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Books Unbanned

Brooklyn Public Library founded Books Unbanned in 2022 to provide teens nationwide with unrestricted access to our entire digital collection, to support their right to read what they like, and to build a network of advocates nationwide to defend and expand the freedom to read.

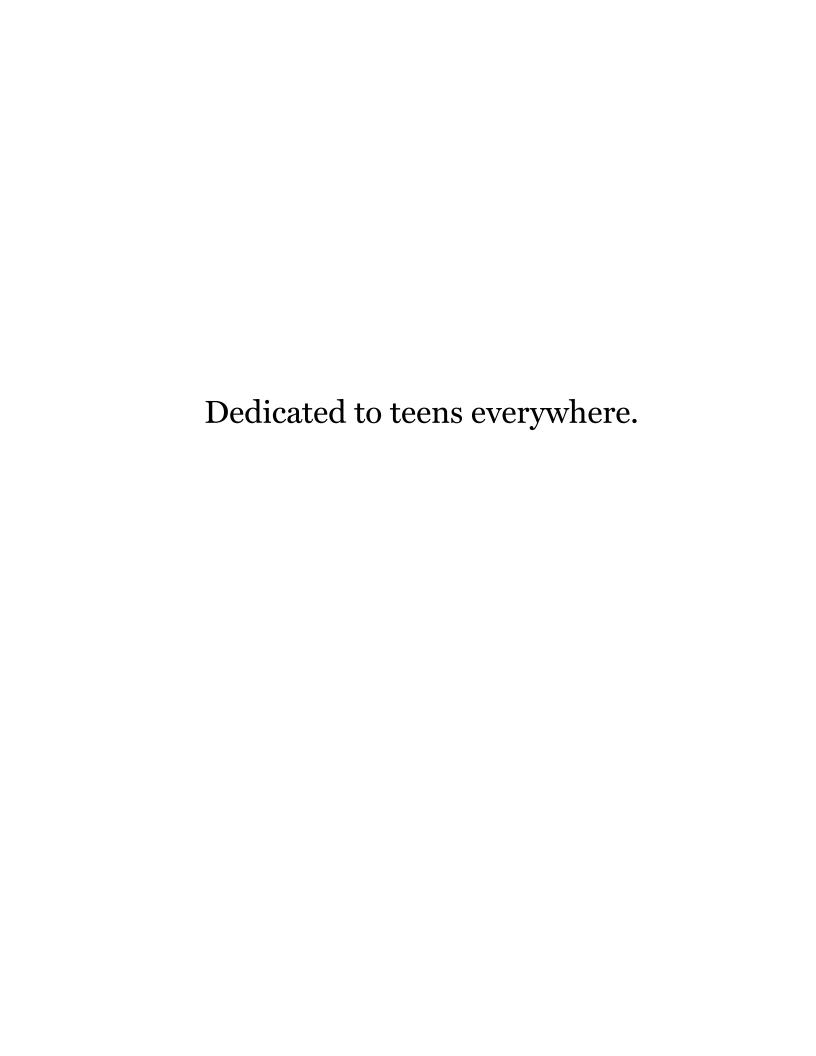
FOUNDING AND GUIDING GOALS

- 1.) Help teens where they are by providing access to a diverse collection of materials
- 2.) Center and support teen voices and expertise
- 3.) Tell affirmative narratives about the value of democratic institutions like libraries



Books Unbanned partners include the Seattle Public Library, Boston Public Library, San Diego Public Library, and the Los Angeles County Library.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This toolkit represents the efforts and support of many people across a wide coalition of library supporters and intellectual freedom advocates. The work started with a collaboration of Brooklyn Public Library's Books Unbanned initiative and PEN America on a series of virtual Freedom to Read Advocacy Institutes. Kelly Jensen developed the curriculum using the previous work of the institutes. Emma Karin Eriksson offered curriculum support, tested the materials with her cohort of Freedom to Read Teen Ambassadors, and created the worksheets for the toolkit. Erica Moroz and Lauren Rochford provided editorial guidance. A. Diaz created the layout and cover. We thank the many who offered to review the toolkit and playtest the activities with their teens, providing us with valuable feedback and insights.



INTRODUCTION

GET EXCITED: you're on the road to helping develop the next generation of library and literary advocates and champions. This toolkit, part of Brooklyn Public Library's Books Unbanned initiative, was designed to help grow the excitement, hone the skills, and encourage the action today's teens have for one of the few institutions where they are welcomed as they are: the library.

In an era of ongoing challenges to books, reading, and libraries, it is crucial to have a way for teens to not only understand what's going on but to have a true toolkit to help institute change. This is that toolkit.

The Freedom to Read Teen Advocacy Toolkit is freely available to anyone who'd like to use it. Everything you need to run the program is available here, including activity ideas, slide deck lessons, and boatloads of additional resources to go deeper and wider in areas of particular interest.



PROGRAM GOALS

The Freedom to Read Teen Advocacy Toolkit was designed with several goals for attendees in mind, whether you use the entire guide cover to cover or you utilize bits and pieces. These goals include:

- Understanding and articulating their personal values
- Appreciating the role and history of the library in American society
- Learning about civic engagement
- Discovering and discussing student rights
- Strengthening skills in public speaking, editorial/letter writing, community-building, networking, advocacy, and self-care
- Growing personal self-awareness and self-reflection skills
- Defending and exercising the freedom to read

PROGRAM SETUP

The program consists of four units, and each of those units contains four sessions. Units capture a major theme running throughout each session, and each session contains an array of different types of activities: hands-on skill building, group discussions, journaling prompts, recommended viewing and listening, and more. Each session runs for one hour, though each of the sessions can easily expand beyond one hour.

The Freedom to Read Teen Advocacy Toolkit was developed for adaptability. Not every session will be a good fit for your teens, so you're encouraged to mix and match the pieces of the program that work best. Want to take a Group Activity from one session and swap it with a journaling activity in another session? Go for it. Want to run the entire 16 session program over the course of a year, with one program every other week? Do it. Only interested in using one activity from the entire guide? That's awesome, too.



In early conversations, it became abundantly clear that an entire program built around book censorship would not be appropriate in every community. While intellectual freedom and library support are the focus of this guide, it is adaptable and flexible to meet the interests and concerns in any community. This program's outcomes include developing teen leadership skills, public speaking skills, and listening skills. It aims to foster a love for community engagement and citizenship, as well as an understanding of why and how public libraries and schools fill an important role in American democracy.

The Freedom to Read Teen Advocacy Toolkit is an expansion on Brooklyn Public Library and PEN America's Freedom to Read Advocacy Institute. The Institute reached teens online and in person. Pulling from that model, this program expands the work through a wider reach. This program works best in an in-person setting in your community, but you can use much of the program in a virtual capacity, too.

Make this guide work for you and your circumstances.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

While the program considers primarily teens in a library setting, it is appropriate to use in a wide range of scenarios and places. "If you have a local teen group that isn't connected to the library you can either substitute

IDEAS FOR HOW YOU MIGHT USE THE CONTENT IN THIS GUIDE



A Teen Intellectual Freedom Summit

- Consists of one or two day events
- Runs 8-10 hours each day
- Allows you to use the entire 16-session program
- Provides time for breaks between sessions and units



A Teen Intellectual Freedom Seminar

- Consists of two or four day events
- Runs about four hours each day
- Allows you to work through half the guide or the entire guide if four days



A Teen Intellectual Freedom Club/Group

- Consists of one hour or 90-minute meetings
- Run this over several months or a full year to cover all 16 sessions
- Optionally, pick and choose sessions that are of interest and work through part of the guide

INTRODUCTION

library-specific examples out for ones that fit your community better or use those library-specific examples to strengthen your community's library advocacy skills." This program may also be helpful for library professionals who want to strengthen their own understanding of book censorship and intellectual freedom.

As you peruse the guide, you might find some sessions or components of sessions work better in a different arrangement. Though they are put together to build upon one another, the themes throughout can be rearranged to meet your needs.

For example: unit one, session two offers an activity where teens work by themselves to identify their core values, followed by an activity where they work in small groups to define and discuss what community means. It might make sense to follow that session up not with unit one, session three, which explores what the library is, but instead, to jump ahead to unit three, session four, which dives into defining one's leadership skills and self-care practices. You could pair these two sessions together for a two-hour program related to understanding your strengths, interests, and rituals around being a leader or advocate for a cause.

Each unit has an introduction, complete with learning objectives and outcomes. Each session has a short explanation of the activities involved and how they contribute to the program's overall goals. You'll find everything you need materials wise for each session. There will be sessions that include required printouts for student reading and reflection. Links will take you directly to those resources.



Every slide deck is freely accessible on **BooksUnbanned** .com/toolkit

You can download each Power Point edit as appropriate.



It is something you're encouraged to do!



PROGRAM MATERIALS

Each session has a list of materials that will make the program run smoothly. You are welcome to adapt and modify. It is not necessary to purchase any new materials if you do not have the listed items. Use something you do have available. In addition to those materials, prepare the following prior to the first session:

- 1. A folder and writing utensils for each attendee so they have somewhere to store handouts. Students may take the folders and handouts with them at the end of each day, as they may wish to revisit them. Be prepared for teens to forget to bring them back in future sessions by having a few extra folders on hand. You may choose instead to collect folders and hold onto them between sessions. but give students the chance to have copies made of anything they might like to take home and look through.
- 2. Printed copies of the Rose, Bud, Thorn activity for each day; you only need one per day, whether you're going to go through several sessions or just one.
- 3. A box with index cards for each session. Teens will be asked to submit one question or comment each session and as facilitator, you'll go through what is submitted and address questions or comments in future meetings.
- 4. Internet capable laptop and projector for slide decks. Many sessions utilize slide decks to share information, so it may make sense to have those preloaded and ready to go.

Rose, Bud, Thorn can be found in the appendix and online at **BooksUnbanned** .com/toolkit



Optional Materials

It is helpful for everyone to periodically have access to internet-capable devices. If your students do not have access to personal cell phones or laptops, utilize any you might have in the library or reserve a computer lab for that period of time.

If you're able, provide a small basket of additional fidgets. Teens, like anyone, can be nervous or anxious in spaces like these, especially engaging in topics that can make them feel vulnerable. Understand that they may have fidget toys with them when they arrive and/or bring with them other self-soothing activities such as knitting or crocheting or doodling materials. Sometimes even teens who don't "need" that

kind of outlet will find that using them helps them open up more and/or think through challenging

questions or scenarios.



You are welcomed and encouraged to adapt, adjust, and change anything in this program to meet the needs of your students.



NOTE TO FACILITATORS

It is strongly encouraged to go through the program on your own and try out the activities, the journaling prompts, the discussion questions, and the slide decks. Within each of the slide decks are extensive notes for facilitators to use.

By going through the program yourself, you may discover places where you need to strengthen your own knowledge. You may also find there is something that you really connect with and want to learn more about. Take the time to go through the bonus resources at the end of every unit to do just that. One of those resources, be it an article, book, short film, or podcast, may feel like a better example or learning opportunity for your group than what's suggested within each session. Again, you are encouraged to adapt, mix and match, and choose your own adventure as facilitator.





TIPS & TRICKS FOR WORKING WITH TEENS

Whether you're an old pro working with teens or this program will be your first foray, there are several things to know and consider when working with this diverse, dynamic, and sometimes challenging demographic.

Like every adult is unique, so, too, is every teen. Understand that especially in the beginning of working with them on this program, they may be quiet, nervous, and disinterested in discussion. That is normal and expected. The small group work will help them open up because there is less pressure to talk with two peers, rather than 10. But you may find some teens never open up to the group. That's okay—most of the discussion activities in this guide are easy to pivot to personal journaling. Give the option to your students to reflect quietly, even if there is a group-wide conversation. You will get a real temperature of what teens are learning and thinking about through the required question or comment they will submit after each session. This gives every teen a voice in the room, even if it is too difficult for each teen to actually share aloud.



You are encouraged to share this toolkit and with students and showing them they can access all the materials at BooksUnbanned.com



zmauln

You might find it useful to set standard norms and expectations at the beginning of each session like "no phones out" or "ask before you leave the room". Bigger norms and expectations like, "be respectful when someone else is speaking" are better when they come from the group. You may want to make time to discuss these with your teens early on, write them up someone everyone can see and refer back to them throughout the units and sessions. At the beginning of each unit check in and see if the teens want to add anything new.

Be an authentic facilitator and engage in the program yourself. You might do a great job breaking the ice in a discussion by giving your answers first.

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If you are able to do so, consider offering an incentive for teens to attend this program. You will have time built into unit four to have a celebration of completion, but where can you create further incentives for attendance? Perhaps you can offer community service hours and or write letters of recommendation for attendees. You can emphasize to teens the skills they are learning in the program will follow them throughout their lives, and that they can include what they've learned on future resumes, work or college applications, and so forth. As facilitator, you might even want to offer some ideas for how they can do this as you reach the end of the program.

Follow the lead of your group, too. If it seems like your group is getting bored by the same pattern of each session, mix it up. For example: instead of having everyone share their answers to the same ice breaker question, you as facilitator can give a unique ice breaker question to everyone in the room. This will keep them listening to the answers of their peers, rather than rehearsing the answer they will give. Small tweaks keep things fresh. Another idea you might find fun in lieu of the ice breaker questions is asking teens to bring something in for show and tell and/or asking them to take a walk around the library/library grounds and bring something in to share with the group that they found and thought was cool (how many cool rocks do you have on your property that teens can bring in, talk about, and then return—it's probably many!).

Do:

- Greet those teens with enthusiasm
- Listen to them talk about the things that light them up
- Build a real and meaningful connection

Don't: Try to pretend you're passionate or a fan about something that you're not.

Instead: Meet the level of enthusiasm of that teen with "neutral" responses such as:

- That sounds awesome.
- Is there a new episode coming out soon?
- Have you watched this other anime that is made by the same creator?



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Be gentle with yourself and gentle with your group.
Not getting through everything is not a loss.

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Understand that some days may not be days you get through anything you wish you could. Lean into it! If you planned on doing a session on public speaking and your group is not interested in any of the activities or lessons, see if you can engage them in something different. Pull out board games or a box of LEGOs and ask them to get creative. These activities also build their skills in interpersonal communication, and you can offer anyone to come up at the end of your time together to share what they created and/ or the things that they loved or hated playing board games.

The above is especially important when we think about the reality that today's teens are living in a world of book bans and attacks on public libraries and public schools. Topics in this programming guide might be triggering to some—those instances are noted in the guide itself—and they are simply heavy topics to think about mentally and emotionally *because* these teens are living in this world. It's an opportunity to put yourself in the shoes of your teens and think about what the wins were anyway. It's also an opportunity to reflect on the skills that teens practiced and learned with you and that will contribute to their growth as leaders, advocates, and library and literary champions.



FREEDOM TO READ TEEN ADVOCACY TOOLKIT





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Building Community, Defining the Freedom to Read, and Understanding the Role of Libraries in Society

PURPOSE

Attendees will learn the role the public library plays in their community and in democracy more broadly. They will discuss book banning and how censorship impacts the library and individuals' rights in America.

OBJECTIVES

- 1. Reflecting through journaling and group discussion prompts and activities.
- 2. Defining the public library through group activities, lectures, and discussion prompts.
- 3. Considering what it means for a book to be banned through lectures, video/audio, and group discussions.

OUTCOME

- Attendees will be able to define the public library in a nuanced and thoughtful manner.
- Understand and articulate their own personal values.
- Understand the history of book banning in the US.

NOTE TO FACILITATORS

All four sessions are one hour long but can be expanded. Mix and match pieces of the sessions as appropriate for your group. For example, you might wish to skip an activity and instead focus on a resource from the guide at the end of this section. The curriculum is adaptable to your needs!



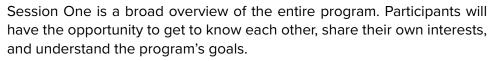
The content in **UNIT ONE** is foundational to the rest of the curriculum, as it introduces the role of libraries, the history of censorship and the freedom to read.





UNIT 1, SESSION 1

Welcome and Overview





Materials needed	Time
 Folder with journal and pen Cardstock for name tags Crayons/markers/colored pencils Fidget toys, pipe cleaners, LEGOS, and/or other small objects teens can use for self-soothing/focus Small box and index cards for questions and comments Large sticky notes or a large whiteboard in the room 	Approximately one hour, with the ability to go longer.

INTRODUCTION AND AGENDA

This portion of the session is facilitator-driven. It's meant to be a top-level welcome to the program. It's an opportunity to go over the day's agenda and outline the full program as adapted by your library. This could be a great time to share the history and services provided by your library.

- Facilitator introduction: Share why you're passionate about the library and the freedom to read.
- Brief explanation of the Books Unbanned program and Brooklyn Public Library's (BPL) Teen Freedom to Read program history.
 This slide deck explains how the BPL team created the program, beginning with free eCards for teens across the country as well as the Institute and an Ambassador Program. (Slide presenter notes offer more insight.)
- Outline the day's session and offer a sneak peek of upcoming sessions. If using folders, you could include these as a printout, write them on a white board, or share them as a slide deck.
- Emphasize that the program includes both interactive and reflective elements; participation has flexibility, so if a participant feels more comfortable journaling instead of discussing ideas with a big group, that is okay. The program should help some of those quieter participants get more comfortable sharing their ideas out loud over time. This program will help teens not only learn how to be freedom to read ambassadors but will help them grow their leadership skills more broadly.



Slide deck:
What Is Books
Unbanned?



Download at

BooksUnbanned
.com/toolkit

• Pass out index cards to each participant every session. Participants can write down one anonymous question or comment about what they're learning, what they're curious about, what they want to know more about, etc. They can put their card in the box at the front of the room before the end of the session. Address the anonymous questions and comments as soon as you can, even if it is to acknowledge that the question may be answered in a future session and/or you need to do some research. You may find some of these questions and comments would be good fodder for participants to do their own research or thinking between sessions. If it feels appropriate, you can assign them as optional "homework."



SESSION ICEBREAKER

Choose an icebreaker question for every participant to answer. In early sessions of the program, the facilitator will call on participants to share their response with the group. As participants become more comfortable with one another, they can call on one another after answering the question themselves.

The goal in the icebreaker is to get teens talking. It's an opportunity for every person in the room to have their voice heard, even if they are nervous or shy. This is especially powerful in situations where they may not speak up in future group discussions. Their voices were still in the room that day.



Use your own icebreaker questions or one from our list found in the appendix.



ACTIVITY: NAME TAGS

A name tag activity will allow participants to introduce themselves to each other. The activity will begin with independent creativity; once participants finish their name tags, they will introduce themselves to the group.

- Provide each attendee with a piece of cardstock or other stiff paper to create name tags that can be reused each session. Have available a stash of colorful writing options, whether crayons, markers, or colored pencils. If you have washi tape, stickers, stamps, or other items for art/crafting make these available.
- Attendees will write their names, pronouns, and an all-time favorite book. Encourage participants to be creative and decorate or style their name tag as they wish.
- Once finished, ask participants to go around the room and share.
 Although facilitators will have introduced themselves earlier, they should participate in this activity and lead it off.







JOURNALING AND GROUP DISCUSSION

Begin this portion of the session with journaling. Participants will respond to the questions below. Feel free to adapt to include others that might fit your library or community. Emphasize to participants that their answers won't be shared unless they wish to share them. All questions are optional, but the more that participants put into the program, the more they will get out.

Let participants know there are no stupid questions - if you don't know something the only way to learn is to ask! If they are too nervous or shy to ask something, that would be the ideal opportunity to put that question/s or comment/s into the box (see above "Introduction and Agenda").

When beginning a group discussion, it helps when the facilitator opens by giving their own answers. Participants may be shy or anxious about participating, especially initially. You may wish to have an incentive, such as candy, to toss to those who speak up in these initial discussions.



Journaling questions are available as a printable hand out included at the end of each session section.

PROMPTS

- 1. What is your favorite genre of book? Can you remember the first book or a particularly meaningful book you read in that genre?
- 2. What character from a book or movie do you identify with? Why is that?
- 3. Is there a book you always recommend to people looking for something to read? What is it? Why do you like to recommend it?
- 4. What is your relationship to the library in your community or school? Do you have any memories of being at or using that library?
- 5. Why did you want to take part in this program? This is your journal, so you can be as honest as you'd like!
- 6. What goals do you have for yourself as we move through these sessions?
 - These can be big goals—like planning to show up to a library or school board meeting and talking—or smaller goals, like feeling brave or confident enough to participate in discussions in this room.
 - List 2–3, as we'll revisit these throughout the program.
- 7. What are you most excited about learning?
- 8. What are you most nervous about?
- 9. What questions do you have right now?







GROUP DISCUSSION

Use the journaling questions above to open up group discussion. Kick off with your own answers. Some of these questions might be tough for participants to share immediately since the answers might be personal. If there is silence, feel free to skip to the less personally revealing prompts, such as what participants are most excited about or what questions they may have. The goal here is to get some conversation going, as it is a lead-in to the interactive group activity coming next.





GROUP ACTIVITY: FREEDOM TO READ BINGO TRIVIA

This group activity has three goals.

- 1. Encouraging teens to interact with one another and understand the value of peer resourcing and allyship
- 2. Facilitating thinking about the importance of the freedom to read in a creative manner
- 3. Learning how to navigate a world of information and how to collaborate with others to verify facts

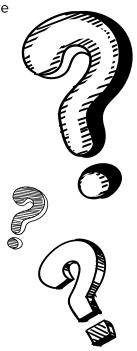
Each teen will be given a copy of the Bingo card. They are to take these cards around the room and work with their fellow ambassadors to make a Bingo. Once they have the answer to a question, they will write it down and get the initials of the peer who helped them. As teens capture a full Bingo, they may return to their seats and wait for others to finish.

An important note for this activity: teens may use their phones to answer questions with one another.

Wrap Up

Wrap up the Bingo activity with the following questions. Participants are welcome to use these to journal as well.

- What did you learn doing this?
- Did you know any of these answers already?
- What was your strategy to find answers?
- How did you decide where to start/which question to answer first?
- What kind of role did you find yourself taking? Did you become an expert on a single question or work to answer whatever question you were given at the time?
- Did you find yourself surprised by how someone else approached the activity? What stood out to you?





