

# Building the Collection

## Course

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### Selection Tools [5:28]

[https://players.brightcove.net/2566261579001/HyuWsfFhb\\_default/index.html?videoId=6321219275112](https://players.brightcove.net/2566261579001/HyuWsfFhb_default/index.html?videoId=6321219275112)

### About

- Learn the importance of building a school library collection that serves diverse interests and needs.
- Learn the value of examining the myriad of resources available for acquisition and support a diverse, ever-changing learning community.
- Learn the benefits of getting involved with other librarians, attending conferences, and working with students and families to continue to build and maintain a valuable school library collection.

### Transcript

As librarians, we know that evaluation criteria can include the resource's content, age, format, accessibility, and authority. Selection tools are the tools that help school librarians identify new and exciting resources using their pre-established evaluation criteria. School librarians use these selection tools with the collection development budget in mind. In this lesson, we will learn the importance of building a collection that serves diverse interests, we will look at the value of becoming familiar with resources available for acquisitions, and finally we will talk about accessing your professional network to help build a valuable school library collection.

Libraries are bound by a resource budget, so it is important to have an idea about the needs of your community to help prioritize genres and formats. Libraries should represent the community in which they serve, while also serving as a window to a different world. Collections are meant to be fluid and reflect societal changes. As a result, setting aside weekly or monthly blocks of time to review a variety of professional selection tools will help ensure you are building a diverse collection.

Prioritize seeking professional recommendations from diverse sources. For example, visit the We Need Diverse Books website, the Association for Jewish libraries website, and LGBTQ reads. Building a neurodiverse, culturally relevant collection with access to resources in multiple formats is a prime responsibility and privilege of the school librarian. If you're looking for a more comprehensive list of selection tools, visit ALA's website and check out their listing of different review sources.

Selection tools are available in a variety of formats. Professional connections on social media can offer valuable recommendations. Blogs written by librarians, book talks seen on TikTok, publisher's Instagram pages, and book-related podcasts are just a few examples. Many library journals offer a starred review section to highlight their strongest recommendations. Professional resources, such as book lists within *School Library Journal*, reviews from *School Library Connection*, *Horn Book*, *Booklist*, *VOYA*, and *Publisher's Weekly* are also worth reviewing for expert reviews and recommendations. Third party services, such as Junior Library Guild, will pre-select books and ship them monthly directly to your library. This type of service is great for librarians serving multiple campuses, each of which may have different collection building needs. Visit ALA's Association for Library Services to Children (ALSC) for a list of children's book award winners. Bound to Stay Bound Books keeps an updated list on their website of each state's award lists. Providing access to books selected for your state's award lists may interest students wishing to compete in statewide reading bowl competitions.

Going beyond print and digital selection tools is invaluable, too. One of the best ways to access your professional network is to attend library conferences. Conferences are a great place to wander the exhibit halls to see what publishing houses are offering, hear from talented authors, and network with other librarians. You can also visit other school libraries to peruse their collections and discover their communal favorites. Gathering student recommendations through a student led collection, development committee or survey students digitally and in-person to seek student book recommendations. Be sure to solicit recommendations from colleagues and families as well. A great idea is to make a suggestion box visible all year long.

Selection tools serve as a gateway to discovering how well a resource meets evaluation criteria to build a collection that best serves the school's unique curricular needs and diverse personal interests. Becoming familiar with all of the different acquisition resources and working within your professional network will help you to build a strong toolbox of selection tools.

### Activities

#### **Compare and Contrast Selection Tools**

Selecting materials to build an inclusive school library collection is one of the greatest privileges of the school librarian. Because we don't know what we don't know, it is beneficial to expand your selection tool network to embody a myriad of evaluative sources. This practice will help you prioritize your spending so that patrons' needs are met academically and personally. After reading the SLC articles in the Resources, complete the Reflect & Practice activity below.

**RESOURCES:**

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**Course Packet**

**Article**

**Article**

**Article**

**REFLECT & PRACTICE:**

After reading the SLC articles, review the authors' lists of recommended resources for identifying quality materials that are representative of a diverse collection. Using the chart on page 20 of the Course Packet (found in the Resources above), identify three sources that will help you build an inclusive school library collection. Be sure to consider why the sources you select might be relevant and meaningful to your community.

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**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

[Bibliography.](#)

**MLA CITATION**

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