

# **Banned Books Week**

Library Event



## **What You Should Know**

Elementary and Middle School students in several KSD schools have experienced a “Banned Book Week” unit with the school librarians for at least the past couple of years. According to its website, *“Banned Books Week is an annual event celebrating the freedom to read. Banned Books Week was launched in 1982 in response to a sudden surge in the number of challenges to books in schools, bookstores and libraries. Typically held during the last week of September, it highlights the value of free and open access to information.”*

In many cases parents were completely unaware of this unit/presentation. While the debate about “banning books” is certainly a heated topic, the specific concerns relative to our students and families are that:

- The librarians pointed students to very controversial books without parental awareness. The students were *encouraged* to read the books that are in question, and parents were not given the opportunity to be aware so they could discuss it with their children or be informed about the books in question.
- The books that were featured during this event are not actually “banned,” and it does the students a disservice to misrepresent the debate surrounding books with questionable content (sexually explicit material, profane language, etc.) being available in school libraries. **There is a strong distinction between a book being *banned* and parents expecting the school district to follow policy and age-appropriate guidelines in their material selection.**
- Banned Book Week is **not part of the approved Library Media curriculum**, so even some KSD leaders were quite surprised to hear about it.

**\*When KSD staff is *pointing* students to controversial materials it seems that a heads-up to parents and a balanced presentation would be a reasonable expectation.\***

The below document is one of the presentations given to middle schoolers.

Even *Captain Underpants* is one of the most challenged books in America and has faced numerous challenges. It was on the Top 10 Most Challenged Books as recently as 2018.



Click on a book cover to read about reasons it is among the 100 Most Banned & Challenged Books of the Past Decade. All these books are available in the NKMS Library!



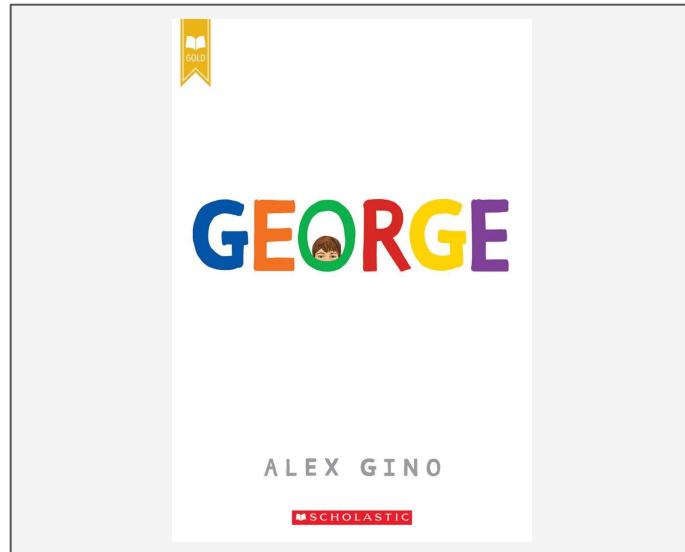
**CENSORSHIP IS A DEAD END.**  
**BANNED BOOKS WEEK**  
 SEPTEMBER 27 - OCTOBER 3, 2020  
 bannedbooksweek.org

I READ BANNED BOOKS



**Kahoot!**

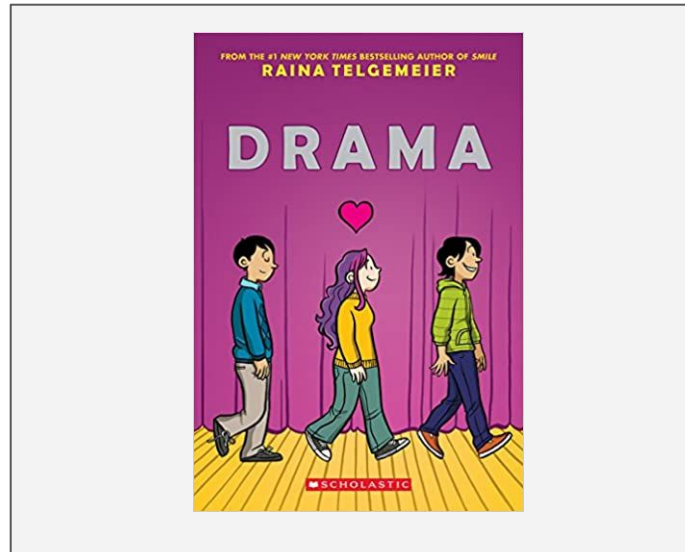
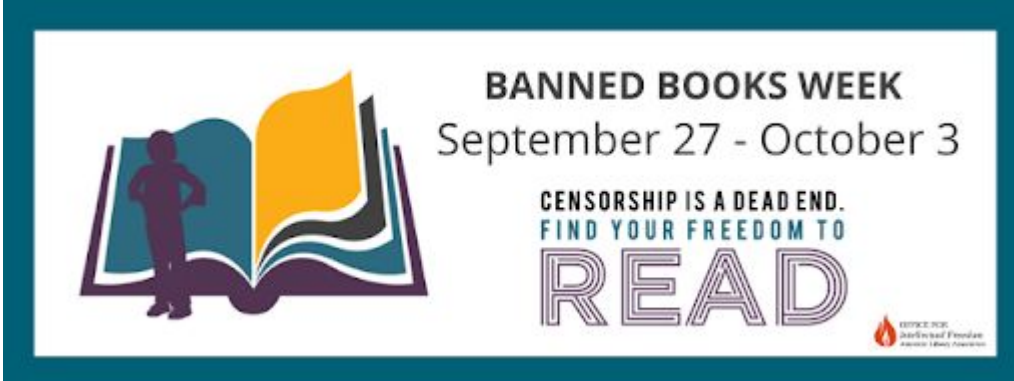