REFLECTION: ROSE, BUD & THORN ACTIVITY

If this is the only session of the day, attendees will wrap things up with a short journaling prompt. If this session is one of several on the same day, this next activity can be saved for the final session of the day.



The Rose

Describe what went well.
This can be anything from "met nice people" to "felt confident talking in a group activity." It's the positive takeaway from the session.



The Bud

Potential and/ or takeaways that excite the attendee and/ or what they want to learn or engage with more. It is something to look forward to, including attending more sessions, visiting their local library, and requesting a book, etc.



The Thorn

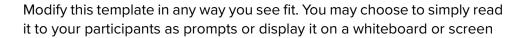
Describe anything that felt challenging or frustrating during the session. This can range from "felt like I knew no one here" to "I didn't have an answer to one of the journaling questions" to "I had no idea this many books were being banned." The Thorn can also be used to consider areas of personal improvement. A participant may consider it a Thorn that they did not engage in a group discussion, and want to in future sessions.



Rose, Thorn, & Bud Template

allows attendees to consider what they have learned in three different ways.

Find in the appendix or download at **BooksUnbanned** .com/toolkit.





DISMISSAL

Right before you dismiss attendees don't forget to thank them for their participation and remind them to leave their question or comment in the box on their way out. Encourage them to bring anything they are curious about to the next session, too.



UNIT 1, SESSION 2

Defining Personal Values and Building Community

The second session of this unit encourages participants to explore their core values and to think about building community. This session will aim to help young people better understand themselves and their strengths in preparation to become freedom to read ambassadors.

Materials needed	Time
Folder with journal and pen	1 hour, with the
Cardstock or construction paper	ability to go longer.
Crayons/markers/colored pencils	
Fidget toys, pipe cleaners, LEGOS, and/or other small objects teens can use for fidgeting/self-soothing/focus	
Small box with index cards for questions	



WELCOME AND OVERVIEW OF SESSION

- Welcome participants back to session two.
- Give an outline of the session, with the note that if a group activity feels overwhelming, individuals can complete them solo.
- Follow up with any questions from the previous session and remind participants to submit a question or comment in the box by the end of the session.



SESSION ICEBREAKER

Choose an icebreaker question for every participant to answer. In early sessions of the program, the facilitator will call on participants to share their response with the group. As participants become more comfortable with one another, they can call on one another after answering the question themselves.

The goal in the icebreaker is to get teens talking. It's an opportunity for every person in the room to have their voice heard, even if they are nervous or shy. This is especially powerful in situations where they may not speak up in future group discussions. Their voices were still in the room that day.



Use your own icebreaker questions or one from our list found in the appendix.



ACTIVITY: DEFINING PERSONAL VALUES

This individual activity will give participants the opportunity to think deeply about the values they hold. They'll consider how they apply those values in their lives, as part of a community and beyond. Throughout the program, these values will come up again and again, and they will be helpful for later activities and discussions, including those around self-care.

INTRODUCE THIS ACTIVITY IN SEVERAL WAYS. HERE ARE TWO IDEAS



Engage participants in an inquiry-based discussion about what values are, what they mean, and why they are important. This can be done with simple prompts, such as: where do we learn our values, what is the difference between a moral and a value, why are values important, and so forth.



Lead a discussion about what values are and what they mean. Explain to participants that values are beliefs that guide how a person behaves, how they think, and how they engage in the world around them. Values are ideas and beliefs you find important. They differ from something like morals. Morals are based on both a personal belief and a social belief and include things like respecting other people's property, helping people out, or telling the truth. Values are entirely personal, though they may be connected to moral beliefs. Examples of values include creativity, adventure, and dependability.

The introduction does not need to be long, but it should be grounded in the importance of knowing what values one holds and why they matter relative to being a leader or champion for a cause.



The below activity is a modification of one created by <u>Andrea Scher of Superhero Life</u> and it has two parts.



Part I.

- 1. Grab a sheet of paper and fold it in half.
- 2. On one half of the paper, write down the name of someone you admire. It can be anyone, whether you know them or not (i.e., a celebrity or beloved author is fine!). Beneath their name, list some of the things you admire about them.
- 3. Repeat step #2 but using the name of someone else you admire.
- 4. Now look at both of your lists and circle the words or phrases that jump out at you. Don't think too hard. Trust your instincts. If it feels like you may have missed some qualities you admire in one or both of your people, go ahead and add them. Circle as many as you'd like.
- 5. Which of the circled words resonate most? Choose 2–5 words and write them down separately. If any of the words or ideas can be combined into a different word, you're welcome to choose the new word. For example, if you wrote down "good artist" and "fun to make silly videos with," you might choose to use the word "creative."



WHAT YOU HAVE WILL LOOK SOMETHING LIKE THIS

MY SISTER ANA		MY GR	MY GRANDMOTHER	
Add name of someone you admire		Add name of	Add name of someone you admire	
smart (safe	funny	encouraging	
classy	trustworthy	strong	hold space	
observant	hardworking	strong willed	savy insight clear	
resilient	sharp	passionate	driver	
great listener	derailed	listener	adventerous	
gives good advice	concise	vulnerable	does all she can to get things done	
reliable	firmgenerous	creative	for her	
preserves sense of	brave	risk-taker	pushes boundaries	
self and privacy	bold	thoughtful	boundaries	
funny	6. 26.1			
comfortable being	fruitful		(1)	
emotional	tactful			

Part II

This part requires a little more writing.

For each of the 2–5 values you listed, ask yourself what that value means to you. How does it show up in your life? What ways do you connect with it? You might not have any examples and that is okay. Values can be aspirational! What matters is that these values make you **feel something**. If more ideas for values come to mind as you're doing this, that is okay!

At this point, you have found some of the values you circled or listed really connect while others do not. Perhaps your list of 5 winnowed down to a list of 3 or you experienced the reverse, and your list of 3 bloomed to 5.

Now you've found your core values! These are great to have handy somewhere where you can see them every day or have them accessible when things get hard. Values can change over time as you gain new life experiences. It can be helpful to revisit this list as you move through different stages of your life.

Extend this activity by passing out paper and markers and allow participants to spend a couple of minutes writing their list of values down/decorating them/making them uniquely their own.

WHAT YOU HAVE WILL LOOK SOMETHING LIKE THIS



Wrap Up

Because core values are so personal, not all participants will want to share what came up for them in the activity. But it is worth wrapping up with a short discussion. Use these questions as springboards for a short discussion.

- 1. Ask participants what they learned about themselves through the activity.
 - What part was hard?
 - What part was easy?
 - What part was most surprising?
 - Had they ever thought about or tried to define their values before?
- 2. Using a large sticky note or a white board, ask participants if they would share 1 or 2 of their personal values. Write those down to revisit throughout the program. If using a white board, take a photo and ask participants to take a photo.



GROUP ACTIVITY: DEFINING COMMUNITY

Ambassadors are community builders, as are libraries. Open up a discussion about what community is, how it is created and how it is sustained. Like with the Personal Values activity, you can choose a method for doing this that most suits your audience. Here are two ideas:

After the introduction, break into small groups of up to four people, depending on the number of participants in the program. Each group will be given a large sticky note or a stack of small sticky notes/small white boards. One person from each small group will volunteer to present to the full group what they discussed.



Engage participants in an inquiry-based discussion about what community means. Examples of prompts may include: what comprises a community; how many different communities do you see yourself as a part of; how do you know whether you are a part of a community; and which communities would you like to join or help start.

Another strong question to ask here is why community matters and what happens when there might be a rift or challenge within

a community.



Lead a discussion about examples of different types of communities, such as a school community, a neighborhood, religious groups, ethnic communities, sports clubs, etc. Talk about why people find and make community and the purpose of being in a community.

In those small groups, participants will discuss the following questions and come up with an answer they'd like to share with the full group. Participants are encouraged to brainstorm their own answers in their journals as well, but it's not required. They may also want to write down the group answers for themselves. Note that these questions build off the short facilitator-led introduction to the activity.

QUESTIONS

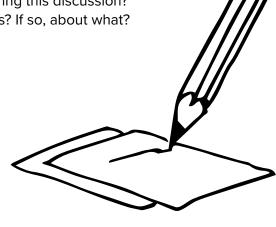
- 1. How do you define a community? What does it look like?
- 2. Communities have their own sets of values, expectations, and norms. What are some norms in a community you are a part of. Who defines/ sets those norms?
- 3. What kind of values, beliefs, and behaviors do you expect in a community like the one we're in right now?
- 4. What kind of behavior, beliefs, and language is unacceptable in this community?

Wrap Up

Invite a spokesperson from each group to share some of the answers that come up in their discussion. Optional: Write answers down on a white board or sticky note to save or take a photo and refer to them throughout the program.

Once every group has had the opportunity to share, open up a conversation with the questions below. As always, encourage quieter teens to share but remind them they can instead journal their thoughts on the questions during the conversation.

- 1. Are there norms within this space that might differ from norms in other communities you are in?
- 2. What was the hardest part of this activity for you personally?
- 3. Were there things that came up that you disagreed with? How did you navigate those disagreements?
- 4. How did your personal values emerge during this discussion? Did you find yourself making compromises? If so, about what?





REFLECTION: ROSE, BUD & THORN ACTIVITY

If this is the only session of the day, attendees will wrap things up with a short journaling prompt. If this session is one of several on the same day, this next activity can be saved for the final session of the day.



The Rose

Describe what went well.
This can be anything from "met nice people" to "felt confident talking in a group activity." It's the positive takeaway from the session.



The Bud

Potential and/ or takeaways that excite the attendee and/ or what they want to learn or engage with more. It is something to look forward to, including attending more sessions, visiting their local library, and requesting a book, etc.



The Thorn

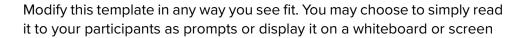
Describe anything that felt challenging or frustrating during the session. This can range from "felt like I knew no one here" to "I didn't have an answer to one of the journaling questions" to "I had no idea this many books were being banned." The Thorn can also be used to consider areas of personal improvement. A participant may consider it a Thorn that they did not engage in a group discussion, and want to in future sessions.



Rose, Thorn, & Bud Template

allows attendees to consider what they have learned in three different ways.

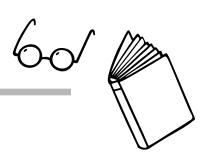
Find in the appendix or download at **BooksUnbanned** .com/toolkit.





DISMISSAL

Right before you dismiss attendees don't forget to thank them for their participation and remind them to leave their question or comment in the box on their way out. Encourage them to bring anything they are curious about to the next session, too.



UNIT 1, SESSION 3

What Is a Library?

The third session of this unit will provide an overview of the history, purpose, and role of the library in America. Participants will walk away with an understanding of what libraries do and their role in protecting the freedom to read.

Materials needed	Time
Folder with journal and penSmall and large sticky notes	1 hour, with the ability to go
Fidget toys, pipe cleaners, LEGOS, and/or other small objects teens can use for fidgeting/self-soothing/focus	longer.
Small box with paper for questions.	



WELCOME AND OVERVIEW OF SESSION

- Welcome participants back.
- Give an outline of the session, with the note that if a group activity feels overwhelming that individuals can complete them solo.
- Follow up with any questions from the previous session and remind participants to submit at least one question or comment in the box by the end of the session.



SESSION ICEBREAKER

Choose an icebreaker question for every participant to answer and share their response with the group. In early sessions of the program, the facilitator will call on participants. As participants become more comfortable with one another, they can call on one another after answering the question themselves.

The goal in the icebreaker is to get teens talking. It's an opportunity for every person in the room to have their voice heard, even if they are nervous or shy. This is especially powerful in situations where they may not speak up in future group discussions. Their voices were still in the room that day.



Use your own icebreaker questions or one from our list found in the appendix.



GROUP LEARNING: LIBRARY 101

This session begins with a facilitator-led session on the history and role of public libraries in America. The lesson can be adapted to your audience, and it is encouraged that facilitators include information about their *own* library in the presentation.



Slide Deck: Library 101

Use the slide deck as-is, and it includes presenter notes, but feel free to edit, add, or remove as appropriate.

An optional activity here could include a tour of your library. Consider showing some of the "behind the scenes" operations, as well as discussing what some of the most popular programs, materials, or events that happen at your library.



BooksUnbanned .com/toolkit



GROUP ACTIVITY: WHAT IS THE PUBLIC LIBRARY?

If you're running the whole unit in one day have participants, take a walk around the library. They can go as individuals or in their small groups and observe what they see people doing in the library. Encourage them to note the range of people within the space and what they might be doing, such as asking the reference desk a question, using public computers, browsing the shelves for new books, making a copy at the printer, etc. Encourage participants to observe book displays, reading rooms, special collections in the building, non-book resources (such as DVDs or video games), programming announcements, and so forth.

Break teens into groups to a) create a definition of the public library in no more than two sentences and b) decide on three values connected to the public library (for example, encouraging inquiry, creating community engagement, providing recreation, etc.). Teens can use sticky notes for idea generation, which can emerge from questions the facilitator may share with participants to get their conversations flowing.

QUESTIONS

- 1. What role does the public library play in your community? What makes it distinct from other places?
- 2. Beyond the items you can borrow from a library, what else does a public library provide?
- 3. What spaces are comparable to a public library? What makes them different?
- 4. Who does the public library serve?
- 5. Are there things you cannot do at a public library (beyond the things you wouldn't do in any space, of course!)?



Participants will add their answers to the corresponding large sticky notes at the front of the room. If sticky notes are not an option, feel free to use a whiteboard or other available material.

Wrap Up

Following the activity, everyone will share what was discussed with their group. Use the following questions to guide conversation and wrap up the activity.

- How do these definitions and values take our understanding of "community" into account? This question reflects back on the conversation from unit one, session two.
- What role do you have in and at the public library? Encourage this as a way to talk about civic engagement and responsibility—how do we champion and protect community centers like this?





REFLECTION: ROSE, BUD & THORN ACTIVITY

If this is the only session of the day, attendees will wrap things up with a short journaling prompt. If this session is one of several on the same day, this next activity can be saved for the final session of the day.



The Rose

Describe what went well.
This can be anything from "met nice people" to "felt confident talking in a group activity." It's the positive takeaway from the session.



The Bud

Potential and/ or takeaways that excite the attendee and/ or what they want to learn or engage with more. It is something to look forward to, including attending more sessions, visiting their local library, and requesting a book, etc.



The Thorn

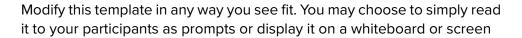
Describe anything that felt challenging or frustrating during the session. This can range from "felt like I knew no one here" to "I didn't have an answer to one of the journaling questions" to "I had no idea this many books were being banned." The Thorn can also be used to consider areas of personal improvement. A participant may consider it a Thorn that they did not engage in a group discussion, and want to in future sessions.



Rose, Thorn, & Bud Template

allows attendees to consider what they have learned in three different ways.

Find in the appendix or download at **BooksUnbanned** .com/toolkit.





DISMISSAL

Right before you dismiss attendees don't forget to thank them for their participation and remind them to leave their question or comment in the box on their way out. Encourage them to bring anything they are curious about to the next session, too.



UNIT 1, SESSION 4

Beginning Our Journey with Book Banning and Censorship

The fourth and final session of unit one takes a deeper dive into censorship, the freedom to read, and the importance of libraries in championing intellectual freedom. Participants will be encouraged to think about what reading means to them personally and why they would want to ensure everyone in a community has the same rights to access informational and recreational material from the library.

Materials needed	Time
Folder with journal and penSmall and large sticky notes	1 hour, with the ability to go
Fidget toys, pipe cleaners, Legos, and/or other small objects teens can use for fidgeting/self-soothing/focus	longer.
Small box with paper for questions	



WELCOME AND OVERVIEW OF SESSION

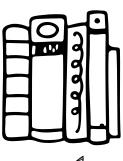
- Welcome participants back.
- Give an outline of the session, with the note that if a group activity feels overwhelming that individuals can complete them solo.
- Follow up with any questions from the previous session and remind participants to submit at least one question or comment in the box by the end of the session.



SESSION ICEBREAKER

Choose an icebreaker question and have every participant share their response with the group. In early sessions of the program, the facilitator will call on participants. As participants become more comfortable with one another, they can call on one another after answering the question themselves.

The goal in the icebreaker is to get teens talking. It's an opportunity for every person in the room to have their voice heard, even if they are nervous or shy. This is especially powerful in situations where they may not speak up in future group discussions. Their voices were still in the room that day.







Use your own icebreaker questions or one from our list found in the appendix..



JOURNALING



This session introduces participants to the ideas and concepts that book bans target, particularly stories by and about people from marginalized communities. Participants will get warmed up for the session by journaling after they read the following short article: "Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Glass Doors" by Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop (1990). Alternatively, you can watch a very short clip of Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop explaining her classic metaphor.

Once the participants finish reading, ask them to journal about the prompts below. One of the most powerful things about journaling is that not only are there no wrong answers, but they can refer back to their writing and see how they have grown and expanded their knowledge of the world around them.

The article and video for "Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Glass Doors" be found at BooksUnbanned .com/toolkit



PROMPTS

- 1. What was a book that was really important to you as a kid?
- 2. Do you remember how it felt to read that book for the first time?
- 3. What is something you have learned from a book (any book, not necessarily the one that meant a lot to you as a kid)?
- 4. What value do books and reading hold culturally? Note: "culturally" can be interpreted in any way the participant chooses.
- 5. Write a few sentences about one thing you learned while reading the Sims Bishop article you never thought about or considered before.
- 6. Where or how have you seen the concepts in the Sims Bishop article in your own life when it comes to books and reading? For example, have you seen mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors in your assigned reading at school? Or do you see where there have been missed opportunities to experience mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors in school?

As participants begin to wrap up their journaling, leave a few minutes for participants who'd like to share anything that they wrote about. This does not need to be formal nor via the prompts. "Does anyone feel like sharing anything" can spur a good discussion, as could the facilitator beginning by sharing an insight or two from their own experiences.





ACTIVITY: WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE BANNED BOOK?

This activity encourages participants to begin thinking about the reasons why books have been banned and gives them a personal hook into the upcoming lesson. It also allows them to start navigating the resources on banned books available on the internet. Participants will need their journals, and they are welcome to use their phone or other internet-connected device for research.

Each participant will answer the following questions in their journal. Encourage them to stick to books that have been banned in the United States.

- What is a banned book that you have read?
- Where has the book been banned?
- What are some of the reasons the book has been banned?

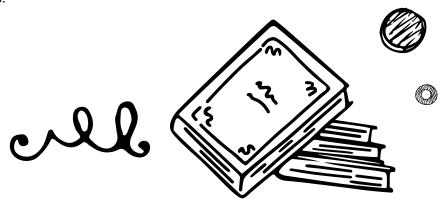
Attendees might not know immediately what their favorite banned books are. Encourage them to look up their favorite books and see if/where/how they may have been banned. If participants are still struggling, feel free to pull up any number of images of banned books displays or the graphics available through the <u>American Library Association</u> or <u>PEN America</u>. Let attendees know that data on banned books is typically released in cycles. For example, ALA releases the top ten banned books of the previous year during National Library Week.

Alternatively, as facilitator, you can assign each attendee a banned book and have them answer the second and third question above. Or, if you run this activity as-is and you find participants are stuck in thinking of a book, you can have them draw one at random from a list you create.

Wrap up

After participants have answered the prompts, ask them to share with the group. The facilitator will write down the reasons for book bans on a large sticky note or white board. Facilitators can break the ice by sharing their own answers before opening up the conversation. Once conversation winnows, look at the list of reasons for book bans generated by participants and ask if they notice any patterns. Use this as a lead into the group discussion about banned books.







GROUP LEARNING: BOOK BANNING 101 AND THE FREEDOM TO READ

+

This session begins with a facilitator-led session on the history and role of public libraries in America. The lesson can be adapted to your audience. It is encouraged that facilitators include information about their own library in the presentation. The slide deck can be modified once shared on your own computer or cloud account, so consider including screenshots, links, or even print outs of the following about your library:

ALA Freedom to Read
Statement. You may
wish to have handouts
of that statement for
participants prior to the

There is a slide in the

• Your collection development policy

Book Banning & The Freedom to Read Slide Deck

lesson.

Your challenge policy and any forms patrons would use to file a material complaint



 Your weeding policy—explain to participants how weeding works in your library and why it is such an important part of keeping a library fresh and relevant.

Download at

BooksUnbanned
.com/toolkit

- Information about how your library is structured (is it part of the city, is it part of an independent district, is it a shared facility with a college/school district, etc.). Include how your library board operates, including whether it is elected or appointed.
- What are the various departments within your library and what do
 people in those roles do (for example, circulation handles making
 sure books are checked in and out, the outreach department is
 responsible for building relationships with other facilities and groups
 in the community, and so forth)



Perhaps you could talk about how things work in your library and encourage attendees to ask questions; they may have some after the group activity in unit

one, session two.



You could also pass out copies of the ALA Freedom to Read Statement and have attendees share what they're reading and consider how it complements or cont, radicts experiences they have personally had (or have learned about in this session).



In addition to talking about the Freedom to Read Statement, it might be worth sharing "Censorship throughout the Centuries" from American Libraries. This short history of book banning in the US not only offers some important context to contemporary book banning but it also opens up the opportunity to discuss things attendees learn that might be surprising.

If your library has been subject to book challenges or removals, consider whether or not you want to address that. It's not necessary, but it might provide insight to participants that these things happen right in their own community.

Find the slide deck below. It can be used as-is, and it includes presenter notes, but feel free to edit, add, or remove as appropriate. Save the deck to your own Google Drive or computer as a copy to make modifications. The first half of the deck is heavy on text; the second half is more image-driven. Take the opportunity to open up the discussion since there is a lot of stuff here to dig into.

Alternately, if utilizing a slide deck this soon into the program doesn't feel like it will suit your attendees, you can choose to do something different to present this information.



VIDEO

This section of the session is adaptable depending on what your preferences are for video and what time you have available. If you have more time, feel free to select a longer option from some of the resources at the end of this Unit. The video suggested here is about 10 minutes long.

