



Selection of Learning Resources AP 200.41

Procedure for:	All Academic and Support Staff	Adopted:	May 22, 2012
Submitted by:	Chris N. Roehrig, Superintendent of Education	Revised:	October 15, 2019
Category:	Students		

Purpose

The purpose of this administrative procedure is to provide direction to all academic and support staff regarding the selection of learning resources to be used in our schools.

Responsibilities

Principals, Vice Principals, consultants, teachers, librarians, and other support personnel responsible for acquiring and/or using learning resources must adhere to the directives reflected in this Administrative Procedure.

Principals – responsible for ensuring that all learning resources selected for use with students are appropriate.

Procedures

The intention of all learning resources selected for use in our schools is to enhance the intellectual, religious, moral, physical and social growth of our students. Principals, vice-principals, teachers, consultants, librarians and other support personnel shall select learning resources that:

- Support and enhance the values, traditions and teachings of the Catholic Church.
- Are consistent with the Board's mission and values.
- Are selected according to the curriculum needs of the student/school.
- Are age appropriate and should not conflict with Catholic values.
- Take into consideration the varied interests, abilities and maturity levels of the students served.
- Emphasize quality Canadian resources whenever possible.
- Reflect local needs: knowledge of the community served (primarily its spiritual needs, academic needs).
- Are evaluated according to its merits such as:
 - ✓ accuracy
 - ✓ appropriateness
 - ✓ timeliness
 - ✓ relevancy
- Take into account the concept of "whole vs. part." Each item shall be approached from a broad perspective, looking at the work as a whole and judging controversial elements in context rather than as isolated parts. Magazines, for example, should be selected and purchased for their overall reputations and should not be rejected because of an occasional article that may be offensive.
- Do not violate copyright; restrictions must be adhered to for all learning resources used.
- Are presented as learning tools, not as entertainment (the exception would be books designed to raise student engagement for learning or encouraging leisure reading).
 - ✓ Are considered for moral suitability using the ratings of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (Appendix A), the Ontario Film Review Board's Ontario Film Ratings (Appendix B), and the Canadian Rating System for Home Videos (Appendix C).
 - ✓ Carefully consider the necessity of the resources given the psychological impact of using resources displaying profanity, drugs, graphic violence, and sexual content.



It may occur that the selection of a particular learning resource may be questioned by a parent/guardian, student, staff or community member. In such a case the principal shall:

- Acknowledge the concern and inform the appropriate staff.
- Direct the concerned party to complete a Request for Reconsideration of Selection of Learning and Library Resources form.
- Meet with the concerned party and appropriate staff to discuss the situation in order to arrive at a solution that is acceptable to all parties.

At the school level, the parties may decide to provide an alternative selection for an individual student's use. *The principal will inform the appropriate teacher or librarian of the issue and any resolution.*

If the request to reconsider cannot be successfully resolved at the school level, the concerned party will be advised by the principal of the right to have the unresolved matter deliberated by the Committee for the Review of Learning Resources. If the concerned party wishes to pursue the matter, the principal will inform the appropriate school staff, and the School Superintendent. The concerned party will forward the request form to the Chair of the Committee for the Review of Learning Resources.

The Committee for the Review of Learning Resources is chaired by a Superintendent appointed by the Director of Education and is struck as needed. The Committee membership for the review of learning resources shall include:

- Superintendent of Education
- Religion and Family Life Consultant
- A teacher from the appropriate division/school
- A Catholic priest
- A parent representative
- Other support staff (as warranted)
- Librarian/library technician
- A Principal

It should be noted that no member of the school from which the concern arises may be a member of the committee.

The Chair of the Committee may also ask to meet at a different time or together with the complainant and the person who selected the learning resources or with any other person who may act as a resource to the committee.

The Committee will review the learning resource(s), deliberate the concern and make a recommendation which will be forwarded to the Director of Education.

The decision regarding the learning resource(s) will be made by the Director of Education and a written notice of the decision will be sent within one month's time to the complainant, the school's superintendent and the school's principal who will forward a copy of the notice to the appropriate staff.

Definitions

Learning Resource

Any material with instructional content or function that is used for formal or informal teaching/learning purposes, co-instructional activities and events. These include: a) Print material: library books, magazines, newspapers, pictures, diagrams, maps, charts, etc.; b) Non-print material: videotapes, DVDs, films, slides, audiobooks, audiotapes, compact disks, electronic resources, (CD-ROMs, computer programs, Internet resources, etc.), digital files (e.g., streaming video, MP3s, JPEGs, etc.).



