

SELECTION CHAIRS

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Mandate

The Forest of Reading has ten selection committees responsible for choosing the annual nominated lists for children and adults. Chairs are appointed by the Ontario Library Association (OLA), in consultation with current committee members. Chairs oversee the committee's work and participate fully in reading, reviewing, and recommending Canadian books that meet the program's selection criteria and represent the strongest titles of the year.

Responsibilities & Objectives – Chairs are responsible for the leadership, coordination, and administration of their committee. Their duties include:

Committee Management

- Review all committee applications and select a team of **10-15 members**.
- Notify both selected and non-selected applicants.
- Maintain regular communication with committee members and address any issues that arise.
- Serve as the primary liaison between OLA staff and the committee.

Book Review & Workflow Coordination

- Review all books submitted by publishers.
- Work directly with the Official Wholesaler to determine which titles are shared with committee members.
- Coordinate book access schedules with the Official Wholesaler.
- Manage the OLA private Community and ensure all titles are properly listed.
- Post reviews on the private Community using the program's established criteria.
- Monitor committee reading progress and ensure members stay on schedule.

Program Stewardship

- Sign a confidentiality agreement and uphold strict confidentiality around deliberations and final selections.
- Maintain awareness of censorship considerations, selection criteria, critical literacy, and age-appropriate evaluation.
- Identify titles with potentially sensitive content.
- Communicate with other Selection Chairs to ensure no duplicate titles appear across programs.

Issue Resolution & Representation

- Provide written responses to OLA for any questions or challenges regarding the committee's

selections.

- Attend and take part in all committee meetings.
- Circulate meeting minutes to committee members promptly.
- Attend the virtual Chairs meeting in October for school-aged programs.

Deliverables

Chairs must provide the following to OLA and the Forest of Reading® Official Wholesaler:

- The top 10 list of nominated titles for their program, following OLA's schedule.
- All publisher annotations, plus content and discussion themes for each selected title.
- Confirmation that the final list is balanced, appropriate, and fully supported by the entire committee.

Composition

While each program differs, Selection Chair guidelines include:

- All Chairs must be current OLA members.
- Each program typically has two Chairs—one senior and one junior—to support continuity so they depart from committee at different times to ensure knowledge transfer.
- Chairs must have professional experience relevant to the program and/or experience selecting books for the program's age range.
- School-aged programs require a mix of school and public library professionals.
- The Evergreen program is chaired, if possible, by public library professionals.
- Chairs must commit to fully participating and providing reliable leadership.
- Employees of publishing houses or authors with books in contention may not serve on selection committees.

Resources & Budget

- Work is conducted primarily through video conferencing and digitally.
- If necessary, the Official Wholesaler may cover the return and routing of physical review copies, as outlined in their contract with OLA.

Timelines – adhere to Reading timelines outlined in Terms of Reference for Selection Committee Members.

Type of Committee

Standing Committee (ongoing program responsibility)

Task Force

Action Group

Term of Appointment – Chairs serve a three-year term. During the final year, current Chairs identify and mentor incoming Chairs to ensure a smooth transition.