

# PROCESSING OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

Stages in the processing | wedding of Library materials



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# Processing of Materials in the Library

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When the materials arrive in the library, they go through the following processes:

- Checking the materials with the invoice and order
- Cataloguing and classification
- Lettering
- Labelling
- Jacketing
- Final checking
- Shelving

# Checking the materials with the invoice and order (1).

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- This is done on receipt of each consignment of books in the library.
- The purpose is to ensure that the particular book ordered has been supplied and in the right edition, and that the price on the book itself corresponds with that on the invoice.
- Property stamp of the library is now placed on the materials to ensure that they are not taken out of the library illegally.



# Checking the materials with the invoice and order (2).

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- The books are then recorded in the accession register and given accession numbers. Information provided in this register includes;
  - Author
  - Price
  - Title
  - Publisher
  - date of publication and acquisition.

# Cataloguing and classification

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- Every library uses some form of classification for its materials.
- This is to facilitate the arrangements of books by subject on the shelves as a means of finding books.
- This task is performed by qualified staff and the class number is entered on the catalogue cards to facilitate tracing of books.

# Lettering

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- This is the process of writing the classification number on the spine of the books.
- It is usually done with broad pens and coloured ink.

# Labelling

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- This is the process of pasting printed labels into the books.
- These labels include date due slips, book cards and book pockets.
- The number of labels used for a book may depend on the type of library and also the type of book.

# Jacketing

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- In some public libraries, new books especially paperbacks are given plastic jackets in order to ensure that they last longer in the library.
- Jacketing may sometimes pose problems for the lettering of the books. Some suitable means must be found to fix the labels outside the plastic cover.



# Final checking

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- When the above processes are completed, they should all be checked by a senior library assistant or the head of technical service department.
- This is to ensure accuracy and uniformity in the processing of library materials.

# Shelving

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- All library materials have their “relations”.
- The shelving is therefore done according to the classification which should relate to other materials in the library.

# To sum it up. . .

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- It must be pointed out that the stages of book preparation or processing differ from library to library.
- However, the order in which the various processes are carried out is immaterial and can be adjusted to suit the method of organization employed in the technical services department.

# Weeding of Library Materials

**DEFINITION OF WEEDING | PURPOSE OF WEEDING | REASONS FOR WEEDING | CRITERIA FOR WEEDING | WEEDING POLICY | FACTORS DISCOURAGING WEEDING IN LIBRARIES**

# What is Weeding?

- Weeding or **relegation** or **deselection** can be defined as the process of sorting through library materials in order to eliminate worn out or outdated materials (Evans, 2005).
- Weeding is a periodic or continual evaluation of resources intended to remove items that are no longer useful from the collection.

# What is Weeding?

- it is the process of removing some library materials from the shelves, because they are obsolete in terms of content, physically damaged or in excess.

- Weeding is the act of reevaluating items in the collection and removing any that are inaccurate, out of date, inappropriate, unused, in poor condition, or otherwise harmful to students.

- Simply put, weeding is selection in reverse. It is deselection.
- Alternately, this activity is referred to as **pruning**, **thinning**, **culling**, **deselection**, **deaccession**, **relegation**, **deacquisition**, **retirement**, **reverse selection**, **negative selection** and **book stock control**.



- In school media centres and public libraries, weeding is often synonymous with withdrawal.
- Withdrawal is the physical process of pulling materials from the collection and removing the descriptive records from the catalogue.

- It is something all librarians and library media specialists must do regularly if they want to maintain the best possible collections for their school communities.
- It is a professional responsibility that cannot be taken lightly.

- Weeding may be the most **undesirable** job in the library, yet it is one of the **most important**.
- Weeding is a normal practice in collection management, which must be carried out from time to time.

- Weeding is usually guided by the following;
  - Publication date
  - Acquisition date
  - The physical condition of the material
  - Excess duplicate

**Aina (2004)**

# Reasons for Weeding

- To make space for more valuable items.
- To provide more appealing, more up-to-date collection.
- To make the library easier for patrons and staff to use.
- To provide reliable information.
- To encourage patrons to handle materials carefully.
- To provide feedback on strengths and weaknesses of the collection.
- To make shelving of the materials easier.

# Weeding Criteria

- Criteria for weeding are similar to those used in selecting items.
- The three most frequently asked questions are;
  - has it been used?
  - Is it worn, soiled or damaged?
  - Is it outdated?

*In addition to the above criteria, the following questions should also be considered.*

- Is the content still pertinent?
- Is it in a language that current and future users can read?
- Is it duplicated in the collection, either in another copy or a comparable item on the same topic?
- Is it available elsewhere?
- Is it rare or valuable or both?
- Has it been superseded by new edition?

- Was it originally selected in error?
- Is it cited in standard abstracting or indexing tools?
- Is it listed in a standard bibliography or important works?
- Does it have local relevance?
- Does it fill a consortial commitment or regional need?
- If available in electronic format, is continued access to retrospective files ensured?



# Weeding Policy

- Weeding can be one of the most controversial aspects of collection development and a carefully prepared and fully documented policy on weeding can lessen or alleviate some misunderstandings.
- It must be noted however, that, a weeding policy cannot replace individual judgement or common sense, but it will make actions of the library professional more understandable to its users.

- The label and type of weeding programme will vary from institution to institution.
- Depending on the institution, weeding may be done on regular basis or occasionally.

- Example; in an academic library very little weeding will be done for research purposes.
- On the other hand, in public libraries, weeding will be frequent because it is important to put current materials on the shelves all the time.

# *Issues to be considered when setting out a weeding policy :*

- Criteria for weeding – what materials to consider.
- Scope – the extent of the weeding process.
- Frequency – the number of times and duration.
- Purpose – the reason for weeding.
- Evaluation – the effectiveness of the weeding process.

# Factors Discouraging Weeding in Libraries

*Despite the advantages of weeding in libraries, a number of factors discourage Librarians from going through the process.*

*Some of these factors are:*

- Sense of possessiveness – Librarians may not want to throw materials away.
- The fear of not being able to replace the materials.

- Materials weeded today may be needed the next day by another reader.
- It is expensive to engage staff in the process of weeding.
- Weeding takes a lot of the time of library staff.
- Weeding reduces the size of the materials in the library.

# To sum up. . .

- Weeding is an essential, though difficult element of collection management, that ensures that the library's materials are useful and accessible.
- No library can exist or survive without weeding or discarding materials because the library has been described as a growing organism.
  - As a growing organism, it is subject to decay.

# Thank you