Resources

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops - <http://www.usccb.org/movies/>

Ontario Film Review Board - <http://www.ofrb.gov.on.ca/english/default.htm>

The Canadian Motion Picture Distributors Association - <http://www.cmpda.ca/>

Catholic News Service - <http://www.catholicnews.com/data/moviews/list.htm>



**Appendix A
UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS
Office for Film and Broadcasting**

DEFINITIONS OF CLASSIFICATIONS:

A-I: General Patronage

Strictly speaking, this does not simply connote films that are “for” children, or films in which they would necessarily be interested. Rather, any film free from significant objectionable content might receive this classification. In the old Hollywood days, when it was assumed that virtually all mainstream films were acceptable for all audiences, many films with “adult” subject matter, like “Giant,” received this classification. Nowadays, with even the cleanest adult films containing at least one four-letter word, such examples are rare.

A-II: Adults and Adolescents

Though a 13-year-old is technically an adolescent, the original intent of this classification was an endorsement for older teens. However, some ambiguity remains in this category, and the Office generally indicates whether the film is most appropriate for “older teens” or anyone over the age of 13. Films with nudity, overt sexual activity (even if implied), violence with bloodshed, and use of four letter words are almost never allowed in the A-I or A-II categories. “Akeelah and the Bee” – an uplifting film about a girl who wins a spelling bee – is one exception. In the film, one schoolmate utters an expletive. Yet, “Akeelah” was deemed so appropriate and inspirational for young viewers that the movie was classified A-I.

A-III: Adults

This can be a tricky category. Adult sensibilities run the gamut from a cosmopolitan readership with a wider tolerance for edgy subject matter to more sensitive moviegoers who find certain elements less palatable. We try to strike a balance between the two. Oftentimes, a worthy film is clearly “adult” in subject matter, but older teens might derive benefit from it, so a sentence may be added about it being “acceptable” or “possibly acceptable” for “older teens.” Dramatically justified violence, moderate sexual content of a “non-deviant” nature, restrained nudity, and valid use of coarse language are permissible here.

L: Limited Adult Audience, Films Whose Problematic Content Many Adults Would Find Troubling

This is an extremely restrictive classification, suggesting a far narrower allowance than may sometimes be realized, and therefore excluding even most adult viewers. It had originally been the A-IV category that had been defined as “certain movies that require some analysis and explanation in order to avoid mistaken interpretations and false conclusions.” The L, like the A-IV before it, is generally for those quality films that have more challenging material than an A-III in terms of nudity, sex, violence, or language, but are still worthy, if viewed in the appropriate Catholic context. In the 1960s, for instance, those increasingly permissive European films (from Bergman, DeSica, Fellini, and so on) which – at that time – far eclipsed what was allowed by the Hollywood production code, but were nonetheless works of great aesthetic value, were given the A-IV. To these, we would add some films that, if not necessarily worthy artistically, nonetheless are too strong for an A-III but not offensive enough to merit an O.

O: Morally Offensive

This is the present-day counterpart to the old C or “condemned” rating. This classification is for films that are excessively violent, graphically sexual, or laden with non-stop vulgarity, or that have little or no redeeming social value or dramatic justification.

“Torture porn” films like the “Saw” or “Hostel” franchise, gross-out comedies like “Superbad” and “Good Luck Chuck” are naturals for this category. But even classier fare such as “Feast of Love” or the Judd Apatow brand of R-rated humor – “Knocked Up” and “The 40-Year-Old-Virgin” – with their surprisingly moral endings, which in themselves would be praiseworthy – nonetheless get O’s for their over-the-top raunchy humor and pervasive expletives.

Films that directly seem to contradict church teaching on matters such as euthanasia (“Million Dollar Baby,” “The Sea Inside”), suicide (“Thelma & Louise”), vigilante killing and revenge (“The Brave One”) also get O’s no matter how lauded they are by the secular press.



Appendix B

ONTARIO FILM RATINGS - Ontario Film Review Board

GENERAL (G): Suitable for all ages

Guidelines

Language: Occasional use of words such as darn, damn, hell.

Violence: Restrained portrayals of limited violence that may result in extremely limited bloodletting.

Nudity: Casual, non-sexual nudity with no close-ups.

Sexual Activity: Limited embracing, kissing in a loving context.