As with the slideshow, take a few moments after the video to open it up to questions or thoughts related to what was viewed. Because this is an information-heavy session, participants may not have much to say. Remind them there is a box they can drop questions into at any time and transition to the next and final activity in the session.



PBS's Above the
Noise: Why Are
People Banning
Books?







REFLECTION: ROSE, BUD & THORN ACTIVITY

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The Rose

Describe what went well.
This can be anything from "met nice people" to "felt confident talking in a group activity." It's the positive takeaway from the session.



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Potential and/ or takeaways that excite the attendee and/ or what they want to learn or engage with more. It is something to look forward to, including attending more sessions, visiting their local library, and requesting a book, etc.



The Thorn

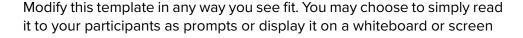
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Rose, Thorn, & Bud Template

allows attendees to consider what they have learned in three different ways.

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RESOURCES



Books Unbanned Program

Books Unbanned landing page at Brooklyn Public Library. This includes links to Books Unbanned programs at participating libraries as of fall 2024: Seattle Public Library, LA County Public Library, Boston Public Library and San Diego Public Library.

Libraries & Library History

<u>A History of US Public Libraries</u> from the Digital Public Library of America

<u>The Library Bill of Rights</u> from the American Library Association (ALA)

Intellectual Freedom FAQs from the ALA

The Freedom to Read Statement from the ALA

Ten Reasons to Value Libraries from the California State Library

Book Banning

How to fight book bans and challenges at Book Riot

How to explain book bans to those who want to learn at Book Riot

Definition of a book ban and book challenge from the ALA

Definition of a book ban from PEN America

Recognizing Both Active and Passive Censorship by Dr. Emily Knox

Maurice Sendak and the Librarians: When Censorship Came from Within by Vicky Ludas Orlofsky for the ALA's Office of Intellectual Freedom

What is soft/quiet censorship? at Book Riot

A history of book bans from PEN America

The top 100 most frequently challenged books, 2000-2009 from the ALA

The top 100 most frequently challenged books, 2010-2019 from the ALA

Book censorship database by Dr. Tasslyn Magnusson from Every Library

The 10 most banned books of the 2021-2022 school year from PEN America

The 11 most banned books of the 2022-2023 school year from PEN America

Censorship by the numbers from the ALA

<u>Parental perceptions of libraries and librarians research report</u> from EveryLibrary and Book Riot



Utilize these resources for your own knowledge or as supplemental activities.

All links can also be found at **BooksUnbanned** .com/toolkit





Inclusivity in Literature

Rise Up Against Racism's resources on Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Glass Doors

"Reading Worthy Women" by Nova Ren Suma, "A Thousand Papercuts" by Shveta Thakrar, and "Many Stories, Many Roads" by Daniel José Older in *Here We Are: Feminism for the Real World*, edited by Kelly Jensen.

Media Resources

Dr. Emily Knox at Smith College <u>talking about book banning and the culture wars</u> (1.25 hours)

The Fiery History of Book Bans from PBS's Storied (15 minutes)

- <u>The ABCs of Book Banning</u> award-winning short documentary, available for purchase, viewing on various streamers, and educational licensure (30 minutes)
- <u>97 Books</u>, a 60 Minutes video segment on Beaufort Public School book bans (15 minutes)
- "<u>Librarians are not groomers</u>" episode of *Conspirituality* podcast (1 hour, 20 minutes)
- <u>Borrowed and Banned</u>, short form podcast series from Brooklyn Public Library (7 episodes, each under 30 minutes long)

FREEDOM TO READ BINGO CARD

1.What organization tracks book bans primarily occurring in public libraries across the U.S.?	2. What is the definition of a book ban?	3. What is the name of the 1980s court case that questioned if school boards could remove books from schools?	4. What is a book challenge?	5. This Pulitzer Prize winning comic about the Holocaust is among the most banned comics in America.
6. What was the first state to create a list of books that are banned in every school in that state?	7. What year was the Freedom to Read statement written?	8. What was the name of the first book banned in the United States?	9. From what historical document does the Freedom to Read derive?	10. Name the first state to ban book bans.
11. List two reasons why the book <i>The Hate U Give</i> by Angie Thomas has been banned.	12. What word is defined as "a deliberate attempt to deceive others by presenting false or inaccurate information?"	FREE TO READ SPACE	13. Which author wrote <i>Beloved</i> and <i>The Bluest Eye</i> , two of the most banned books in the U.S.?	14. What are three of the most common themes in books that have been banned in the last 5 years?
15. How are the words "censorship" and "book ban" related?	16. What is the name of the organization whose goal is to protect comics from censorship?	17. What US institution censors the most books?	18. "Obscenity" is a common argument for book banning. What is the name of the test used to define material as "obscene?"	19. When is Banned Books Week?
20. What are the "Four Rs" of book censorship according to Dr. Emily Knox?	21. Besides books, name two other common targets of censorship in schools and/or libraries?	22. What was the most challenged book in 2021?	23. What word describes false or inaccurate information that is not intended to deceive?	24. What organization tracks book bans in primarily occurring in public schools across the U.S.?

FREEDOM TO READ BINGO CARD

Research the bingo questions and use this page to fill in your answers.

1		 	
2			
7			
8			
9		 	
18			
19			
20	 	 	
21		 	
23.			
24.			

FREEDOM TO READ ANSWER KEY

ALA Office of Intellectual freedom	A removal of a book from where it once was based on objections of a group or organizations.	Island Trees School District vs. Pico	An attempt to remove or restrict material based on the objections of a group of individuals.	Maus by Art Spiegelman or The Diary of Anne Frank by Anne Frank, adapted by Ari Folman and illustrated by David Polonsky
Utah	1953	New English Canaan by Thomas Morton, 1673	Constitution, Bill of Rights, or the First Amendment are all Acceptable answers	Illinois
Anti-police sentiment, profanity, or violence	Disinformation	FREE TO READ SPACE	Toni Morrison	Race, sexuality, gender, LGBTQ+ content, violence, or any other theme listed by the ALA or Pen America
A book ban is a form of censorship	The Comic Book Legal Defense Fund (CBLDF)	Prisons	Miller Test	Date varies from year to year, typically the last week in September
Redaction, Restriction, Relocation, and Removal	Student newspapers, student plays, book displays, and a number of other possible answers.	Gender Queer by Maia Kobabe	Misinformation	PEN America

particularly meaningful book you read in that genre?
2. What character from a book or movie do you identify with? Why is that?
3. Is there a book you always recommend to people looking for something to read? What is it? Why do you like to recommend it?
4. What is your relationship to the library in your community or school?
5. Do you have any memories of being at or using that library?
6. Why did you want to take part in this program? This is your journal, so you can be as honest as you'd like!
7. What goals do you have for yourself as we move through these sessions? These can be big goals, like planning to show up and speak at a library or school board meeting, or smaller goals, like feeling brave or confident enough to participate in discussions in this room.
8. What are you most excited about learning?
9. What are you most nervous about?
10. What questions do you have right now?



1.	How do you define a community? What does it look like?
2.	Communities have their own sets of values, expectations, and norms. What are some norms in a community you are a part of. Who defines/sets those norms?
3.	What kind of values, beliefs, and behaviors do you expect in a community like the one we're in right now?
4.	What kind of behavior, beliefs, and language is unacceptable in this community?



1.	What role does the public library play in your community?
2.	What makes it distinct from other places?
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4.	What spaces are comparable to a public library? What makes them different?
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1.	What was a book that was really important to you as a kid?
2.	Do you remember how it felt to read that book for the first time?
3.	What is something you have learned from a book (any book, not necessarily the one that meant a lot to you as a kid)?
4.	What value do books and reading hold culturally? Note: "culturally" can be interpreted in any way the participant chooses.
5.	Write a few sentences about one thing you learned after reading the article or watching the video "Mirrors, Windows, Sliding Glass Doors" by Sims Bishop you never thought about or considered before.
6.	Where or how have you seen the concepts in the Sims Bishop article in your own life when it comes to books and reading? For example, have you seen mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors in your assigned reading at school? Or do you see where there have been missed opportunities to experience mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors in school?



Book Bans, Advocacy, and Teen Rights

PURPOSE

In this unit, students will deepen their understanding of censorship. They'll look at American political history, including the Bill of Rights and how the legislative system has determined if, where, and how books can be banned. Participants will learn about their own rights as teenagers; what it means to be a conscious and thoughtful consumer of information; and explore ways to be civically engaged. Finally, attendees will have the opportunity to view projects teens across the US have undertaken to protect the right to read.

OBJECTIVES

- Through individual brainstorming, group discussions, and lectures, students will learn about the varying definitions of "book ban" and "censorship." They'll develop an understanding of what these words mean and how their meanings can be manipulated depending on who is using them.
- 2. Through lectures, students will discover their rights as teenagers when it comes to freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and equal protection amendment.
- The topics of civic engagement, advocacy, and activism will be explored through group discussion, lectures, and journaling, with a focus on local-level and community work.

OUTCOME

Students will confidently define "book ban" and be able to defend that definition. They will walk away knowing what rights they have as young people, including the names and outcomes of several important court cases. Students will begin to develop their own toolkit of advocacy and civic engagement.

NOTE TO FACILITATORS

Each of the four sessions are one-hour long, but can be expanded. For example, you may wish to make session four 90 minutes or longer to go deeper in discussion of topics. You are also welcome to mix and match pieces of the sessions as appropriate for your group. For example, you might wish to skip one activity and instead, incorporate something from the resource guide at the end of this section. The curriculum is adaptable to your needs, and you will find that the topics in unit two expand upon and deepen those addressed in unit one.





UNIT 2, SESSION 1

Exploring Banned Books + Identifying Resources for Finding Information about Banned Books

The first session in Unit Two builds upon the sessions from Unit One. In this session, students will begin to engage with the type of books that are being banned, as well as discover the resources out there to help them find information about why those books have been banned. Students will begin to see the power in working together to counter book challenges.

Materials needed	Time
Folder with journal and pen	1 hour, with the
Small box with index cards for questions	ability to go
Small and large sticky notes	longer.
 Fidget toys, pipe cleaners, LEGOs, and/or other small objects teens can use for fidgeting/self-soothing/focus 	
Laptops or smartphones (or access to a computer lab)	



WELCOME AND OVERVIEW OF SESSION

- Welcome students back.
- Give an outline of the session, with the note that if a group activity feels overwhelming that individuals can complete them solo.
- Follow up with any questions from the previous session and remind students to submit at least one question or comment in the box by the end of the session.



SESSION ICEBREAKER

Choose an ice-breaker question for every student to answer. Since this session kicks off a whole new unit, you may find it worthwhilen to also ask students the following questions as part of welcoming them back:

- 1. What questions or thoughts do you have from the previous unit?
- 2. What is one thing that stoodout to you from the previous unit?
- 3. What is something from the previous unit that made you eager to learn more?



Use your own icebreaker questions or one from our list found in the appendix.



JOURNALING

These prompts are intended to warm up discussion in the next activity. As in Unit One, the first session's journal prompts give an overview of what's to come and gives teens the opportunity to think about what they already know and understand. Some of these questions are repetitive from previous discussions and prompts. That is intentional, as it allows attendees to see their thinking evolve.



PROMPTS

- 1. Thinking about your own experiences and knowledge, including what was discussed in Unit One, how would you define a book ban?
- 2. Why do you think book bans happen?
- 3. Name a banned book you think everyone should read and why. What reasons have been given for why that book has been banned? Note that this may be different from your favorite banned book.



NOTE TO FACILITATORS

If you have not had students journal about their personal favorite banned book and why it was banned (Unit One, Session Four), include that prompt here.



GROUP ACTIVITY: RESEARCHING BANNED BOOKS

Once journaling is finished, break students up into small groups of three or four. One student will volunteer to serve as spokesperson, and one will volunteer as notetaker. All group members are encouraged to take notes, but one person will be "officially" responsible for tracking the discussion.

Responses from the above prompts, as well as those from Unit One, Session Four, will be useful here for small group discussion. Groups are encouraged to use technology to do the research components of this activity.



Part I

Each group will select 4–5 books that have been banned in US public libraries or public-school libraries. Choose a mix of books, including "classic" titles and more recently published work. Selecting "odd" books, such as *Seahorse: The Shyest Fish in the Sea* by Christine Butterworth, is fine and even encouraged as one of the selected titles.



The designated notetaker will fill out the following spreadsheet to track where and how information was found throughout the group discussion. Write down the kinds of searches used, the names of the websites and their URLs where the information was found, and where/how finding that information was easy and where it was difficult. All group members may wish to have a copy for themselves, so feel free to duplicate either before the activity (allowing them to use it as they work through these questions) or afterwards.

The group will answer and that the notetaker will track the process through. For books that have been banned/removed in multiple locations, these more specific questions can be applied to a specific incident—just note where that is (i.e., the banning of *Gender Queer* in Virginia Beach Schools):



Worksheet available at the end of the session or on BooksUnbanned .com/toolkit



QUESTIONS

- 1. Write down the name of each selected title and its author or author-illustrator team.
- 2. When and where was each book banned?
- 3. What led to the book being removed?
- 4. Who was behind the challenge of the title and what information can you find about the process of the book's removal? The "who" here doesn't need to be a specific name of a parent, but if there is a group or politician behind it, feel free to be specific.

Once the groups have answered these questions, and the research trails to find information have been recorded, each group will select **one** book from their list. They will then discuss how they would counter the arguments for why the book was banned. In other words, how would they argue that the book belongs in the library? Students do NOT need to know how or where they would fight the ban. The goal is to think through the reasons they believe the book deserves to be on public library and school shelves.



Part II

No more research documentation is needed at this point (though research will be relevant in discussions). In their small groups, students will talk with one another about the questions below.

They are encouraged to journal anything here that especially interests them.

QUESTIONS

- 1. What was the most difficult part of finding information about the banned books you selected? That could include a lack of good resources about the book; inconsistent or biased information on the topics the book covered; negative or triggering opinions about the book/author that were hard or unpleasant to read, and so forth.
- 2. What was the easiest part of this activity? Was there a part of the activity that was enjoyable?

Part III

When all the groups reconvene, the spokespersons will present answers to the questions below. The notetakers have the option to speak on behalf of their group for relevant questions or they may pass that responsibility onto the group speaker. Other group members may jump into the conversation, of course.

Each spokesperson will name the 4–5 titles the group selected and record them on a large sticky note or whiteboard in the room. The spokesperson will talk about the one book the group decided to counter book banning arguments to, answering the questions below. Allow conversations to flow naturally, so if it makes sense to answer each question group by group or to choose one question and go through each group, that's fine. There will likely be crossover in book titles.

Wrap Up

Once each group shares their responses, facilitators will open conversation back up to the entire room with the questions below. Recording these answers on large sticky notes or a whiteboard can be helpful. All of the recorded information in the session can be stored physically or virtually and used throughout the program. Taking photos of them works, too!

- 1. What themes did you discover in the books you identified as banned?
- 2. How did your understanding of the term "book ban" change from the start of the day, if it did?
- 3. What did you learn through the process of researching this information? Were there frustrating parts? Parts that were easy?



REFLECTION: ROSE, BUD & THORN ACTIVITY

If this is the only session of the day, attendees will wrap things up with a short journaling prompt. If this session is one of several on the same day, this next activity can be saved for the final session of the day.



The Rose

Describe what went well.
This can be anything from "met nice people" to "felt confident talking in a group activity." It's the positive takeaway from the session.



The Bud

Potential and/ or takeaways that excite the attendee and/ or what they want to learn or engage with more. It is something to look forward to, including attending more sessions, visiting their local library, and requesting a book, etc.



The Thorn

Describe anything that felt challenging or frustrating during the session. This can range from "felt like I knew no one here" to "I didn't have an answer to one of the journaling questions" to "I had no idea this many books were being banned." The Thorn can also be used to consider areas of personal improvement. A participant may consider it a Thorn that they did not engage in a group discussion, and want to in future sessions.



Rose, Thorn, & Bud Template

allows attendees to consider what they have learned in three different ways.

Find in the appendix or download at **BooksUnbanned** .com/toolkit.

Modify this template in any way you see fit. You may choose to simply read it to your participants as prompts or display it on a whiteboard or screen



DISMISSAL

Right before you dismiss attendees don't forget to thank them for their participation and remind them to leave their question or comment in the box on their way out. Encourage them to bring anything they are curious about to the next session, too.



UNIT 2, SESSION 2

Student Rights and Censorship

Session two offers attendees an introduction to rights and legislation that covers their freedom of speech and freedom to read. This session also showcases a pair of videos that will further apply and engage students in understanding book bans and where their voice in the freedom to read matters. Of note is that many of these court decisions, as well as much of the coverage in the videos, focuses on school libraries. This is worth discussion through the session—why is there so little about teen rights in public libraries when public libraries are also seeing book bans?

Materials needed	Time
 Folder with journal and pen Fidget toys, pipe cleaners, LEGOS, and/or other small objects teens can use for fidgeting/self-soothing/focus 	1 hour, with the ability to go longer.
Small box with index cards for questionsSmall and large sticky notes	

Both of the lessons in this unit include discussion questions within the slide decks. Use those as opportunities to engage students, and to break up the heavy information being presented. The information in the lessons can be used to support and adapt to the conversations students want to have.



WELCOME AND OVERVIEW OF SESSION

- · Welcome students back.
- Give an outline of the session, with the note that if a group activity feels overwhelming that individuals can complete them solo.
- Follow up with any questions from the previous session and remind students to submit at least one question or comment in the box by the end of the session.



SESSION ICEBREAKER

Choose an ice-breaker question for every student to answer. In early sessions of the program, the facilitator will call on students to share their response with the group. In early sessions of the program, the facilitator will call on students. As students become more comfortable with one another, they can call on one another after answering the question themselves.

The goal in the ice breaker is to get teens talking. It's an opportunity for every person in the room to have their voice heard, even if they are nervous or shy. This is especially powerful in situations where they may not speak up in future group discussions. Their voices were still in the room that day.



Use your own icebreaker questions or one from our list found in the appendix.



GROUP DISCUSSION



For this session, you might find it beneficial to skip the icebreaker in order to start a conversation about student rights immediately. Kick off the conversation by asking students the questions below. They can spend a minute or two writing down an answer in their journals, then encourage every student to share a response; it is okay if it is the same thing that someone else said, but encourage students to share something that has yet to be shared.

QUESTIONS



- 1. What are rights? What rights do you have now?
- 2. Where do rights come from? Who makes decisions about what your rights are?
- 3. How do your rights differ from those of your parents/guardians? Why do you think there are differences?



GROUP LEARNING: THE CONSTITUTION & YOU

This basic lesson in civics and the Constitution will encourage some initial conversation in a broad way. The conversation may become more granular as it relates to two key Amendments related to the freedom to read. Those are the First and Fourteenth Amendment. Several lawsuits against book bans have used those two Amendments, together and individually, to make a case for why bans are unconstitutional. As will be laid out in the second presentation deck, more decisions about constitutionality of free speech and the freedom to read are decided in individual cases, both in lower- and

There are additional notes, resources, and suggestions for presenting this lesson in the deck itself.



Slide deck:

The Constitution

& You



Download at

BooksUnbanned
.com/toolkit

NOTE TO FACILITATORS

upper- level courts.

Within the slide deck is the classic Schoolhouse Rock video "I'm Just a Bill." It runs for three minutes. You may find it beneficial to share that video before diving into the lesson.







GROUP LEARNING: STUDENT RIGHTS AND LEGISLATION

So, what rights do young people have when it comes to the Constitution? This slide deck is a short look at some of the key court cases that have interpreted the First (and to an extent, the Fourteenth) Amendment as it relates to young people. The information here is far from comprehensive, but it is intended to give some context and information to participants. If this becomes an overwhelming section, feel free to summarize without using the slides or share the slides with students as supplemental reading. That said, it's also possible students will be really interested in these cases because they are not only directly impacted by them, but rarely do they learn about them in school.



What About Student Rights?

There are additional notes and resources in the slide deck.
Feel free to edit this deck to include other information you'd like.

IF YOU WANT TO SKIP THE SLIDE DECK, HERE ARE SOME SHORT VIDEOS YOU CAN SHARE ABOUT STUDENT RIGHTS



What Are Student
Rights In Public
Schools?

 Childhood Education Zone

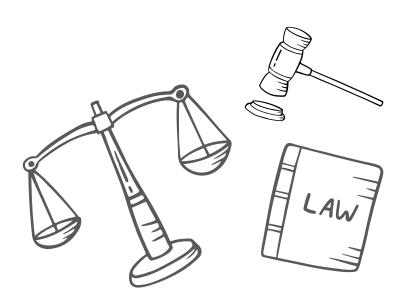


What Precedent
Did This Case
Set For Students'
Freedom Of
Speech Rights?

• <u>County</u> Office.org



Students Rights video series from ACLU



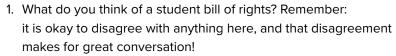


GROUP ACTIVITY: STUDENT BILL OF RIGHTS

The National Youth Rights Association, in conjunction with Students for a Sensible Drug Policy, the Freechild Project, and Oblivion.net, developed a robust Student Bill of Rights. What do actual students think of it and where/how do they see something like this being beneficial or challenging to implement in their own communities?

Break students into small groups and print copies of the bill for each group or individual.

QUESTIONS



- 2. What are the strengths of this particular student bill of rights?
- 3. What are some of the weaknesses of this student bill of rights?
- 4. Is there anything you'd add or take out of this bill of rights?
- 5. How do you believe something like this could be implemented in your own community? Remember: you can define "community" here in whatever way makes the most sense. It might be your school, it might be a group you're involved in outside of school, it might be in your home, etc.

After a few minutes of discussion, you might find it valuable as a facilitator to open up a whole group discussion about these questions. Or, you might wish to transition to the next activity and discussion, and end the session with a larger discussion of the topics presented. Gauge the temperature of your students—they may be itching to talk now after a long stretch of sitting or they may want to transition to watching this video and continuing their small group discussions before returning for a whole group conversation.



Expand on this activity by printing out copies of the United States Bill of Rights and the <u>Library Bill of Rights</u>. Ask students to consider the similarities and differences.





