

# Learning Experience

**LE Title: Censorship**

**Authors: Mattie Sagaas, Ellen Burney**

**Grade Level: 11**

**School : Ilion**

**Topic/Subject Area(s): English**

**School Address: Golden Bomber Drive**

**Email: msagaas@ilion-csd-high.moric.org**

**School Phone/Fax: 315-89-7471**

## LEARNING CONTEXT

### **Purpose or Focus of Experience**

Students will write a research paper incorporating information from print and electronic sources that support a thesis statement. Students will critically examine each source and evaluate the information for its validity, bias and accuracy. All sources used will be cited according to the *Modern Language Association* (MLA) format.

## CONNECTION TO STANDARDS

New York State Learning Standard for English Language Arts

### **Standard 1 – Language for Information and Understanding**

Listening and reading to acquire information and understanding involves collecting data, facts, and ideas; discovering relationships, concepts and generalizations; and using knowledge from oral written and electronic sources.

- 1) Students interpret and analyze complex informational texts and presentations, including professional journals, newspapers, electronic networks, and primary source material in their subject area courses.
- 2) Students will synthesize information from diverse sources and identify complexities and discrepancies in the information.
- 3) Students will make distinctions about the relative value and significance of specific data, facts and ideas.
- 4) Students will make perceptive and well developed connections to prior knowledge.

Speaking and writing to acquire and transmit information requires asking probing and clarifying questions, interpreting information in one's own words, applying information from one context to another, and presenting the information and interpretation clearly, concisely and comprehensibly.

- 1) Students will present a controlling idea that conveys an individual perspective and insight into the topic.
- 2) Students will revise and improve early drafts by restructuring, correcting errors, and revising for clarity and effect.
- 3) Students will use standard English skillfully, applying established rules and conventions for presenting information and making use of a wide range of grammatical constructions and vocabulary to achieve an individual style that communicates effectively.

**AASL Learning Standards/Library & Information Skills Learner Outcomes addressed in assessment:**

**Standard 1 - Use of information and ideas**

1.1 Efficient and Ethical Information – Seeking Behavior

1.2 Literacy and Reading

1.3 Access to Information

**ESSENTIAL QUESTION(S)**

Compose a thesis statement on the topic of Censorship. Several topics have been provided. The student may choose one of following or select his/her own.

**Sample Topics:**

- 1) Choose one of the books on the list of “Most Frequently Banned Books in 1990’s,” and discuss the grounds for censorship of the book. You will have to be familiar with the book to do this as you will need to give SPECIFIC reasons as to the censoring of this piece of literature. You will also need to give an overview of the book, as it may not be familiar to the grader.
- 2) The novel, *Fahrenheit 451*, was both a critic and a victim of censorship. On what grounds was the book censored? How much of the book was originally challenged and changed? What was done in response to this? Discuss other well known titles that were “expurgated” (define this term in your paper) due to elements that were considered offensive to religious or private groups, or to society as a whole.
- 2) Research and discuss the history of censorship in schools. Give an overview of books that have been banned in school libraries and classrooms, and discuss what elements of these books have been challenged. Include any book challenges that have been made in your school district. (See Librarian for details.)
- 3) In relation to the First Amendment, discuss freedom of expression in regard to obscenity. What actions has the government taken to curtail freedom of expression in an effort to limit obscenity? Cite examples in film, television, the Internet, and books.
- 4) Provide an overview of books that have been banned for political reasons. Discuss the books and why (and to whom) they were deemed politically threatening.

## **CONTENT KNOWLEDGE: DECLARATIVE, PROCEDURAL**

### **Declarative**

1. Search the OPAC
2. Search online data bases
3. Search the Internet, including Literary criticism, as well as author's web pages

### **Procedural**

1. Start with print materials that the high school library owns (OPAC)
2. Search *Google*. Use the search term: Book Banning
3. Peruse result list with a critical eye with regard to bias and validity
4. Read the information. Scan where appropriate.
5. Use Source Sheet to cite information source accurately. (Attached)

## **PROCEDURE**

- 1) Library Media Specialist will introduce the print materials available in the Library. Students will peruse print materials before going online. Use index and table of contents to improve efficiency of search. Also mention challenges in district.
- 2) Check online data bases, *Gale Net*, *Ebsco*, *Electric Library* and newspapers to get authoritative information on student's topic. Literary criticism can be also be found on the Mid-York homepage – *Twayne's Authors Series* and *Contemporary Authors*. (Click on Electronic Resources – Mid-York Library card number required)
- 3) Google Search: Teach students how to select search terms that will give potential results that will be specific to their topic. Also, author web pages, though biased, can be useful.
- 4) Look at URLs in the results list. Choose **.edu**, **.gov**, **.org**, before a **.com**. Explain why.  
Look at the phrase in the first line(s) to see if it matches their search term.
- 5) Find a page that seems to have accurate and up-to-date information. Check for the last update and find the name of the author/web master.

