



**DURHAM CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**
Learning and Living in Faith

Framework for the Selection of Culturally Responsive and Relevant Learning Resources

The purpose of this framework is to guide educators in our system to select and reconsider resources, films, and presentations that are accessible, reflect diversity, and are conducive to facilitating meaningful learning experiences for our students, embedding the principles of human rights, equity and inclusion within DCDSB learning resources.

To inform this process, criteria is provided in four interconnected areas, followed by guiding questions to discern the appropriate selection of culturally responsive and relevant learning resources.

The following considerations should be given while reviewing resources:

1. The age and developmental appropriateness of the intended audience of the resource should provide context for the use of the resource. It may be appropriate for one audience, but not another.
2. Resources should not be eliminated on a collective basis, for instance by removing all books in a series based upon concerns identified in one book of the series.
3. The guiding questions in each area should not be applied individually to determine the appropriateness of the resource. Instead, teachers should use this framework collectively as a whole to determine the appropriateness of a resource.
4. For the purpose of Religious and Family Life education, the Institute for Catholic Education (ICE) works in collaboration with the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario (ACBO) to develop and publish the primary resources that are to be used in classrooms (e.g., *Born in the Spirit, Blessed and Beloved*).

Mission of the Catholic Church

When selecting resources, whether in a classroom collection or online or in the school library, care must be taken in selecting materials that support the expectations of the Family Life Education curriculum and that respect the developmental nature of the learning in this area for students. (*p 18, Ontario Catholic Elementary Curriculum Policy Document, Grades 1 – 8 Family Life Education, 2024*)

Questions for Consideration

1. Does the resource contribute positively to the overall mission and identity of the Catholic School?
2. Does the resource focus on excellence in faith formation as well as academic achievement?

3. Does the resource promote equity, democracy, and solidarity for a just, peaceful and compassionate society, fostering a positive sense of self and the dignity of others?
4. Is the resource aligned with the grade level expectations of the Ontario Family Life Curriculum and/or the Ontario Religious Education Curriculum?

Ministry of Education Directives

- Resources will have relevance to the curriculum as outlined by the Ministry, the Board and the school.
- Resources used as textbooks will be selected from the Trillium List – The Ministry of Education list of approved textbooks.
- In the selection of learning resources, staff will adhere to copyright restrictions and appropriate licensing agreements. Refer to DCDSB's Copyright Policy (PO439)

Questions for Consideration

1. Is the resource in alignment with grade-appropriate curriculum expectations, content and learning goals?

Diverse Interests of Students

- Resources will develop literary and aesthetic appreciation, encourage the exploration of different points of view, and enable students to develop, with guidance, the best practices of inquiry-based learning, virtues education, citizenship, communication, critical thinking, collaboration and creativity, and the ability to become informed decision-makers, problem-solvers and lifelong learners.
- Resources will address specific interests, abilities, curriculum expectations and needs of students in terms of their emotional development, intellectual development, language development, physical development, social development, and learning styles

Questions for Consideration

1. Does the resource contribute to a wide representation of your students' identities, backgrounds and lived experiences, validating both student interests and cultural history?
2. Does the resource foster a positive sense of self and respect for the dignity and welfare of others?
3. Does the resource present potentially triggering content that may be sensitive or traumatic to students?
4. Does the resource provide opportunities for students to act considering gospel values by respecting the human rights, responsibilities, and contributions of self and others?
5. Does the resource allow students to access the content with sufficient difficulty (prior knowledge, reading level, Multi-Lingual Learners (MLL), age-appropriateness)?

Equity and Inclusion*

- Resources will be in alignment with the DCDSB's Anti Racism Policy and must promote anti-racism and equitable treatment of individuals or groups regardless of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, disability, gender expression, gender identity, receipt of public assistance, record of offences, as set out in the Ontario Human Rights Code, or on the basis of other, similar factors.

- The physical format of all resources will be suitable for their intended use. Non-print resources should be user friendly and compatible with existing equipment. Accessibility standards for new purchases must be considered when purchasing new resources – Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) compliance for materials bought after 2020.
- Staff should include Canadian learning resources representing Indigenous Peoples' perspective and the creative talent of our nation when making selections. These resources should focus on strengthening student knowledge and understanding of Indigenous histories, cultures, perspectives, contributions, and ways of knowing to support the Calls to Action outlined in the Truth and Reconciliation Report (2015).
- Staff should include resources that reflect positive representation and recognition of equity deserving and/or historically marginalized communities. They should validate the histories of students' identities, families and communities.

*Reference Policy 516 when selecting and reconsidering resources related to Indigenous Education.

Questions for Consideration:

1. Can the resource be accessed in different formats and alternative versions (e.g., film, audio, adapted texts, dual language books)?
2. Does the resource portray specific groups (e.g., Black, Indigenous, Racialized Groups; 2SLGBTQ+; etc.) in society in a tokenistic, stereotypical, or derogatory manner?
3. Does the resource exclusively portray Western worldviews while silencing or omitting the perspectives related to the history, cultural heritage and pluralism of today's contemporary society?
4. Will the resource increase access and opportunity for under-represented individuals/groups?
5. Are there individuals/groups that will be disproportionately and negatively affected by this resource (e.g., unintended consequences)?

NOTE: All non-print resources including audio-visual, guest speakers, digital resources will be consistent with the criteria listed above where applicable as well as with the mission, vision and values of Catholic Education.