

GROUP TASK:

1. READ THE ARGUMENT.
2. LOCATE THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS IF PRESENT:
 - a. The claim typically answers the question: “What do I think or accept as a truth?”)
 - b. The reasons typically answer the question: “Why do I think this?”)
 - c. The evidence typically answers the question: “How do I know this is the case?”).
 - d. The warrant typically answers “Why is the evidence presented relevant to the claim at hand?”
 - e. The counter-argument explains the opposing side’s position
 - f. The rebuttal addresses how the counter-argument is faulty.
3. If the elements are present, complete those elements in the chart.
4. If the elements are missing, consider what evidence or logic would benefit the claim and write it in a different color on the chart.

DEFENDER OF BOOK:---*School Library Journal's response to the Singapore Government's decision to remove all copies of the book.*

“While we firmly support the right of every reader to choose or reject a book for themselves or their families, those objecting to a particular book should not be given the power to restrict other readers’ right to access and read that book,” says Barbara Jones, director of ALA’s Office for Intellectual Freedom (OIF). “As members of a pluralistic and complex society, we must have free access to a diverse range of viewpoints on the human condition in order to foster critical thinking and understanding. We must protect one of the most precious of our fundamental rights—the freedom to read.”

The campaign to highlight milestones in the history of banned and challenged books and promote intellectual freedom was spearheaded by library activist Judith Krug. She once said "You should have access to ideas and information regardless of your age. If anyone is going to limit or guide a young person, it should be the parent or guardian—and only the parent or guardian." ---*School Library Journal*

VOCAB

PLURALISM: 1 a condition or system in which two or more states, groups, principles, sources of authority, etc., coexist.

- a form of society in which the members of minority groups maintain their independent cultural traditions.
- Philosophy a theory or system that recognizes more than one ultimate principle. Compare with monism.

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CHALLENGER OF BOOK: State-run libraries in Singapore have deemed a children's book about two male penguins raising a baby chick inappropriate and are to destroy all copies following complaints the content was against the city-state's family values.

The country's information minister Yaacob Ibrahim has said he supports the decision to pulp all copies of the book along with two other titles after the National Library Board (NLB), which runs 26 public libraries in Singapore, pulled them from the shelves.

...

"The prevailing norms, which the overwhelming majority of Singaporeans accept, support teaching children about conventional families, but not about alternative, non-traditional families, which is what the books in question are about," Ibrahim said.

"Societies are never static, and will change over time. But NLB's approach is to reflect existing social norms, and not to challenge or seek to change them."

--*TheGuardian.com*

VOCAB:

City-state: a city that with its surrounding territory forms an independent state
Deemed: considered
Static: fixed, stable, steady, unchanging
Social norms: a standard or pattern, esp. of social behavior,
Conventional: traditional, established
Alternative: different, non-traditional
Pulp: mush

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TEACHER OF BOOK: Cameron Carter teaches second grade at Slate Hill Elementary in Worthington, Ohio. This is the first year he’ll be teaching *And Tango Makes Three*. *Were you surprised to learn that this book had been challenged?*

It didn’t surprise me at all. Any book that has any type of social situation where it might be different than your own has the potential to be challenged.

Why did you want to teach it?

One of our main standards in second grade is creating a community. When these students go out in the world – especially in Columbus, which is a big city – they are going to be surrounded with all different types of people. And yes, they might not agree with someone’s lifestyle choice, but they still need to be able to accept people for who they are. If someone were to challenge my teaching of this book, that’s what I would explain to them.

How do you know when your class – in this case very young children – are ready for subject matter like this?

I think it depends on the dynamic of the class. I think it depends on the students that you have – and you can gauge that in the first few weeks of school: Are they still in that immature stage, or do you feel that your class is ready as a community to talk about a concept or an issue? Like with any good instruction, it’s based on when the students are ready, and you can tell that by their

interactions with each other.

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PARENTAL SUPPORT

In a very strong letter to the *Des Moines Register*, parent Wendy Sontag defends keeping *And Tango Makes Three* in the Ankeny Public School libraries.

Like the Russells, I consider myself a “values-conscious Christian parent.” However, it is clear that the Russells do not speak for me. My two bright, caring daughters began their academic careers at East Elementary. We loved East and I am delighted to know that “And Tango Makes Three” is available in its library. I would never purport to decide that there are books in the East library that should not be available

“And Tango Makes Three” is no exception. This book seems to really be a story about adoption. Nowhere in the book is the word “homosexuality” even used, so I take issue with the argument that the book is not age appropriate.

Regardless, there are students of all ages who attend Ankeny schools and have same-sex parents. I’d like to ensure that there are books in our school libraries that reflect those children’s life experiences as they are. As a Christian, who am I to determine that those children’s needs are less important, or that their family configuration is somehow less loving or less “right” than my own? And as a public citizen, it’s not fair for me to decide which books other people’s children get to have access to, especially in a public school library. ---Wendy Sontag, Ankeny

