

To Ban or Not to Ban? Intellectual Rights and Responsibilities

Banned Books, Censorship Part 2

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Grade Level	9th – 12th Grade	**Time Frame**	10-11 class period(s)
Subject	English/Language Arts	**Duration**	500 minutes
Course	A.P. Language and Composition, A.P. Literature and Composition		

Essential Question

Should free speech have limits? Are all books worth reading?

Summary

This lesson is designed to take place following completion of another K20 lesson, "Trigger Warnings." Through collaboration, reading, and research, students will continue the study of a controversial work of literature by examining various perspectives on book banning. Students will establish their own views on free speech and explore both sides of an argument around the banning of a controversial work. Students will then refine personal opinions to construct a multi-genre infographic on a banned book, share their reasoning, evaluate each others' arguments, and apply their understanding of intellectual rights and responsibilities to a class novel. While this lesson is currently aligned only to 9th grade standards, it would be appropriate to teach in grades 9 through 12, adjusting standards as needed.

Snapshot

Engage

Students watch a CBS News clip about banning books in a Virginia school district and establish positions on the essential question "Are all books worth reading?" using the Lines of Agreement strategy.

Explore

Students work with partners to choose a book from a provided list and find four articles (two pro, two con) that discuss the book's banning.

Explain

Students individually complete an annotated bibliography that summarizes each article's position on the banned book.

Extend

Students collaborate on an infographic poster that makes a case for or against the banning of their chosen book.

Evaluate

Students share their posters with peers and provide feedback via the Tug-of-War strategy.

Standards

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards - Reading (6-12)

SYN501: Draw logical conclusions using information from two informational texts

Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts (Grade 9)

9.3.R.1: Students will analyze works written on the same topic and compare the methods the authors use to achieve similar or different purposes and include support using textual evidence.
9.6.R.3: Students will evaluate the relevance, reliability, and validity of the information gathered.
9.6.W.3: Students will quote, paraphrase, and summarize findings following an appropriate citation style (e.g., MLA, APA, etc.) and avoiding plagiarism.
9.7.W.1: Students will create a variety of multimodal content to engage specific audiences.

Attachments

- Annotated Bibliography Template - Spanish.docx
- Annotated Bibliography Template - Spanish.pdf
- Annotated Bibliography Template.docx
- Annotated Bibliography Template.pdf
- Banned Books List - Spanish.docx
- Banned Books List - Spanish.pdf
- Banned Books List.docx
- Banned Books List.pdf
- Frayer-Model GO - Spanish.docx
- Frayer-Model GO - Spanish.pdf
- Frayer-Model GO.docx
- Frayer-Model GO.pdf
- Project Self-Reflection Form - Spanish.docx
- Project Self-Reflection Form - Spanish.pdf
- Project Self-Reflection Form.docx
- Project Self-Reflection Form.pdf

Materials

- Student devices with internet access
- Writing materials (optional)
- Lined notebook paper (optional)
- Large poster or butcher paper (optional)
- Markers, crayons, colored pencils (optional)
- Construction paper (optional)
- Glue or tape (optional)
- Frayer Model
- Sticky easel Ppad
- Dry erase markers (to use on Frayer Model)
- Annotated Bibliography Template handout (attached)
- Banned Books List handout (attached)
- Frayer Model GO handout (attached)
- Project Self-Reflection Form handout (attached)

Engage

Inform students they are going to watch a video clip from CBS News that discusses a local school district in Virginia's struggle with whether or not to ban two challenged books, "Huckleberry Finn" and "To Kill a Mockingbird," from its high-school curriculum. Ask students to consider the following essential questions as they watch:

- Should free speech have limits?
- Are all books worth reading?

Teacher's Note

You may want to play the CBS News video a couple times so students have time to process the clip and carefully consider their positions on the essential questions.

Engage students in the Lines of Agreement strategy by first asking them to commit to a claim for one or both of the essential questions (time permitting). You may need to model potential claims for students.

Ask students to record their claims and explain their thinking in a quick write (no more than 5 minutes). Encourage students to get their positions on paper without worrying about conventions or correctness to start.

Choose an essential question to begin. Instruct students to form two lines facing each other: one line for positions that agree (pro) and one for disagree (con).

Teacher's Note

If certain students are on the fence with their positions, advise them to choose the line that MOST CLOSELY aligns with their views. They may not be an exact match, and that is perfectly fine.

