

Celebrate the Freedom to Read in Oregon

Lesson Plans for Banned Books Week

General Teaching Resources	pgs. 1-2
Elementary Schools	pg. 2-3
Middle Schools	pgs. 4-10
High Schools	pgs. 10-11

General Teaching Resources

Compiled by Gordon Turner, member ALA student chapter Emporia State University School of Library and Information Management; Oregon Cohort

- ▶ EDUCATION FOR FREEDOM: Lesson Plans for Teaching the First Amendment
<http://www.freedomforum.org/templates/document.asp?documentID=13588>

Education for Freedom is offered by The Freedom Forum's First Amendment Center, a nonpartisan center dedicated to the understanding and appreciation of the values of the First Amendment. There are seven lessons with three more under construction which are appropriate for middle and high school students and address constitutional principles and contemporary issues involving the First Amendment.

- ▶ The following links are from the American Bar Association (ABA)
 - Grades 4-6 http://www.abanet.org/publiced/lawday/schools/lessons/46_1stamend.html
 - Grades 7-9 http://www.abanet.org/publiced/lawday/schools/lessons/79_1stamend.html

- ▶ High School Students

- Freedom of Speech on the Internet
http://www.abanet.org/publiced/lawday/schools/lessons/hs_internet.html
- Teach the First Amendment <http://teachfirstamendment.org/>

- ▶ These resources are from the American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE) High School Journalism Initiative:

- Lesson Plans: The First Amendment in Action
http://www.highschooljournalism.org/Teachers/Lesson_Plans/Detail.cfm?lessonplanid=411
- Lesson Plans: Introduction to the First Amendment
http://www.highschooljournalism.org/Teachers/Lesson_Plans/Detail.cfm?lessonplanid=263
- Lesson Plans: How the First Amendment Applies to Your High School Newspaper
http://www.highschooljournalism.org/Teachers/Lesson_Plans/Detail.cfm?lessonplanid=420
- Lesson Plans: The First Amendment and Freedom of the Press in Schools
http://www.highschooljournalism.org/Teachers/Lesson_Plans/Detail.cfm?lessonplanid=280
- Lesson Plans: The First Amendment, What It Means and When Libel Comes Into Play
http://www.highschooljournalism.org/Teachers/Lesson_Plans/Detail.cfm?lessonplanid=322
- Lesson Plans: The First Amendment, What It Means and When Libel Comes Into Play
http://www.highschooljournalism.org/Teachers/Lesson_Plans/Detail.cfm?lessonplanid=322

General Teaching Resources (cont.)

- ▶ First Amendment Schools: Educating for Freedom and Democracy

<http://www.firstamendmentschools.org/resources/lessonplans.aspx>

First Amendment Schools: Educating for Freedom and Responsibility is a national reform initiative designed to transform how schools teach and practice the rights and responsibilities of citizenship that frame civic life in our democracy.

- ▶ Lesson plans from the Anti-Defamation League (ADL):

- What Is the First Amendment?

http://www.adl.org/education/curriculum_connections/spring_2007/lesson%201.pdf

- Religious Freedom in Public Schools

http://www.adl.org/education/curriculum_connections/spring_2007/lesson%202.pdf

- Freedom of Speech and the Press in Public Schools

http://www.adl.org/education/curriculum_connections/spring_2007/lesson%203.pdf

- Freedom to Assemble and to Petition

http://www.adl.org/education/curriculum_connections/spring_2007/lesson%204.pdf

Elementary Schools

- ▶ Finish a lesson with students on the topic of censorship for any age group by handing out in a blatant subversive way several well known frequently banned books (age appropriate of course) in brown paper lunch bags with lots of whispering and shhing to create atmosphere. The idea being kids will naturally do something grown-ups don't want them to, so the books will get read and passed on to another subversive reader. Even if they've read the title before finding out grown-ups don't like kids to read it makes them want to read it again to find out why

-Deborah Hoover

- ▶ Lesson: "Free People Read Freely"

Note: I do this in the English/LA classroom; teacher must be willing to do a bit of playacting with me

Goal: to raise awareness about our freedom to express and obtain information and alternate views even if they are unpopular

Warmup/motivation:

Gaze over the bookshelves and begin to pick books out and throw into wastebasket, remarking about language, nasty topics, dangerous ideas, insubordination, etc). Ask teacher if students are allowed to read these books some people wouldn't think that's appropriate.

[Any appropriate response from teacher referring to her defense of reading]

Ask: What does it mean: "This is a free country!" (Invariably one of the kids will have said this) What is the source of our freedom in the United States? (depending on their age, kids will fumble for this)

Elementary Schools (cont.)

► Lesson: "Free People Read Freely" (cont.)

Display: First amendment: [overhead or poster, tee-shirt-I use the latter which had been underneath a sweater]

"Congress shall make no law respecting establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of Speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances." Discuss terminology if necessary

Points to cover: Books (and other materials) are "challenged," usually with the best of intentions: to protect people (esp. children) from unsavory, unpopular, scary, or mature ideas or those that denigrate a group. Do you think anyone should have the right to limit what you see (read, hear)?

If so Who? If not, why not?

What kinds of things are challenged?

Language deemed obscene or vulgar

Explicit sex or discussion of sexually transmitted diseases

Violence, sadism of Satanism, devil-worship, witchcraft

Demeaning or sarcastic of family values

Involvement with drugs and/or alcohol

Anti-patriotism, or Derision of established institutions

Disparagement of any ethnic or religious group

Discussion: Have you ever felt restricted in what you may read/view/listen to?

-motion picture ratings

-printed lyrics

-book lists

Have you ever read/viewed/listened to anything that made you uncomfortable?

Scared? Something that you "knew" shouldn't be doing?

What is the difference between guidance vs. restriction?

Distribute quotes (see below) to small groups-give a few minutes for discussion.

Comments?

Additional questions:

Do you talk about what you are reading with your parents?

Do they read what you're reading? Watch TV/movies with you?

Middle Schools

▶ Do an annual BANNED BOOKS presentation later to coincide with the 8th grade teachers unit on the first amendment. Share info on the first amendment, lists of children's and young adult books that have been challenged over the years, set up a display of 100 titles (all the books in our library that have been challenged have a red dot taped onto the spine label)- and then all 8th graders check out a banned book for a project for their social studies class. They write a paper defending the book - in rare instances they argue to remove it. We invite noted young adult author Chris Crutcher to speak with all the 8th graders since all of his titles have generated controversy and book challenges over the years. The response from the kids and staff has been very positive - students often come back to the library after the project is over asking for more books "with the red dots on them". *Jackson Middle School* (Portland Public Schools)

▶ Using challenged and banned books, based on lists from the ALA site and others I had on file. I showed several samples, asked students what these books had in common, and engaged in conversation including these points: censorship, challenge, banned books, selectivity. We included the criteria for banning and the process in our school district. I placed an assortment of books on the tables and asked students to choose one with a partner, read the first chapter and blurbs. Take the role of either the defending librarian or the challenger. Argue a position. Volunteer partners showed their book cover on the document camera and stated their position. This lesson was for fifth graders.
-Beaverton School District Libraries

▶ Banned Book Project by Kathleen Dunbar, English Teacher *Einstein Middle School* (Shoreline, WA)

To introduce the Banned Books unit we were going to do this simulation in the library with crime tape around a fake "prison" and ask students if they had read certain books on the list, and if they had they would get "arrested". I got a fake orange jumper with handcuffs and everything. Then on the day of our big dramatic lesson we had three snow days which foiled our plan.

I still did the project with students choosing a banned book to read and making the posters (described below) but we didn't have time to do our dramatic introduction. But the next time I do this hopefully that can happen.

Please learn from my mistakes and see the items below for things I will add to my unit.

1. Tell students that if they find the book too shocking or intense for them to handle they should exercise their right to stop reading it. A few of my students told me they were creeped out by some parts of the book they read and wished they hadn't read certain passages.

Middle Schools (cont.)

► Banned Book Project (cont.)

2. Make sure there are enough banned books for entire classes to check out. I had 147 students total and by the time my last class got into the library to check out a banned book there wasn't much left. Several had to use interlibrary loan which set them back time wise for finishing the book on time. If several classes do this project at the same time I might invite a public librarian to come in and bring books with him/her that students can check out with a public library card to supplement the school's collection.

3. When the unit ended I set up a discussion page on my website for students to share their opinions. 99% of my students felt that because a person has the right to stop reading a book or return it that books shouldn't be banned. I am trying to think of a way to add more depth to this discussion so that there are more varieties of opinion... such as adding a question about a book being taught as part of a school curriculum or something like that.

DOCUMENTS FOR THE EINSTEIN MIDDLE SCHOOL LESSON PLAN

Banned Book Project

The Pros and Cons of Book Censorship 8th Grade English and Advanced English

Ms. Dunbar / Einstein Middle School

Objective: The objective of this unit is for students to explore the pros and cons of book censorship and to form and articulate their own opinion about the book they read and present.

