

Challenged Book Essay - Scoring Rubric

Name _____

Date: 10/31/13

Book Whale Talk

Author Crutcher

Published: 1900

The purpose of your essay against banning a Challenged Book is to:

- Demonstrate "information competency" by evaluating the logic, relevance and validity of information. You will research:
 - a. book challenges in general,
 - b. why your book has been challenged, and
 - c. what biases were evident in your research.
- Develop and support an argument: Communicate your opinion in a two page persuasive essay that answers the questions: How can the school board support the First Amendment, and how should it respond to efforts to ban this book?
- Properly cite all reference materials (in-text citations for quotes and alphabetical list of references on an MLA formatted work cited page).

Your Challenged Book Essay is worth 50 total points. Projects that earn the highest value for each criterion will reflect thorough research with proper citations, a cohesive argument with support, and college-level writing skills.

Criterion	Available Points	Your Points	Comments
2 page, double-spaced, word processed essay with 12 pt font + works cited page	2	2	minor errors
MLA citation for quotes & 4+ references (must have a quote & works cited page)	6	3	needed quite a bit of cited material
Freedom from errors. Proofread!	4	0	need to proofread
Summary of research: when and where was the book challenged; results; evaluation of arguments (pros & cons)	10	10	Good
Statement of your main points against banning the book (lessons, free speech)	10	9	would like specific examples from the book and explanation
Mitigating measures: Policies the school can use to help students handle the issues without banning the book. <i>me</i>	10	7	Really - only one given.
Your conclusion or claim (thesis) against banning.	8	8	Good.
Total	50	39	

24
15
39



Professor Hart

ACDV 50: T/R 11:10 a.m.

31 Oct. 2013

Challenged Book "Whale Talk"

1/4 margins
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The controversial issue that this challenged book ~~Whale~~^{Halee} Talk^x, by Chris Crutcher, may present is that if someone ^{is} already going through a personal identity crisis, they can develop a totally different point of view in contrast to the challenged book they are reading. Since that individual can become more agitated with the subject matter than they previously were before they actually started to read the book. Especially, if the challenged book contains inappropriate use of language, harassment, and degrades cultures in such negative ways. According to ^uCensorship Roundup, "Author Chris Crutcher has had a few schools in the United States that removed his book ~~Whale Talk~~^x for explicit profanity and racism. Although ^{it} there was one particular school in Folerville, MI, in which the board committee voted to restore the previously banned Whale Talk^x. Crutcher defends his novel by saying that it reflects the characters' lives (SLJ News, pg. 51.3).

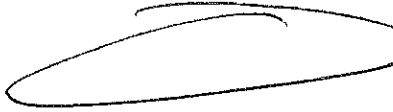
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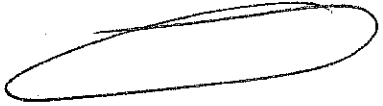
One of the alternate pros of banning books from school libraries is that teachers also have a positive impact on children's learning through literature. In association to the way they choose to — ? teach a life lesson linked from the context of the challenged book; which is reflected in the child's learning with instances of moral, — *strong* values, and good judgment. Therefore, teachers will be admired by parents and students for their commitment to banning challenged books; since their influence will keep more appropriate books on the library shelves for school aged children to read instead. After all, challenged books present unnecessary issues of biases and stereotypes. Secondly, parents can have a greater advantage to books being banned because they would have more control over the literature content the child reads both at school and in the home environment. For parents, it would mean limiting explaining and overgeneralizing issues that can affect the child's mindset; since it can be quite overwhelming for the child to conceive knowledge on strong content within the book. Thirdly, school aged children can have better access to a variety of books that are well written in good context that deal with everyday ordinary life circumstances; without the controversy of profane language, racism, and sexual content.

Moreover, one of the alternate cons of banning books is that young children can try to obtain access to books that are too



mature for their own reading comprehension. Secondly, the banning of books can bring upon controversies about the book and it will draw more people to want to read them. Thirdly, the content of the banned book may offend one especially if they can relate to it on a personal level in comparison to the character's lives in the book. In comparison with the challenged book "Whale Talk," in connection to T.J. Jones's circumstances with personal identity and personal conflicts dealing with his own feelings of belonging among peers; it can influence the reader to react or reason in a negative manner.


As a parent to young children I believe that book banning is somewhat misconstrued in the United States. I believe that as a nation of individuals one lives in a country where the first amendment claims freedom of speech which allows one the right to communicate their own proper use of ideas and opinions. By use of one's mind, body, and property, to whomever is willing to receive them. I believe that schools should adopt the same concepts when it comes to banning books from their library shelves as well. This view should be centered on the approach that parents are the first teachers in a child's life; with this perception comes the responsibility of cultivating knowledge into the child's life and primarily through the use of good books no matter how



controversial they may be. Considering that books are the first impact to a child's life since infancy.

Therefore, I believe that constructive mitigating measures that schools can adopt are policies and strategies that teachers can carry on into the classroom environment that will help students to handle their issues; without actually having to ban the challenged book. Teachers can cultivate a good positive message from the book, they can teach children to distinguish instances of good character from bad, and they can also teach children about diverse cultures and customs in society. Teachers can accomplish this method by using their own positive perspectives in order to compare and contrast controversial issues with contemporary ways in today's society. ✓ ✓

I believe that we live in a country of equal opportunities and equality so why not pursue challenged books to see and find out if they measure up to one's standards as teachers and parents. Yet, at the same time one should give credit to the author's that do deserve honorary acknowledgment and recognition for the positive messages that are depicted in their novels in order for school age children to appreciate; in contrast to the novels that present the far more controversial issues and topics for minor readers to fully comprehend. There should be a balance in this concept a fifty-fifty win-win situation for both spectrums of audiences who favor



banning of challenged books and those whom oppose of the
measure.

There is a lot of good
ideas here; however, word
choices and sentence structure
made it very difficult to
read.

Needed specific examples from
the book and explanation to
make the argument stronger.

Works Cited

✗ "Censorship Roundup." ^{Hale} School Library Journal 51.3 (2005): 25.

Academic Search Premier. Web. 15 Oct. 2013.

✗ Crutcher, Chris. Whale Talk. New York, New York: Library of Congress, 2001. ~~1-298~~.

Print. ~~<http://www.haperteen.com>~~.

✗ Follos, Alison M.G. "Author Profile: The "3 C's" of Chris Crutcher."

Library Media Connection 25, 3, pp. 40-43. Academic Search Premier, EBSCO host, ^{Web}
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✗ "OIF Unvelis Most-Challenged Books." American Libraries 37.4 (2006): 6.

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