VIDEO

This 10-minute video from PBS Newshour looks at how book banning and restriction has played out in the state of Indiana as of mid-2024. It is worth watching for students in any state, as it does a good job of giving insight into "all sides" of the Freedom to Read, including an excellent interview with an LGBTQ+ teen who saw their public library moving books from the teen section.

It is likely students will begin to see the connections between the lessons on the Freedom to Read, as well as their rights under the Constitution as discovered in the units and sessions up to this point. Remind them there is a box they can drop questions into if they do not yet feel ready to ask aloud.



How Book
Restrictions
Are Playing
Out in Indiana
from PBS Newshour
(10 minutes)



Wrap Up

After watching the video, ask students to discuss with their small group and/ or journal on the following prompts. To launch the group conversation with the whole group, offer your thoughts to the questions as a facilitator. If you did not open up discussion to the whole group following the Student Bill of Rights small group activity, include time here to discuss those questions.

- What did you learn from watching?
- What's something that surprised you? Something that made you angry?
- Did you learn anything that contradicts what you already know or learned? What about anything that supports your prior and current knowledge?
- How does what you learned in this lesson connect with the <u>Freedom</u> to Read Statement?





REFLECTION: ROSE, BUD & THORN ACTIVITY

If this is the only session of the day, attendees will wrap things up with a short journaling prompt. If this session is one of several on the same day, this next activity can be saved for the final session of the day.



The Rose

Describe what went well.
This can be anything from "met nice people" to "felt confident talking in a group activity." It's the positive takeaway from the session.



The Bud

Potential and/ or takeaways that excite the attendee and/ or what they want to learn or engage with more. It is something to look forward to, including attending more sessions, visiting their local library, and requesting a book, etc.



The Thorn

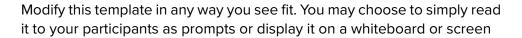
Describe anything that felt challenging or frustrating during the session. This can range from "felt like I knew no one here" to "I didn't have an answer to one of the journaling questions" to "I had no idea this many books were being banned." The Thorn can also be used to consider areas of personal improvement. A participant may consider it a Thorn that they did not engage in a group discussion, and want to in future sessions.



Rose, Thorn, & Bud Template

allows attendees to consider what they have learned in three different ways.

Find in the appendix or download at **BooksUnbanned** .com/toolkit.





DISMISSAL

Right before you dismiss attendees don't forget to thank them for their participation and remind them to leave their question or comment in the box on their way out. Encourage them to bring anything they are curious about to the next session, too.



UNIT 2, SESSION 3

Defining "Book Ban"

The third session of this unit encourages students to think about language and the ways it can be used accurately and as mis-/dis-/mal- information. It also will walk them through the process of how book challenges and book bans typically operate in public libraries. Students will learn the nuances of censorship, including how even if a book is not removed from the shelf, it may still be censored in libraries.

Materials needed	Time
 Folder with journal and pen Small box with paper for questions Fidget toys, pipe cleaners, LEGOS, and/or other small objects teens can use for fidgeting/self-soothing/focus 	1 hour, with the ability to go longer.
Small and large sticky notes	



WELCOME AND OVERVIEW OF SESSION

- Welcome students back.
- Give an outline of the session, with the note that if a group activity feels overwhelming that individuals can complete them solo.
- Follow up with any questions from the previous session and remind students to submit at least one question or comment in the box by the end of the session.



SESSION ICEBREAKER

Choose an icebreaker question for every student to answer. In early sessions of the program, the facilitator will call on students to share their answers. As students become more comfortable with one another, they can call on one another after answering the question themselves.

The goal in the ice breaker is to get teens talking. It's an opportunity for every person in the room to have their voice heard, even if they are nervous or shy. This is especially powerful in situations where they may not speak up in future group discussions. Their voices were still in the room that day.



Use your own icebreaker questions or one from our list found in the appendix.



GROUP ACTIVITY: DEFINING WHAT A "BOOK BAN" IS

Break attendees into groups of 2–4, depending on the size of the group. If you're doing this session the same day as unit two, session three, pick different groups between the two sessions.

Groups will use sticky notes or small whiteboards and work together to create a definition of "book ban" that everyone in the small group agrees with, whether it's long or short. Once the group finalizes a definition, it will be written on a large sticky note or whiteboard at the front of the room. Wait for every group to participate before moving on to the next part of this activity.

Distribute the Book Ban Definitions worksheet to participants. They come from a variety of sources, but for the sake of discussion, the attributions are not included in the handout version. As a facilitator and for discussion, the second page has the definitions again with their attribution. Those from nonprofessional groups have been summarized and anonymized.

QUESTIONS

- 1. Which definition of "book ban" do you think is most accurate or appropriate? Which definition do you agree with the least?
- 2. Are there any definitions that you don't like? What makes you dislike or disagree with them?
- 3. Why do you think the definition of a "book ban" is so inconsistent?
- 4. Do you believe there should be an authority on defining "book bans?" Why or why not?
- 5. Is there a difference between censorship and book banning?
- 6. What was it like to create a single definition of a concept when working with other people? What was easiest? What was hardest?

Wrap Up

Break up into groups and then reconvene—or just go straight into a group discussion. Encourage students to ask questions, to challenge one another, and to write down thoughts. The goal is a conversation about what terms mean, who has the authority to define terms, and to build dialog and community around shared meanings and understandings.



GROUP LEARNING: CENSORSHIP, BOOK CHALLENGES, AND MEDIA LITERACY



This lesson tackles several interrelated topics. As with other lessons, there are ample notes for the facilitator in the slide deck. The deck also includes questions for group discussion.

The research exercises from Unit Two, Session Two will be helpful to recall throughout this presentation. When discussing topics like mis-/dis-/mal- information, ask students where or how their research could have been easier or harder before learning how to look at sources of information.

Slide deck:

Censorship, Book
Challenges, and
Information Literacy

Download at

BooksUnbanned
.com/toolkit





There are two slides in the presentation that feature an image that includes cartoon violence depicting blood that could be disturbing to some. Let them know ahead of time that this might be the case, and that the inclusion of that image is to discuss mis/dis/mal information. If they prefer not to be there for that segment, let them know to step out after the slide related to the CRAAP method of information assessment. Once those slides are finished, invite them back in.



GROUP ACTIVITY: WHAT KIND OF CENSORSHIP IS THIS?

Break students into pairs or groups of three to answer the library-based prompts below. Based on what they learned in the group lesson, ask them to define the kind of censorship presented in each of the prompts. Once each pair or group completes the sheet, reconvene with the entire group and discuss the responses they came up with. As facilitator, you have a key to responses but you may find yourself interpreting the response differently from the key itself. You could even discuss that with the group and emphasize how difficult it can be to reach a consensus on topics such as censorship or serving your community as a library.

Alternatively, you could present this as a group activity, presenting each scenario to the group and asking them to define what kind of censorship it is.

Remind students there may not be a single correct answer. Disagreeing is beneficial and encouraged. As facilitator, you may recognize pretty quickly that many of these scenarios require more information to make a decision. The goal here is not for students to have a correct answer. It is for them to discuss the thinking that goes into each scenario and what kind of information they may need in order to define each case.

Questions get trickier and more nuanced—and thus more ripe for discussion—the further along students go in the activity.

It may be useful to pull up Dr. Emily Knox's Four R's of Censorship on a slide or white board



REFLECTION: ROSE, BUD & THORN ACTIVITY

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The Rose

Describe what went well.
This can be anything from "met nice people" to "felt confident talking in a group activity." It's the positive takeaway from the session.



The Bud

Potential and/ or takeaways that excite the attendee and/ or what they want to learn or engage with more. It is something to look forward to, including attending more sessions, visiting their local library, and requesting a book, etc.



The Thorn

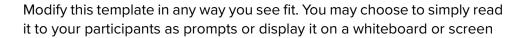
Describe anything that felt challenging or frustrating during the session. This can range from "felt like I knew no one here" to "I didn't have an answer to one of the journaling questions" to "I had no idea this many books were being banned." The Thorn can also be used to consider areas of personal improvement. A participant may consider it a Thorn that they did not engage in a group discussion, and want to in future sessions.



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DISMISSAL

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UNIT 2, SESSION 4

Dipping Our Toes into Advocacy, Civic Engagement, and Activism

Students will begin to look into what it means to be engaged locally, what activism and advocacy look like, and start to consider their personal strengths and interests when it comes to being civically minded. This section will cover topics like voting and showcase a variety of teen-created, teen-led advocacy projects related to the freedom to read. Like in unit two, session three, teens will be asked to define terms and ideas on their own before covering them in more depth. The goal is for participants to learn to communicate, collaborate, and expand their ideas and knowledge of key features related to civic and community engagement.

Materials needed	Time
Folder with journal and pen	1 hour, with
Fidget toys, pipe cleaners, LEGOS, and/or other small objects teens can use for fidgeting/self-soothing/focus	the ability to go longer.
Small box with index cards for questions	
Small and large sticky notes	
Technology that would allow listening to audio, such as a laptop or smartphone with wireless speakers for the facilitator only	



WELCOME AND OVERVIEW OF SESSION

- · Welcome students back.
- Give an outline of the session, with the note that if a group activity feels overwhelming that individuals can complete them solo.
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SESSION ICEBREAKER

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The goal in the icebreaker is to get teens talking. It's an opportunity for every person in the room to have their voice heard, even if they are nervous or shy. This is especially powerful in situations where they may not speak up in future group discussions. Their voices were still in the room that day.



Use your own icebreaker questions or one from our list found in the appendix.

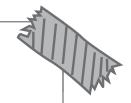


JOURNALING

Begin this final session of the unit with journaling. This is intended to help get students thinking about their own definitions of a variety of terms before discussing further with their peers.

PROMPTS

- 1. What is advocacy? Brainstorm one example.
- 2. What is civic engagement? Brainstorm one example.
- 3. What is activism? Brainstorm an example.
- 4. What kind of overlap do these terms have? What differences are there?





GROUP ACTIVITY: CREATING COMMON DEFINITIONS

We know words have power. When working together it is important to for people to have a common definition of terms to make sure everyone is on the same page. Depending on the size of your group, break students into small groups of 2–4. Each group will have a large sticky note and a pad or two of small sticky notes. Groups will work together to develop a definition of the following terms. They will also share 2–4 examples of what these words mean. The examples can be from the news or life, or they can be hypothetical examples that teens brainstorm together. Yes, these are the same terms as in the journal prompt. This exercise expands on the same conversation and allows each participant to share their thoughts and insights while helping build an agreed-upon definition.

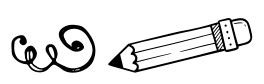
The small sticky notes are available for brainstorming, while the large sticky note will be used to write down the definitions and examples the group agrees on.

- Advocacy
- Activism
- Civic Engagement

- Ambassador
- · Politics/"Being political"

NOTE TO FACILITATORS

If sticky notes are unavailable use sheets of paper, a whiteboard, or even a projection of your computer screen while you or a teen type or draw





Group Discussion

Each small group will share their definitions with the wider group. Groups can elect someone to be a spokesperson and share their big sticky note definitions at the front of the room. Another approach would be to have each group put their big sticky note at the front of the room and then going around the room. Choose the method which suits your group and their energy level.

During the discussion, the facilitator or a volunteer will stand at the front of the room with a fresh large sticky note and/or white board. Once each group shares their definitions and examples, the question to answer will be how and where they see these ideas intersecting or overlapping. You could create a Venn Diagram with five interlocking circles; for example, let the group choose what fits in the center and work outward toward the things that are unique to each term. It could make sense to create a big list of commonalities and a list of what differentiates some of these concepts from one another. Perhaps there is another visual your group thinks might be more effective—it could be that the group sees a word like "Civic Engagement" as the center of a bubble map and draws the qualities or definitions of the other terms outward from that center point.

The goal is to be creative and see where these ideas are similar and where they are different. It might be the case that the examples groups come up with of these definitions are where the associations are most readily made.

No answer is right or wrong. As the lesson in this session demonstrates, there is a lot of overlap among the terms. In some communities, some terms are going to be less "charged" to use than others. That's conversation-worthy, too.



GROUP LEARNING: ADVOCACY, ACTIVISM, CIVIC ENGAGEMENT, AND TEEN AMBASSADORSHIP

There are three big pieces to this lesson. First, students will learn the meaning behind and nuances of the words they have been thinking about and discussing in this session. Then, they will have a short overview of voting—recognizing that most attendees are not of age but can and should begin to think about the process. Finally, there will be a showcase of student activists who've fought book bans.

As a facilitator, feel free to modify and adjust to your community. It would be beneficial to include a slide or two about local election laws, as well as information about registering or pre-registering to vote. Links to that information are in the notes in the slidedeck.

You may also have an activist you'd like to spotlight in the final section. Go for it. See if you have a local group that would be eager to come in, such as a local chapter of PFlag, an organization that helps the houseless with food and clothing, a member of your Friends of the Library, etc. The goal is for young people to see the variety of ways they can talk about or bring attention to book banning and censorship in their own community.



Slide deck:

Advocacy, Activism,
Civic Engagement,
and Teen
Ambassadorship

This deck, like others, includes discussion questions within it.

Download at

BooksUnbanned
.com/toolkit





As a large group or in small groups review the tactics on Beautiful Trouble



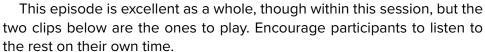
Watch and discuss the Game Changers videos on Youth Voting Rights or Free Speech on Campus



Use the Activism 101: Strategies & Tactics slide deck to help teens complete the Theory of Change worksheet

Audio

To reinforce the concepts within the lesson and to facilitate the next group discussion, play the following excerpts from "Are You Treating Politics Like a Hobby" from Jon Favreau's podcast *Offline* (April 7, 2024). Along with guest Eitan Hersh, Favreau talks about the concept of political hobbyism. It is *not* about belittling online activism or organizing, but instead, about the power of getting active on the local level and building true relationships with people in order to be effective in pushing for action on things you believe in.



- Minute 27-37, which focuses on local efforts to make change
- Minute 46-51, which focuses on building relationships

Wrap Up

Round out this session with the following discussion questions. Encourage students to explore both the knowledge and ideas generated in the first individual and group activity with what they're thinking after the lesson and podcast excerpts.

- 1. What rights did the student advocates/activists exercise in the examples you saw in the slideshow?
- 2. Are there things you do every day or even once in a while that would fall under advocacy, activism, civic engagement, or ambassadorship? Share any examples, big or small, whether or not they're related to the Freedom to Read.
- 3. Are there things you *wish* you were doing more when it comes to advocacy, activism, ambassadorship, and/or civic engagement? What holds you back?
- 4. What feelings or thoughts are coming up right now? Those can be related to book bans or libraries, to advocacy or teen rights. This is your opportunity to think through *your* experiences right now.



Find the episode wherever you get podcasts or scan below.





REFLECTION: ROSE, BUD & THORN ACTIVITY

If this is the only session of the day, attendees will wrap things up with a short journaling prompt. If this session is one of several on the same day, this next activity can be saved for the final session of the day.



The Rose

Describe what went well.
This can be anything from "met nice people" to "felt confident talking in a group activity." It's the positive takeaway from the session.



The Bud

Potential and/ or takeaways that excite the attendee and/ or what they want to learn or engage with more. It is something to look forward to, including attending more sessions, visiting their local library, and requesting a book, etc.



The Thorn

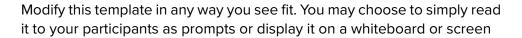
Describe anything that felt challenging or frustrating during the session. This can range from "felt like I knew no one here" to "I didn't have an answer to one of the journaling questions" to "I had no idea this many books were being banned." The Thorn can also be used to consider areas of personal improvement. A participant may consider it a Thorn that they did not engage in a group discussion, and want to in future sessions.



Rose, Thorn, & Bud Template

allows attendees to consider what they have learned in three different ways.

Find in the appendix or download at **BooksUnbanned** .com/toolkit.





DISMISSAL

Right before you dismiss attendees don't forget to thank them for their participation and remind them to leave their question or comment in the box on their way out. Encourage them to bring anything they are curious about to the next session, too.



RESOURCES



Book Censorship

- "The Freedom of Expression" from the ACLU
- "Recognizing Both Active and Passive Censorship Practices" from Dr. Emily Knox
- "What Is Censorship?" from the ACLU
- "What's The Definition of a Book Ban?" from NPR
- "Book Bans in America Are Rising. Here's a Look at What's Lost" from *The Washington Post* (10 minutes)
- "How Book Restrictions Are Playing Out in Indiana" from PBS News House (10 minutes)
- "This Talk May Be Banned in Schools," a TedX talk by Jonathan Friedman of PEN America (18 minutes)
- "<u>Why Public Libraries Are Under Attack</u>," Last Week Tonight with John Oliver (30 minutes)



Utilize these resources for your own knowledge or as supplemental activities.

All links can also be found at **BooksUnbanned** .com/toolkit



Information Literacy

"Give Information the CRAAP Test" from Lisa Nowlin at the ALSC Blog

What the Fact?: Finding the Truth in All the Noise by Seema Yasmin (YA nonfiction book)

Civics, The Constitution, and Student Rights

- "Civic Engagement" from Youth.gov
- "Preparing the Next Generation of Citizens Requires Bringing Back Civics" from The Institute for Citizens and Scholars
- "Miller v. California" from the Free Speech Center at Middle Tennessee University
- "How a Bill Becomes a Law" from Crash Course (10 minutes)
- "Why Is It So Hard to Pass an Amendment?" TED Ed video (5 minutes)

Civic Engagement, Activism, and Advocacy

- "<u>Types of Civic Engagement</u>" from the Center for Civic Engagement at Illinois State University
- "Unpacking Civic Engagement" from EngageGPC (5 minutes)
- "We're All Responsible for Protecting Public Libraries" by Amanda Jones at YES Magazine



1.	Using your own experiences and knowledge how would you define a book ban?
2.	Why do you think book bans happen?
3.	Name a banned book you think everyone should read and why.
4.	What reasons have been given for why that book has been banned?



Book title and author
When and where was the book banned?
Who tried to ban the book?
How did you search for this information? Include keywords you used and where you searched,
What was the exact website/link/source that gave you an answer? Include all if you got from multiple places.
On a scale of 1-10, 1 being the easiest and 10 the hardest, how would you rate the difficulty of finding this information?

1.	What was the most difficult part of finding information about the banned books you selected?
	That could include a lack of good resources about the book; inconsistent or biased
	information on the topics the book covered; negative or triggering opinions about the book
	or author that were hard or unpleasant to read, and so forth.

2. What was the easiest part of this activity? Was there a part of the activity that was enjoyable?



1.	What are rights?
2.	What rights do you have now?
3.	Where do rights come from? Who makes decisions about what your rights are?
4.	How do your rights differ from those of your parents/guardians?
5.	Why do you think there are differences?



1.	What do you think of a student bill of rights? Remember: it is okay to disagree with anything here, and that disagreement makes for great conversation!
2.	What are the strengths of this particular student bill of rights?
3.	What are some of the weaknesses of this student bill of rights?
4.	Is there anything you'd add or take out of this bill of rights?
5.	How do you believe something like this could be implemented in your own community? Remember: you can define "community" here in whatever way makes the most sense. It might be your school, it might be a group you're involved in outside of school, it might be in your home, etc.

- 1. We define a book ban as any action taken against a book based on its content that leads to a previously accessible book being completely removed from availability for students or where access to a book is restricted or diminished.
- 2. There is a difference between book banning and book curation. Book banning means you are unable to get the book anywhere because it is unavailable. Curation is the act of ensuring every book on the shelf in a library is appropriate.
- **3.** A 'book ban' is the removal of a title from a library because someone considers it harmful or dangerous.
- 4. When a book is banned, that means it's not available anywhere and not legal to sell.
- **5.** There is no such thing as a book ban because you can get anything you want thanks to the internet and to websites like Amazon.
- **6.** A book is "challenged" when a person or group objects to the materials and attempts to remove or restrict their accessibility. A book is "banned" when this removal is successful.
- 7. A book ban is when a government decides to outlaw a book or when a big corporation like Target or Amazon decide to deplatform a title. It is not choosing one book over another book in a library.



1.	Which definition of "book ban" do you think is most accurate or appropriate? Which definition do you agree with the least?
2.	Are there any definitions that you don't like? What makes you disagree with them?
3.	Why do you think the definition of a "book ban" is so inconsistent?
4.	Do you believe there should be an authority on defining "book bans?" Why/why not
5.	Is there a difference between censorship and book banning?
6.	What was it like to create a single definition of a concept when working with other people? What was easiest? What was hardest?

1. We define a book ban as any action taken against a book based on its content that leads to a previously accessible book being completely removed from availability for students or where access to a book is restricted or diminished.

- PEN America

- 2. There is a difference between book banning and book curation. Book banning means you are unable to get the book anywhere because it is unavailable. Curation is the act of ensuring every book on the shelf in a library is appropriate.
 - Modified response from a parental rights activist
- **3.** A 'book ban' is the removal of a title from a library because someone considers it harmful or dangerous.

- American Library Association

- 4. When a book is banned, that means it's not available anywhere and not legal to sell.
 - Modified response from a member of the Cato Institute
- **5.** There is no such thing as a book ban because you can get anything you want thanks to the internet and to websites like Amazon.
 - Modified response from a Moms for Liberty Member
- **6.** A book is "challenged" when a person or group objects to the materials and attempts to remove or restrict their accessibility. A book is "banned" when this removal is successful.
 - American Civil Liberties Union
- 7. A book ban is when a government decides to outlaw a book or when a big corporation like Target or Amazon decide to deplatform a title. It is not choosing one book over another book in a library.
 - Modified from Daniel Buck at the National Review

Materials

Provide a printed copy of the Questions for Participants sheet to each participant

Set Up

- Break students into pairs or groups of three.
 - Alternatively, you could present this as a group activity, presenting each scenario to the group and asking them to define what kind of censorship it is.
- Distribute to them the following library-based prompts and, based on what they learned in the Group Lesson, ask them to define the kind of censorship presented in each of the prompts.
- Once each pair or group completes the sheet, reconvene with the entire group and discuss the responses they came up with.

