

INTO THE WOODS:

Weeding and Assessing Your Library Collections

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Librarianship 101 2021

Weeding 101

Weeding: *removing materials that are no longer relevant to the library's collection*

Why should we weed?

- Increases library appeal
- Protects readers from inaccurate information
- Encourages browsing
- Eliminates items no longer of interest to patrons
- Saves space
- Creates space for updated priorities

Why DON'T We Weed?

As beneficial as weeding is, it's often a neglected part of the Collection Development process. Why is that?

- It's time consuming
- Throwing books out feels wrong
- Fear of making (or confronting!) mistakes
- Not seen as a priority
- The perception of quantity over quality
- Materials might be "worth something"
- "If we weed all the old stuff, we won't have anything left!"

HOWEVER...

- It's part of library materials' life cycle
- It CAN be time consuming when you have to "crisis weed" (just ask Kermit)
- Interlibrary loan is available for items your library doesn't own
- The best predictor of future circulation is past circulation
- A collection is a living thing and needs to adapt to both the community and the library's priorities (like diversity)



Before You Hit the Stacks: Diversity Audit

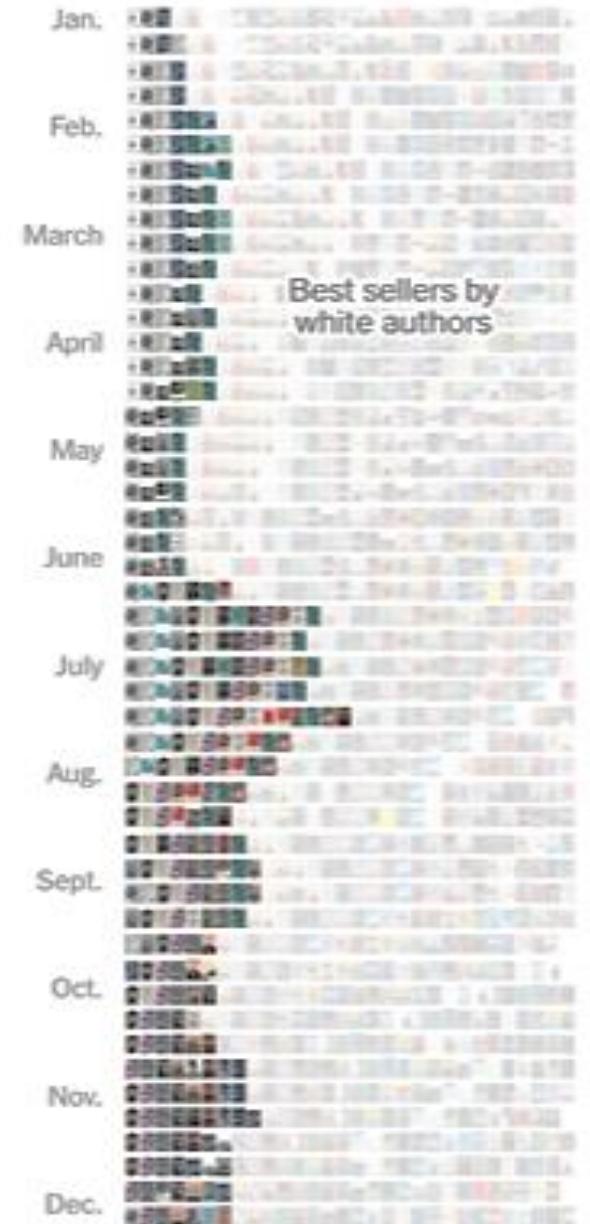
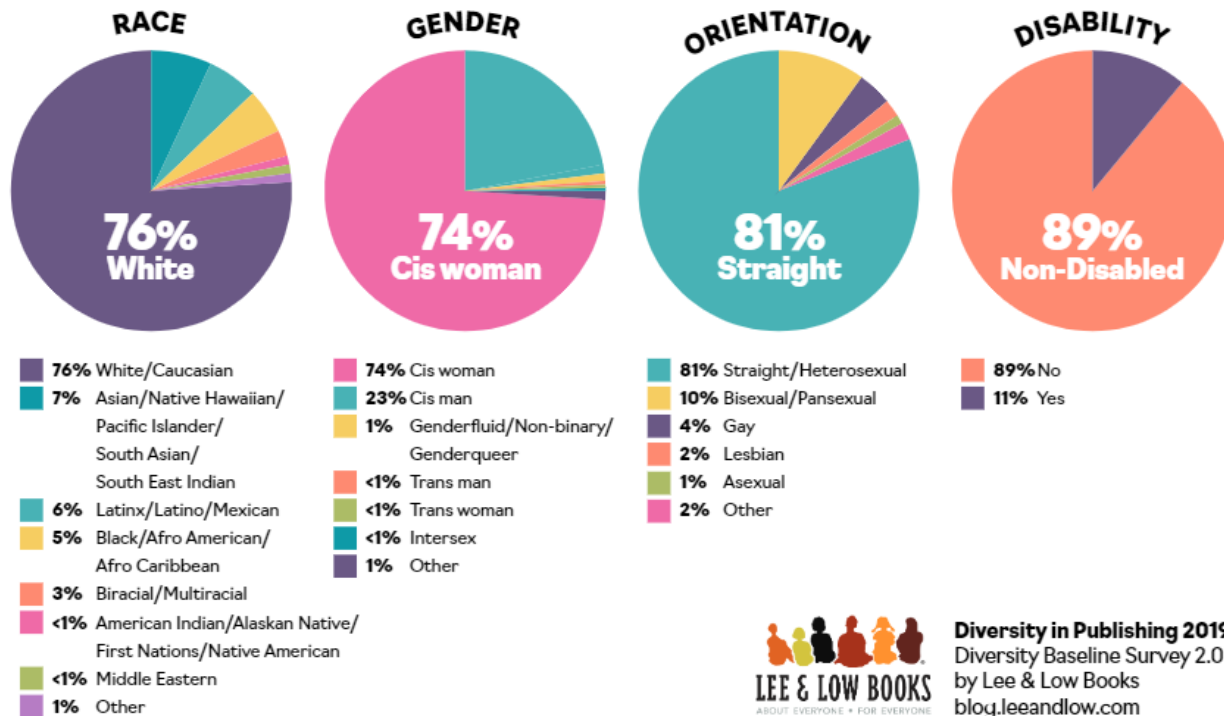
- A diversity audit is a way to see who your collection represents
- How does your collection compare with your community?
- However, ALL collections should be diverse regardless of community data—it is important that we all see diversity
- Can assess a collection's diversity in terms of:
 - Authors of color
 - Main characters of color
 - Authors/characters identifying as LGBTQ+, disabled, neurodiverse, etc.

