

November 3, 2014

Dear Students, Parents and Guardians,

Our November Book-a-Month project will be for the students to choose a novel to read at home that has been challenged and/or banned. The inspiration for this project is the American Library Association's *Banned Book Week*. This year marks the 32nd anniversary of this event, which celebrates the right to read and the belief in the freedom individuals have to use their voices, even if unpopular. Although the official *Banned Book Week* event was in September, our students tackle these issues as they learn about the Bill of Rights in history class, creating context for these founding ideals that are still being challenged today.

Students are encouraged to participate in this celebration in order to gain a deeper understanding of the First Amendment and the negative effects of censorship on knowledge. Students will make connections with our fall semester theme of identity and voice.

The students will be introduced to a list of recently challenged or banned books. The student *does not* have to choose from this list. In fact, students and families should do their due diligence and research a novel that is of interest, yet does not conflict with their personal beliefs. Parents are the ultimate censors in families. If a student or parent has concerns about the content of a specific title, a resource such as Amazon.com includes hundreds of user reviews that highlight content that might be considered controversial. In addition to being a book the student is both interested in and comfortable with, the student's selection should be at an appropriate reading level.

Students should have their novel researched and selected by November 9. While King's library does have some challenged or banned books on the shelf, students might need to check out a book from a public library or even, if possible, obtain his/her own personal copy of the book. Ownership encourages notations, thoughts, reactions and markings of significant passages.

The student will keep a weekly reading log of pages read and important passages that will essentially save this book. Students are encouraged to partner with fellow classmates to read the same novel, stimulating dialogue and deeper insight and inquiry while also collaborating on the final project, a video exposing the dangers of censorship or the importance of the right to free and open access to information.

If you have questions or concerns, please email me at msjhoefer@gmail.com Also, parents--please sign the lower portion of this sheet as an indication that you are aware of what your child is reading.

Thank you for your support,
Ms. Hoefer
8th grade English

CONSENT:

I have read the plans for the next Book-A-Month reading project and I understand the requirements.

Student's Name _____

Novel title and author _____

Student's Signature _____

Parent's Signature _____

Websites to Explore Books:

- www.ala.org/bbooks/frequentlychallengedbooks
- www.bannedbooksweek.org

ASSIGNMENT 1:

DUE DILIGENCE ON CHALLENGED OR BANNED BOOK:

Due: Nov. 10, 2014

After researching a book acceptable to your family as well as on an appropriate reading level, book groups will write a paragraph offering a brief plot summary of the chosen banned or challenged book as well as an overview of the dates, places and reasons for the challenge. The idea is to look for patterns or trends in subject matter censorship over time and over geographical areas. Include an image of the cover of the book. Make sure the title and the author is included in this typed assignment. This will be part of a bulletin board, so take design and appearance into consideration. Be sure and include your source for information in a MLA citation at the bottom of the page.

MLA: Website

[Click here to automatically cite a Website.](#)

How to Cite a Website in MLA

Structure:

Last name, First name. "Article Title." *Website Title*. Publisher of Website, Day
Month Year article was published. Web. Day Month Year article was
accessed. <URL>.

Example:

Cain, Kevin. "The Negative Effects of Facebook on Communication." *Social
Media Today RSS* N.p., 29 June 2012. Web. 02 Jan. 2013.

Make sure to: