

Banned Books (4-5)

Summary

This lesson promotes an understanding of why a diverse collection is required in school and public libraries. It will be acknowledged that individual reading choices are widely differentiated. Methods on making personal reading choices will be explored. Ideally this lesson would be used the fourth week of September, in conjunction with Banned Book Week

Main Core Tie

Elementary Library Media (K-5)

[Strand 3 Standard 3](#)

Time Frame

1 class periods of 30 minutes each

Life Skills

Social & Civic Responsibility

Materials

Optional: Print covers of books in your collection that have encountered challenges. Lists of the books can be found on the provided ALA website. Create a simple (or more elaborate) display with the copies of the banned titles in your collection. Pinterest is full of ideas.

Background for Teachers

Read through the "take action" portion of the 2016 BANNED BOOKS PDF. Scan through the Banned Books Week website for up to date information.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Students will know that the right to choose what to and not to read is protected by the First Amendment. They will understand their peers may have varied reading choices. All should be respected.

Instructional Procedures

The following is a rough outline of how the discussion is led.

Ask if anyone thinks they know what these books have in common?

What is a banned book?

Explain that at some point in time and in some place someone or some organization had a problem with something in each of these books and felt like they shouldn't be in a public library, a school library, or a classroom. Sometimes it was removed, more often it wasn't.

Ask for a raise of hands if they have read any of the books displayed?

Let them tell which books they love and allow them to express their outrage.

Any guesses why you think someone might have wanted any of these particular titles removed from a library or school?

Acknowledge that many of the books might not be right for some of the students in our school. (I may even admit that I'm not crazy about a few of them myself. I keep the specific titles to myself.)

They will want to know why some were banned. Spend as much time as you wish on this but be careful before you know it you will be out of time. Visit the ALA site to get the specifics.

Do you have someone in your life that helps you make decisions about what books you read?

Should Jaden's mom help him choose the books he reads?

Would it be acceptable for her to tell him he shouldn't read a particular book?

Should Jaden's mom call up Karlie and tell her she shouldn't read that book either?

Anyone know how many students we have in our school?

What ages are they?

Should we have books in the library for each and every one of them?

Will each student wish to, be capable of, or be comfortable with each book in our library?

Would it make sense for us to ONLY have books that each and every one of our 950 students be capable of reading or comfortable with the content?

Have you ever read a book you didn't like or that made you uncomfortable?

What can you do if this happens?

Set it aside. Get a different book.

What are some reasons you might stop reading a book?

Inappropriate, language, scary, boring. Acknowledge that those are all good reasons to stop reading a book.

Do you think everyone in your class would find the same book scary?

Do you think everyone in your class would necessarily find the same words or situations inappropriate?

Do you think Authors sometime put uncomfortable things in their books to tell the story they need to tell?

Let them know that we have books in our library that may have words they don't like or situations they don't like.

What can you do if you find something that makes you uncomfortable, bored, or angry? (I ask this repeatedly)

Is it legal or acceptable to remove a title from our library because some of the patrons find the content inappropriate?

Again, what should you do if you have a problem with a library book?

Do you know what happens to books that no one checks out or reads in a library?

Provide a quick explanation on weeding.

Ask them what strategies they use to find the books they want to read.

- Recommendations from friends

- Recommendations from teachers and librarians

- Read the jacket description

- Liked the cover

If time allows encourage them to share favorite titles with the class.

Close by reaffirming that no one needs to read any book they don't want to but that a library needs to have books for all kinds of readers.

Point again to the displayed books. None of these books are banned in this library. You are welcome to check any or NONE of them out.

Assessment Plan

These principles can be referred to, and reinforced at any point in the upcoming year.

Authors

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