THE PUBLISHING INDUSTRY

DIVERSITY IN PUBLISHING 2019 • DIVERSITY BASELINE SURVEY BY LEE & LOW BOOKS

INDUSTRY OVERALL EXECUTIVE LEVEL EDITORIAL SALES MARKETING & PUBLICITY BOOK REVIEWERS LITERARY AGENTS INTERNS

Industry Overall



NYT 2020 Bestseller Data

MLC's Diversity Audit of Fiction Collection's Nonwhite Authors

- MLC's fiction collection is very small (about 500ish books) and only began four years ago
- Went to the shelves and physically handled each book to assess authors (last names, general knowledge, and author photos helped, as did Google)
- Added up number of nonwhite authors, divided by total number of books on the shelf
- 25.3% of fiction collection is by nonwhite authors
- 74.7% of fiction collection is by white authors

Building a diverse collection is an *intentional* process.

9 /23	6 /22	
4 /23	8 /25	Ha
6 /22	12 /30	
5 /20	15 /20	
7 /28	6 /27	
4 /25	2 /24	
4 /21	6 /21	
9 /22	3 /23	
8 /21	2 /22	
3 /21	6 /25	
6 /21	10 /22	

Thinking about Conducting a Diversity Audit in Your Library?

Follow these
steps! →

Choose

Choose collection you know you can handle

Decide

Decide what to assess: character or author (ethnicity, neurodiversity, LGBTQ+, disability or chronic illness, etc)

Assess

Assess scientifically, not emotionally: if your collection was super diverse you would probably know. This is a tool for change!

Before You Hit the Stacks: The Analysis

RUN CIRCULATION REPORTS!