Note to Facilitators

As facilitator, you have a key to responses but you may find yourself interpreting the response differently from the key itself. This is an opportunity to discuss that with the group and emphasize how difficult it can be to reach a consensus on topics such as censorship and best serving your community as a library.

Remind students there may not be a single correct answer and discussion among peers, even when they disagree, is beneficial and encouraged. As facilitator, you may recognize pretty quickly that many of these scenarios require more information to make a decision. The goal here is not for students to have a correct answer. It is for them to discuss the thinking that goes into each scenario and what kind of information they may need in order to define each case.

Questions get trickier and more nuanced—and thus more ripe for discussion—the further along students go in the activity.



Answer Key for Facilitators

WHAT KIND OF CENSORSHIP IS THIS?

- 1. Redaction.
- 2. Redaction. This is a real scenario that has played out many times for Maurice Sendak's classic In The Night Kitchen.
- 3. Relocation.
- **4.** It depends entirely on the intent! Was the book removed as part of a normal process of weeding or because it was damaged beyond repair and repurchased? Then it's not a removal. If it was pulled after a complaint or because a library worker objected to it, then it is removal.
- **5.** Restriction. More specifically, this is an opt-in restriction, meaning that the default level of access for anyone under 18 is NO access.
- 6. This question should generate a lot of discussion and it's based on a real scenario. This would not be any censorship at all on the part of the library nor the patron. It is likely true that the book in question would better find its readership in the religion/theology section than in the general parenting section, as the religion/theology section of the nonfiction collection would have a parenting subsection. There is a great opportunity here to talk with students about how nuanced collection organization is and that sometimes, books do better find their audiences when cataloged differently.
- 7. Talk about a tricky question here! This is not censorship. We may not know much information about why the teen said the book should be removed, but the library workers who reviewed the title likely figured out the problem: the Cold War ended in 1989, and the book did not mention that. In other words, the book was out of date and thus, needed to be replaced with something more updated. The purchase of a new title might clue in students about this being thoughtful weeding and collection updating.
- **8.** This is a complicated one because it entirely depends on intent. Is this in addition to those books being available in the sections they'd otherwise be shelved? Are the books being removed from their original place and put here? Who will have access to the shelf? Where is the shelf located? There are tons of good conversations to be had on this one.
- **9.** It depends! Are the magazines there because of the content? Or are they behind the desk because of damage those have sustained before and it's a protective measure? The long and short on this one is that it leans more into censorship than not, especially because it might be too intimidating for a young person to ask at the desk for them (and what if the desk is unstaffed at times?).



- **10.** It's a restriction via an opt-in form, rather than a more ethically gray opt-out form. A good conversation could be had about the decision of the library to have restricted level cards in the first place. Who policies those policies? What if someone who has a children's only card enters the teen area and browses those books in the library but doesn't borrow them?
- 11. This final scenario is purposefully not giving an action the library takes. The conversation should dig into pros/cons of funding decisions, what "inappropriate materials," means, and so forth. If students are stuck on what to do here, some questions you can use to prompt them include: What if the library submits a report to the state acknowledging there are no inappropriate materials without doing anything in the library? What if the library decides to forgo state funding because they don't want to remove material? What does "inappropriate" mean and how does the library toe the line between their ethical duty to provide material and the state pressure to define "inappropriate" in a way that's not up to the Miller Test standard?



Questions for participants

WHAT KIND OF CENSORSHIP IS THIS?

- 1. A library worker tears a chapter about climate change out of a science book.
- 2. When going through the picture book collection, a librarian opens up a book that features an image of a child without clothing on. Only the backside of the child is visible. The librarian uses a white marker to draw on a diaper and returns the book to the shelf.
- **3.** After a parent complained about a picture book that talked about pronouns, the book was then cataloged and shelved in the adult section of the library.
- 4. A novel by Ellen Hopkins was discarded by a library worker.
- 5. In order to access the adult fiction section of the library, a parent must sign a permission slip for every one of their children under the age of 18.
- 6. A parent looking for a book about how to support their teen who just came out as trans finds a book on the shelf in the parenting section of the adult nonfiction collection that discusses what the Bible says about LGBTQ+ people. The parent submits a formal challenge to the library through the appropriate complaint form, noting that they did not believe the book was in the right area of the library. The library reviews the title and decides the patron is correct. The book is reshelved in the religion and theology section of adult nonfiction.
- 7. A teenager borrows a book from the adult section of the public library for a research paper about contemporary Berlin, Germany. The book, published in 1989, was returned with a note that the book should be removed from the library. There is little more information provided, but once reviewed by library staff, the book is removed. A new book was purchased that covered the history and culture of Berlin, with a publication date of 2019.
- **8.** A library creates a new parenting section in the children's area. The books in that collection cover topics like puberty, death and dying, gender and sexuality, family dynamics, mental health, and more. There are both books for adults and books for children in it.
- **9.** In order to borrow teen magazines, a young person has to ask at the reference desk for them.
- **10.** Until a parent signs a permission slip designating what kind of library card their child can have—one that limits them to the children's section only, one that permits them to the children's and teen section, or one that allows them full access to the library—no one under 18 can enter the library.
- 11. The state legislature passes a new law. To get funding, public libraries must prove they have no inappropriate materials on the shelf for children under 18.



1.	What rights did the student advocates/activists exercise in the examples you saw in the slideshow?
2.	Are there things you do every day or even once in a while that would fall under advocacy, activism, civic engagement, or ambassadorship?
3.	Share any examples, big or small, whether or not they're related to the Freedom to Read.
4.	Are there things you wish you were doing more when it comes to advocacy, activism ambassadorship, and/or civic engagement? What holds you back?
5.	What feelings or thoughts are coming up right now? Those can be related to book bans or libraries, to advocacy or teen rights. This is your opportunity to think through *your* experiences right now.



1. What is your definition of advocacy? Brainstorm one example.
2. What is your definition of civic engagement? Brainstorm one example.
3. What is your definition of activism? Brainstorm an example.
4. What kind of overlap do these terms have? What differences are there?



Advocacy, Change Making, and Finding Your Leadership Superpowers

PURPOSE

Students will begin to strengthen their advocacy skills; dive deeper into the themes common among banned books both past and present; and practice their listening and argumentation skills. This unit will also help students think about various ways of being a leader, as well as why practicing self-care is crucial for not only advocacy, but for everyday life.

OBJECTIVES

- 1. Through role playing, students will exercise their argumentation, listening, and empathy skills, as well as strengthen their understanding of what influences their own thinking and behavior.
- Students will work collaboratively to practice their advocacy skills, including how they might address an individual or authoritative body like a school board.
- 3. A greater understanding of the issues surrounding book bans will be achieved through lecture, video, and audio about the themes and topics prevalent in the most challenged materials nationwide.
- Group discussion and individual journaling will help students discover the different ways they can put their own unique skills and interests to use.
- The importance of self-care will be broached through lecture and practice as a means of helping students enhance personal well-being and self-awareness/emotional intelligence.

OUTCOME

Attendees will practice and hone their skills in listening, argumentation, and defending the right to read. They will walk away with practical ways to address issues impacting their community and learn how to lean into their own strengths as leaders.

NOTE TO FACILITATORS



Each of the four sessions is one-hour long but can be expanded. For example, you may wish to make session four 90 minutes or longer to go deeper in discussion of topics. You are also welcome to mix and match pieces of the sessions as appropriate for your group. For example, you might wish to skip one activity and instead, incorporate something from the resource guide at the end of this section. The curriculum is adaptable to your needs, and you will find that the topics in unit three expand upon and deepen those in units one and two.

UNIT 3, SESSION 1

Advocacy Skill Building, Part I

The first session in unit three introduces students to putting much of what they've learned in the first two units into practice. This session encourages teens to view a freedom to read scenario from several perspectives, including some that may not align with their own beliefs. Through this experience, they will also strengthen their listening skills and learn to identify common logical fallacies in argumentation.

This session is the first of two that illuminates what happens when a book is being challenged. From there, sessions will focus on the skills and techniques students can use when it comes to advocating for the freedom to read (or any cause they care about). In the second part, which will come in unit four, session two, attendees will see those newly acquired and strengthened skills as they roleplay another book challenge scenario with a fuller toolbox from which to pull.

Materials needed	Time
Folder with journal and penSmall box with index cards for questions	1 hour, with the ability to go
Fidget toys, pipe cleaners, LEGOS, and/or other small objects teens can use for fidgeting/self-soothing/focus	longer.
Small and large sticky notes	
Any props or costume pieces (hats, sunglasses, scarves, etc.) you may have available	



SESSION ICEBREAKER

Choose an icebreaker question and invite every student to share their response with the group. Since this session kicks off a whole new unit, you may find it worthwhile to also ask students the following questions as part of welcoming them back:

- 1. What questions or thoughts do you have from the previous unit?
- 2. What is one thing that stoodout to you from the previous unit?
- 3. What is something from the previous unit that made you eager to learn more?





Use your own icebreaker questions or one from our list found in the appendix.



GROUP DISCUSSION

Because this particular session has a lot of group participation and will require that students thoughtfully argue with one another, begin with a low-stakes question that may grease the wheels. The purpose is to give everyone the opportunity to talk and share a perspective they hold over something that is not especially important. It may generate some debate among students—this is a good thing! If it does not generate debate, that is okay, too.

QUESTIONS



- 1. Do you put toothpaste on your toothbrush first then put water on top or do you wet the brush first?
- 2. Do you put cereal in your bowl then add milk or do you put the milk in first, then add cereal?
- 3. What is your most silly unpopular opinion?
- 4. What do you think is the worst snack or worst candy?
- 5. What fandom is the most cringe?
- 6. If you had to get rid of one color, what color would it be and why?
- 7. What age do you consider to be "old?"



JOURNAL

Transition students to an individual journaling assignment to continue getting them thinking about opinions and standing up for what they believe in.

PROMPTS



- 1. What inspires or influences you to do something?
- 2. What are some of your strongest held beliefs? In other words, what are non-negotiable beliefs for you? Name 2–3 and what led you to holding those beliefs.
- 3. Name a time you've had to stand up for the beliefs you listed above. What was happening? What kind of response did you give? What support did you give in favor of your beliefs? How did you respond to those who disagreed? How did that disagreement make you feel?
- 4. What did you do to take care of yourself after having a disagreement with someone?



Depending on your group's willingness to share, these questions could lead to a good group discussion. Take the temperature of the room and ask if a few students would like to share any of their answers. As always, facilitators can share their answers first to help open up the conversation.



GROUP ACTIVITY: ROLE PLAYING IN THE LIBRARY

Break students up into groups. If groups are of three, each person will take turns playing a role. If in groups of four, three students will role-play with the fourth observing and/or taking notes on what they observe. Students will play each role once.

Students will be going into this scenario with some skills from prior units, as well as from their own experiences. They're not expected to have all the tools or skills we discuss. Consider this activity a springboard for developing them. Emphasize, too, that teens may disagree with the perspective of one or more of the roles they play. That is expected. The purpose is to practice explaining points of view and arguments, as well as to build empathy with each of the roles.

The book mentioned in the scenario may be unfamiliar to attendees. That is okay! As a facilitator, you have some options. You can allow everyone a few moments to look the book up. You can have the book in the room with you for everyone to peruse. As a final option, you can also change the book to another commonly banned title that your attendees may be more familiar with; you may need to adapt the scenario in this case.

NOTE TO FACILITATORS



Some teens may find getting into character easier or more enjoyable with props or costume pieces. Whatever you might have in the library or bring in from your personal collection is fine—think hats, scarves, glasses, etc. Have those available at the front of the room and encourage teens who would like to use them to do so.

Students will work through the questions from the perspective of the role they are playing. It is likely there will be disagreements or questions the groups find themselves asking along the way. That is purposeful—encourage them to write those questions or thoughts down for the follow-up discussion with the whole group. Examples of those questions might include whether or not the comics section of the library has teen comics in it or if those are only in the teen area; whether or not this parent has complained about books previously; about whether or not the teen has been to the library before or is well-known to the librarian; what are the library's collection policies and challenge policies (as discussed in earlier units); and so forth.



ROLES

The **parent** who found the book

The **teenage child** of the parent
who found the book
but who is
not present

The **librarian** who receives the complaint

Scenario

A parent finds a copy of the book Gender Queer on display in the comics area of the public library, which is next to the teen area. The parent tells the librarian working at the nearby desk they are uncomfortable with that book being so close to the teen section. They do not believe it is appropriate for anyone under the age of 18 and should be removed from the library.

Questions for the parent role

- What values or beliefs do you hold when it comes to your responsibility as a parent to your own child?
- What is your argument for removing the book from the public library?
- How do you imagine you would feel if you learned your teen had read the book? What conversation might you have with them about it?

Questions for the teen role

- If you read a book that made you uncomfortable, what would you do?
- How would you navigate disagreeing with the values and beliefs of your parent in this situation? What kind of conversation would you have with them and who might you turn to for help?
- Imagine you have a younger sibling who picked up Gender Queer.
 How would that make you feel and how would you/wouldn't you bring this up with your parent? With that sibling?

Questions for the librarian role

- How would you respond to the parent in this situation?
- What reasons would you give for having and keeping Gender Queer in the comics section of your library?
- Would your response in this situation be the same or different if it was the teenager who wanted to have the book removed, rather than the parent?

Discussion

Once every group member has played each role, reconvene as a whole. Ask students to share their experiences with the following questions:

- What were the most compelling arguments for removing the book from the library in your group? What were the least compelling?
- Was it harder to be a listener in one of these roles than in another one? For example, did you find it hard to listen to the parent's reasons for wanting a book removed if you were their child or the librarian? Did you find it hard to listen to the librarian's response when playing the role of parent? What made it hard?
- Which role was most challenging to play? Which was the easiest?
- Did anything in this scenario surprise you?



GROUP LEARNING: SHARPENING LISTENING SKILLS, BUILDING AN ARGUMENT, AND IDENTIFYING LOGICAL FALLACIES

This lesson has two separate slide decks, linked below. Both decks are relatively short. There are so many examples and resources available on all of these topics, so bring in anything that might resonate with your particular group of attendees. Remind students that they learn the more they practice and that the program is the perfect place for them to practice, make mistakes, and learn. Remind them, too, they'll make mistakes all their lives with these things. There's nothing shameful about that. They may find it beneficial through the program and in the real world that writing about those misses will give them a chance to reflect and consider how they might approach things differently next time, using them as opportunities to grow We are all imperfect. If we were able to be perfect every time, there would be no need to learn any of these things.

As with every lesson deck in the program, additional notes and resources are available in the presenter notes. There are also discussion questions embedded to allow teens the chance to speak and share.



Slide decks:

Becoming a

Good Listener

The Good and the Bad of Argumentation

Download at

BooksUnbanned
.com/toolkit







REFLECTION: ROSE, BUD & THORN ACTIVITY

If this is the only session of the day, attendees will wrap things up with a short journaling prompt. If this session is one of several on the same day, this next activity can be saved for the final session of the day.



The Rose

Describe what went well.
This can be anything from "met nice people" to "felt confident talking in a group activity." It's the positive takeaway from the session.



The Bud

Potential and/ or takeaways that excite the attendee and/ or what they want to learn or engage with more. It is something to look forward to, including attending more sessions, visiting their local library, and requesting a book, etc.



The Thorn

Describe anything that felt challenging or frustrating during the session. This can range from "felt like I knew no one here" to "I didn't have an answer to one of the journaling questions" to "I had no idea this many books were being banned." The Thorn can also be used to consider areas of personal improvement. A participant may consider it a Thorn that they did not engage in a group discussion, and want to in future sessions.



Rose, Thorn, & Bud Template

allows attendees to consider what they have learned in three different ways.

Find in the appendix or download at **BooksUnbanned** .com/toolkit.

Modify this template in any way you see fit. You may choose to simply read it to your participants as prompts or display it on a whiteboard or screen



DISMISSAL

Right before you dismiss attendees don't forget to thank them for their participation and remind them to leave their question or comment in the box on their way out. Encourage them to bring anything they are curious about to the next session, too.



UNIT 3, SESSION 2

Wrestling with the Themes of Banned Books

The second session of the unit dives even deeper into the themes that have been targeted in book bans, expanding upon previous sessions. This session will generate discussion first on why we read books and the purpose of literature. It will then explore the mental health realities of today's generation of young people.

Materials needed	Time
 Folder with journal and pen Small box with index cards for questions Fidget toys, pipe cleaners, LEGOS, and/or other small objects teens can use for fidgeting/self-soothing/focus Small and large sticky notes 	1 hour, with the ability to go longer.



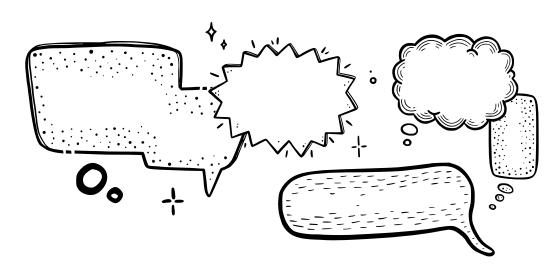
SESSION ICEBREAKER

Choose an icebreaker question and let each student share their response with the group. In early sessions of the program, the facilitator will call on students. As students become more comfortable with one another, they can call on one another after answering the question themselves.

The goal in the icebreaker is to get teens talking. It's an opportunity for every person in the room to have their voice heard, even if they are nervous or shy. This is especially powerful in situations where they may not speak up in future group discussions. Their voices were still in the room that day.



Use your own icebreaker questions or one from our list found in the appendix.





GROUP DISCUSSION

Launch this session with a conversation about the purpose of reading. The following questions can guide the discussion, but feel free to adapt, modify, or add anything that comes up. As the facilitator, answering first or sharing a thought about the question may help engage students. There are no right or wrong answers and questions may be answered in many different ways.

QUESTIONS



- 1. What is the purpose of reading? Why do we need to read and why do we want to read?
- 2. What makes you stop reading a book? If you'd like, would you share a book title you stopped reading and why?
- 3. Who has the right to decide what someone else can or cannot read?
- 4. What do you think about adults who want to decide which books children and teens have access to?



GROUP ACTIVITY

This particular activity can be done either as a full group or by splitting teens into smaller groups. If you choose to do it with smaller groups, after a few minutes of brainstorming, bring the small groups back together for a whole group discussion.

In a full group setting, use a large sticky note or white board to write down responses. In a small group setting, allow each group to use a series of sticky notes or a large one to write down their responses that can then be added to the white board or a large sticky note at the front of the room.

Ask the group/s to discuss the following and write down their answers on sticky notes. Remind them that there are no wrong answers. The question can encompass answers about right now in the present and/or those in the future:

QUESTIONS



- 1. What are the biggest challenges faced by you and your peers?
- 2. What are issues that are important to you?
- 3. What issues do you think are important to your peers?
- 4. What big questions do you have about the future?
- 5. How do you feel about your future?

Once conversation comes to a natural conclusion, ask students to hold those ideas in their mind as you move through the next lessons.



GROUP LEARNING: THE DEMOGRAPHICS AND MENTAL HEALTH OF GENERATION Z/GENERATION ALPHA

+

Many of the things in this session will be familiar to students. Giving them concrete data, language, and resources will be invaluable as they serve as ambassadors for the freedom to read.

Slide decks:
The Demographics
and Mental Health
of Generation Z/
Generation Alpha



GROUP LEARNING: WHY ARE BOOKS BEING BANNED?

Why Are Books Being Banned?

This lesson ties together everything so far in the session, as it looks at the reasons books have been banned. It is primarily focused on contemporary book bans, though it will touch a bit on historical examples for further context and insight. Teens will see the parallels between the conversation about the realities of their generational experience and the books being made unavailable to them.

Download at

BooksUnbanned
.com/toolkit





VIDEO: FIGHTING FOR BOOKS

Fighting for Books

This short video is a compilation of stories from authors involved with the group Authors Against Book Bans. The authors share why they stand up for books amidst the rise in book banning—even as they themselves are among the marginalized whose identities are being attacked through these bans.



The video allows young people to see and hear from an array of beloved authors and to know they're in good company in the fight.



GROUP ACTIVITY: RESPONDING TO BOOK CHALLENGES

The goal for this activity is for participants to use the data and information they've learned to defend the continued inclusion of books on library shelves. There are no "right" answers here. It's an exercise, and it will help put the lessons into practice.

For this activity, you can either break students up into pairs, small groups, or as one big group with the facilitator acting reading the script.

One person will read the script for why a book should be banned and the participants will share how they would respond to counter the argument. Encourage participants to use the worksheet to write down their thoughts.







NOTE TO FACILITATORS

Feel free to pick different books than the ones given here. If your participants are having a hard time thinking of reasons why the book should remain on the shelves have them look up the title on the United Against Book Bans Book Resume resource.

SCRIPTS

Book: The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas

"The Hate U Give is inappropriate for the young adult shelves at the public library. The book has a lot of explicit language, and it has a very clear antipolice sentiment. It is also racist against white people because it depicts them as hateful against Black people. The message it sends will hurt a lot of feelings."

Book: All Boys Aren't Blue by George M. Johnson

"All Boys Aren't Blue is completely inappropriate for teens in the library. It is full of sexually explicit passages, and the language throughout is not what anyone, let alone minors, should be hearing. The main character is way too worried about sex and with gender. No one should be having sex or thinking about sex this when they're young and the parts about gender are part of the movement to indoctrinate and confuse young people about the difference between boys and girls."

Book: Let's Talk About It: The Teen's Guide to Sex, Relationships, and Being Human by Erika Moen and Matthew Nolan

"This book is inappropriate for anyone under the age of 18 to pick up. It is filled with pornographic images of young people having sex, and it has all kinds of explicit photos of naked bodies. There's even a whole section about how to find pornography on the internet. It blames white people for teens who have body image, and it advertises the idea that there are more than two genders. It's absolute filth and does not belong in any library. It shouldn't have been published at all."

Book: Sold by Patricia McCormick

"This book should not be in the library because it is a story of a girl sold into the sex slave trade and it is full of aberrent sexual content, including rape and prostitution. There is so much violence in this story that it is sickening that someone would write, let alone publish, such a book. Here are two passages you need to know are in this book.

