

# Toronto District School Board

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Operational Procedure PR.531 CUR

Title: **SELECTION AND APPROVAL OF LEARNING RESOURCES**  
Adopted: September 2, 2001  
Revised: **September 22, 2003** (replaces C.007: Criteria for Assessing Learning Resources, September 1, 2001)  
Authorization:

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## 1.0 OBJECTIVE

To describe the responsibility of schools in the selection and approval of supplementary learning resources

## 2.0 RESPONSIBILITY

Associate Director

## 3.0 PROCEDURES

- 3.1. In May 2002, the Ministry of Education distributed to schools the Guidelines for Approval of Textbooks. The Guidelines contain the Trillium List of those textbooks that have been approved as meeting the eligibility and evaluation criteria. Schools are expected to use the Trillium List when selecting textbooks which are defined as comprehensive resources designed to support at least 85 percent of the curriculum expectations, i.e., core learning resources.
- 3.2. Boards are responsible for the selection and approval of supplementary resources, i.e., those learning resources that do not fit the definition of textbooks, such as novels, dictionaries, atlases, poetry anthologies, single-genre anthologies, and stand-alone videotapes. The Board has developed this procedure and criteria for the selection and approval of such learning resources, including print and non print resources and a screening tool (see Appendix A). It is the responsibility of principals and teachers to select and approve learning resources for use in the school that meet the needs of their school community and support students in attaining curriculum expectations. Schools are required to use these criteria and this procedure when selecting and purchasing supplementary resources.
- 3.3. Learning Resources: Elementary and Secondary Schools

The ordering of supplementary learning resources is monitored by each principal, and selections are made in accordance with Board criteria. The principal/designate

must facilitate the annual process of selecting learning resources by holding a meeting that focuses on and clarifies for staff the following:

- the review of learning materials being considered for use
- the application of Board criteria to learning resources
- the review of titles that may no longer be appropriate
- the development and maintenance of an annual inventory of newly selected and approved learning resources

By clarifying the roles of those involved in this selection and approval process, schools will be better prepared to deal with contentious/sensitive issues, should they arise.

#### 3.4. Library Resources: Elementary and Secondary Schools

While the principal is ultimately responsible for all materials used in the school, the responsibility for the selection and approval of library resource materials will normally be delegated to the teacher-librarian, assisted by the school staff. Teacher-librarians receive specialized training in materials evaluation and in the selection and overall development of the library's print and electronic collection.

The following principles for the selection and approval of school library materials will be used as they apply:

- Library resource materials will be selected and approved by using the same criteria that are applied to the selection and approval of supplementary learning resources for classroom use.
- The same criteria used for the selection and purchasing of materials for school libraries will apply to materials offered as donations.
- Deselection or selective weeding ensures that the school library collection contains only those resource materials that are accurate, current, and relevant to the curricular needs of the school. The development of an effective collection of resources requires periodic weeding to ensure balance, reliability, and comprehensiveness.

Central support for selecting materials is provided through Library and Learning Resources Instructional Leaders and through the Board Professional Library. Focused lists of recommended materials have been published. These searchable database lists identify grade level appropriateness and curriculum connections. Recommended materials are then displayed at the display library at the Tippet Centre.

#### 3.5. General Criteria for Selection and Approval

The criteria outlined below apply to all learning resources. Although not ALL supplementary resources will meet ALL of the criteria listed below, it is expected that

staff members will exercise their professional expertise, judgment, and sensitivity to apply the criteria when choosing resources.

- (a) Appropriateness to Program
- (b) Suitability for Students
- (c) Nature and Degree of Bias
- (d) Canadian Content and Publication
- (e) Quality of Visual and Physical Format
- (f) Cost and Durability

### 3.6. Specific Criteria for Selection and Approval

The criteria listed below expand on the six general criteria above by highlighting key points to be used in such areas as gender; race, religion, and culture; values; and Canadian content. The use of these specific criteria reflects the policies of the Board pertaining to equity in the curriculum and anti-discriminatory education.

#### (a) Appropriateness to Program

- The material supports the curriculum as outlined in Ministry, Board, and school documents.
- The material supports the principles of the Equity policies of the TDSB.
- The material supports specific kinds of programs or modifications, e.g., Special Education, ESL/ELD, enrichment, remediation, upgrading.
- The material is appropriate for the grade(s) and level(s) of instruction.

#### (b) Suitability for Students

- The resource will enrich the learning experiences of students.
- The resource will sustain the interest of students.
- The resource will be appropriate to the maturity and experience of students.
- The resource will be relevant to and reflective of students' lives.
- The resource will be appropriate for learning styles and skills of the intended audience.

