

Banned Books Week

September 24th – October 1st

Why are books banned and challenged? What does that mean to me?

Banned Books Week

- Annual event
- Learn about the process of banning or challenging books
- Learn about *intellectual freedom*
- Celebrate the freedom to read act & inform people of their library rights
 - You have the right to access books and information in the library
 - You have the right to choose what you read
 - If you choose a book that is not appropriate, you don't have to continue to read it

Intellectual Freedom

- Freedom of thought and expression
 - Based on First and Fourth Amendments
 - First Amendment – freedom of speech
 - Fourth Amendment – freedom from unlawful search and seizure
- Intellectual freedom does not include the right to act on beliefs
- Intellectual Freedom is the right to seek and receive information on all subjects from all points of view without restriction and without having the subject of one's interests examined or scrutinized by others¹

How are books banned?

- Concerned citizen goes to the school
 - Principal, classroom teacher and librarian review the book & make a decision
- Citizen may re-challenge the book
 - Superintendent
 - School Board
- Parents and students always have the right to opt out

- Board Policies
 - Philosophy on [Complaints about Library Media Materials](#)
 - Procedure for [Complaints about Library Materials](#)

Why are books banned?

- If a patron considers a book inappropriate, he/she has the right to challenge the book
 - Books are very rarely banned – usually challenged
 - Banned → completely removed
 - Challenged → considered and altered or replaced

Reasons for challenging/banning books

- Educationally inappropriate
- Age inappropriate
- Racism
- Violence
- Sexual Content
- Religious Viewpoint
- Illicit Substances

What if we disagree?

- The Library must make all sides of an issue accessible.²
- Individual students choose what they read
 - Genre reading for class – you choose *which* fiction novel you read
 - Independent reading – you choose the book you read
- If you start reading a book that is not appropriate for you
 - **Stop reading**
 - **Talk to your teacher & parents**
- If you know you shouldn't read certain books
 - Don't check them out
 - Talk to your parents & teachers
- “Parents know best” is true. It's your parents' job to look out for you.

Writing Prompt

In your Thinker's Notebooks, please respond to the following prompt:

Based on the things Miss Cucchetti has explained to you today about banning/challenging books, choose a book or a movie that you think *could have been* challenged and explain which category(ies) it would have been challenged under.

- ✓ Age appropriateness
- ✓ Violence
- ✓ Language
- ✓ Racism
- ✓ Illicit Substances
- ✓ Sexual Content
- ✓ Religious Viewpoint

Resources

¹Taken from *Intellectual Freedom Manual: Eighth Edition* [Office for Intellectual Freedom](#) 2010

²*The Library Bill of Rights*. ALA. 1996.
<http://www.ala.org/ala/issuesadvocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/index.cfm>