Horror: Brief moments of mild horror in comedic, historic, or fantasy settings (for example, dragons, giants, wicked witches).

Psychological Impact: Sensitive to treatments of scenes or situations related to a child's sense of security and well-being.

PARENTAL GUIDANCE (PG): Parental Guidance Advised

Guidelines

Language: Limited use of stronger expletives and/or slurs and/or mild sexual references.

Violence: Restrained portrayals of non-graphic violence, integral to the plot. The portrayals are not prolonged; there are no close-ups; bloodletting and/or tissue damage is limited.

Nudity: Brief nudity in a non-sexual context, non-exploitative close-up.

Sexual Activity: Embracing, kissing in a loving context; mild sexual innuendo.

Horror: Exciting horror scenes and some grotesque images may be allowed in a fantasy or comedic context, but there will be no detailed and/or prolonged focus on gory images or suffering.

Psychological Impact: Sensitive to treatments of scenes and situations that may cause adverse psychological impact on children. May include frightening or emotionally upsetting situations involving threats, injury, illness, family problems, or death to young people, family member and animals (particularly pets).

14 ADULT ACCOMPANIMENT (14A): Persons younger than 14 years must be accompanied by an adult.

Guidelines

Language: Coarse language and/or slurs directed to specific segments of society; sexual references. Infrequent strong, aggressive language

Violence: Portrayals of violence resulting in some bloodletting and/or tissue damage, which may or may not be fatal. Violence should be within the context of the film.

Nudity: Full frontal nudity, non-detailed, brief, casual, non-close up, in a non-sexual situation.

Sexual Activity: Kissing, petting, fondling, implied sexual activity; sexual innuendo.

Horror: Occasional gory moments and some grotesque images, but these will not be detailed.

Psychological Impact: Occasional upsetting scenes that will tend to be more frightening, intense, disturbing - particularly to younger viewers. More mature themes can be portrayed. Threats with some abusive dialogue may be considered.

18 ADULT ACCOMPANIMENT (18A) Persons younger than 18 years must be accompanied by an adult.

Guidelines

Language: Very intense & aggressive coarse language &/or slurs or sexual references, usually accompanied by violence directed toward the person(s). Frequent sexual references.

Violence: Frequent and/or prolonged portrayals of violence resulting in bloodletting and/or tissue damage. Limited instances of brief, visually explicit portrayals of violence.

Nudity: Limited instances of brief, full frontal nudity in a sexual situation.

Sexual Activity: Limited instances of brief simulated sexual activity.

Horror: Gory or grotesque imagery may be more frequent or detailed, but will generally avoid prolonged focus.

Psychological Impact: Frequent upsetting, disturbing or frightening scenes that may cause adverse psychological impact on some mature viewers.

RESTRICTED (R) Restricted to persons 18 years of age or over

Guidelines

Language: No restriction.

Violence: Visually explicit portrayals of violence, which may be characterized by extreme brutality, extreme bloodletting and extreme tissue damage. May include torture, horror, sexual violence.

Nudity: Full frontal nudity in a sexual situation.



Appendix C
CANADIAN RATING SYSTEM FOR HOME VIDEOS
Canadian Motion Pictures Distributors Association

General (G):	Suitable for all audiences.
Parental Guidance (PG):	Parental guidance advised.
14A:	Suitable for people 14 years of age and older.
18A:	Suitable for persons 18 years of age and older.
Restricted (R):	Restricted to 18 years of age and older.
Exempt:	Contains material not subject to classification, i.e., documentaries, nature, travel, music, culture, sports and leisure, educational and instructional information.



Request for Reconsideration of Learning Resources

***Note: This form has been developed to provide space for comments. Please add extra pages, if necessary.*

School: _____

Date: _____

Your name and contact information: _____

Please address the following questions as fully as possible in order that this matter may be thoroughly reviewed by the school administrator. Please add extra sheets or write on the back if more space is needed.

1. Share details of the resource(s) in question (author, title...)

2. Describe the nature of your concern with this resource? Please be specific. In your response, please add if you reviewed the entire work or sections of it. In the case of a section, what section(s) were reviewed.

3. What do you believe is the main idea of the material/resource?

4. What do you feel may be the effect upon students who use this resource in their learning? Does your concern eliminate all value the resource may have for students?

5. What do you feel may be of value in this resource?

6. What do you think would be a satisfactory resolution?

7. Do you have any other comments you would like to add?

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please return this form to your child's school administrator.