- Divide collection reports into digestible chunks (000s-399s instead of all nonfiction, etc.)
- Could set parameters to just list books that have only circ'ed once, have never circ'ed, are over 25 years old, etc.
 - Include # of checkouts
 - Last activity date
 - Date of material

HITTING THE STACKS

You go into the stacks and find a crusty old book...then what?



The **CREW** Method

CREW = **C**ontinuous **R**evision,
Evaluation, and **W**eeding

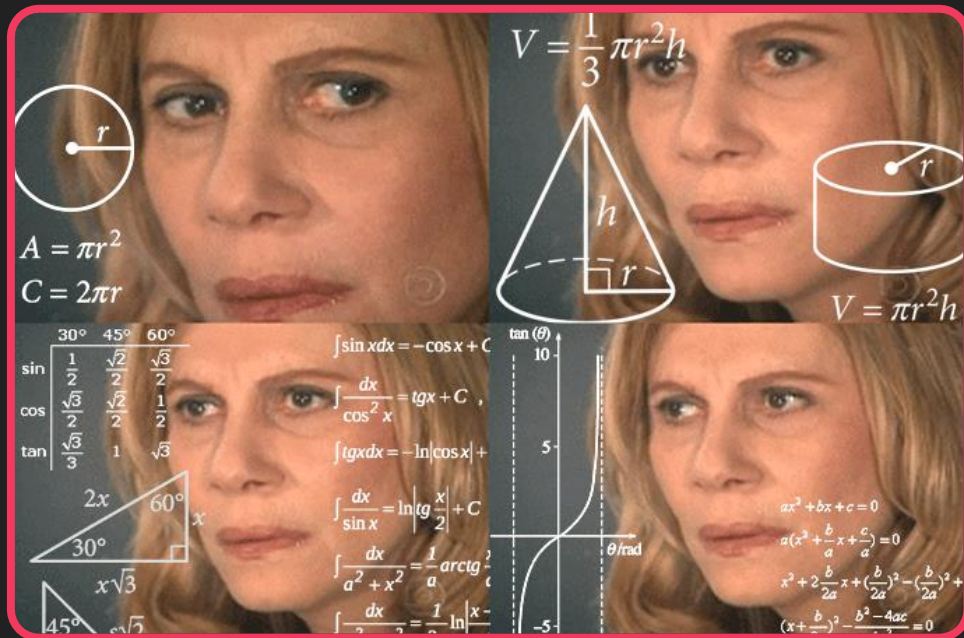
CREW uses a formula to assess collections
as well as criteria known as **MUSTIE**:

- **M**isleading
- **U**gly
- **S**uperseded by a newer edition
or a better source
- **T**rivial
- **I**rrelevant to the needs and
interests of the community
- **E**lsewhere (ILL)



The CREW Method

Each Dewey call number is assigned a formula to help you assess the material.



Formula: a/b/c

a = years since the copyright date

b = maximum time since last usage

c = criteria

x = indicates not applicable in any of the positions

000	
004	3/X/MUSTIE
010	10/3/MUSTIE
020	10/3/MUSTIE
030	5/X/MUSTIE
Other 000s	5/X/MUSTIE
101	15/5/MUSTIE
133	10/3/MUSTIE
150	10/3/MUSTIE
160	10/3/MUSTIE
170	10/3/MUSTIE
200	10/3/MUSTIE or 5/3/MUSTIE
306	5/2/MUSTIE
310	2/X/MUSTIE
320	5/3/MUSTIE
323	5/3/MUSTIE
330	3/3/MUSTIE
340	5/2/MUSTIE
350	5/3/MUSTIE
360	5/3/MUSTIE
370	10/3/MUSTIE
390 - 394	10/3/MUSTIE
395	5/3/MUSTIE
398	X/3/MUSTIE
400	10/3/MUSTIE
500	5/3/MUSTIE
507	10/3/MUSTIE
510	10/3/MUSTIE
520	5/3/MUSTIE
550	X/3/MUSTIE
560	5/2/MUSTIE
570	7/3/MUSTIE
580	10/3/MUSTIE