Directions: By yourself or with a partner select a young adult book that has been banned or challenged in some way. Research the book's history. Create a poster that shows the pros and cons of the book. Write a persuasive essay that states your opinion about whether or not the book should be banned. **IF STUDENTS WORK WITH A PARTNER THE ESSAY IS STILL AN INDIVIDUAL WRITING ASSIGNMENT!**

English 8 Students: Present your poster to the class and briefly explain the book's pros and cons and your opinion of the book.

Advanced English 8 Students: Present your poster to the class briefly explaining the pros and cons of the book. Then give a formal speech about your opinion of the book's issues. The speech should be given as if it's an opening or closing statement for a jury. You can use the essay for your speech. Be sure to practice your speech out loud before your presentation. Cutting and pasting the paragraphs of your essay onto note-cards might be a good way to practice and present your speech. Students will sign up for a presentation day.

Middle Schools (cont.)

▶ Banned Book Project (cont.)

Poster Grading:

Content 20: Details of book's history and pros and cons

Visual 20:

- Gets observers attention and is easy to read
 - Design reflects issues and emotions of book
 - Letters of title are large, and other letter sizes are appropriate for an effective poster
 - Poster is at least 11x17 and no larger than the size a movie poster
- Effort 10: Thoughtful preparation is obvious (not last minute)

Essay Grading:

Use the persuasive essay format that includes the items in the order below. This is the same order used for the other two persuasive essays. *At some point in your essay you should refer to one of the amendments from the Constitution of the United States of America.* The essay will be graded on the six traits of writing.

I. Thesis

II. Short summary of book's history (why, when, how, and by whom it was banned)

III. Arguments on the other side (concede to the opposing viewpoint)

IV. First argument (quote from book or other source)

V. Second argument (quote from book or other source)

VI. Third argument (quote from book or other source)

VII. Re-State Thesis

Online Resources for Students:

Use the websites below for your research. Mrs. Heller will provide more in the library.

- Banned Books: How Schools Restrict the Reading of Young People

<http://www.worldandi.com/newhome/public/2003/september/mt2pub.asp>

- Stories Behind Banned Books/ Discussions of Pros and Cons (click the

“here” links) <http://www.abffe.org/bbw-booklist-detailed.htm>

- American Library Association official Banned Books Week page

- This site gives important distinctions between “challenging” and book and “banning” it.

<http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/bannedbooksweek/bannedbooksweek.htm>

Middle Schools (cont.)

▶ Banned Book Project (cont.)

Books for Students:

The books [from the schools library] are books you may check out. Any book chosen for this project has to be age appropriate and a title that will not be officially read in high school. The book you choose may be used for your 2nd Trimester reading log and you may use SSR to read it. You will also have to read some outside of class for homework. Make sure that the book is something your parents would allow you to read. This list is from the Banned Books website with titles you may have already read and books your high school instructors might teach you in the future. *If you do not choose a book from the list please approve your book choice with the instructor.*

▶ Book Report and Presentations on Banned Books -Einstein Middle School (Shoreline, WA)

Banned Books Presentation

Name _____

Date _____ period _____

BANNED BOOK PRESENTATION

Tally Sheet and Reflection

Fill in the sheet below for each book report presentation you see.

Do not fill one in for your own.

Name of Book and Author Do you think the book should be banned?

1.	YES	MAYBE	NO
2.	YES	MAYBE	NO
3.	YES	MAYBE	NO
4.	YES	MAYBE	NO
5.	YES	MAYBE	NO

Written Reflection: Write a five to seven sentence paragraph about what you have learned from reading your own banned book and seeing the presentations.

Middle Schools (cont.)

► Censorship Scenarios

-Einstein Middle School (Shoreline, WA)

**EINSTEIN MIDDLE SCHOOL LESSON PLAN
CENSORSHIP SCENARIOS**

Name _____

Date _____ period _____

Read the 10 situations below and make some type of mark on the censorship meter how much censorship you believe is going on. You may use the criteria below to help you with your judgment.

If you can answer no to one of the questions below then some type of censorship might be occurring. If you can answer no to two questions below then an extreme type of censorship is likely occurring. If you answer no to all three questions below then (cut off?)

- Are the sender and receiver of the information aware that censorship of the message might occur?
- Do the sender and receiver of the information agree to possible censoring?
- Do the sender and receiver of the information have a choice about when to terminate communication if either become uncomfortable?