Students should then share the thinking they recorded in the quick write that led them to their positions/claims. You will need to establish rules for this discussion (e.g., you will call on a certain number of students per line or each person in each line presents her/his reasoning and the other group follows with a rebuttal) and communicate those rules to students prior to sharing. Make sure to remind students that the best arguments have evidence to back up the claim. Consequently, students may want to include paraphrased evidence from the video as support.

Ask students if anyone would like to switch lines based on the explanations and/or evidence provided.

Discuss, whole-class, the claims made and which were or were not valid. Ask students to consider not only the explanations given but if evidence was provided, as well. Finally, you might want to make a list with the class of reasons why a book might be banned. This might be a good place to discuss the topics of censorship and free speech as they pertain to the banned-books issue.

Pacing Note

Depending on your overall unit pacing/needs, you can easily spend anywhere from 20 minutes to an entire class period on the Engage portion of this lesson.

Explore

Brainstorm with students the possible reasons why a book may or may not be banned/challenged in a particular environment. Press students to differentiate between different settings (e.g., high school, college, public library, home). You can frame this discussion either whole class or using a strategy such as Think-Pair-Share.

Teacher's Note

If you are covering a specific text, such as an in-class novel like "To Kill a Mockingbird," you may want to ask students to brainstorm possible reasons why this particular text has been banned/challenged. Be careful to hold off on any background information related to the text. Save that for a future activity/lesson plan.

Divide students into pairs. Provide students with a list of banned books (see "Banned Books List" in Attachments). Each pair will need to select one book from the provided list to research. It is recommended that you have AT LEAST TWO pairs researching the same book. This will make the Extend activity more manageable.

Instruct pairs to find four sources that provide evidence for and against their chosen book (two pro sources, two con sources). Two sources should feature arguments that assert the novel should be banned. The other two sources should make a case for the novel's study. This information will help students set up their own arguments and create infographics illustrating those arguments in the Extend portion of this lesson.

Teacher's Note

To facilitate the research process, you may want to allow students to use sources that do not necessarily address the specific text being researched but instead provide reasons why books in general should not be banned or positive criticism that establish the literary merit of the book. Remind students to focus on their research purpose (to find arguments both for and against the banning of their book) and which sources will best serve it. You may also want to emphasize the importance of considering multiple stakeholders (e.g., parents, teachers, administrators, students).

If necessary, provide parameters to guide students' research:

- Sources must pass the CARS (credibility, accuracy, reasonableness, support) test.
- At least one source must be from an academic database or journal (e.g., EBSCO, Destiny, Google Scholar).
- At least one source must be from a nationally-recognized news outlet or newspaper (e.g., "The New York Times," CNN, NBC).
- At least one source must be from a local news affiliate.

Ask students to work with their partners to complete a Frayer Model graphic organizer (see "Frayer Model GO" in Attachments) that will help students organize their sources effectively. Encourage student pairs to work collaboratively on the graphic organizer. For example, one student may research the pro position and then share findings with her/his partner or vice versa. For each source (four total), have students record the following:

- Source position (pro/con)
- Student paraphrase (1-5 sentences that give a sense of the author's argument)
- A useful/important quotation
- MLA 8 citation (via EasyBib) *If students are not familiar with MLA, you may need to practice using EasyBib as a whole class.

Pacing Note

This portion of the lesson will take approximately 2-4 class periods to complete. Depending on your overall unit pacing/needs, you can trim/extend the Explore portion of this lesson as necessary.

Explain

Students will use the graphic organizer (see "Frayer-Model GO" in Attachments) from the Explore activity to work independently on an annotated bibliography (MLA 8) over their four sources.

Distribute sheets of paper or ask students to format their bibliographic entries using the handout (see Attachments). For each entry (five sentences minimum), students should summarize the source, evaluate its reasoning, and establish its position (pro, con, qualify).

Teacher's Note

Model this process for students, if necessary. Use the CBS News clip from Engage as your source. You can ask the class to help you find the clip's main idea, evidence, and possible position(s). Ask the class for input on how the video clip might answer the essential questions "Are all books worth reading?" and "Should free speech have limits?"

Although students are working individually, encourage them to use their Explore partners as resources. For instance, as students complete their annotations, they can share and compare the results with their partners. Students who finish faster can guide their partners toward completion.

If all your students are searching for sources on an in-class novel, such as "To Kill a Mockingbird," as opposed to selections from the "Banned Books List" (see Attachments), you can ask them to share out the best sources from their research and why they feel those sources are more persuasive.

Pacing Note

This portion of the lesson will take approximately 2-3 class periods to complete. Depending on your overall unit pacing/needs, you can trim/extend the Explain portion of this lesson as necessary.

Extend

Now students get to apply creativity to their own opinions/positions on the topic of book banning.