610	5/3/MUSTIE
629	X/2/MUSTIE
630	5/3/MUSTIE
635	10/3/MUSTIE
636	5/2/MUSTIE
640	5/3/MUSTIE
649	5/3/MUSTIE
670	10/3/MUSTIE
700	
709	X/3/MUSTIE
720	X/3/MUSTIE
737	5/3/MUSTIE
740	X/3/MUSTIE
770	5/3/MUSTIE
791	10/2/MUSTIE
793 - 796	10/3/MUSTIE
800	X/3/MUSTIE
910	3/2/MUSTIE
Personal Travel Narratives	5/2/MUSTIE
930 - 999	10/3/MUSTIE
92, 920 or B	X/3/MUSTIE
F (Fiction)	X/2/MUSTIE
Graphic Novels	X/1/MUSTIE
E (Easy Readers/ Picture Books)	X/2/MUSTIE
JF (Juvenile Fiction)	X/2/MUSTIE
YA Fiction (Teen Fiction)	3/2/MUSTIE
J and YA Non-fiction	Use adult criteria (and review children's general criteria)
Periodicals/ Newspapers	3/X/X
Government Documents	3/2/X
Local History	X/X/X
Nonprint	WORST
Film Formats	2/1/WORST
Audio Formats	X/2/X

OVERVIEW CHART OF CREW FORMULAS

From *CREW: A Weeding Manual for Modern Libraries*
via the Texas State Library & Archives Commission

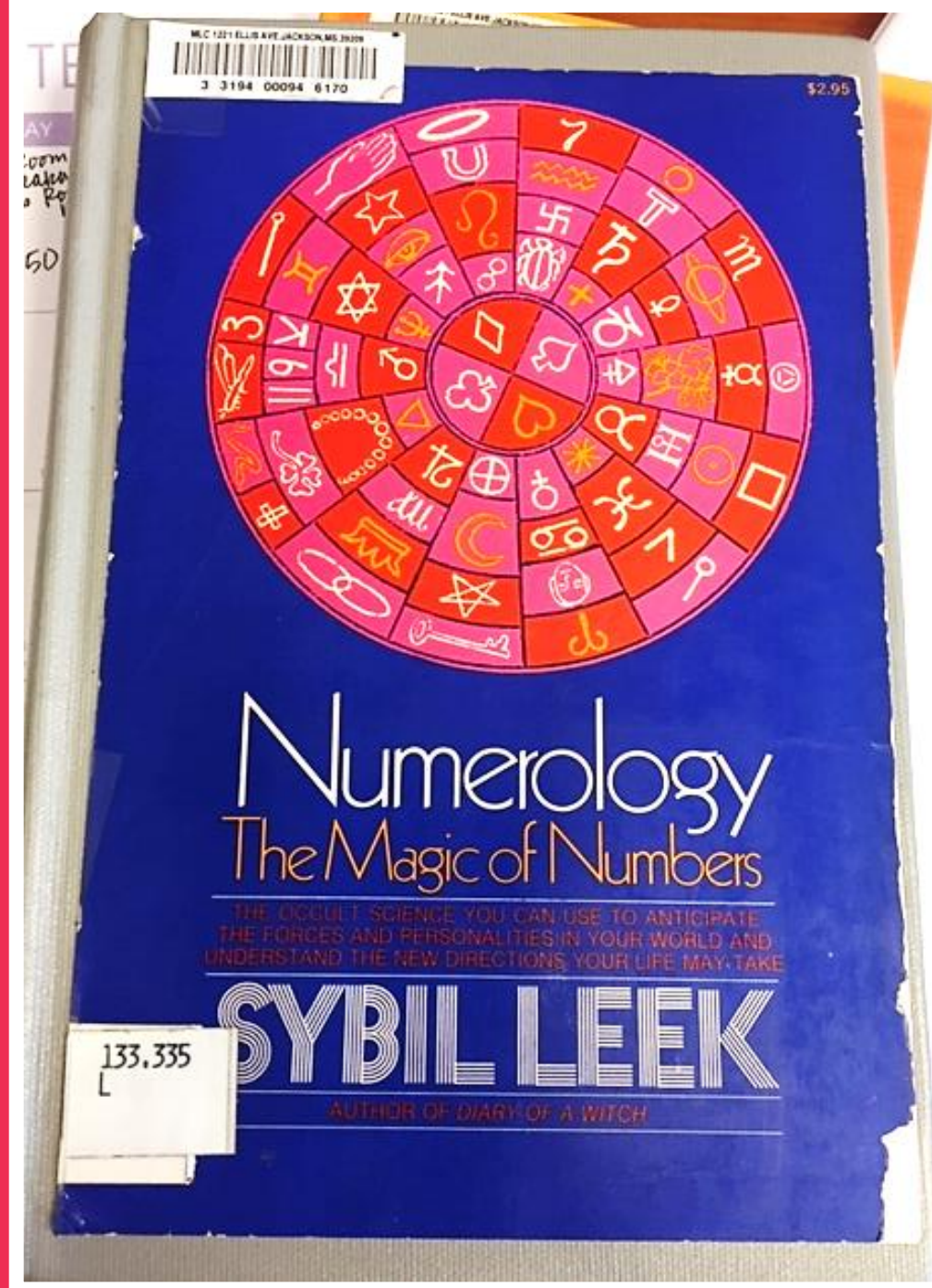
<https://www.tsl.texas.gov/ld/pubs/crew/index.html>

