# The School Library Monthly Update

from SD State Library School Library Services

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## DITCH DEWEY...OR DON'T!

Ditching the Dewey Decimal System has been a hot topic in the library world for quite some time, and you probably either love the idea, hate the idea, or just don't have time for it. Regardless of opinion, there have been many libraries - both school and public - that have made the transition to the Genrefication System and have statistics to prove its effectiveness.

I encourage you to both view the webinar and read the genrefication guide below with an open mind and to consider how an updated organizational system in your library may better help your literacy efforts with your students. Because if your goals are to get more books in the hands of your students, to make it easier for your students to find the books they desire reading, and to make the library more user-friendly, then genrefication is one of the best solutions. Keep in mind, as well, that it is very likely that you have already done some level of genrefication in your library (yes, it's true!) and that through the process of genrefication, you also get to weed your collection!

If you still aren't convinced (or you don't have time) to make any major changes to your library, there are other tactics you can employ to make your library more browser-friendly (found at the end of the video and the guide). Ultimately, it is about finding what works for you, your students, and your library.

## Genrefication Webinar & Slide Deck

## Genrefication Guide
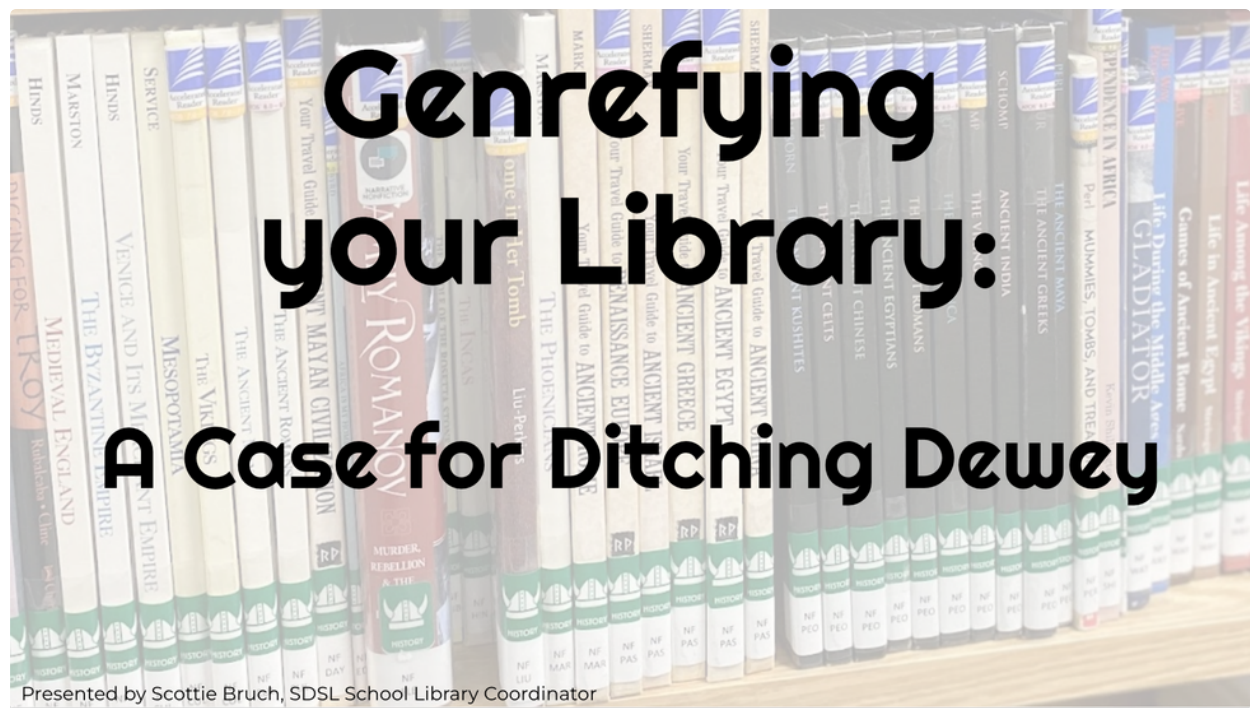
# THE SCHOOL LIBRARY GENREFICATION GUIDE

If you are thinking about genrefying your library or you are currently in the process of genrefying your library, then this guide is for you. And, although this guide will go into the pros and cons of the Dewey Decimal System and of the Genrefication System, it is not meant to persuade anyone to change the way they organize their library. It is, however, meant to encourage you to think about how you can best support literacy efforts in your library and engage your student readers.