## **TIME REQUIRED**

Two 80 minute periods

## RESOURCES

### **Print:**

- Bald, Margaret. **Literature Suppressed on Religious Grounds**. New York, NY: Facts on File. 1998.
- Doyle, Robert P. **Banned Books: Resource Guide**. Chicago, IL: American Library Association, 2000- (published annually.)
- Foerstel, Herbert N. **Banned in the U.S.A.: A Reference Guide to Book Censorship in Schools And Public Libraries**. Greenwood Press. 1994.
- Karolides, Nicholas J. **Literature Suppressed on Political Grounds**. New York, NY: Facts on File. 1998.
- Newman, Leslea. **Heather Has Two Mommies**. Los Angeles, CA: Alyson Publications, 1989.
- Sova, Dawn B. **Literature Suppressed on Sexual Grounds**. New York, NY: Facts on File. 1998.
- Sova, Dawn B. **Literature Suppressed on Social Grounds**. New York, NY: Facts on File. 1998.
- Willhoite, Michael. **Daddy's Roommate**. Los Angeles, CA: Alyson Publication, 1991

Google. Search Term – Banned Books  
Especially [www.ala.org](http://www.ala.org)  
Online Data Bases (listed under Procedure)

## ASSESSMENT PLAN

### Rubric

Each paper will receive a separate rough draft and final draft grade. The paper will be graded according to the following rubric which coincides with the grading of the Regents exam:

<u>Rough</u>	<u>Final</u>
Meaning .....20 points	Meaning .....10 points
Development...20 points	Development.... 10 points
Organization...20 points	Organization.....10 points
Language Use..20 points	Citation.....10 points
<u>Citation.....20 points</u>	<u>Editing..... 60 points</u>
TOTAL.....100 points	TOTAL.....100 points

## STUDENT WORK

Students will submit a 5-6 page research paper, plus Cover Page and Works Cited Page. Students will be required to use and cite at least 4 sources (2 print, 2 Internet). Each source will include a source sheet. Internet sources will additionally require a printout, in its entirety, of the web site.

## **REFLECTION**

Students concentrated on comparing reviewer's opinions of the author, on his/her authorship in general and to a specific work. They liked to see how an author defended his/her controversial work, if available. They found it challenging to arrive at a personal criticism, if the reviews were inconsistent.

Another burning issue was: Who decides morality? --- the government, the school, the parent, etc?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Period \_\_\_\_\_

## Source Sheet

(this is the information you will use to compose your Works Cited List)

Use **ONE** Sheet per Source

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Print Source (book, magazine, or newspaper)

Title of Book, Magazine or Newspaper \_\_\_\_\_

A. Title of article: (if from a magazine, newspaper or encyclopedia) \_\_\_\_\_

B. Author: \_\_\_\_\_

C. Editor: (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

D. Publisher: \_\_\_\_\_

E. Place of Publication: \_\_\_\_\_

F. Date of Publication: \_\_\_\_\_

G. Volume number: (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

H. Page numbers: \_\_\_\_\_

### Online Print Source (*Ebsco, Electric Library, GaleNet, Proquest, Grolier's Encyclopedia, World Book Encyclopedia, etc.*)

A. Author: \_\_\_\_\_

B. Title of Article: \_\_\_\_\_

C. Title of Periodical: \_\_\_\_\_

D. Date of Publication: \_\_\_\_\_

E. Publication Medium (Online or CD-ROM): \_\_\_\_\_

F. Name of Source: (ie. GaleNet) \_\_\_\_\_

G. Publication date or Date of access: \_\_\_\_\_

H. Web Site address: \_\_\_\_\_

### Internet Source (use search engine to access, i.e., Google, Yahoo, AskJeeves, etc.)

A. Author or Originator of Web Site: \_\_\_\_\_

B. Title of Item: \_\_\_\_\_

C. Date of Item or download: \_\_\_\_\_

D. Web Site Address: \_\_\_\_\_