## George by Alex Gino (published in 2017)

- On the Top 10 Challenged Books list every year since it was published.
- Reasons: challenged, banned, restricted, and hidden to avoid controversy; for LGBTQIA+ content and a transgender character; because schools and libraries should not “put books in a child’s hand that require discussion”; for sexual references; and for conflicting with a religious viewpoint and “traditional family structure”

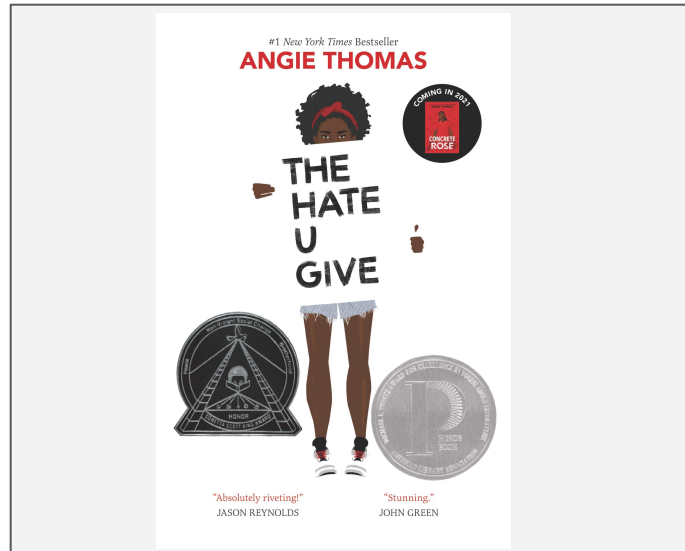
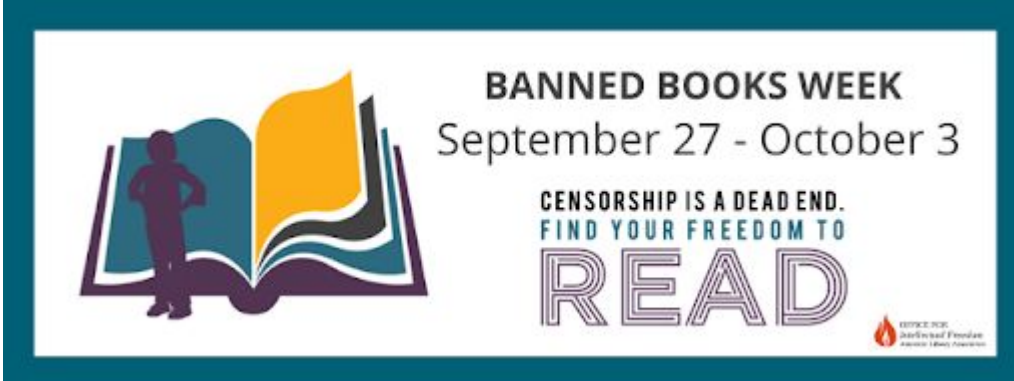
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## *Drama* by Raina Telgemeier (published in 2012)

- On the Top 10 Challenged Books in 2014, 2016, 2017, 2018 & 2019
- Reasons: This Stonewall Honor Award-winning, 2012 graphic novel from an acclaimed cartoonist was challenged and banned in school libraries because it includes LGBT characters and was considered “confusing.”

