specific collections. Materials purchased for the collection are not an endorsement by the Library of either the content or viewpoint presented in them.

Patron purchase requests and interlibrary loans are additional avenues of obtaining materials for patron use.

The Library's collections are intended for a broad range patron base, ranging from infants to the elderly. The collection will contain a wide variety of material formats, including, but not limited to, print, audio-visual, and electronic. The Library's collections are meant for the general reader and not the specialist or the professional. Works meant for the professional will be selected only if they are also useful to the general reader.

The Library's collections will provide a broad range of opinion on current issues. The Preston Public Library is committed to the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion. We acknowledge and embrace the strengths of our differences and respect the varied experiences and viewpoints that make up our global and local community. To ensure our collection reflects these ideals, we are flexible and conscientious in our selection and evaluation of materials. We affirm this work is a continuous process and a critical part of our overall mission.

Materials are not excluded or included in the collection based solely on subject matter or on political, religious, or ideological grounds. In building collections, staff are guided by the principle of selection, rather than censorship. Furthermore, the selection of a given item for the Library's collections should not be interpreted as an endorsement of a particular viewpoint.

In selecting materials and developing collections, staff will include materials that represent the broad range of human experience, reflecting the ethnic, religious, racial, and socio-economic diversity, not only of the region it serves, but also the larger global perspective. The over-all value of an item, rather than freedom from defects, is the chief criterion in selection. Works which present an honest picture of some problems or aspects of life are not excluded because of coarse language or frankness. Materials, which trade on a taste for sensationalism or pornography, may be added when some specific social, psychological, or literary factor justifies their purchase. Location of all materials selected for the collection is placed in three broad aged-based collections: Childrens, Young Adult, and Adult. The Technical Services Manager and the Library Director determine location of materials most closely based on publisher age recommendation as corroborated by professional reviews.

The Library provides a variety of collections developed to serve specific demographics or subject needs:

- Children's Area: The Children's Collections are intended to satisfy and stimulate the informational, recreational, and cultural needs of children through the elementary school years.
- Young Adult Area: The Young Adult Collection aims to meet the recreational reading interests of adolescents of middle and senior high school age. It is intended to provide a transition from children's to adult literature. The collection will also contain special interest topics for adolescents, including, but not limited to, sex education, drug abuse, popular culture, and mental health.

• Local History & Genealogy Collection: These collections document the history of Preston and the region, including family histories. The majority of materials in these collections do not circulate.

The following general criteria below are used to evaluate potential purchases and gift materials:

- Relevant to community needs and interests
- Favorable attention of critics, professional journals, and the public
- Reputation/qualifications of author, artist, publisher, or producer without regard to political, religious, or other affiliations
- Date of publication
- Cost
- Artistic merit, literary value, or recognized award recipient
- Local or national significance
- Permanence or timeliness
- Quality of presentation in relation to content and audience
- Suitability of physical format for library shelving and circulation, including binding, paper quality, readability of type, packaging, specialized equipment needs, and technical quality for electronic media
- Evaluation of titles in relation to current holdings, available shelf space, patron demand, and budget
- Availability of information within region or electronically
- Legal, licensing, or copyright issues
- Availability from preferred vendors, where possible
- Representation of various cultures, viewpoints, and interests

Items generally excluded from selection include:

- Textbooks and curriculum-related works unless they are considered useful to the general reader as an introduction to a subject and their presentation is superior to other sources
- Scholarly and technical materials that are carried by academic or special libraries
- Items having removable media such as memorabilia, patterns, stickers, or toys unless the book is usable without these items
- Puzzle or workbooks that encourage filling in blanks
- Materials that are publicized solely through infomercials or personal websites where authoritative and evaluative information about them is lacking

D. Preston Public Library offers an up-graded collection as well as solid reference tools that support in-depth reference service for the Town of Preston and the surrounding community. The

materials of the Library are shared throughout the LION Consortium and other libraries in the state of Connecticut.

