



librarians should consider cultural biases and power relations when creating genre-based labels related to a book's content, as discussed in the next section.

### **Labeling Content**

*School librarians should avoid using prejudicial and identity-based labeling practices.*

The ALA's makes a  
distinction between viewpoint-neutral directional labels that increase learners' access to information and support their First Amendment right to read and prejudicial labels, which are based on value judgments used to warn patrons or limit access to certain materials. A label that describes materials as "controversial" or warns readers of "mature themes" is an example of a label that contains a value judgment, since what i03>4.645<09.2w 1 0 0 1 243.365 14 Td [(h3)m 78.833 0 Td [(o)-3.



based on a learner's age or grade, since the needs, interests, and readiness levels of two children of the same age may be vastly different.

It is also important for school policies to recognize the distinctions between a school library's need to be accessible to all learners and a classroom library's more narrowly targeted collection, which may focus on the needs of a specific age group or instructional goal. Because the school library's goal is to meet the needs of its entire community's information-seeking, curricular, and leisure reading goals, its collection and labeling practices will necessarily be more inclusive and less restrictive than some classroom libraries.

### **Protecting Learner Privacy**

*School librarians have a responsibility to protect learner privacy and confidentiality when considering any practice that places a label on the outside of a book or on library shelving.*

Labeling and shelving a book with an assigned reading level or an indicator of content on its spine allows other learners to observe the reading level and reading interests of their peers and should be avoided.

anyeadrand c br

o48 TD6999Ae-5.1ddr( a )53(de)4onllow a spe 7(ab0)-39bdeer(e)4.4(b0.001 Tc 0.002 Tw T\* [(o1TD 26( )Tj [((as)-5.4be  
o48 TD [(W)1.7(oue)4.4(r)2.7(d e)4.4(o0 -3.8e)4.4(hr)2.de1.(n23.84 -3.8pr)2.7(r)2.7((n23TJ( 1.6o(n23TJ 1)2.3(dul)2.3(t )5.2



American Association of School Librarians. 2018. *National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries*. Chicago: ALA.

American Library Association. 2006. "The Freedom to Read Statement."  
<[www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement](http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement)> (accessed Feb. 25, 2021).

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions. 2015. *IFLA School Library Guidelines (2nd revised edition)*. <[www.ifla.org/files/assets/school-libraries-resource-centers/publications/ifla-school-library-guidelines.pdf](http://www.ifla.org/files/assets/school-libraries-resource-centers/publications/ifla-school-library-guidelines.pdf)> (accessed Feb. 25, 2021).

National Council of Teachers of English. 2018. "NCTE Position Statement Regarding Rating or 'Red-Flagging' Books." <https://ncte.org/statement/rating-books/> (accessed Feb. 25, 2021).

Rainbow Round Table. 2016. *Open to All: Serving the GLBT Community in Your Library*. American Library Association. <[www.ala.org/rt/sites/ala.org/rt/files/content/professionaltools/160309-glbtrt-open-to-all-toolkit-online.pdf](http://www.ala.org/rt/sites/ala.org/rt/files/content/professionaltools/160309-glbtrt-open-to-all-toolkit-online.pdf)> (accessed Feb. 25, 2021).

Parrott, K. 2017. "Fountas and Pinnell Say Librarians Should Guide Readers by Interest, Not Level." *School Library Journal* (Oct. 12). <[www.slj.com/?detailStory=fountas-pinnell-say-librarians-guide-readers-interest-not-level](http://www.slj.com/?detailStory=fountas-pinnell-say-librarians-guide-readers-interest-not-level)> (accessed Feb. 25, 2021).

Trott, B., and V. Novak. 2006. "A House Divided? Two Views on Genre Separation." *Reference & User Services Quarterly* 46 (2): 33–8.

Fountas, I. C., and G. S. Pinnell. 2012. "Guided Reading: The Romance and the Reality." *The Reading Teacher* 66 (4): 268–84

Hoffman, J. V. 2017. "What If 'Just Right' Is Just Wrong? The Unintended Consequences of Leveling Readers." *The Reading Teacher* 71 (3): 265–73.

The position taken by the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) represents the organization and cannot be applied to individual members or groups affiliated with the association without their direct confirmation.

February 18, 2021

Labeling Position Statement Task Force