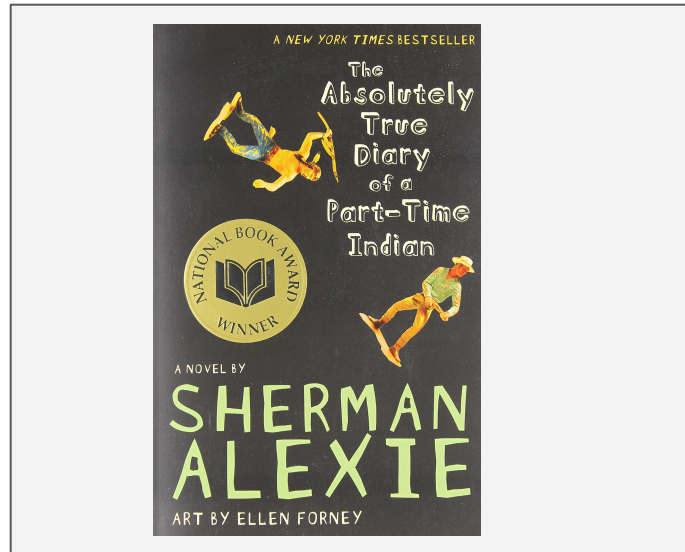
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## *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas (published in 2017)

- On the Top 10 Challenged Books list in 2018
- Reasons: banned and challenged because it was deemed “anti-cop,” and for profanity, drug use, and sexual references

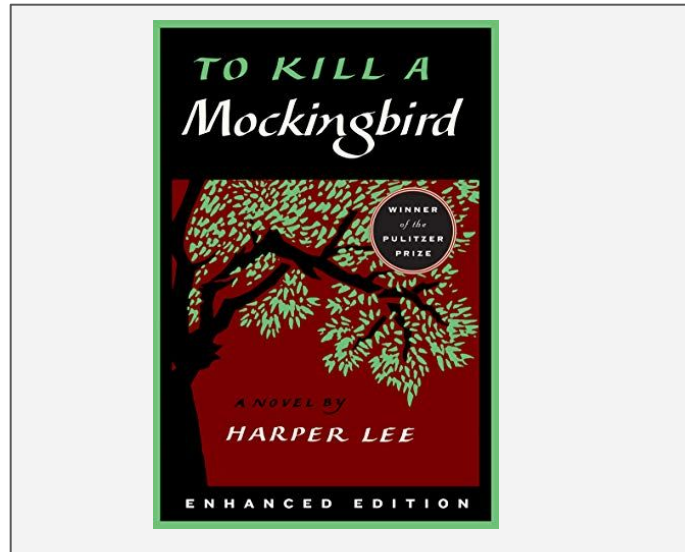
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## *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie (published in 2007)

- On the Top 10 Challenged Books list in 2012, 2017 & 2018
- Reasons: Consistently challenged since its publication in 2007 for acknowledging issues such as poverty, alcoholism, and sexuality, this National Book Award winner was challenged in school curriculums because of profanity and situations that were deemed explicit.

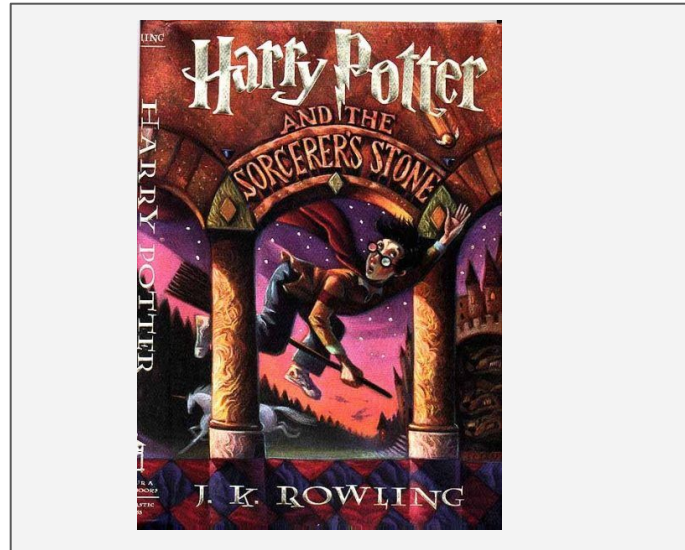
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### *To Kill A Mockingbird* by Harper Lee (published in 1960)

- On the Top 100 Most Banned and Challenged Books of the Past Decade
- Reasons: **To Kill a Mockingbird** is one of the most frequently challenged books in the US due to its use of profanity and racial slurs and mature situations.