From page 107: "This Shahanna leans close and whispers to me, "It will go easier on you if you hold still." There is a slicing sound, and a clump of my hair falls to the floor. I cry out and try to break free, but Shahanna has hold of me. Mumtaz draws back, the jaw of the scissors poised at my neck. "Hold still," she says, her teeth clenched. "Or I'll slice your throat.""

From page 132: "One afternoon, Mumtaz comes to the door and tells me to gather up my things. "Now that you are no longer a virgin," she says, "I cannot fetch a good price for You." That doesn't even begin to get into how depressing this book is! What teenager would want to read a story that is so upsetting?"

Book: Out of Darkness by Ashley Hope Perez

"She was there when Henry came into the bathroom and closed the door behind him. She watched as he placed both hands on the wall beneath the mirror and pressed his forehead against the glass. A moment later, one of his hands slid down into his pajamas. It was like some small creature was trying to escape from his throat. His hand moved fast. His body jiggled. He kept his forehead against the mirror and his eyes closed. Then he grunted once and seemed to shudder all over."

"That is a passage from page 67 of this book, which has dozens of such scenes throughout it. This book is derogatory and it is extremely racist toward white people, with tons of inappropriate racial commentary. Not only is there all kinds of unnecessary sex in this book, there are several scenes of assault and brutal violence. It's disgusting and no one under the age of 18 should have access to this. I cannot believe it was published. Do you know how many times the N word is used? No less than 12 times!"





REFLECTION: ROSE, BUD & THORN ACTIVITY

If this is the only session of the day, attendees will wrap things up with a short journaling prompt. If this session is one of several on the same day, this next activity can be saved for the final session of the day.



The Rose

Describe what went well.
This can be anything from "met nice people" to "felt confident talking in a group activity." It's the positive takeaway from the session.



The Bud

Potential and/ or takeaways that excite the attendee and/ or what they want to learn or engage with more. It is something to look forward to, including attending more sessions, visiting their local library, and requesting a book, etc.



The Thorn

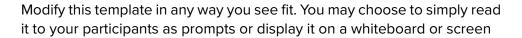
Describe anything that felt challenging or frustrating during the session. This can range from "felt like I knew no one here" to "I didn't have an answer to one of the journaling questions" to "I had no idea this many books were being banned." The Thorn can also be used to consider areas of personal improvement. A participant may consider it a Thorn that they did not engage in a group discussion, and want to in future sessions.



Rose, Thorn, & Bud Template

allows attendees to consider what they have learned in three different ways.

Find in the appendix or download at **BooksUnbanned** .com/toolkit.





DISMISSAL

Right before you dismiss attendees don't forget to thank them for their participation and remind them to leave their question or comment in the box on their way out. Encourage them to bring anything they are curious about to the next session, too.

UNIT 3, SESSION 3

Who Can I Turn To and How Do I Speak Up?

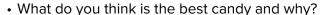
Where the first and second session of this unit focus on building skills and providing data and talking points to young people, the third session encourages teens to begin thinking about whom in their community they can turn to. This is a session about community building, as well as a session on practicing and developing speaking skills. Through two group activities, a lesson on effective communication, and a discussion, teens will feel empowered to talk with peers, community members, and folks with authority whose decisions impact young people.

Materials needed	Time
Folder with journal and pen	1 hour, with
Small box with index cards for questions	the ability to go longer.
Fidget toys, pipe cleaners, LEGOS, and/or other small objects teens can use for fidgeting/self-soothing/focus	
Show Up, Stand Up, Speak Up Canvas for each attendee	

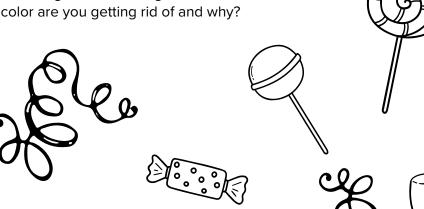


SESSION ICEBREAKER

In this session, one of the Group Activities involves defending one's opinions and thoughts. Choose one of the following for an icebreaker so attendees can practice this skill in a low-stakes way:



- You are in charge of adding a new marshmallow shape to Lucky Charms cereal. What shape is it and why?
- Who is the best cartoon character and why?
- What season of the year is the best one and why?
- You are in charge of eliminating one color Skittle.
 Which color are you getting rid of and why?





Use your own icebreaker questions or one from our list found in the appendix.



GROUP ACTIVITY: WHO CAN I TURN TO?

Part I

Students will break into groups of 2–4; they will remain in these groups for the entire session. In each group, one person will record the group responses to the questions and a second person will write down any questions and/or research queries that happened when responding. Groups are encouraged to use the technology they have available to them (i.e., cell phones and/or laptops). They will engage with the following scenario.

Scenario

The local public has seen several people showing up at the last 2 or 3 board meetings demanding that the following books be banned: *All Boys All Boys Aren't Blue* by George M. Johnson, *It's Perfectly Normal* by Robie Harris, and *Crank* by Ellen Hopkins. You learned this because you were at the library and overheard some of the library staff talking about being worried those people might show up at any time and complain.



Participants will use the "Who can I turn to worksheet to answer the following questions.

- 1. Who can you turn to in your community to talk about potential book bans in the library? Consider starting at home, then expanding to other places in your community where you are regularly, such as your school, library or a local club. Then consider who else in your community represents you and your interests, such as people who are on local boards or in city hall or local newspapers/bloggers/influencers/ etc. Who else would care or should care?
- 2. Who can you turn to outside your immediate community to talk about potential book bans in the library? In other words, who represents you in your county or state? What about at the federal level? [Recognizing that these specific answers might be different for each student, encourage them to jot down how they would find their specific representatives in their State and US House and Senate].
- 3. What actions would you take to better understand why people in your community are seeking to get rid of books at the public library? Come up with 3–4 actions you would do as a group. If, for example, your plan includes addressing the people mentioned in the answers to questions 1 and 2, explain how you would approach them and what you might say to them.

WRAP UP

Once each group wraps up the first part of the activity, open up discussion to the larger group with the following questions:

- Were you familiar with the books in the scenario? Did you need to learn about them before you began to get to work as a group? What did you discover about the books? Why are they frequently targeted for banning?
- How did your knowledge of libraries and intellectual freedom and the First Amendment help you?
- Where did you feel like you were able to make the most impact in this activity? In other words, what skills or strengths did you have that were helpful?
- Where did you feel the least empowered in this activity or feel like you were either not allowed to do something and/or did not have the skills or knowledge to do something? What would help change that?
- What did you learn about when it comes to who you can turn to in your community? How hard or easy was it to find information about the people who represent you? Did you learn or discover anything about those individuals who encouraged you or discouraged you?
- What questions, challenges, or concerns came up that you want to share?

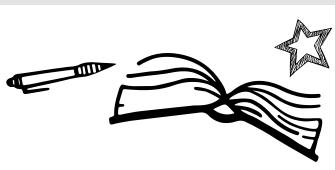


GROUP LEARNING: HOW TO TALK ABOUT THINGS YOU CARE ABOUT

This very brief lesson will offer tips and tricks for building confidence in speaking. It is especially aimed at helping young people when talking to elders who have more power socially and culturally than they do.



One of the slides includes a screen grab and link to a Tedx talk that runs about 19 minutes long. You can show the entire thing to students, as it is relevant, engaging, and powerful, but if time is a concern, you can begin the video at 11:40, which is when the speaker dives into the framework outlined on the slide.





Slide deck:

How to Talk About
Things You Care About

The Show Up, Stand
Up, Speak Up Canvas
is available at the end
of the session or at
BooksUnbanned
.com/toolkit





GROUP ACTIVITY: WHO CAN I TURN TO?

Part II

Following the lesson, give students the opportunity to look over the Show Up, Stand Up, Speak Up Canvas for a few moments.

Now, the small groups will develop a short 2–3 minute talk that they would give at the public library board meeting using the template or creating your own. The group can decide once they finish writing their short talk whether they will deliver it collectively or have one person represent their group and share it.

Every group will present their short talk when finished. If you like, provide a mechanism for others to offer feedback or insight like index cards.

Wrap Up

Once all of the groups have presented their short talk, bring the conversation back to the full group with the following questions:

- What was the hardest part of this activity? Which part did you enjoy the most?
- What did you like about the template for writing your group's talk?
 What didn't you like about it? Are there things you might change or modify?
- What did you notice about your group's talk compared to what other groups came up with?
- In this activity, where did you see the ideas of advocacy, ambassadorship, activism, and civic engagement show up? (Feel free to write these down on a white board or giant sticky note for a visual).
- Where else can you see the Show Up, Stand Up, Speak Up Canvas being useful?





JOURNAL

The last several sessions have involved a lot of group activities, as well as a lot of information. The journal prompts here will provide the opportunity for students to reflect on these experiences and lessons; if the discussion from the activity is robust, feel free to spend less time on this portion.

PROMPTS

- 1. Your answer to what you would do in this scenario was based on working together as a group. Were there steps you personally wish you could have taken that the group did not? What were they?
- 2. What might your talking points differ if you were to approach the library board by yourself?
- 3. Where did you personally feel like you would be most comfortable and skilled when it comes to the activity? Where did you feel least comfortable? Why?
- 4. Thinking more broadly about all of the activities so far, where did you feel yourself to be most comfortable in terms of skills and talents? For example, did you feel comfortable as a group spokesperson? As a notetaker? As an idea generator? As someone who likes to listen to other people talk before offering your own thoughts?
- 5. Conversely, where did you feel least comfortable? Were there things you wish you could get better at? Note: you never have to want to be great at everything--if you want to strengthen your public speaking skills, that's not the same as saying you want to become a spokesperson.





REFLECTION: ROSE, BUD & THORN ACTIVITY

If this is the only session of the day, attendees will wrap things up with a short journaling prompt. If this session is one of several on the same day, this next activity can be saved for the final session of the day.



The Rose

Describe what went well.
This can be anything from "met nice people" to "felt confident talking in a group activity." It's the positive takeaway from the session.



The Bud

Potential and/ or takeaways that excite the attendee and/ or what they want to learn or engage with more. It is something to look forward to, including attending more sessions, visiting their local library, and requesting a book, etc.



The Thorn

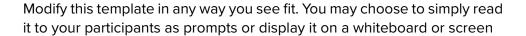
Describe anything that felt challenging or frustrating during the session. This can range from "felt like I knew no one here" to "I didn't have an answer to one of the journaling questions" to "I had no idea this many books were being banned." The Thorn can also be used to consider areas of personal improvement. A participant may consider it a Thorn that they did not engage in a group discussion, and want to in future sessions.



Rose, Thorn, & Bud Template

allows attendees to consider what they have learned in three different ways.

Find in the appendix or download at **BooksUnbanned** .com/toolkit.





DISMISSAL

Right before you dismiss attendees don't forget to thank them for their participation and remind them to leave their question or comment in the box on their way out. Encourage them to bring anything they are curious about to the next session, too.



UNIT 3, SESSION 4

Finding Your Leadership Superpowers and Practicing Self-Care

This session introduces teens to the Social Change Ecosystem Map developed by Deepa Iyer. It is intended to encourage teens to think of being a leader and ambassador through a wide range of skills and talents they already have within them. It may instill confidence, even if they do not think of themselves as organizers or outspoken activists.

The second part of this session will dive into the importance of self-care. The buzzy concept can too easily be dismissed as looking or feeling one way; the session will encourage teens to think about what a self-care routine or practice would look like for them, especially as it relates to keeping their cups filled in sometimes-draining advocacy work. Teens will walk away with several tools for their self-care toolkit.

Materials needed	Time
Folder with journal and penSmall box with index for questions	1 hour, with the ability to go longer.
 Fidget toys, pipe cleaners, LEGOS, and/or other small objects teens can use for fidgeting/self-soothing/focus 	longer.
Social Change Ecosystem Map for each attendee	



SESSION ICEBREAKER

Choose an icebreaker question and allow each student to share their response with the group. In early sessions of the program, the facilitator will call on students. As students become more comfortable with one another, they can call on one another after answering the question themselves.

The goal in the icebreaker is to get teens talking. It's an opportunity for every person in the room to have their voice heard, even if they are nervous or shy. This is especially powerful in situations where they may not speak up in future group discussions. Their voices were still in the room that day.



Use your own icebreaker questions or one from our list found in the appendix.



ACTIVITY: DEEPA IYER'S SOCIAL CHANGE ECOSYSTEM INVENTORY

Attendees will use a framework developed by Deepa Iyer called the Social Change Ecosystem Map (copyright 2017) to recognize their own roles in taking steps to improve their communities, including addressing book bans. Students will have a chance to understand the Social Change Ecosystem Map and identify their own core values and roles.



NOTE TO FACILITATORS

This session should take about an hour. Feel free to add more prompts that are applicable to the issues being discussed by attendees. For more information, please visit **socialchangemap.com**. Iyer's workbook, *Social Change Now: A Guide for Reflection and Connection* provides a primer on the social change ecosystem framework.

Materials Needed

- Copies of Social Change Ecosystem Map and also at socialchangemap.com
- Copies of worksheet
- Small dot stickers or markers for mapping

Step 1. Review and understand the Social Change Ecosystem Map.

What is it? The Social Change Ecosystem Map, developed by Deepa lyer, is a tool to understand the various roles that individuals and institutions can play in order to bring about social change in our communities.

What are the framework's three components?

- 1. Values (indicated in the circle in the middle)
- 2. Roles (ten ways in which we show up)
- 3. A collaborative ecosystem (an approach by which we rely on each other and work in solidarity).

Reflect on how different movements use an ecosystem approach. Many advocates of social justice movements play different roles to reach their aims. For example, think about the civil rights movement of the 1960s. Dr. Martin Luther King played the role of the visionary; students played the role of disrupters by taking actions to desegregate buses, schools, and restaurants; and groups like the NAACP and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee took on the role of builders to organize programs for community members.

Review the descriptions of the 10 roles. As we review the characteristics of each role, we should think about how we often show up, or how we aspire to show up. Reflect on how others in our communities may play these roles.

Step 2: Complete the activity using the worksheets

Wrap Up

Once students have done the inventory and had the opportunity to think about it, bring the conversation back to the entire group with the following questions. As always, students are encouraged to write down their own thoughts during the discussion in their journals.

- What did you learn about your style/role amidst change? Do you think you fall into more than one category and if so, what and why?
- Thinking about the activities we've done so far in today's unit and in previous units, where do you see yourself playing your role? Did you see yourself playing any other roles? Perhaps someone in a group stands out as a specific role you'd like to note here, too.
- Where or how does this kind of inventory help you understand social change, advocacy, and being an ambassador? Do you think this will help in understanding the roles other people play in change?



GROUP LEARNING: OTHER FRAMEWORKS FOR LEADERSHIP

This lesson is image-heavy and intended to provide students the opportunity to learn about several types of leadership styles. They will consider how each style applies to them and how to work with people whose styles differ from theirs. The lesson ends with a short discussion about the importance of emotional intelligence, which serves as an introduction to the self-care lesson to come next.



Slide deck:

<u>Frameworks</u>

for Leadership

Download at

BooksUnbanned
.com/toolkit





GROUP LEARNING: WHY SELF CARE IS CRUCIAL

Before presenting the slide deck, print the following pieces from *Teen Vogue* and from The Center for Community Solutions and share with attendees. The *Teen Vogue* piece is a short history of self-care as it originated in Black activist circles; the Center for Community Solutions piece adds more depth and context to the *Teen Vogue* piece while also emphasizing that self-care is rooted in Black activism.



Slide deck:
Why Self-Care
Is Crucial

Ask students to read the pieces and think about them as you move through the slide deck. There will be several opportunities throughout the deck to discuss them. Where it feels natural, pause and encourage students to share their thoughts about where and how the things they read fit into what they're thinking and learning in the decks.

- The Radical History of Self-Care by Lenora E. Houseworth from Teen Vogue, January 2021
- Origins of Self-Care and Why Activists and Advocates Need to <u>Practice It</u> by Natasha Takyi-Micah from The Center for Community Solutions, April 2023

Wrap Up

Once each group wraps up the first part of the activity, open up discussion to the larger group with the following questions:

- Did your idea of self-care change after reading these articles?
 Why or why not?
- What did you learn from one or both of these articles that you did not know before?
- Did your perception of well-known activists shift or change knowing how important self-care was to their work?
- How do you think that some of the biggest self-care advocates
 would perceive what "self-care" looks like or is presented in popular
 culture today? (Note this is a great opportunity to talk about consumerism and self-care and thus, may be a better discussion question to
 pull out while presenting the slide deck).

The slide deck reviews what self-care is and why it is so important to incorporate it into everyday life. There are discussion questions throughout, including an opportunity for students to brainstorm different types of self-care. There is a corresponding Self-Care Toolkit worksheet for participants to fill out. There are also short discussions of things like breath work and physical movement that anyone can teach and practice. Because of how individualized and unique self-care can be, feel free to include anything else in this deck or conversation that feels appropriate.





REFLECTION: ROSE, BUD & THORN ACTIVITY

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The Rose

Describe what went well.
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Potential and/ or takeaways that excite the attendee and/ or what they want to learn or engage with more. It is something to look forward to, including attending more sessions, visiting their local library, and requesting a book, etc.



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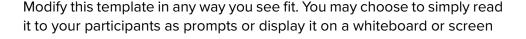
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Rose, Thorn, & Bud Template

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RESOURCES



Listening Skills

How to Be a Better Listener by Sunny Sea Gold at Scientific American

<u>What Great Listeners Actually Do</u> by Jack Zenger and Joseph Folkman in the *Harvard Business Review*

You're Not Listening: What You're Missing and Why It Matters by Kate Murphy (book)

Argumentation, Debate, and Speaking Skills

Argumentation: The Basics from University of Pittsburgh

A History of FLICC: The Five Techniques of Science Denial by John Cook

How to Show Up without Starting a Show Down by the News Literacy Project

Mental Health and Self-Care

"2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey Results" from the CDC

"The Black Panther Party and the Radical History of Self-Care" by Hope Talbot for The Bristorian

"The Fundamentals of Self-Care When You're Young, Black & Woke" by Kiarra Sylvester for xoNecole

"Generation Z and Mental Health" by Annie E. Casey Foundation

"On the Cusp of Adulthood and Facing an Uncertain Future: What We Know About Gen Z So Far" from PEW Research Center (2020 data)

"Parents Worry About Growing Post-pandemic Youth Mental Health Crisis" by Chia-Yi Hou for *The Hill*

"Reclaiming Audre Lorde's Radical Self-Care" by Kathleen Newman-Bremang for Refinery29

"The State of Mental Health in America" from Mental Health America (updated annually and includes a specific section about youth mental health)

"US Teen Demographic Information" from ACT for Youth

"Why Acknowledging and Celebrating the Black Feminist Origins of 'Self-care' is Essential" by Bryony Porteous-Sebouhian for *Mental Health Today*

Activism and Advocacy Against Book Bans

"<u>97</u>" – The Fight for the Freedom to Read Event from EveryLibrary (Video)

"Cobb Students: Our Voices Matter. We Should Be Heard by Our School Board" from the *Atlanta Journal Constitution* (Note: this may be paywalled)

"How to Fight Book Bans in 2024" by Kelly Jensen for Book Riot

"<u>Parental Perceptions of Libraries Survey</u>" from EveryLibrary and Book Riot PEN America's Book Ban Archive

Trouble in Censorville Video Testimonials

"The Top 10 Most Challenged Books Archive" from the American Library Association

"<u>Visibility Matters</u>: Maia Kobabe Responds to Book Banning" by Maia Kobabe at Prism Comics



Utilize these resources for your own knowledge or as supplemental activities.

All links can also be found at **BooksUnbanned** .com/toolkit



GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- **1.** Do you put toothpaste on your toothbrush first then put water on top or do you wet the brush first?
- 2. Do you put cereal in your bowl then add milk or do you put the milk in first, then add cereal?
- 3. What is your most silly unpopular opinion?
- **4.** What do you think is the worst snack or worst candy?
- **5.** What fandom is the most cringe?
- 6. If you had to get rid of one color, what color would it be and why?
- **7.** What age do you consider to be "old?"



What inspires or influences you to do something?
What are some of your strongest held beliefs? In other words, what are non-negotiable beliefs for you? Name 2–3 and what led you to holding those beliefs.
Name a time you've had to stand up for the beliefs you listed above.
What was happening? What kind of response did you give? What support did you give in favor of your beliefs? How did you respond to those who disagreed? How did that disagreement make you feel?
What did you do to take care of yourself after having a disagreement with someone?

Materials

Provide printed copies of scenario and roles to students

Set Up

- Break students up into groups of 3 or 4.
 - If groups are of three, each person will take turns playing a role. If in groups of four, three students will role play with the fourth observing and/or taking notes on what they are seeing, hearing, and observing. Each student will play each role once.
- Optional:
 - Have a copy of the book discussed in the scenario out for each group to look through before getting into role playing.
 - Have a set of props or costumes available for participants to help them get into their character

Students will be going into this scenario with some skills from prior Units, as well as from their own experiences. But it is expected they will not have the tools or skills they wish they did. That is part of the experience and those things will serve as springboards for the rest of the program. Emphasize, too, that they may disagree with the perspective of one or more of the roles they play. That is expected. The purpose is to practice explaining points of view and arguments, as well as to build empathy with each of the roles.

Students will work through the following questions from the perspective of the role they are playing. It is likely there will be disagreements or questions the groups find themselves asking along the way. That is purposeful—encourage them to write those questions or thoughts down for the follow up discussion with the whole group. Examples of those questions might include whether or not the comics section of the library has teen comics in it or if those are only in the teen area; whether or not this parent has complained about books previously; about whether or not the teen has been to the library before or is well-known to the librarian; what are the library's collection policies and challenge policies (that one is a reminder how much they really have learned already in the program!); and so forth.

Scenario

A parent finds a copy of the book Gender Queer on display in the comics area of the public library, which is next to the teen area. The parent tells the librarian working at the nearby desk they are uncomfortable with that book being so close to the teen section. They do not believe it is appropriate for anyone under the age of 18 and should be removed from the library.

