



24 N. Reading Ave.
Boyertown, PA 19512
boyertowncl@berks.lib.pa.us
610-369-0496

Reference Policy

The Boyertown Community Library (BCL) maintains a reference collection at the “Basic” (as defined by the Berks County Public Library system) level. The reference collection shall be reviewed on a continual basis. Out-dated or inappropriate materials shall be removed and needed resources considered for purchase.

Reference service is available to all persons served by the library regardless of age, sex, religion, race, social or economic status, or physical disability. In compliance with Pennsylvania’s Act 90, the Library Records Confidential Act, the library will not reveal the names of patrons or the nature of materials used by them to anyone, except by court order in a criminal proceeding. The staff endeavors to provide accurate information and materials in response to requests from library users in an efficient, courteous and timely manner.

Reference and other direct public services receive priority over other duties. In-person and telephone requests should be handled in the order received. Where it is not possible to respond quickly to telephone inquiries, the caller should be offered the choice of having their call returned or remaining on hold.

In answering reference inquiries, the source of the answer shall always be cited, as well as the date of publication. Staff will not offer opinions, advise, condense or abstract information or suggest a course of action or diagnosis.

Generally, reference services are limited to such services as can be provided in five or ten minutes. Telephone reference is appropriate only for short factual information inquiries. Lengthy research for homework assignments is not performed in response to telephone requests. In-person requests for assistance with school assignments will generally be addressed by assisting the student to find the appropriate potential sources and/or instruction in the use of library resources. Samples of available materials can be gathered and held for patron pick-up.

Where the BCL lacks the resources to answer an inquiry, the inquiry may be forwarded to the District Library Center. Alternately, the patron may be advised of other library resources or referred to appropriate agencies.

Electronic Access Statement

Public access computers are available offering children’s educational software, word processing, and the Internet. Access to a variety of databases is available in-house and remotely through the library’s homepage. Staff assistance will be provided as needed and/or when available.

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