133 (Paranormal Phenomena)

10/3/MUSTIE

Books on the paranormal generally receive high use and should be kept until worn. It will be necessary to replace lost and stolen titles regularly since this category includes the popular topics of witchcraft, fortune telling, dream interpretation, and astrology. High use and wear generally ensures that a fresh supply of books is available.

- Numerology: The Magic of Numbers
- Call number 133.335 L
- Published 1969
- Checked out 8 times since 2010
- Last checkout date 2015
- Only book on subject in collection

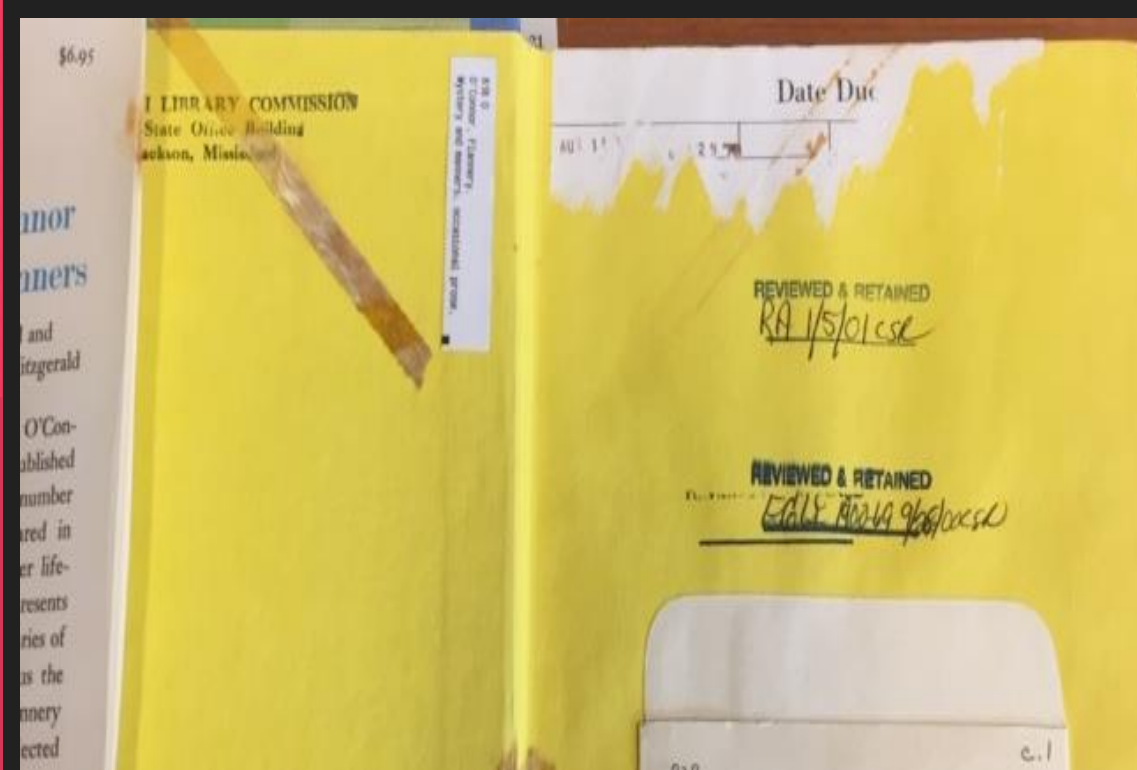


In most public libraries, general (or popular) fiction is cataloged in a separate area and the 800s are reserved for collections of poetry and prose, literary criticism, and, frequently, works of literature by non-Western authors. See the Fiction section (below) for works of popular fiction.