Roles

- The Parent who found the book
- The Teenage child of the Parent who found the book but who is NOT present
- The Librarian who receives the complaint

A parent finds a copy of the book Gender Queer on display in the comics area of the public library, which is next to the teen area. The parent tells the librarian working at the nearby desk they are uncomfortable with that book being so close to the teen section. They do not believe it is appropriate for anyone under the age of 18 and should be removed from the library.

Questions for the Parent Role

- What values or beliefs do you hold when it comes to your responsibility as a parent to your own child?
- What is your argument for removing the book from the public library?
- How do you imagine you would feel if you learned your teen had read the book?
 What conversation might you have with them about it?

Questions for Discussion after Roleplay

- What were the most compelling arguments for removing the book from the library in your groups? What were the least compelling?
- Was it harder to be a listener in one of these roles than in another one? For example, did you find it hard to listen to the parent's reasons for wanting a book removed if you were their child or the librarian? Did you find it hard to listen to the librarian's response when playing the role of parent? What made it hard?
- Which role was most challenging to play? Which was the easiest?
- Did anything in this scenario surprise you?

A parent finds a copy of the book Gender Queer on display in the comics area of the public library, which is next to the teen area. The parent tells the librarian working at the nearby desk they are uncomfortable with that book being so close to the teen section. They do not believe it is appropriate for anyone under the age of 18 and should be removed from the library.

Questions for the Teen Role

- If you read a book that made you uncomfortable, what would you do?
- How would you navigate disagreeing with the values and beliefs of your parent in this situation? What kind of conversation would you have with them and who might you turn to for help?
- Imagine you have a younger sibling who picked up Gender Queer. How would that make you feel and how would you/wouldn't you bring this up with your parent? With that sibling?

Questions for Discussion after Roleplay

- What were the most compelling arguments for removing the book from the library in your groups? What were the least compelling?
- Was it harder to be a listener in one of these roles than in another one? For
 example, did you find it hard to listen to the parent's reasons for wanting a book
 removed if you were their child or the librarian? Did you find it hard to listen to the
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Questions for the Teen Role

•	How would	you respon	id to t	the	parent	in t	this	situation	?
---	-----------	------------	---------	-----	--------	------	------	-----------	---

• What reasons would you give for having and keeping Gender Queer in the comics section of your library?

 Would your response in this situation be the same or different if it was the teenager who wanted the have the book removed, rather than the parent?

Questions for Discussion after Roleplay

- What were the most compelling arguments for removing the book from the library in your groups? What were the least compelling?
- Was it harder to be a listener in one of these roles than in another one? For example, did you find it hard to listen to the parent's reasons for wanting a book removed if you were their child or the librarian? Did you find it hard to listen to the librarian's response when playing the role of parent? What made it hard?
- Which role was most challenging to play? Which was the easiest?
- Did anything in this scenario surprise you?



1.	What is the purpose of reading? Why do we need to read? Why do we want to read?
2.	What makes you stop reading a book? If you'd like, would you share a book title you stopped reading and why?
3.	Who has the right to decide what someone else can or cannot read?
4.	What do you think about adults who want to decide which books children and teens have access to?



1.	What are the biggest challenges faced by you and your peers?
2.	What are the issues that are important to you?
3.	What issues do you think are important to your peers?
4.	What big questions do you have about the future?
5.	How do you feel about your future?

Read the script as if you are someone who wants this book to be banned. Add or edit it as you see fit. Once finished work to craft a response to this objection. Use the data and information you have learned or outside resources to craft your argument for why the book should stay on the shelves.

Book: The Hate U Give by Angle Thomas

"The Hate U Give is inappropriate for the young adult shelves at the public library. The book has a lot of explicit language, and it has a very clear anti-police sentiment. It is also racist against white people because it depicts them as hateful against Black people. The message it sends will hurt a lot of feelings."

Book: All Boys Aren't Blue by George M. Johnson

"All Boys Aren't Blue is completely inappropriate for teens in the library. It is full of sexually explicit passages, and the language throughout is not what anyone, let alone minors, should be hearing. The main character is way too worried about sex and with gender. No one should be having sex or thinking about sex this when they're young and the parts about gender are part of the movement to indoctrinate and confuse young people about the difference between boys and girls. "

Book: Let's Talk About It: The Teen's Guide to Sex, Relationships, and Being Human by Erika Moen and Matthew Nolan

"This book is inappropriate for anyone under the age of 18 to pick up. It is filled with pornographic images of young people having sex, and it has all kinds of explicit photos of naked bodies. There's even a whole section about how to find pornography on the internet. It blames white people for teens who have body image, and it advertises the idea that there are more than two genders. It's absolute filth and does not belong in any library. It shouldn't have been published at all. "

Book: Sold by Patricia McCormick

"This book should not be in the library because it is a story of a girl sold into the sex slave trade and it is full of aberrent sexual content, including rape and prostitution. There is so much violence in this story that it is sickening that someone would write, let alone publish, such a book. Here are two passages you need to know are in this book. From page 107:

"This Shahanna leans close and whispers to me, "It will go easier on you if you hold still."

There is a slicing sound, and a clump of my hair falls to the floor. I cry out and try to break free, but Shahanna has hold of me. Mumtaz draws back, the jaw of the scissors poised at my neck.

"Hold still," she says, her teeth clenched. "Or I'll slice your throat."

From page 132:

"One afternoon, Mumtaz comes to the door and tells me to gather up my things.

"Now that you are no longer a virgin," she says, "I cannot fetch a good price for you."

That doesn't even begin to get into how depressing this book is! What teenager would want to read a story that is so upsetting? "

Book: Heart of Darkness by Ashley Hope Perez

"She was there when Henry came into the bathroom and closed the door behind him. She watched as he placed both hands on the wall beneath the mirror and pressed his forehead against the glass. A moment later, one of his hands slid down into his pajamas. It was like some small creature was trying to escape from his throat. His hand moved fast. His body jiggled. He kept his forehead against the mirror and his eyes closed. Then he grunted once and seemed to shudder all over."

That is a passage from page 67 of this book, which has dozens of such scenes throughout it. This book is derogatory and it is extremely racist toward white people, with tons of inappropriate racial commentary. Not only is there all kinds of unnecessary sex in this book, there are several scenes of assault and brutal violence. It's disgusting and no one under the age of 18 should have access to this. I cannot believe it was published. Do you know how many times the N word is used? No less than 12 times!

Book: The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas

Response:	
Book: All Boys Aren't Blue by George M. Johnson	
Response:	
Book: Let's Talk About It: The Teen's Guide to Sex, Relationships, and Being by Erika Moen and Matthew Nolan	ı Human
Response:	



Book: Sold by Patricia McCormick

Response:

Book: Heart of Darkness

Response:

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. Do you put toothpaste on your toothbrush first then put water on top or do you wet the brush first?
- 2. Do you put cereal in your bowl then add milk or do you put the milk in first, then add cereal?
- **3.** What is your most silly unpopular opinion?
- **4.** What do you think is the worst snack or worst candy?
- 5. What fandom is the most cringe?
- 6. If you had to get rid of one color, what color would it be and why?
- **7.** What age do you consider to be "old?"

1.	Your answer to what you would do in this scenario was based on working together as a group. Were there steps you personally wish you could have taken that the group did not? What were they?
2.	How might your talking points differ if you approached the library board by yourself?
3.	Where did you personally feel like you would be most comfortable and skilled when it comes to the activity? Where did you feel least comfortable? Why?
4.	Thinking more broadly about all of the activities so far, where did you feel yourself to be most comfortable in terms of skills and talents? For example, did you feel comfortable as a group spokesperson? As a notetaker? As an idea generator? As someone who likes to listen to other people talk before offering your own thoughts?
5.	Conversely, where did you feel least comfortable? Were there things you wish you could get better at? Note: you never have to want to be great at everythingif you want to strengthen your public speaking skills, that's not the same as saying you want to become a spokesperson.

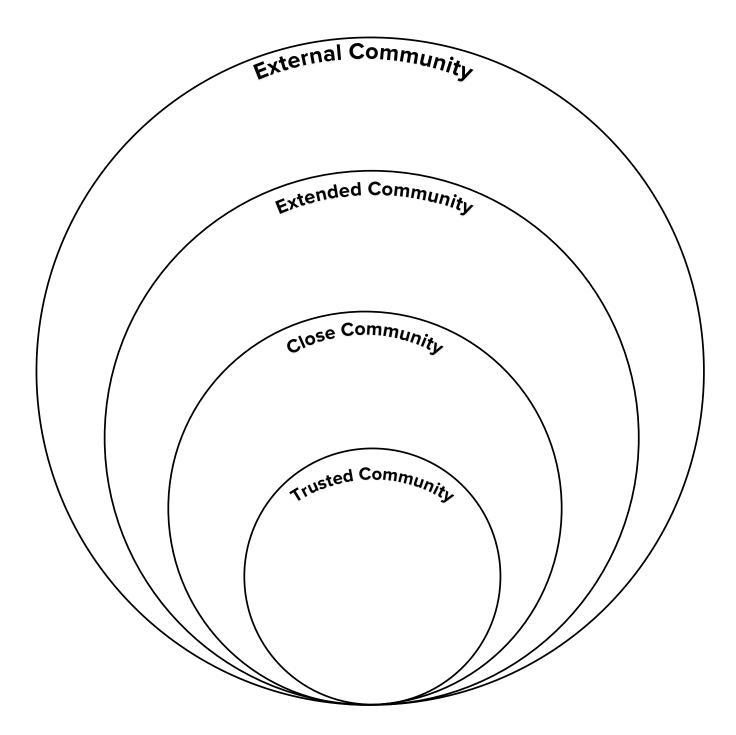


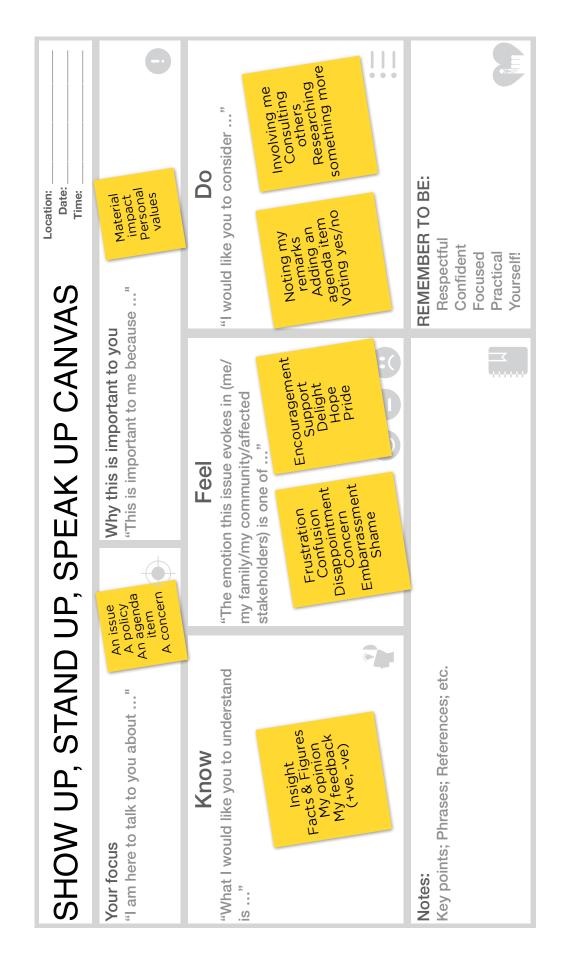
The local public has seen several people showing up at the last 2 or 3 board meetings demanding that the following books be banned: All Boys Aren't Blue by George M. Johnson, It's Perfectly Normal by Robie Harris, and Crank by Ellen Hopkins. You learned this because you were at the library and overheard some of the library staff talking about being worried those people might show up at any time and complain.

Activity Use the worksheet to answer the following questions.

- 1. Who can you turn to in your trusted community to talk about potential book bans in the library? Your close community can be your friends, family members, and anyone else you trust.
- 2. Next expand to your close community. Consider the places you are regularly, such as your school, library or a local club. Who there do you connect with?
- 3. Then consider who else in your extended community represents you and your interests, such as people who are on local boards, in city hall or local journalists, bloggers, or influencers. What about local clubs, organizations or groups? Who else would care or should care?
- **4.** Who can you turn to in your expanded community to talk about potential book bans in the library? In other words, who represents you in your county or state? What about at the federal level? Who outside of your immediate community can you reach out to who has interest and influence. you might say to them.
- 5. What actions would you take to better understand why people in your community are seeking to get rid of books at the public library? Come up with 3–4 actions you would do as a group. If, for example, your plan includes addressing the people mentioned in the answers to questions 1 and 2, explain how you would approach them and what you might say to them.







"I would like you to consider ..." Do REMEMBER TO BE: Date: Time: Location: Respectful Confident Focused **Practical** Yourself! SHOW UP, STAND UP, SPEAK UP CANVAS "This is important to me because ... Why this is important to you "The emotion this issue evokes in (me/ my family/my community/affected stakeholders) is one of ..." Fee Key points; Phrases; References; etc. "What I would like you to understand "I am here to talk to you about ..." Know Your focus Notes:



What can you do to give yourself a break? In each box write something you can do to care for yourself when you are feeling stressed or disconnected from yourself. Self-care can be physical like taking a walk or gardening, personal like journaling or reading, spiritual like spending time in nature, or something community based like seeing a movie, with friends or spending time with family.

"Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare." -- Audre Lorde

The Social Change Ecosystem Map, developed by Deepa Iyer, is a tool to understand the various roles that individuals and institutions can play in order to bring about social change in our communities.

The information below should be used only for purposes related to the Freedom to Read Teen Advocacy Toolkit. For more information about the social change ecosystem framework, please visit www.socialchangemap.com.

The framework's three components are:

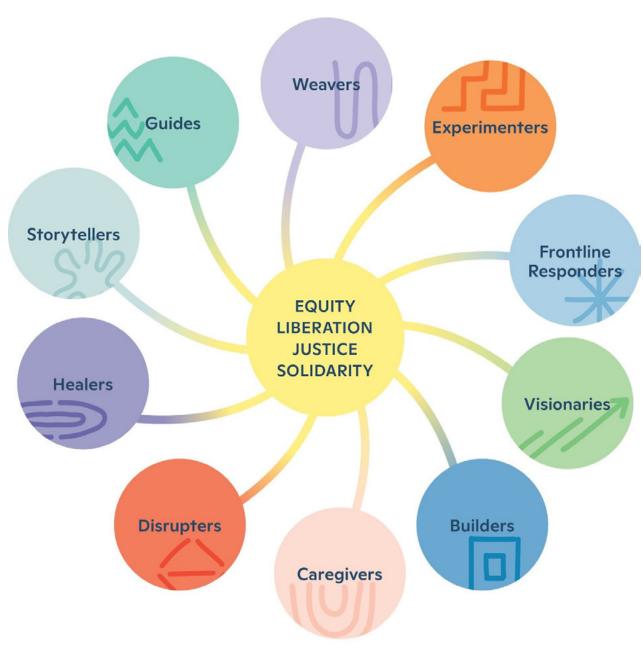
Values: Indicated in the yellow circle in the middle

Roles: The ten ways in which we show up

Collaborative Ecosystem: An approach by which we rely on each other and work in solidarity

Description of Roles

- Builders develop, organize, and implement ideas, practices, people, and resources in service of a collective vision.
- Weavers see the through-lines of connectivity between people, places, organizations, ideas, and movements.
- Caregivers nurture and nourish the people around us by creating and sustaining a community of care, joy, and connection.
- Storytellers craft and share our community stories, cultures, experiences, histories, and possibilities through art, music, media, and movement.
- Disrupters take uncomfortable and risky actions to shake up the status quo, to raise awareness, and to build power.
- Visionaries imagine and generate our boldest possibilities, hopes and dreams, and remind others of our direction.
- Frontline responders address community crises by marshaling and organizing resources, networks, and messages.
- Healers recognize and tend to the generational and current traumas caused by oppressive systems, institutions, policies, and practices.
- Experimenters innovate, pioneer, and invent, taking risks and course-correcting as needed.
- Guides teach, counsel, and advise, using gifts of well-earned discernment and wisdom.



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Reflection Questions

Use the space below to reflect on the questions asked and then complete the steps

Values

What values are important to you? When you consider book bans, what values do you want to advocate for?

Step 1: Place your personal values in the middle circle of the map.

Roles

What are your innate gifts, skills and strengths? How do you often play these roles? If you aren't sure, then identify the roles that you aspire to play. Reflect on why you are drawn to these roles.

Step 2: Mark your roles by putting your name in those circles.

Apply

Consider the issue of book banning. What are the top 2 roles that you can play to address this issue? How would you play these roles? What information and support to do you need to engage in these roles?

Step 3: Use stickers or draw a symbol on the two roles that you can play when it comes to fighting back against book bans.



Copyright Deepa Iyer SM, © 2017 Deepa Iyer All rights reserved. All prior licenses revoked. **Step 4:** Turn to a peer or discuss as a group your maps.

- What roles are coming up as the most common ones?
- What roles are not mentioned at all?
- How can the roles be supported? (For example, disrupters often need the support
 of caregivers, and visionaries often need the organizing skills of builders and the
 innovative ideas of experimenters)

Step 5: Write 3 action steps that you can take over the coming weeks that are aligned with your values, embody your roles, and support your ecosystem in the fight against book bans.

1	
2.	
_	
3.	



Pulling All the Pieces Together

PURPOSE

Attendees will continue to build upon the skills in the first three units of the program, with a particular focus on how to be an advocate for the library beyond book bans, as well as how to be an advocate for other areas of personal interest. Students will practice these skills with a scenario related to the freedom to read.

Additionally, attendees will develop their own personal advocacy and self-care toolkits.

OBJECTIVES

- 1. Attendees will apply all the "hard" and "soft" skills acquired in the program through a group book banning role play scenario.
- 2. Attendees will consider what they care about and what aligns with their values. This will allow them to figure out what kind of advocacy they are interested in. It will also allow them to see where their skills can contribute to a greater whole.
- 3. Attendees will practice self-reflection skills through the creation of an advocacy toolkit and a self-care toolkit.
- 4. To celebrate the program's conclusion and wrap up, students will participate in activities to reinforce the concept of community.

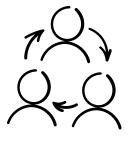
OUTCOME

Students will leave with an advocacy road map and tool kit, as well as a self-care plan, to support them in their anti-book ban work or any other advocacy work that lights them up. They will feel prepared to hold conversations and show up in support of the freedom to read in their own community in whatever way aligns most with their skills, leadership style, and values.

NOTE TO FACILITATORS



Each of the four sessions is one hour long but can be expanded. For example, you may wish to make session two 90 minutes or longer to go deeper in discussion of topics. You are also welcome to mix and match pieces of the sessions as appropriate for your group. For example, you might wish to skip one activity and instead, incorporate something from the resource guide at the end of this section. The curriculum is adaptable to your needs. Unit four has allocated time to address topics of interest to your attendees. The final celebration in session four is entirely adaptable to the resources and interests of your attendees, though several ideas are presented as options.



UNIT 4, SESSION 1

Democracy and Advocacy in Action

The first session in unit four continues to build upon the work done in the prior units. There will be time built into this session for students to reflect upon what they've learned and for facilitators to answer questions and share feedback that they have received throughout the program so far. This will allow time to tailor parts of the next sessions to accommodate those interests as best as possible.

Students will begin to think about the ways advocacy applies to the library, or to other spaces and topics they are passionate about.

Materials needed	Time
Folder with journal and pensmall box with index cards for questions	1 hour, with the ability to go
 fidget toys, pipe cleaners, LEGOS, and/or other small objects teens can use for fidgeting/self-soothing/focus; 	longer.
small and large sticky notes	



SESSION ICEBREAKER

Choose an ice breaker question and have every student share their response with the group.

Because this is the beginning of a whole new unit, you may find it worthwhile to also ask students the following questions as part of welcoming them back:

- What questions or thoughts do you have from the previous unit?
- What is one thing that stood out to you from the previous unit?
- What is something from the previous unit that made you eager to learn more?



Use your own icebreaker questions or one from our list found in the appendix.



GROUP DISCUSSION

Use the beginning of this session to both ask students what questions they have that they would like to talk about from the program so far and to address the questions and comments left in the box following each session so far. Facilitators will have already gone through them to compile them and will address the ones they can, while noting any questions or comments that apply to the sessions in this unit will be covered then.

Allow as much time here as feels appropriate. If there are not a lot of questions or comments, that is okay, too. Encourage students to write down some thoughts they have had so far, including any feelings that have come up, in their journals for five to ten minutes.



GROUP ACTIVITY: WHAT CAN YOU BE AN ADVOCATE FOR?

Part I

Break students into small groups and ask them to brainstorm examples of advocacy they have participated in, that they have seen peers engage with, and anything they have seen on social media or in the news. Topics don't matter. It can be environmental advocacy or anti-censorship advocacy or racial justice advocacy, and it can be something "smaller," such as asking a teacher to include more books/readings by women in their syllabus or ensuring there are free menstrual products in school bathrooms. The goal is to develop a big list of what advocacy looks like. Allow this brainstorm to be as expansive as possible.

Once groups finish the initial brainstorm, then each of the small groups will share their lists with the whole group. Facilitators will write the ideas down on a large sticky note or a whiteboard. There will be overlap, and that is okay. If it's a direct repeat, it does not need to be written down again. If it's a little bit different, feel free to include it on the big list.

When the final small group adds their ideas, allow the entire group to see if there are any other examples of advocacy they might want to add. After the big list is complete, ask students to turn back to their small groups.

LOOKING AT THE BIG LIST, EACH SMALL GROUP WILL SORT THE ACTS OF ADVOCACY INTO THREE CATEGORIES



They can physically write down the level of effort for each one or they can create a color system if that makes it easier (such as green for easy, blue for medium, yellow for hard). If new ideas of advocacy emerge during the conversations, they're welcome to be added!

Part II

After creating the three categories of advocacy, groups will answer the following questions among themselves. One person will record the answer to the first question from each group. The second question can be discussed or journaled about within the small group. For the journaling portion, encourage students to take a few moments to write down their thoughts, then share with the small group. It is possible, depending on the group's size and

how well each teen knows one another, those small groups could provide feedback on where else their strengths and skills may apply in the scenario.

Once the small groups have finished their conversation, the whole group will come back to answer them.

