

# Weeding

The why, the how & the when

It does not matter how many books you have, but whether they are good or not.

Epistolea Morale

Lucius Annaeus SENECA

3 BC – 65 AD

Library Officer's Day 2013

# Snowball?

Write any questions you have regarding weeding on the piece of paper

screw up the paper

and throw it in the box

# Hands up



Schools without teacher  
librarians



Primary schools



# Definition: of weeding

share /pair

Weeding is the removal of materials (books, periodicals, encyclopedias, videos etc) from a library collection in a planned and systematic manner.

The deselection process is an ongoing part of collection development, a deliberate and thoughtful activity that will keep the library current and vital.

Weeding is an ongoing process of removing resources that are worn, outdated, unattractive, inappropriate in content, or of no further value to users.

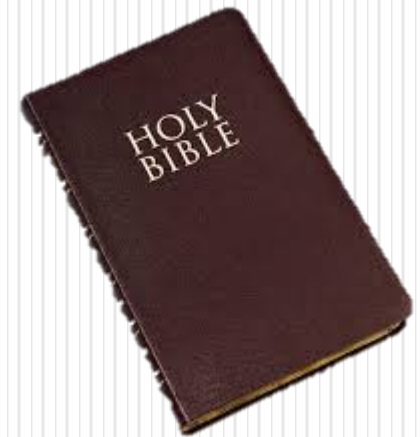
What is Collection Development Policy

call out

# Collection Development Policy

Every library must have a collection development policy. It should include:

- purpose of the collection
- type of material in the collection
- selection criteria and processes
- Budget



hands up who has heard of a Collection Policy  
keep hands up those who have read a Collection Policy,  
keep hands up who has a Collection Policy in their library

- weeding criteria
- stocktaking processes
- procedures for dealing with controversial material
- donated resources
- roles & responsibilities
- stocktaking



What is the difference between a policy & a procedure?

# Who does the weeding?

The person who does the best job of weeding is the one who has a thorough understanding of the existing collection, of the school's curriculum, of the various units taught in all classrooms, and of the reading interests and levels of students.

Are you the person with the 3 E + P

education – experience – exchange - pedagogy

Resources are weeded by professional staff with knowledge of:

- ✓ the curriculum
- ✓ learning and teaching styles
- ✓ child development
- ✓ student achievement levels
- ✓ collection development
- ✓ weeding selection criteria

Library Procedure Manual for Automated School libraries:  
Education Department of Western Australia 1998



# Criteria for Weeding:

- ✓ maintain currency
- ✓ outdated information
- ✓ patron satisfaction
- ✓ duplicate copies and older editions
- ✓ outdated technologies and software
- ✓ space requirements

Fill out handout

- ✓ availability of more current information in a different format
- ✓ physical condition - replacing deteriorated, worn-out, frayed, dirty items
- ✓ low circulation statistics
- ✓ unable to be repaired
- ✓ inaccurate information
- ✓ offensive material

# Criteria:

## **M.U.S.T.Y.**

This acronym summarises what to look for when weeding the collection

**M** - Misleading and/or factually inaccurate information.

**U** - Ugly. This refers to the physical condition of the collection. Items that are worn and beyond repair are weeded

**S** - Superseded. New editions or another recent title should replace obsolete, out- of-date materials. Obsolescence occurs much more rapidly in some subject areas than others. Some areas like anatomy are timeless; others like technology change frequently.

