



The goal of educators at GRACE Christian School, both as Christians and as college preparatory instructors, is to equip students for life. Reading texts together allows for collective discussion of issues that are spiritual, moral, social, political, and philosophical. Our desire is for the reading, activities, and discussions to draw students closer to a relationship with Jesus Christ even though the stories and characters studied may reflect flaws in that relationship. We believe the texts selected for instruction at GRACE Christian School should accomplish these goals.

## **Guiding Principle for Selection of Materials**

Our guiding principle is to apply a Christian worldview while we examine the features of literature that may include 'broken' characters facing conflicts. Works are selected for literary merit, student interest, cultural awareness, appropriate lexile range, and cross-curricular connections. Books are among our best teachers of compassion and historical context and are instrumental in developing intellectual, emotional, and spiritual maturity. We read to understand experiences that relate to our status as both image-bearers of God and humans born with a sin nature, and allow us to mature into informed and effective global citizens.

## **Considerations for Selection of Materials**

### **OBJECTIVE OF SELECTION POLICY**

Materials are thoughtfully selected for appropriateness and effectiveness in meeting educational goals at GRACE Christian School. Some non-Christian materials may be included for literary merit and educational value. Parents should be aware that not all items selected for the curricular goals will be Christian or comfortable to every family. It is the school's desire to teach students to critically evaluate what they read. It is important for parents to know that they should be actively involved in helping their children evaluate what they read and discuss the issues presented.

### **RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELECTION**

The Selection Committee includes a group of people representative of faculty, staff, and administration. The Selection Committee agrees that it is the expectation of all instructors (or a group of GRACE instructors) to personally read and approve books that are on their reading lists (required and recommended). Departments will have a rationale for the inclusion of required and recommended material that can be supported if a book is questioned at a later time by a student/parent/Board member, etc.

### **SELECTION CRITERIA**

***The selection committee should be familiar enough with content for consideration so that they choose materials for inclusion wisely.***

**TRUTH:** *Ultimate truth exists and is based on the Word of God, and all information can be measured by it.*

**AUTHORITY:** *GRACE Christian School recognizes the authority of the Bible and the*

*order God established through government, church, school, and home.*

**VALUE:** *Academic standards require that many kinds of materials be made available for student use, even those which may not be consistent with biblical truth.*

Generally, materials are selected on the basis of these criteria (in no particular order of importance):

- educational significance
- contribution the subject makes to the curriculum and to the students' interests
- favorable reviews found in selection sources
- favorable recommendations based on examination of materials
- reputation and significance of the author, producer, and publisher
- contribution the material makes to breadth of representative viewpoints on controversial issues
- high aesthetic quality and/or literary contribution, including:
  - keen awareness of the subtleties of thought and language that promote the students' creative use of language
  - characters and plot that are convincing, with evidence of growth and character development
  - sensitivity to others and their needs that gives insight to personal relationships and feelings.
- quality and variety of format
- timeliness or permanence
- Is the item high in literary merit and/or factual content and presentation?
- Is it grade-level and/or age-appropriate?

Selections will contribute to the breadth of representative viewpoints on controversial issues and noted for strengths rather than rejected for weaknesses. They may have words or ideas that deal with issues or human qualities not recommended as ways for a Christian to speak or act, but are identified as important for students to understand within the storyline. These additional criteria will be used to determine conformity to our standards.

### Language

Inappropriate language is defined as profanity or obscenity. If a significant amount of inappropriate language is found in a book under consideration, the book will be rejected. If the offensive language is infrequent or appropriate in context, the selection may be considered on the basis of other merits for acceptance or rejection.

### Sex

In materials in which the subject of sex is taught, described or mentioned: Is the element of sex functional and necessary to the story? Is it mentioned or explicitly described? What is the moral tone of the entire work? Materials of sexual identity exploration will be considered on its other merits for acceptance or rejection.

### Doctrine

Concerning Christian doctrine, the adopted materials should be reasonably balanced on those matters in which Christians differ by denominational traditions. Selected materials will not be used that advocate justification by works, express disrespect for the local church, and/or any other doctrine contrary to GRACE's Statement of Faith. In addition, selected material will allow for the integration of a distinctively Christian perspective and Christian discernment on issues and are not openly or covertly hostile to a Christian perspective. Discussion is encouraged so students will know the full spectrum and depth of the concepts.

### Presentation of God

Works that show God as unfair or mythical or misrepresent the person, and nature of Christ (such as *Night*) will not be taught as Truth, but will be taught in context of Christ's role as Savior, Redeemer, and the Son of God.

### Occult / Evil

Unless books of fantasy contain a significant amount of evil or evil triumphs over good, they will be considered separately on their other merits for selection or rejection. No materials will be selected that deal with witchcraft, demon possession, etc. unless such material is presented as satanic for the purposes of comparative religious studies.

### Treatment of Controversial Subjects

Whether fiction or nonfiction, works will be evaluated by the Selection Committee. Materials dealing with drugs, suicide, immoral lifestyle, violence, etc. will be evaluated by these questions:

- Is the element informative or sensational?
- Is it instructively descriptive or explicitly descriptive?
- Is it accepted as the norm?
- What is the moral tone of the work?

The GRACE Christian School Selection Committee supports the principles of intellectual freedom inherent in the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States, although the school's mission statement and core values guide the practice of these principles.

### **DIVERSITY**

Believing that God created man in His image, GRACE wants to utilize materials that reflect the community it serves. Therefore, it will make intentional decisions to adopt curricular materials that represent many religious, ethnic and cultural groups and their contributions to our national heritage and global community while maintaining a Christ-centered worldview. The selected materials on different lifestyles, i.e. sexual orientation, will be limited.

### **CHALLENGED MATERIALS**

Materials will be chosen with thoughtful attention to their appropriateness for a Christian school. The school should provide a wide range of resources on all levels of difficulty with a diversity of appeal and different points of view.

Currently the process for handling complaints requires a written complaint. Challenges of materials will be directed to the selection committee. The complaint must be in writing, using the **Request for Reconsideration of Material form**. It will ask the person making the complaint to read the selection policy and complete the form prior to submitting a signed complaint.

The processing of the complaint will follow the current procedure: it will be reviewed by both the Selection Committee and school administration. A prompt response and resolution will be communicated to the person making the complaint.

**The item in question will be suspended during this process.** The Selection Committee and Administration will review the resource in question and advise the person making the complaint, of the action that will take place.