1. A screenplay is submitted to MGM studios for movie production. MGM is interested in the script if the author is willing to take out certain scenes and change others.

Intense Medium Little None

Reason: _____

2. A family owned bookstore does not have any copies of any Harry Potter book for their customers to buy because they choose not to sell it.

Intense Medium Little None

Reason: _____

3. The Seattle Public library is ordered to remove a book from its shelves because the government feels the book promotes terrorism.

Intense Medium Little None

Reason: _____

Middle Schools (cont.)

► Censorship Scenarios (cont.)

4. Two articles are submitted to a newspaper about a controversial whale hunt. One article discusses the objections to the whale hunt and the other discusses the reasons for the hunt. The paper only chooses to print one point of view and not acknowledge the opposing view at all.

Intense Medium Little None

Reason: _____

5. During the Vietnam War carpet-bombing occurs on the Cambodian border. A reporter sends a story about the event to the New York Times about the event but military censors intercept the message and unknown to the reporter is never printed.

Intense Medium Little None

Reason: _____

6. Eminem writes a new song for an album release party at a club. The song is played on a radio station but certain words are “bleeped” out.

Intense Medium Little None

Reason: _____

7. A literature teacher at a public school is told by the school district to stop teaching a Stephen King novel as part of the curriculum but the book is still available for students to check out on their own from the school library.

Intense Medium Little None

Reason: _____

8. A student at a public school writes an article for the school newspaper that accuse the district of racism. The school bans the article from the school newspaper and the article is not printed.

Intense Medium Little None

Reason: _____

Middle Schools (cont.)

► Censorship Scenarios (cont.)

9. A soldier in Iraq writes a letter to her family telling them about her unit's strategy in a current conflict. Military personnel read the letter and shred it.

Intense Medium Little None

Reason: _____

10. A drama director at a private school wants to select the musical "Hair" for their fall production. The school board denies the request.

Intense Medium Little None

Reason: _____

High Schools

► We began the Banned Books Week one week early in order to have the full display up in the library when the English teachers brought their students in to begin the Banned Book Trials. The students are divided into reading groups, each group reading one of 8 "banned" books. The teacher hold a mock trial during which each group will have to defend their book against charges leveled against it.

-Grants Pass High School

► Schedule presentations on the history of specific challenged books with follow-up discussions in the district's English classes. Provide the teachers with web links.

-Oregon Trail School District

► Have the students read Fahrenheit 451 and then create a display for the library: They made a "fire" using chicken wire and yellow, orange, and red tissue paper. Under the supervision of a volunteer parent they burned the edges of several very worn out "banned" books purchased at Good Will. They arranged all of this in the bottom of a display case with a banner above. Then each of the students read a banned book and give a synopsis / review of it. We hung the reviews from a string over the "fire" in the display.

-Chesterfield, VA.

► Work with English teachers to incorporate Banned Books Week into the curriculum. If you are a school library in Multnomah County invite Multnomah County Library's School Corps program to present workshop Feasting on Forbidden Fruit to students and suggest that teacher assign follow-up activities like reading a banned book for class or further research on censorship.

-Cleveland High School (Portland Public Schools)

High Schools (cont.)

► Quotations for small group discussions

-*Rye Country Day School* (Rye, NY)

"Educated people generally agree that a significant benefit of literature is that it provides insights into human experience."

-- John Simmons, Professor of English, Florida State University

"If there is a bedrock principle underlying the First Amendment, it is that Government may not prohibit the expression of an idea simply because society finds the idea itself offensive or disagreeable."

--Supreme Court Justice William J. Brennan

"Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."

United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

"If all mankind minus one, were of one opinion, and only one person were of the contrary opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person, than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind."

--John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*

"Censorship is the strongest drive in human nature; sex is a weak second."

Phil Kerby, former editor, *L.A. Times*

"The freedom to read is about choice and respecting the right of others to choose for themselves and their families what they wish to read."

-Judith Krug, Director of ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom

Every burned book or house enlightens the world; every suppressed or expunged word reverberates through the earth from side to side.

--Ralph Waldo Emerson

There are worse crimes than burning books. One of them is not reading them.

--Joseph Brodsky

I think we ought to read only the kind of books that wound and stab us.

--Franz Kafka in a letter to Oskar Pollack

We live in oppressive times. We have, as a nation, become our own thought police; but instead of calling the process by which we limit our expression of dissent and wonder "censorship," we call it "concern for viability."

--David Mamet