

Batesville Memorial Public Library

Materials Selection Policy

Library materials should be selected and services and programs planned that satisfy library users' needs as individuals and as members of groups with concern given for all ages, backgrounds, interests, abilities and levels of education. The library must consider not only the present needs of the community but must anticipate the future needs in order to give timely service. Though the library attempts to give the best service possible to its regular users, it also has an obligation to collect materials and search for methods of service that will satisfy the needs of those in the community who have not traditionally been library users. It is vitally important that every citizen today have ready and free access to the world of ideas, information and creative experience.

The Batesville Memorial Public Library selects, makes available, and promotes the use of library materials, whatever the format, which:

1. meet the information needs of the community;
2. meet the recreational needs of the community;
3. supplement formal and informal study;
4. reflect a variety of opinions on a subject;
5. support business, cultural, recreational and civic activities in the community;
6. stimulate self-understanding and growth;
7. enhance job-related knowledge and skills; and
8. increase knowledge of and participation in the affairs of the community, the country and the world.

Authority and Responsibility for Materials Selection

The authority and responsibility for the selection of library materials is delegated to the library Director and, under his or her direction, to the library staff who are qualified for this activity by reason of education, training and experience. The advice of specialists in the community is requested in fields in which staff members do not have sufficient expertise. Suggestions from library users are welcome and are given serious consideration within the general criteria. Final decision for purchase rests with the library.

Criteria for Selection

The evaluation of materials is characterized by flexibility, open-mindedness and responsiveness to the changing needs of the residents of the Batesville Memorial Public Library district. Materials are evaluated as a whole and not on the basis of a particular passage or passages. A work will not be excluded from the library's collection because it presents an aspect of life honestly or because of frankness of expression.

All acquisitions, whether purchased or donated, are considered in terms of the following standards. Clearly, however, an item need not meet all of the criteria to be acceptable. In some instances, materials may be judged primarily on artistic merit, or because of scholarship, or as valuable human documents, or as critical to the information needs of the community. In other instances, the criterion may be substantial demand.

The following general criteria are used:

1. Present and potential relevance to community needs.
2. Suitability of subject, style, and reading level for the intended audience.
3. Insight into human and social conditions.
4. Importance as a document of the times.
5. Appropriateness and effectiveness of medium to content.
6. Reputation and/or significance of the author.
7. Demand for the material.
8. Critics' and staff members' reviews.
9. Reputation of the publisher or producer.
10. Relationship to existing materials in the collection on the same subject.
11. Availability and accessibility of the same materials in the local geographic area.

Bi-lingual and Foreign Language Collections

We recognize that persons in the local Hispanic community do not all speak and read only Spanish; they do not speak and read only English; nor are they all bilingual. The members of this community have diverse needs and are entitled to access to materials diverse enough to meet those needs.

The library supports learning English as a Second Language (ESL) as one of those needs. Providing materials and meeting space for ESL programs are an important part of the library's mission emphasis: "Promoting life-long learning and literacy." The collection should meet the educational and recreational needs of the community by providing relevant and culturally sensitive materials. The collection should contain materials in Spanish, materials in English, and bilingual materials.

Materials in Spanish, as well as in German, French and other languages, should be part of the library's collection as they are useful for students who are learning those languages.

Donations

The Batesville Memorial Public Library is pleased to accept gifts and/or memorial gifts from patrons. Gifts are gratefully and willingly accepted as long as no restriction is placed upon their use and disposition. Acceptance of gifts of books and other library materials will be determined by the library director on the basis of their suitability to the library's purposes and needs in accordance with the library's materials selection policy. Use of all gift materials will be determined by the library director or a designated agent. The library has the right to discard any gifts that are in poor physical condition (e.g. brittle paper, water, mildew, or other damage, torn and /or missing pages).

Values will not be placed on donated items for income tax purposes, but receipts will be provided for items in good or better condition.

Reconsideration Procedures

The choice of library materials by users is an individual matter. Responsibility for the reading or viewing of materials by children and adolescents rests with their parents or legal guardians. While a person may reject materials for himself or herself and for his or her children, he or she cannot exercise censorship to restrict access to the materials by others.

The Batesville Memorial Public Library supports intellectual freedom and endorses the following statements: "Freedom to Read," American Library Association (Appendix B), "Freedom to View," American Film and Video Association (Appendix G), and "Library Bill of Rights," American Library Association (Appendix A).

Citizens with complaints about library materials should be channeled to the library Director. If the Director's explanation of the material's selection, or solution to the complaint, is not adequate to the complainant, that person may submit a description of the problem in writing to the Board of Trustees using the "Request for Consideration of Library Materials" form (Appendix D) and "Request for Consideration of Library Materials - Part 2" form (Appendix E). He or she may then decide to present the complaint in person at a regularly scheduled Board of Trustees meeting for a decision to be determined later. Questions about censorship are a regular part of the library's annual report to the State Library, and details about "challenged" materials are requested.