#### (c) Nature and Degree of Bias

- Recognizing that bias exists in all learning materials:
- People of a variety of races, religions, genders, sexual orientations, classes, abilities, and ages are represented.
- Aboriginal peoples and a range of their issues and experiences are represented.
- The material depicts individuals and groups in a range of social, economic, and political environments.
- The resource addresses issues from a variety of perspectives.

- The examples of stereotyping and discrimination (including language, visuals, omissions, or distorted perspectives) can be used by the teacher for anti-discriminatory educational purposes.
  - If the material contains controversial issues, they can be addressed in ways that are educationally appropriate to students and programs.
- (d) Canadian Content
- The material presents a broadly based perspective of Canada within a global framework.
  - The material presents Aboriginal Canadians in contemporary contexts where appropriate.
  - The material presents Canada and its people within a multicultural context.
  - The material is written or edited by a Canadian author.
  - The material is edited, printed, or bound in Canada.
- (e) Quality of Visual and Physical Format
- The material is well-organized and presented clearly and logically.
  - The format of illustrations, graphics, pictures, photographs, and artwork is of a high quality.
- (f) Cost and Durability
- The cost of the material is justified for its use.
  - The resource is durable.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call the District-wide Coordinator for the appropriate subject area.

## **4.0 APPENDICES**

Appendix A: Screening Guidelines for Supplementary Learning Resources

Screening Guidelines for Supplementary Learning Resources

General Criteria	Specific Criteria	Evaluation (Circle one)	Comments
Appropriateness to Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the material support the curriculum as outlined in Ministry, Board, and school documents?</li> <li>• Does the material support the principles of the Equity policies of the TDSB?</li> <li>• Does the material support specific kinds of programs or modifications, e.g., Special Education, ESL/ELD, enrichment, remediation, upgrading?</li> <li>• Is the material appropriate for the grade(s) and level of instruction?</li> </ul>	<p>Yes No N/A</p> <p>Yes No N/A</p> <p>Yes No N/A</p> <p>Yes No N/A</p>	
Suitability for Students	<p>Will the resource:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enrich the learning experience of students?</li> <li>• sustain the interest of students?</li> <li>• be appropriate to the maturity and experience of students?</li> <li>• be relevant and reflective of students' lives?</li> <li>• be appropriate for learning styles and skills of the intended audience?</li> </ul>	<p>Yes No N/A</p> <p>Yes No N/A</p> <p>Yes No N/A</p> <p>Yes No N/A</p> <p>Yes No N/A</p>	

Appendix A: Screening Guidelines for Supplementary Learning Resources

General Criteria	Specific Criteria	Evaluation (Circle one)	Comments
Nature and Degree of Bias	<p>Recognizing that bias exists in all learning materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are people of a variety of races, religions, genders, sexual orientations, classes, abilities, and age represented?</li> <li>• Are Aboriginal peoples and a range of their issues and experiences represented?</li> <li>• Does the material depict individuals and groups in a range of social, economic, and political environments?</li> <li>• Does the resource addresses issues from a variety of perspectives?</li> <li>• Can the examples of stereotyping and discrimination (including language, visuals, omissions, or distorted perspectives) be used by the teacher for anti-discriminatory educational purposes?</li> <li>• If the material contains controversial issues, can they can be addressed in ways that are educationally appropriate to students and programs?</li> </ul>	<p>Yes No N/A</p> <p>Yes No N/A</p> <p>Yes No N/A</p> <p>Yes No N/A</p> <p>Yes No N/A</p> <p>Yes No N/A</p>	

Appendix A: Screening Guidelines for Supplementary Learning Resources

General Criteria	Specific Criteria	Evaluation (Circle one)	Comments
Canadian Content and Publication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the material present a broadly based perspective of Canada within a global framework?</li> <li>• Does the material present Aboriginal Canadians in contemporary contexts where appropriate?</li> <li>• Does the material present Canada and its people within a multicultural context?</li> <li>• Is the material written or edited by a Canadian author?</li> <li>• Is the material edited, printed, or bound in Canada?</li> </ul>	<p>Yes No N/A</p> <p>Yes No N/A</p> <p>Yes No N/A</p> <p>Yes No N/A</p> <p>Yes No N/A</p>	
Quality of Visual and Physical Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the material well-organized and presented clearly and logically?</li> <li>• Is the format of illustrations, graphics, pictures, photographs, and artwork of a high quality?</li> </ul>	<p>Yes No N/A</p> <p>Yes No N/A</p>	
Cost and Durability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the cost of the material justified for its use?</li> <li>• Is the resource durable?</li> </ul>	<p>Yes No N/A</p> <p>Yes No N/A</p>	

If you have any questions or concerns, please call the District-wide Coordinator for the appropriate subject area.