

Materials Selection Policy

It is the function of the Haston Free Public Library to serve all residents of the Town of North Brookfield. Books, periodicals, and audio-visual materials are provided for information, for general educational advancement and for the enrichment and recreation of borrowers. For the specialized or out-of-print materials not available here, the library depends on the CW MARS (Central and Western Massachusetts Resource Sharing) and Massachusetts Library System for inter-library loan service and delivery.

Book selection is performed by the Youth Services Librarian for the Children's Department and Young Adults and by the Library Director for the other areas of the Library. The Library Director is responsible overall to the Library Trustees for the development of the collection. Factors which may limit the selection of materials include primarily, the availability of funds, space in the library, and whether or not the cost of an item outweighs its value to the overall community.

Books and other materials are selected according to the following policy:

- Materials selected must meet high standards of quality in content, expression and format. These standards are not determined by any one individual, but rather from a consensus of well-known journals and critics (i.e. the Library Journal, Booklist, etc.)
- Materials of local history shall be purchased.
- The Library will purchase works written by authors whose views, though they may be widely rejected, have affected the shaping of world events.
- The Library is responsible for providing materials on controversial issues, and whenever possible, to represent many shades of opinion on these issues.
- Serious works are not necessarily excluded because of unpleasant language or frankness. If a work has artistic merit or provides important information, it has a place in our collection.
- Criteria essential to the selection of non-fiction for both the children's and the Adult collection include authoritativeness, accuracy, objectivity, timelessness, clarity of presentation and community need. An attempt is made to limit purchases of specialized research materials for which there might be demand from only one or two members of the community.
- An up-to-date, balanced and useful collection will be maintained through a continual discarding and replacing process. Worn but basic titles will be replaced and obsolete or infrequently used material withdrawn.
- Gifts of books to the library may be accepted if they meet the standards of the Materials Selection policy as outlined above.
- The Library is opposed to the removal from its shelves at the request of any individual or group, books or materials which have been chosen according to the Library Materials Selection Policy. Furthermore, the library will oppose coercion on the part of an individual or group seeking to have books or materials added to the shelves contrary to the Materials Selection Policy.
- Because they represent an ideal which the Library is trying to maintain, the Board of Trustees endorses the "Freedom to Read" statement of the American Library Association, and the "Library bill of Rights" adopted by the American Library Association.