



Core Collections Development Policy

Selection Process

With the express purpose of assisting with the collection development decisions made in a variety of public and school libraries, content specialists and collection development librarians select titles for *Core Collections* through a systematic and wide-ranging evaluation of review literature and other sources. These include publisher catalogs, reviews and other content included in respected industry periodicals, award-winning title lists, and best-of lists. We also seek out sources catering to genres currently underrepresented in industry sources, specific niche audiences, and professional materials. Examples of journals used for review purposes include: *School Library Journal*, *Booklist*, *Horn Book*, *Publishers Weekly*, *Kirkus*, and *Library Journal*. Examples of non-industry sources include theroot.com, Goodreads.com, and diversebooks.org.

Selectors are encouraged to emphasize materials that build a well-rounded collection, which includes many viewpoints and opinions, in service of fulfilling the core mission of the library. Titles are evaluated according to standard library collection development review criteria, which include the following: authoritative nature of the work, quality of content, usefulness and intended purpose, relevance to audience or community, enduring value/demand, and cost relative to overall value. All titles selected for *Core Collections* have received positive reviews in professional journals and/or have been selected by librarians who are experts in their field.

Scope

All titles selected for *Core Collections* have been chosen by librarians with expertise in their fields. While each title is endorsed for the appropriate audience and specific criteria may differ across those audiences, the *Core Collections* products for English language collection development do exclude the following: non-English-language materials, with the exception of bilingual materials and language dictionaries; books widely used in curricula such as textbooks; books about individual computer programs or versions of programs; and other topics that quickly become outdated. Our newest Collection, *Core Collection en Español*, provides guidance in maintaining a collection for a Spanish-speaking audience, and thus provides recommendations for titles in Spanish across all ages, genres, and topics, including English language instruction. It does not include textbooks.

Out-of-print titles are eligible for inclusion in *Core Collections*; we believe that good literature is not obsolete simply because it goes out of print, and in some cases those out-of-print titles are difficult to replace.



Advisory Board

In addition to our staff members, Novelist makes use of external advisors for the purposes of developing *Core Collections*. These advisors have collection development expertise, subject-specific backgrounds, curriculum expertise, and more. This group is charged with a number of tasks, including selecting and weeding titles, applying recommendation and grade levels, advising the editors—also librarians—on ways to enhance and improve the collections, and providing guidance to editors when assessing the collections.

Diversity and Inclusion

Core Collections content specialists and collection development staff are committed to creating and maintaining collections that reflect the diversity of the human experience. When selecting a title for Core Collections, we evaluate its critical consensus, but we also consider its contribution to the breadth and depth of viewpoints present in the databases. We mitigate biases to the best of our ability by seeking out multiple opinions on books and actively staying educated on issues of diversity and representation in publishing.

In order to ensure that *Core Collections* meets an inclusive collection development ethos and meet the needs of the public and school library communities we serve, the following guidelines are also considered when making nominations: authors and characters that reflect an authentic and diverse variety of races, cultures, and nationalities; genders; sexual or romantic orientations; abilities (physical and mental/psychological); and religions. Wherever possible, *Core Collections* includes "own voices" selections—titles in which the author and characters share a marginalized identity.

We are always seeking to improve the *Core Collections* and welcome feedback and suggestions regarding potential prejudices or blind spots. Email us at novelist@ebSCO.com.

Recommendation Levels

After a book is selected for *Core Collections*, it is given a recommendation level, as described below. Books that are appropriate for multiple audiences (for example, adult fiction that has YA appeal, or a book that should be found in both elementary and middle school libraries) may have different recommendation levels for the different audiences.

Essential. These are the highest priority titles for purchasing or retaining; all libraries will want



Core Collections Recommendation Levels

these books on their shelves, frequently if not always with multiple copies. Limited budgets would be well spent on these titles. In areas without a wide variety of published titles, these items are the best of their kind—keeping in mind the importance of diverse representation in all libraries. In many cases, these books will have multiple starred reviews. These titles also likely have staying power; classics (especially those taught in schools) and beloved titles are often found here as are older bestselling books that influenced the publishing market, award-winners, and other books with lasting popularity. *Provided in online databases and print.*

Recommended. These titles are recommended for a well-rounded collection. Most libraries will want to have these titles on their shelves, subject to budgetary and space constraints. Alternatively, some may be excellent books but with narrower appeal. Books that meet curriculum needs may also be found here. *Provided in online databases and print.*

Supplemental. These titles are worthwhile for libraries to purchase but may be restricted to larger libraries or generous budgets, or those trying to purchase more in specific areas of interest to their communities. *Provided only in the online databases.*

Weeded. These titles were added to Core Collections at other levels but have since been lowered because we no longer recommend them for purchasing/retaining. Reasons for this rank include: out of date or irrelevant content, superseded by newer edition, titles without staying power, and so on. *Provided only in online databases.*