A genre is a label that tells its audience what to expect. It is the organization and classification of writing into categories such as fiction and nonfiction, but also into smaller sub-categories of fiction and nonfiction. Genrefication, then, is the process of organizing, classifying, and categorizing items in your library into genres. In many libraries, some form of genrefication is already happening: separating fiction from nonfiction, putting graphic novels in their own section, or creating special shelving for poetry and biographies. While this may not have been an intentional attempt at genrefication, it was most likely done to make it easier for students to browse for and find the books that they like - which is the goal and proven outcome of genrefication.

In fact, many librarians choose to transition to a genrefied system because of the questions they receive from students on a regular basis: "Do you have any other books like Maze Runner?" or "Where are the sports books?" or "Are there other authors like Sarah Dessen?" or "Where are all of the war and military books?" These questions prove to us that most readers look for new books based on genre...not by author name or title. And while the Dewey Decimal System is set up in this manner for nonfiction books, it does have flaws that make it difficult for readers to locate books, and it is very rarely used for the classification of fiction books. So, let's dive into the nuts and bolts of genrefication and how you can use it in your library to help students find the books they love. If you aren't ready to genrefy yet, stick around until the end! We'll talk about alternative methods you can use in your library to achieve some of the same outcomes.

If we are going to make any changes, we should first understand what we are making a change from. In the fiction section, genrefication means that we are simply chunking like with like. Instead of having the entire fiction section organized alphabetically by author last name, genrefication has us putting all of the fiction sports books together and then arranging those books alphabetically. In the nonfiction section, genrefication means transitioning away from the Dewey Decimal System.

## School Library Scoop Ep21: Genrefication

# Weeding Guide

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## THE SCHOOL LIBRARY WEEDING GUIDE

Collection maintenance and weeding are important components of a school library's collection management system. The collection should be reviewed on a consistent basis for accuracy, currency, usage, range, and subject area gaps. Collection maintenance involves care of materials, accurate and efficient shelving, cleaning, checking digital materials for broken links and sufficient coverage and usage, and evaluating all resources for accuracy, currency, and relevancy.

Weeding (or the deselection of material) is an important part of the collection maintenance process. In addition to evaluating materials for accuracy, currency, and relevancy, the following should also be considered: space limitations, edition, format, physical condition, and the number of copies available. Weeding should not be used as a tool for the removal of controversial materials.

School libraries should have policies to guide material selection, collection maintenance, and weeding. This ensures an efficient and procedural way to manage the collection and also ensures that students and staff have the most accurate, current, and relevant resources available to them. The policies should include guidance on the repair, replacement, and removal of materials, including who is responsible for maintenance, inventory, and weeding and the correct procedure for removal.

**Example from the American Library Association:**
Annually, the school librarian will conduct an inventory of the school library collection and equipment. The inventory can be used to determine losses and remove damaged or worn materials which can then be considered for replacement. The inventory can also be used to deselect and remove materials that are no longer relevant to the curriculum or of interest to students. Additionally, school librarians should develop a collection maintenance plan that includes systematic inspection of materials that would result in weeding outdated, damaged, or irrelevant materials from the collection.

"It does not matter how many books you
may have, but whether they are good or not."
- *Epistolae Morale Lucius Annaeus SENECA 3 B.C.-65 A.D*

SDSL - 8/2022                                                                                        1

Join in the **SDSL School Library Collect + Connect Meet-up (Wednesday 11/2, 3:30pm MT/4:30pm CT)**! These meet-ups will be held monthly via Zoom and are an opportunity for school librarians

COLLECT
+
CONNECT

November's session will be an open chat discussion about **GENREFICATION AND WEEDING** in the library. Pre-register for the meet-up HERE. Once registered, you will receive the Zoom link on the morning of the event.

## Stay in the Know

As we head into the new school year, communication from SDSL School Services will look a little different than it has in the past. The School Library Weekly Update will now be a School Library Monthly Update. The link to this newsletter and any other pertinent weekly school library news will be sent out from Brenda Hemmelman on the school library listserv every Tuesday morning in the SDSL Weekly Update. Please be sure to watch for it!

In addition to SDSL Weekly Update and the School Library Monthly Update, there are a few more places that you may want to bookmark so that you are always in-the-know about important school library services and resources:

- SDSL School Library Services Page on the SDSL Website
- SDSL School Library Resources Libguide
- SDSL School Library Services Digital Binder
- SDSL School Library Services Professional Development Website

## School Library Services

Supporting South Dakota school librarians and educators by providing professional development, resources for teaching and learning, and opportunities for collaboration

**Public Libraries** / School Library Services

STUDENT RESEARCH DATABASES

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

STAY IN TOUCH

## ...from SDSL School Library Services

The Weekly Update is a correspondence from the South Dakota State Library focusing on current topics in school libraries, best practices, resources, professional development, and more.

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