

## BANNED BOOKS WEEK TRIVIA:

### CHALLENGED BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

1. Which of the following Dr. Seuss books was banned because it offended forestry workers? It was also criticized for the way it portrays consumerism.
  - a. Horton Hears a Who
  - b. Yertle the Turtle
  - c. The Sneetches
  - d. The Lorax.

Answer: d. The Lorax.

Both the San Juan Island Library in Washington State and the Middletown Township Public Library in Monmouth County, NJ included this question in their Banned Books Week quizzes.

2. Why was The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein banned from a public library in Colorado?
  - a. Anti-environmentalism
  - b. Sexism
  - c. Promoting greed
  - d. Promoting stealing

Answer: b. Sexism because the boy keeps taking from the tree, without giving anything in return.

Credit goes to The Banned Books Project at Carnegie Mellon University, which explained, “Many readers interpreted the tree as a sacrificial female and the boy as a man that [sic] constantly takes from the woman.” Reading Partners, a national literacy nonprofit, also discussed this interpretation at [readingpartners.org](http://readingpartners.org).

3. Which beloved children's book was called "psychologically damaging" and "too dark" when it was first published?
- a. Llama Llama Mad at Mama by Anna Dewdney
  - b. Mouse Was Mad by Linda Urban
  - c. Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak
  - d. When Miles Got Mad by Samantha Counter

Answer: c. Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak

Credit goes to Reading Partners, although the magazine *The Week* and various book-related websites and book review websites also cited these reasons for the ban. According to numerous sources, opposition to the book began almost immediately after its publication.

4. Books have been banned because of their illustrations. Which of the following popular children's books was banned because of an allegedly obscene illustration?
- a. Where's Wally? by Martin Handford (known as Where's Waldo in the U.S. and Canada)
  - b. Animalia by Graeme Base
  - c. What Do People Do All Day? by Richard Scarry
  - d. Journey by Aaron Becker

Answer: a. Where's Wally/Where's Waldo because someone claimed to have found a tiny image of a woman with an untied bikini top in a beach scene. This question was included in a Banned Books Week quiz created by the Middletown Township Public Library in New Jersey.

Note: The author originally called his character "Wally" because, in English slang of that time, "there was a certain kind of character called a train spotter, someone slightly nerdy, a bit idiotic, Handford told the *Dallas Morning News* on Wally's tenth birthday. It matched Wally's lost personality perfectly." (Information courtesy of [trivia.happy.com](http://trivia.happy.com))

5. Why was an illustrated edition of Little Red Riding Hood banned in two California school districts in 1989?
- Wolf cross-dressing as Grandma
  - Little girl traveling alone in forest
  - Little girl carrying wine to Grandma
  - Woodcutter attacks wolf with axe

Answer: c. Little girl carrying wine to Grandma

MentalFloss.com gets the credit for this question.

6. Some parents of students in a Kansas school district challenged this book because it features talking animals, which the parents considered “unnatural and blasphemous, as humans are the highest level of God’s creation.” The book was:
- Charlotte’s Web by E. B. White
  - The Wind in the Willows by Kenneth Grahame
  - Mrs. Frisbee and the Rats of NIMH by Robert O’Brien
  - The Mouse and the Motorcycle by Beverly Cleary

Answer: a. Charlotte’s Web

Credit for this question goes to San Juan Island Library in Washington State.

7. Another classic book with talking animals was banned for several years (until a revised edition was published) due to a chatty parrot’s remarks that were determined to be racist?
- Treasure Island by Robert Louis Stevenson
  - Doctor Dolittle by Hugh Lofting
  - Kim by Rudyard Kipling
  - Kon-Tiki by Thor Heyerdahl

b. Doctor Dolittle

Credit for this question goes to MentalFloss.com. As MentalFloss notes, “Doctor Dolittle was first published in 1920. Polynesia the parrot uttered many phrases that, while un-PC today, were commonly used then.”

8. There is a popular book series by Dav Pilkey, which, according to *Business Insider*, “topped the list of the most banned books in America” in 2012. According to Marshall University, the series was challenged (Marshall doesn’t say at what institution) “because it was perceived as encouraging disruptive behavior.” According to the *Los Angeles Times*, one of the books in the series was banned from the school book fair by a Michigan elementary school in 2015 because one of the main characters is gay. What is the name of the hero in this series?
- Wicked Wedgie Woman
  - Deputy Doo-Doo
  - Bionic Booger Boy
  - Captain Underpants

Answer: d. Captain Underpants

In its Banned Books Week quiz, the San Juan Island Library in Washington State said, of Pilkey’s books, “This series of illustrated books for grade schoolers has often been challenged and banned by those who find that it is unsuited for its intended age audience, and that it encourages children to disobey authority.” The series was also cited by MentalFloss.com.

9. Which series of books that is enjoyed by all ages and is the basis for some of the most popular films of all time has been banned for promoting witchcraft, setting bad examples for youth, and for being “too dark.” Although most of the bans have since been overturned, there are still schools and libraries where these books and films are not welcome.
- The Kane Chronicles trilogy by Rick Riordan
  - Harry Potter by J. K. Rowling
  - The Oz books by L. Frank Baum
  - The Chronicles of Narnia by C. S. Lewis

Answer: b. Harry Potter

Credit for this question goes to San Juan Island Library in Washington State. Other institutions that included a question about this series or a specific title in the series in their Banned Books Week quizzes included Spokane County Library District (also in Washington), Hickory Stick Bookshop in Washington, CT, and New Jersey’s Middletown Township Public Library.

10. Officials in many elementary schools challenged Helen Piers' How to Take Care of Your Dog because it contained what word?
- a. dam
  - b. stud
  - c. spay
  - d. bitch

Answer: d. bitch.

As MentalFloss.com points out, "'Bitch,' of course, is the standard term for a female dog which veterinarians and members of the American Kennel Club use regularly without flinching."