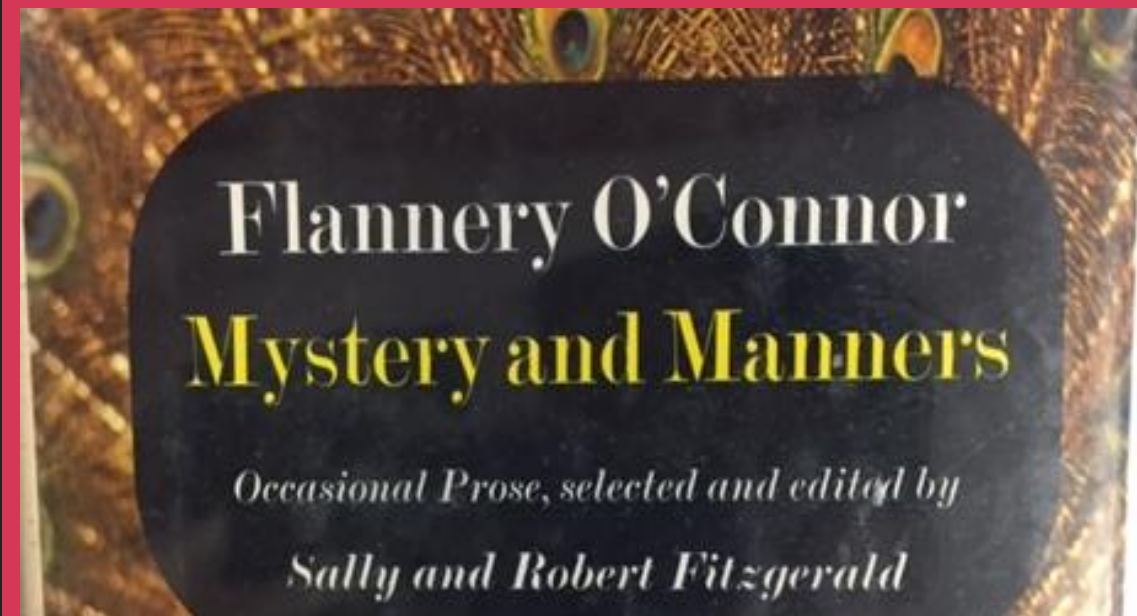
Copyright is not relevant for literature but older editions that are MUSTIE rarely circulate.

Keep basic materials, especially criticism of classic writers. Discard any works of minor writers no longer read in the local schools, unless there is an established demand among the non-student population. Discard older editions of classics that have unappealing covers and yellowing pages, replacing with newer copies or paperback editions. Remember that classics that are being read won't be weeded—don't keep classics just because they are classics!

X/3/MUSTIE



- **Mystery and Manners by Flannery O'Connor**
- **Call number 818 O18**
- **Published 1969**
- **Checked out 5 times since 2010**
- **Last checkout June 2020**



The background of the slide is a dense, overlapping collage of small, rectangular sticky notes in various colors including yellow, blue, green, pink, red, and white. Each sticky note has a large, black question mark printed on it, creating a visual theme of inquiry and uncertainty.

Common Questions

- What if the recommendation from the CREW Method doesn't make sense for my community?
 - It's a guideline—you know your community the best!
- What if there's no formula for the call number of a book?
 - Use your best judgment!
 - Your library may want to create its own default formula for those titles

Common Questions

- What if we get rid of it and then someone wants it?
- If you're on the fence about a title's availability for interlibrary loan, check the [Beehive Resource Sharing System](#):
 - Choose any library to search (no need to login)
 - See the holdings of all public libraries in the state

Time for an Activity!

1. In your breakout rooms, examine the selections assigned to your group
2. Duke it out
3. Decide whether to toss, keep, or replace
4. Be ready to discuss and defend your decisions



Questions?



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