E. The Library's Digital Branch provides eMaterials, such as eBooks, eAudios, eMagazines, and eComics. Some titles are single use and others offer simultaneous use. Selection of eMaterials is based upon the same selection criteria used for the rest of the Library's collection. Not all titles are available in all formats.

F. Special Collections, housed in the library, consist of local history and genealogy collections of interest to the general public and specialized researchers. These materials are owned by the Preston Historical Society and located in the Genealogy Research area of the Library. The Local History collection preserves and provides access to published and unpublished documentary resources (i.e., books, pamphlets, maps, photographs, family papers, business records, and audio and video recordings) important to the study of the history and cultural heritage of the town of Preston and Eastern Connecticut. The genealogy collection includes published resources valuable for the study of an individual's ancestry. This collection encompasses the continental United States from the colonial period through the early 20th century, with emphasis on Connecticut and New England. For additional information on special collections or genealogy, please consult the Library's policies on these areas. These collections are non-circulating. Materials must be used in the Genealogy Research area. Those interested in using the materials must have a valid library card or ID. Materials must be used in the Genealogy Research area.

G. The electronic resources collection consists of authoritative databases and eBooks. Databases are used by patrons and library staff to provide or supplement reference services. Many of the databases contain specialized information beyond the depth of the Library's circulating collections; others have information that is more easily accessed online than in print format. Scope, subject coverage, time span, frequency of updates, authority, and currency are considered in reviewing electronic resources.

H. The criteria for materials selection also apply in the acceptance of gifted books and other collection materials. Once a gift is accepted by the Director and the Board of Trustees, it becomes the property of the Library unconditionally. Gift magazines and subscriptions may be accepted by the Library subject to the same selection and retention policies as regular subscriptions. Gifted materials that are not added to the collection, as well as donated materials, are given to The Friends of the Preston Public Library for potential sale coordination, with fundraising to support the Library. The Library will provide the donor a letter of acknowledgment upon request; however, it is up to the donor to place a value on gifted materials or material donations.

II. Guidelines

A. The number of copies of a title that are purchased varies with the expected popularity of that title. Demand for individual titles is monitored and additional copies are purchased to meet that demand.

B. The collection receives ongoing review in order to maintain its relevance and physical condition, as well as accommodate shelf space. Staff uses the following criteria in choosing materials for retention or withdrawal:

- Condition: worn, missing or stained pages, water damaged, mildewed, or defaced
- Relevance to community needs
- Information: accurate, timely, up-to-date
- Number of copies in the collection across all formats
- Number of copies in the LION Consortium
- Circulation statistics
- Shelf space
- Relevance/sustainability of format
- Availability elsewhere, including libraries in the LION Consortium other libraries in Connecticut, online, or via Interlibrary Loan (ILL)

Materials withdrawn from the collection are given to The Friends of the Preston Public Library or a vendor for resale. Materials that are damaged or unsellable will be recycled, when feasible, or discarded. Materials removed from the Library's collection are chosen based upon the above criteria and without consideration of their potential resale value, nor for the purpose of resale.

C. The Preston Public Library believes in freedom of information for all and does not practice censorship. This principle applies to all formats included in the Library's collection. Materials may be considered controversial, and any given item may offend some person. Selections are not made on the basis of anticipated approval or disapproval but on the merits of the material and collection needs. Exclusion of materials may occur due to cost, accessibility, or limited demand or lack of documentation, but never solely because of expression, language, viewpoint, or mature content.

The Library holds the choice of materials to be a purely individual matter. While anyone is personally free to reject books and other materials, an individual may not restrict the free choice of others.

Parents or legal guardians are responsible for monitoring materials used by their own children. Library selection decisions are not influenced by the possibility that materials may be accessible to minors. Materials are not labeled to show approval or disapproval or to indicate certain philosophies. Access to items is not restricted except for protection from damage or theft.

A formal Challenged Materials Policy and process has been developed to assure that complaints and requests for reconsideration are handled in an attentive and consistent manner. The Library will carefully reevaluate an item when a Request for Reconsideration form is submitted. The Library considers the value of each item in its entirety and within the context of the collection, not on specific passages or sections within the item itself.

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