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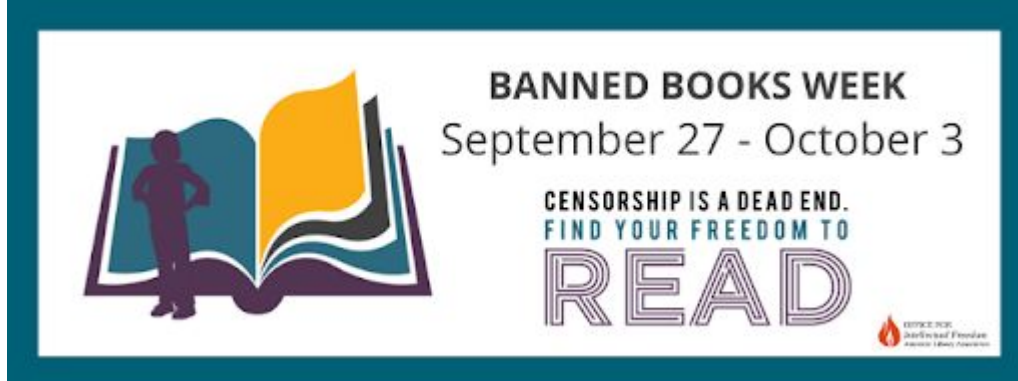


## ***Harry Potter Series* by J.K. Rowling (first book published in 1997)**

- On the Top 100 Most Banned and Challenged Books of the Past Decade
- Reasons: Concerns included that it glorified magic and the occult, confusing children and leading them to attempt to emulate the spells and curses they read about. There were some concerns over the violence and the increasingly dark tone of the later books in the series. But most of the censorship attempts aimed at *Harry Potter* were for religious reasons.

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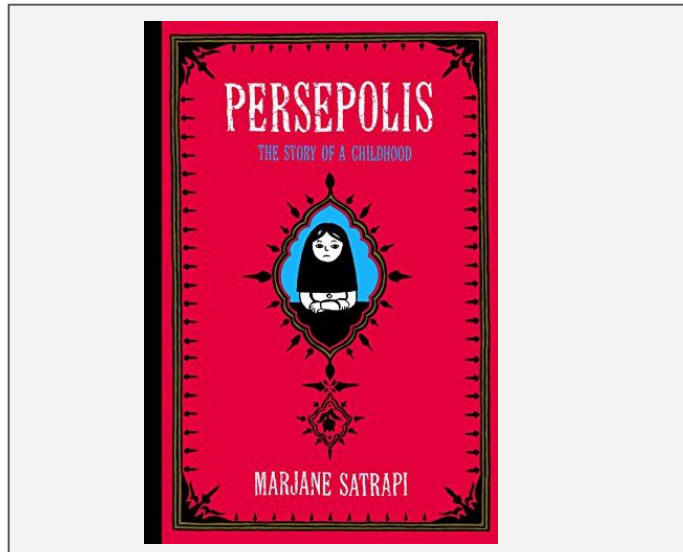




## *Goosebumps* Series by R.L. Stine (first book published in 1994)

- On the Top 100 Most Banned and Challenged Books of the Past Decade
- Reasons: Parents felt that the **books were** too graphic and scary for their children. Many parents wanted to protect their kids from the element of fear; however, some teachers felt that **Goosebumps** helped students manage the feeling of being afraid

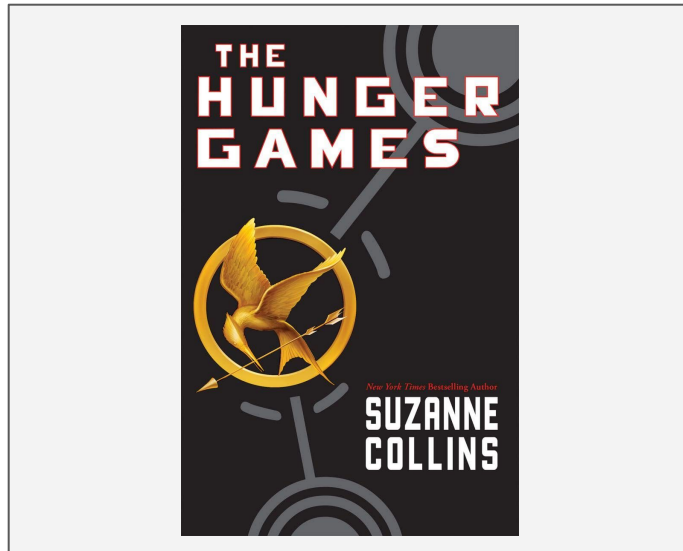
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## *Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi (published in 2000)

- On the Top 100 Most Banned and Challenged Books of the Past Decade
- Reasons: gambling, offensive language, political viewpoint. Additional reasons: “politically, racially, and socially offensive,” “graphic depictions”

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### *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins published in 2008)

- On the Top 100 Most Banned and Challenged Books of the Past Decade
- Reasons: religious viewpoint, unsuited to age group

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