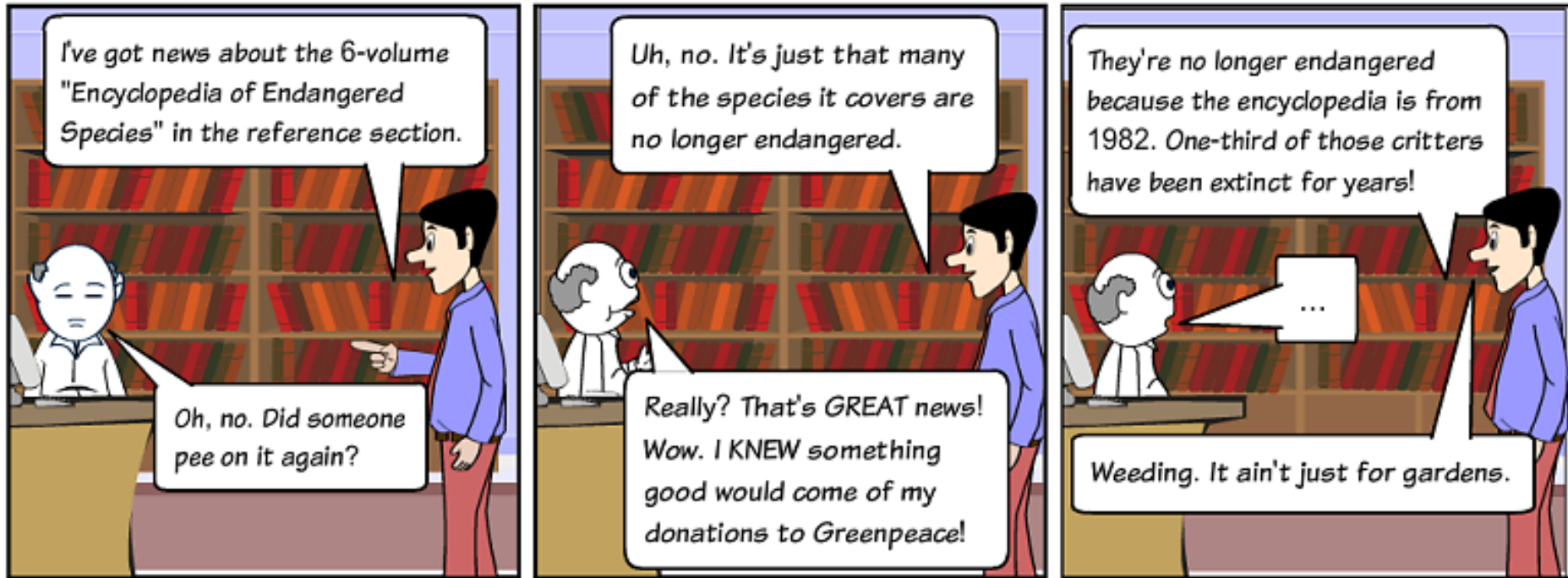
**T** - Trivial and of no discernible value. This includes items that are no longer on standard lists of recommended materials.

**Y** - Your particular collection has no use for this material because the content or format is irrelevant to the needs of the library's clientele.

# Humour

**SHELF CHECK 238 - BY POESYGALORE**

WWW.TOONDOO.COM



# Benefits of weeding:

- Creates an up to date collection
- Ensures that all parts of the collection have been evaluated for equity issues and stereotyping
- Makes gap analysis easier (collection mapping)
- Directs further collection development
- Provides a cleaner and more attractive collection

- Makes it easier to search and find relevant material
- Makes it easier to maintain the library
- Highlights and makes accessible new and exciting resources

# Excuses not to weed

- A large collection looks good
- I hate throwing things away
- If I pulled everything off that should go, I wouldn't have a collection left
- My principal/teachers won't let me weed
- I haven't the funds to replace discarded items
- I can't discard the donated items, I may offend ...  
(the donor)



# What not to weed

- award winners and classics
- Student authored books
- Local histories
- School yearbooks
- list for core collection

- research value - good photos
- out of print
- local title
- unusual illustrations
- balance a topic
- rare items

# Why we don't weed

*Emotional attachment*

*Reluctance to judge*

*Difficult decisions*

*Fear of public reprisal*

*Fear of "empty shelves"*



# Disposal

What to do with weeded items?

Sell – give to overseas – throw out?

Refer to Collection Development Policy

# Some helpful hints for hassle-free weeding

- decide on clear, justifiable criteria before starting
- don't try to weed the whole collection at once – do a little at a time
- get the support of at least one other staff member
- discard old editions of texts immediately to save problems later

- if in doubt about a subject area, weed with a teacher who has the expertise and an understanding of the purpose of weeding
- Refer to Collection Development Policy