Divide students who researched the same book from the list (see "Banned Books List" in Attachments) into groups of two to four. If possible, group students who have not yet worked together during this lesson.

Distribute the project instructions handout (see Attachments). Give students the option to create their infographic digitally (Google Slides, Padlet, Glogster, Canva) or on paper. Provide groups choosing the latter with a large sheet of poster or butcher paper, construction paper, glue, markers, crayons, etc.

Tell students to take a collective position in their groups on their chosen text (see Explore activity). Ask students to create a claim for their book that makes a case for why the book should or should not be banned. Use your discretion on allowing students to make a claim that qualifies both positions. This is a great opportunity for students to debate in their groups using the evidence gathered in their handouts (see "Infographic Project Instructions + Rubric" in Attachments), especially if group members disagree on whether their book should be banned.

Students will create an infographic that establishes their position on the topic of book banning. Provide examples (see "Infographic Project Instructions + Rubric" in Attachments) for students to reference as they plan/work.

Infographics should include:

- The group's claim
- FOUR pieces of supporting evidence (see Explain activity)
- AT LEAST ONE graphic representation of the group's position (drawing, chart, table, bitmoji/emoji, etc.)
- Works Cited list (preferably in MLA 8) of sources used

Allow students time to brainstorm/plan their infographics in groups. It may be necessary to assign roles within the groups so each student has a chance to contribute according to her/his strengths.

Pacing Note

This portion of the lesson will take approximately 3-4 class periods to complete. Depending on your overall unit pacing/needs, you can trim/extend the Extend portion of this lesson as necessary.

Evaluate

Ask groups to present their infographics to the class. Groups should use their infographic to support their position on the banning of books/their book. If time is a factor, use the Gallery Walk strategy to give students a chance to view their classmates' infographics and provide feedback. This also allows students a chance to show off their work via a step in the writing process that is often ignored: publishing!

You can grade each group's presentation and/or infographic. Additionally, you can ask students to reflect on the lesson and their contributions to their groups (see "Project Self-Reflection Form" in Attachments).

As an Exit Ticket, ask students to vote on the essential questions below. If students have access to their own devices, use the online polling service Mentimeter to help you with this.

Extension Note

There are several ways to extend this lesson further. The first involves the Tug-of-War learning strategy. Following the Evaluate portion of this lesson, return to the essential question "Are all books worth reading?" Discuss the opposing sides of this issue with students. Have students write on sticky notes as many "tugs" (reasons) for both sides of the issue. Display these reasons and discuss. Ask students to consider which side has the strongest "tugs."

Extension Note

The next way to extend this lesson is to have students keep a dialectical or reader-response journal as they read a controversial in-class novel, such as "To Kill a Mockingbird." Ask students to look for evidence in the text that might prompt a person or organization to ban the book. Encourage students to move beyond the obvious (e.g., obscene language) and instead search out issues like questionable morality, mature subject matter, offensive depictions, and the potential influence on young readers. Students should look for 25-30 examples from the novel, with citations and explanations for each reference. Require students to find AT LEAST 5-10 different issues (e.g., language, stereotyping), depending on the text.

Pacing Note

This portion of the lesson will take approximately 1-2 class periods to complete. Depending on your overall unit pacing/needs, you can trim/extend the Evaluate portion of this lesson as necessary.

Resources

- CBS News Clip: CBS News. (2016, Dec. 1). Books suspended by Va. school for racial slurs [Video file]. CBS News. http://www.cbsnews.com/news/to-kill-a-mockingbird-huckleberry-finn-suspended-by-virginia-school-for-racial-slurs/
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Bell Ringers and Exit Tickets. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/d9908066f654727934df7bf4f505d6f2
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Frayer Model. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/d9908066f654727934df7bf4f505d709
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Gallery Walk / Carousel. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/d9908066f654727934df7bf4f505a54d
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Lines of Agreement. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/d9908066f654727934df7bf4f507570a
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Mentimeter. Tech Tools. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/645
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Think-Pair-Share. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/d9908066f654727934df7bf4f5064b49
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Tug-of-War. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/b30762a7557ba0b391f207f4c600e440
- Santa Barbara City College, CLRC Writing Center. (n.d.). C.A.R.S. checklist for evaluating sources. https://www.sbcc.edu/clrc/writing_center/wc_files/handout_masters/CARS%20Checklist%20for%20Evaluating%20Sources.pdf
- EasyBib: http://www.easybib.com/
- Google Scholar: https://scholar.google.com/
- Mentimeter: https://www.mentimeter.com/
- Purdue OWL: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/614/01/