

**Young Adult Fiction**  
**Updated 1/23/04**

**DESCRIPTION**

The primary purpose of the Young Adult fiction collection is to meet the recreational reading needs of independent adolescent readers. In addition, to a lesser degree, the collection supports fiction reading for academic as well as intellectual, spiritual and emotional development. The Young Adult Fiction collection includes books with a wide variety of themes central to the adolescent experience. These themes relate to self-discovery and coming-of-age including relationships within and outside of the family; examination of values; dramatic life events such as death, divorce and substance abuse; and sexual awakening. Books generally feature an adolescent protagonist. These themes may be presented through a variety of settings, time periods and literary styles but it is their relationship to adolescence that is the primary determinant for their inclusion in this collection.

**EXCEPTIONS AND SCOPE**

All genres are represented in the collection with some special emphasis on mystery and light horror because they hold particular appeal for teens. Exploration of sexual and romantic relationships is incorporated into many of the books in this collection; however, traditional or formulaic romance is generally satisfied by series or original paperback titles that are cataloged for access. Sports is a popular element for readers of both genders and an effort is made to include all types.

Science Fiction/Fantasy is a popular genre with teen readers; however, there tends to be little differentiation in content between what would be characterized as "adult" or "teen." Because the adult Science Fiction/Fantasy collection is nearby, few titles purchased for the adult science fiction collection are duplicated. Other science fiction titles are considered if the primary characters are adolescents or the theme is primarily of interest to this audience.

*New* Young Adult fiction is segregated at the beginning of the collection and occupies one shelving unit. Each book is labeled with a *new* sticker and remains in this area for roughly six months. Mystery, Science Fiction/Fantasy, Western and genres are identified with spine labels and subject headings but are interfiled in the collection and shelved in alphabetical order by the author's last name.

In addition to providing a place for the body of literature written specifically for young adults, this collection has a secondary purpose as a bridge between the reading interests of the child and that of the adult in order to promote reading as an activity that will last a lifetime. Because of this, there is limited, yet intentional, duplication of titles in both the adult and juvenile fiction collections. These are generally confined to books appropriate for the mature child and works by authors that have written for both children and adolescents, which may serve as an enticement to the collection for the early adolescent. Periodically books are purchased that are written primarily for adults but are of exceptional interest to young adults and might otherwise be missed if not included here.

An effort is made to include books at a variety of reading levels to accommodate the broad range of reading skills that are characteristic of adolescence. Reviews often note titles requiring particularly high or low reading skills.

## **AUDIENCE**

The target audience for Young Adult Fiction is adolescents between 12 and 18. The collection's purpose is to highlight literature of interest to adolescents, which means that use by readers both younger and older should be expected. Typical use patterns for this collection would include a small contingent of readers as young as 10, with primary users between 12 and 16, and a tapering off between 17 to 18 year olds as they begin to migrate to the adult fiction collections. There is occasional use of this collection by adults for general recreational reading and by students who are studying young adult literature. A smaller fraction of potential users are new English speakers who look for easy reading with semi-sophisticated themes and plots, beyond titles available in the Easy Reading collection.

## **SIZE AND DUPLICATION**

As of 1/23/04 there are 2,322 Young Adult titles. This is a little more than one-third the size of the Juvenile Fiction collection and approximately one-fifth the size of Adult Fiction. The difference in the size and depth of this collection in comparison to other fiction collections is a result of the transitional nature of the collection and the ability as well as the desirability of Young Adult readers to read fiction from the juvenile and adult fiction collections. There is projected growth for this collection. Time and use will indicate to what degree this collection will expand and grow in the new library.

Current issues and settings are often themes in many of the books in this collection, and can make an otherwise appropriate book dated. The proportion of books that would be considered classics is smaller than either the adult or juvenile fiction collections.

Multiple copies of titles are purchased when demand warrants duplication. Demand can be somewhat predicted by recent circulation, awards lists, and reserves. Books by perennially popular authors with a history of well written books are ordered as soon as they appear in pre-pub lists or advertisements without waiting for reviews, and multiple copies purchased if reviews are good. With aggressive marketing aimed at the teen audience by booksellers, long-running series books are sought after by some readers. Because of the limited space available, series are carefully selected with only the best reviewed and most requested added. Once selected, there is a commitment to ensure that at least one copy of each book in the series is purchased for the collection as long as there is sustained demand for titles in the series.

## **MAINTENANCE**

Items are withdrawn from the collection when they are in poor condition, cannot be easily repaired, or are no longer of interest as measured by circulation. Replacements are ordered for withdrawn, lost, or long overdue material if the circulation history and/or determination of value to the collection suggest replacement is needed and funds are available.

Item purge is run annually for items that have not circulated in the past 12 months. Any title that appears on an item purge list is a strong candidate for withdrawal or evaluation for replacement if the item is missing.

Settings and cover art tend to date rather quickly so shelf review is important to identify books on the downward slide and helps to maintain the vitality of this collection. Attention is given to books that have been made into movies. Often books are re-released with updated cover art from the movie and these editions are preferred. Hardbacks are purchased for replacement when available. Replacements available only in paperback will be bound if heavy use is expected.

Shelving is currently adequate for the collection.

## **SELECTION**

The universe of items available is growing rapidly. There are more favorable reviews and items available than money to purchase. Standard selection criteria is applied. Authenticity of settings, characterization, age of the protagonist, and cover art are particularly important in selecting for this collection.

Standard review sources such as Booklist, Publisher's Weekly, and Kirkus are consulted for generally reliable, pre-pub reviews. Specialized review sources including VOYA (Voice of Youth Advocates), Horn Book, and School Library Journal provide more critical reviews of books and are used for confirming considerations from pre-pub sources and filling in books that have been missed by the more general review journals. Popular magazines such as Seventeen Magazine, Teen People, and Rolling Stone are also regularly perused to keep abreast of trends and topics of interest to young adults and to discover books noted or reviewed.

The American Library Association's YALSA division provides annual awards and book lists that are used for guidance. These include [Alex Awards](#), [Best Books for Young Adults](#), [Michael L. Printz Award](#), [Outstanding Books for the College Bound](#), [Popular Paperbacks for Young Adults](#), [Quick Picks for Reluctant Young Adult Readers](#), and [Teens' Top Ten](#). VOYA's annual list of [Best Science Fiction and Fantasy Books](#) is excellent and frequently posted near the Young Adult collection. Books included on the nomination list for the Iowa Teen Award and any lists distributed in local secondary schools are always purchased and sometimes in multiples if demand becomes apparent.

Paperback series or other paperbacks selected that are predicted to have high circulation or longevity are often bound prior to circulation. The selector may choose to order one copy to circulate immediately and one copy to send to the bindery.

Gifts are not a significant factor. They are not donated in large numbers and books in good condition are most often passed on for use at deposit collections.

Patron suggestions are welcome and the requested items are considered using standard selection criteria that apply to the rest of the collection. A moderate number of requests are received.