QUESTIONS

- What do you need to complete the advocacy in the low effort, medium effort, and large effort categories? Choose one idea from each category and consider
 - do you need to work with an adult (if so, who?)
 - do you need access to money (how might you acquire that?)
 - do you need to set up a social media account (who would be responsible for it/how would you determine how frequently you need to update it)
 - do you need to show up to a meeting (what would you need to prepare, if anything)
 - and list any other considerations that might be required to engage in the advocacy
- 2. The first question addresses the efforts of a group. Now, each student will think about this for themselves as an individual. Thinking about your own strengths and skill sets, what advocacy appeals to you on the lists? What is appealing to you about it? You can select specific tasks within a larger effort if you'd like, such as talking with a teacher at your school about an issue or setting up a meeting for a bigger project.



GROUP LEARNING: GETTING INVOLVED IN YOUR LOCAL PUBLIC LIBRARY

This lesson will cover both small and large ways students can engage with and advocate for the public library. As a facilitator, feel free to adapt this to include any additional or unique opportunities for teens within your own library in the lesson. If something in the deck is not applicable to your library, feel free to remove it or talk about how it is a possibility elsewhere—students may not know how different each public library is if they have only ever known one or two. The goal is to help teens consider possibilities that advocating for the freedom to read can look like (plus help build library advocates more broadly!).



Slide deck: Getting
Involved In Your
Local Public Library

Download at

BooksUnbanned
.com/toolkit







GROUP ACTIVITY: LIBRARY ADVOCACY IN ACTION

This activity is designed to be done either in small groups or as one large group, and it is meant to apply the brainstorming done in the prior group activity in this session. Choose what feels most appropriate for the students in attendance in terms of how they will work, be it in small groups or as a whole group. As facilitator, you are engaged in either setup, working as part of the team or teams to help bounce ideas or make suggestions. For example, if your teens suggest reaching out to local youth groups and telling them what's going on, you may want to ask them to get specific about what youth groups, how they would provide factual information about the situation, and how they would then help those groups in their own advocacy efforts in the future.

The scenario here is one that is open to modification. If your library has had an issue arise in the past that required advocacy work around it, feel free to substitute the below scenario for that. You can then talk about the experience, what worked or did not work, what the final resolution was, etc.

Read or distribute the following scenario to the group. Their job is to work together to develop a single advocacy campaign that will raise awareness of the issue. Emphasize that they are not responsible for everything; in other words, they will be doing *one* thing as a small or large group, to raise awareness about the issue, not *everything*.

Once the advocacy campaign is decided among each group, group members will outline how they would accomplish their campaign. The questions and considerations from the prior group activity are useful for creating this outline. More questions and considerations for students are included here as well.

The prior group lesson will likely inspire some answers and ideas as well.

Scenario

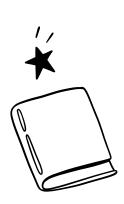
There is word that teen services at your local public library are going to be cut. This means there will be no librarian to run programs or do outreach to teens in town. The librarian who has been doing that job will still be employed, but the time she spent on teen-related services will be spent elsewhere.

The reason given for the elimination of teen services from the library administration is that teens are not coming in and using the dedicated teen space enough to justify keeping it. Program attendance for teens is low—the last teen program, a movie night with pizza, only had three people show up—and the number of teens who participate in the annual summer reading program has dropped every year for the last 10 years.





The information provided is light and does not explain much of the who, what, where, or when of the situation. That's purposeful. If you're asked questions as facilitator, some things you can share to give attendees more information:



- The administration did not make this decision. It came from the library board, but the administration has not said if they agree with the decision.
- Teen books would still be purchased for the library, though part of the materials budget could be shifted to another area of the library in the future. It is believed teens aren't reading as much as they used to, so that money might be better used to purchase more large print material.
- The information about this came from a flier in the teen services area that someone took a photo of with their phone and shared with their friends. The sign is still in the teen area and there is a link attached that asks for any feedback about the future of teen services. There has not been information posted elsewhere in the library, and it does not appear to be on the library's website or social media.
- There is no teen advisory board in the library, though prior to the current teen services librarian taking the job about 10 years ago, there was a very active group.
- Book challenges and other pushback to the library have not been an issue in this particular library.

Unless you are using a personal library experience in place of the above scenario, there is no population attached to this library. This bit of information can be determined based on the teens you yourself are working with. If they are mostly rural, then the library in the scenario might make sense to be a small-town library serving a few thousand people. If you are in a large suburb, consider making the library bigger, perhaps even with a branch library.

While it is likely at this point in the program teens will be bursting with ideas, here are some examples of advocacy campaigns teens could develop if they need inspiration or feel stuck:

- Host a teen services sit-in: every day for a week, groups of teens sit in the teen area of the library reading, playing board games, doing homework, or simply hanging out, for several hours after school.
- Letter writing campaign: teens will send letters to local officials in city council, to their library board, and to library administration about why the teen services area is so important to them. Thai campaign may involve writing letters to other youth advocacy organizations in the community to put what's happening on their radars, perhaps even inviting the group to reach out to the library about some kind of teen program they could run to bring more teens into the library.
- A new teen advisory board: propose the library develop a teen advisory board to help them create programming, drive interest in summer reading, and be library champions among their teen peers.







NOTE TO FACILITATORS

To help teens outline the advocacy program, some questions:

- 1. What tasks are necessary to run the advocacy campaign? Think about the big picture stuff here—when things will happen, who needs to be contacted, and things like where/how verification of information about the change to teen services will happen. Where and how would word be spread that the campaign was happening?
- 2. As in the session's previous Group Activity, encourage teens to consider labeling each of the tasks in the advocacy campaign as low, medium, and high effort. This can help see holes or overlaps in tasks.
- 3. Who in the group will (hypothetically) take on what tasks and why?
- 4. If there are tasks not assigned to a person, who will take them on? Are there skill sets or social connections that your group does not have but that the tasks would require? If so, how would you build those among your members? Where and who might you reach out to help you out?
- 5. Where and how will work on the advocacy program take place? Will teens do it online through a digital tool or have in-person meetings at school, a coffee shop, or even the library itself?
- After the advocacy campaign is complete, where and how will success be measured? Ask teens to consider if the answer to this question changes if the scenario is resolved positively or negatively and why.

Wrap Up

Once the group/s have created their outline, bring everyone back together. This is an opportunity to discuss the following:

- What was the easiest part of developing this advocacy campaign?
 What was the most challenging part?
- Do you think you could take your outline (or even part of your outline) and apply it to an issue you care deeply about right now? If you're comfortable, feel free to share where and how.
- Where and how do you think working on this advocacy campaign-built community among you and your peers? What about how it builds community with the library and its users and/or potential users?

If your library was the scenario in this activity, take the time to talk about what happened, some of the advocacy campaigns you were aware of or took part in, and what the outcome was. Were you satisfied with the advocacy work, even if your preferred outcome did not happen?



REFLECTION: ROSE, BUD & THORN ACTIVITY

If this is the only session of the day, attendees will wrap things up with a short journaling prompt. If this session is one of several on the same day, this next activity can be saved for the final session of the day.



The Rose

Describe what went well.
This can be anything from "met nice people" to "felt confident talking in a group activity." It's the positive takeaway from the session.



The Bud

Potential and/ or takeaways that excite the attendee and/ or what they want to learn or engage with more. It is something to look forward to, including attending more sessions, visiting their local library, and requesting a book, etc.



The Thorn

Describe anything that felt challenging or frustrating during the session. This can range from "felt like I knew no one here" to "I didn't have an answer to one of the journaling questions" to "I had no idea this many books were being banned." The Thorn can also be used to consider areas of personal improvement. A participant may consider it a Thorn that they did not engage in a group discussion, and want to in future sessions.



Rose, Thorn, & Bud Template

allows attendees to consider what they have learned in three different ways.

Find in the appendix or download at **BooksUnbanned** .com/toolkit.

Modify this template in any way you see fit. You may choose to simply read it to your participants as prompts or display it on a whiteboard or screen



DISMISSAL

Right before you dismiss attendees don't forget to thank them for their participation and remind them to leave their question or comment in the box on their way out. Encourage them to bring anything they are curious about to the next session, too.



UNIT 4, SESSION 2

Advocacy Skill Building II

Prepared with new knowledge, insights, and ideas, teens will revisit a scenario like that in unit three, session one. They will work in small groups to practice how they would talk about anti-censorship at a library/school board meeting, incorporating their listening and argumentation skills, practicing public speaking skills, and utilizing the facts they've learned about book bans and the freedom to read.

This activity can take up the entire hour. However, time is also built into this session for addressing any topics students have expressed interest in learning more about or reviewing from previous sessions.

Materials needed	Time
Folder with journal and pensmall box with index for questions	1 hour, with the ability to go
 fidget toys, pipe cleaners, LEGOS, and/or other small objects teens can use for fidgeting/self-soothing/focus 	longer.
small and large sticky notes	



SESSION ICEBREAKER

Choose an ice breaker question and have every student share their response with the group. In early sessions of the program, the facilitator will call on students. As students become more comfortable with one another, they can call on one another after answering the question themselves.

The goal in the ice breaker is to get teens talking. It's an opportunity for every person in the room to have their voice heard, even if they are nervous or shy. This is especially powerful in situations where they may not speak up in future group discussions. Their voices were still in the room that day.



Use your own icebreaker questions or one from our list found in the appendix.



GROUP LEARNING: DIY

Pulling from feedback gathered throughout the program, use the first ten to fifteen minutes of this session to share answers to questions raised by students. Feel free to develop your own slide deck here or revisit some of the topics in previous units and sessions—it may even make sense to pull pieces of various previous lessons into a fresh slide deck to address topics of interest.

Let this be
flexible to meet
the unique needs
and interests of your
students and you as a
facilitator.



Use the
News Literacy
Project to dive
into media
literacy skills



Watch a video you had to skip in a previous session



Have participants research other student advocacy groups and activists and share what they found with the group



GROUP ACTIVITY: PUTTING ALL OF THE PIECES TOGETHER

Students will work solo for the first portion of this activity, then begin to team up with others in the room, to develop a plan for how they would act in the presented scenario. There are no right or wrong answers. This is an exercise that builds upon prior activities, skills, and knowledge. The more practice teens have, the stronger and more confident they will feel not only when it comes to defending the right to read, but when it comes to *any* form of advocacy that matters to them.

This activity is set in the school library, but it can easily be modified to be set in the public library. The same skills and tools will be used; the difference will be who the teens may talk to prior to and at the board meeting.

Scenario

A group of parents who want to get the books *The Hate U Give* and *The Handmaid's Tale* off shelves in your public school library. You learned this from a friend who heard it from their parents on a Facebook group for your school. You disagree with banning the books and want to make sure they remain on shelves. What would you do?

Part 1

Students will first work on this scenario by themselves for five or so minutes. During this time, they will write three elevator pitches explaining the situation

- one they'd give to their friends
- one they'd give to their parents/guardians/a close trusted adult, and
- one they'd give to an adult they don't know but know would care.

Part II

Once the solo time concludes, students will pair up with one person in the room to talk about how they could combine efforts. What would they do as a pair and as individuals within the pair? Give students at least five minutes but allow them to take longer if the conversations are robust. It is okay if there are odd numbers here. Students will practice their "friends" elevator pitches with one another and discuss where and how they might strengthen those pitches, as well as the pitches to a trusted adult and an adult who they may not know well.

Part III

Then, student pairs will team up with another pair to talk about how they could combine efforts and what they would do as a group and as individuals within the group. It is okay if there are odd numbers here. They will once again practice those elevator pitches, editing and combining them in whatever way they see fit. It is okay if teens choose to craft three elevator pitches total as a group OR if each teen chooses to craft three of their own. The goal is to practice writing and speaking to different audiences and making them as powerful as possible through community and coalition building.

Students are encouraged as they move through the scenario to practice listening skills, as well as practice writing what they might say at a school board meeting, to the local paper (and the school paper counts--reminder about Hazelwood vs. Kuhlmeier), to staff, administrators, local officials, etc. That's where those pitches come in handy!



GROUP DISCUSSION

As conversation with the groups of four wrap up, ask students to consider the following questions.

QUESTIONS

- 1. Where and how would you determine if the information you learned was true?
- 2. Who might you turn to first in this situation?
- 3. How would you address the people you need to talk to to get answers and to advocate on behalf of your beliefs? What about the beliefs of your fellow students?
- 4. How can you find research and proof to back up your beliefs and argument that the books should remain in the school library?
- 5. What skills do you bring to the table?
- 6. What worries or fears do you have about your ability to navigate this scenario? Nothing is too big or too small. Remember that in addition to being a champion of books and reading, you're also a student, have friends, might have a job, might be involved in sports or other extracurricular activities, etc. You are still the person you are right now, so any stress you feel about those are valid, too.
- 7. Who might you turn to if you find yourself stuck or feel like you're not being listened to?



REFLECTION: ROSE, BUD & THORN ACTIVITY

If this is the only session of the day, attendees will wrap things up with a short journaling prompt. If this session is one of several on the same day, this next activity can be saved for the final session of the day.



The Rose

Describe what went well.
This can be anything from "met nice people" to "felt confident talking in a group activity." It's the positive takeaway from the session.



The Bud

Potential and/ or takeaways that excite the attendee and/ or what they want to learn or engage with more. It is something to look forward to, including attending more sessions, visiting their local library, and requesting a book, etc.



The Thorn

Describe anything that felt challenging or frustrating during the session. This can range from "felt like I knew no one here" to "I didn't have an answer to one of the journaling questions" to "I had no idea this many books were being banned." The Thorn can also be used to consider areas of personal improvement. A participant may consider it a Thorn that they did not engage in a group discussion, and want to in future sessions.



Rose, Thorn, & Bud Template

allows attendees to consider what they have learned in three different ways.

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DISMISSAL

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UNIT 4, SESSION 3

Build Your Advocacy Tool Kits

This session gives teens the opportunity to reflect once again inward and strengthen those self-awareness skills. They will do so through developing plans for how they will become the kinds of advocates they want to be, as well as considering where and how they will build self-care into their routines.

The final activity in this session will emphasize the unique strengths each student has and brings with them to advocacy for the freedom to read and beyond.

Materials needed	Time
Folder with journal and pen	1 hour, with the
small box with index cards for questions	ability to go
small and large sticky notes	longer.
fidget toys, pipe cleaners, LEGOS, and/or other small objects teens can use for fidgeting/self-soothing/focus	
 art supplies—anything available to you is good! 	



SESSION ICEBREAKER

Choose an ice breaker question and have every student share their response with the group. In early sessions of the program, the facilitator will call on students. As students become more comfortable with one another, they can call on one another after answering the question themselves.

The goal in the ice breaker is to get teens talking. It's an opportunity for every person in the room to have their voice heard, even if they are nervous or shy. This is especially powerful in situations where they may not speak up in future group discussions. Their voices were still in the room that day.



Use your own icebreaker questions or one from our list found WWin the appendix.



ACTIVITY: BUILD YOUR OWN ADVOCACY TOOL KITS

Throughout this program's different units, students have done much self-exploration and reflection. Some of the things they have considered are what values they hold, what their strengths are when it comes to being a leader and an advocate, and where they feel comfortable and uncomfortable when standing up for issues that matter to them. Now we'll pull all of that together to create our own advocacy tool kits.

NOTE TO FACILITATORS

This does not need to be a silent activity. If students want to talk or collaborate, they can. If your group is especially drawn to group discussion, you can turn this tool kit building into a whole group activity. If you choose to do that, ask one or two students to take notes on a whiteboard or large sticky note to capture the information being shared.



THE TOOLKIT CAN BE CREATED A FEW WAYS.



Create a blank zine using the one-sheet method and cover the pages in collage and text or use the one-sheet zine template provided



Stack six blank sheet of 8.5 x 11 inch paper on top of each other and fold them all in half. Use a long arm or saddle stitch stapler to staple the create in the middle



Give each participant an 11x17 inch piece of paper and have them create posters of their answers that they can hang in their rooms

What the advocacy tool kit could include:

- A list of causes that you are passionate about--it can be 1 thing or up to 4 things—that you want to be an advocate and ambassador for. It is okay for some of these to come from previous discussions of advocacy in the program!
- What skills, knowledge, and experience do you bring to the table when it comes to advocacy? This can include broad skills, like feeling comfortable publicly speaking, and more specialized ones, like being familiar with your local library. List between 5 and 10.
- What connections do you have related to the causes you're passionate about? Who do you know that you can turn to or reach out to?
- What skills or knowledge do you want to grow or practice through your advocacy and ambassador work? How might you acquire those? Be as specific here as you can. For example, if you want to work on public speaking skills, you might record yourself giving a short speech and review it with a friend to see what your strengths are and where you can practice. If you feel like you aren't ready to share your thoughts on a topic, how might you practice doing so? Choose 1–3 things.
- What is one way you can practice advocacy every week? What about one way you can practice every month? Finally, what's one big advocacy goal you'd like to set for yourself over the next year? Feel free to be as pie-in-the-sky or realistic as possible. This is your advocacy tool kit!

- » Choose one of these areas and write out how you would do that in your everyday life. For example: if your big goal for the next year is to begin a Banned Books Club, how might you begin doing that? Where would you hold the club? Would it be a school activity? Who would you need to talk to to begin a club? How would you tell people about the club? As you think about these things, write down questions, concerns, or unknowns—those are as important to think about as the things you do know the answers to.
- Create a list of words to describe your greatest strengths as an advocate. Choose one word of these to share with the whole group—it'll be decorated however you might like to and put on the wall/board at the front of the room to build a community quilt, tying all of the work done individually with the work done communally.

Add in some self-care too! List 3–5 things participants can do when they feel overwhelmed, stressed out, or when they need a break, such as practicing breathing exercises, playing a favorite computer or phone game, going for a walk with friends at the park, etc. • List 3 people you can turn to when you feel overwhelmed or need some extra support and encouragement.



GROUP ACTIVITY: STRONGER TOGETHER QUILT

Quilt-making is a tradition in activism and advocacy. As students have spent significant time together building their advocacy skills and tool kits, it makes sense to tie everything back together to community and to the history of change movements themselves.

Take a few moments as a facilitator to talk about the history of quilting as a historical part of activism. It might be valuable to first ask your attendees where and how they see quilts being a tool of political power or advocacy. There's no formal lesson here, but take a few moments to share one or more of these historical quilt movements with your group (your library likely has some excellent books on this you can bring in as well—some are in the resources at the end of this unit):



National AIDS Memorial Quilt

- · Watch this video
- · Read this article



Quilts of Gee's Bend

- Watch this video
- Read this article



Queen Lili'uokalani

- Watch this video
- Read this article



Quilting in General

- The Serious Art of Quilting
- The Surprisingly Radical History of Quilting

Pass out paper and ask participants to to think about one single word or short phrase that they feel best encompasses their personal beliefs and/or contributions to advocacy work. One straightforward way they can do this is to turn back to the values lesson they did in unit one, session two. That could provide all the inspiration they need. Alternatively, as a facilitator you might find it worthwhile to do this values activity a second time, as the responses may have changed just throughout this program. Consider your group and what might be meaningful to them. Whatever the word is that teens choose, they will write it on a brightly colored sheet of paper, and they are welcome to decorate it however they wish. If the word really resonates—and it likely will—encourage teens to consider creating a digital wallpaper for their home computer or phone that allows them to see it regularly.

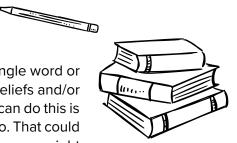
Students will then affix their sheets to the front of the room in the shape of a quilt. Give students time to create quilt patterning. If they want to, they can have access to scissors as they work together to build a community quilt, adjusting and readjusting shapes as they wish. This gives them the time to think about how their strengths contribute to a whole, as well as the chance to talk with their peers about how everyone's pieces fit together in clever, necessary, community-driven ways.

Wrap Up

When the quilt is complete, bring the students back together to have a discussion. Use the following questions:

- What did you notice about the quilt of strengths? How does it relate to the concept of building community?
- Where else can you use the skills you've developed over the last several sessions?
- How does understanding your strengths and interests help you as a leader? As a community member? As a member of a broader society?

Encourage students to take photos of the quilt. After this activity wraps up, the quilt can be disassembled, and each student can keep their piece. Alternatively, the quilt could be put on display somewhere in the library.





REFLECTION: ROSE, BUD & THORN ACTIVITY

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The Rose

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Potential and/ or takeaways that excite the attendee and/ or what they want to learn or engage with more. It is something to look forward to, including attending more sessions, visiting their local library, and requesting a book, etc.



The Thorn

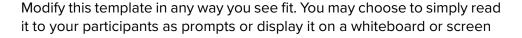
Describe anything that felt challenging or frustrating during the session. This can range from "felt like I knew no one here" to "I didn't have an answer to one of the journaling questions" to "I had no idea this many books were being banned." The Thorn can also be used to consider areas of personal improvement. A participant may consider it a Thorn that they did not engage in a group discussion, and want to in future sessions.



Rose, Thorn, & Bud Template

allows attendees to consider what they have learned in three different ways.

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DISMISSAL

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UNIT 4, SESSION 4

Celebration!

Wrap up the program with a celebration for attendees. You will know your students well here, whether you've done one full unit, several independent sessions, or the entire program. Offer them the opportunity to give input on what kind of celebration they might like at the end—ideas here are but a suggestion.

Materials needed	Time
Whatever you like for your celebration!	1 hour



GROUP DISCUSSION: WHAT'S LEFT?

Take a temperature check with attendees and ask if there are any lingering questions or thoughts they have about the program. Feel free to let this portion be as long or short as needed.



GROUP ACTIVITY: CELEBRATE

This is entirely up to you as facilitator and requests of attendees. Consider a party where you have sweet treats or pizza. You may like to bring out board games or LEGOs for teens to play to continue building their community and/ or decompress after such great work.

OTHER IDEAS YOU MAY WANT TO CONSIDER OR CREATE



A No-book Book Club, where students can share their favorite banned books with one another



Host a book exchange, where students can swap books and/or peruse from books donated or weeded from the library



Have participants create book ban-themed word search or crosswords to give out at the library



Create a freedom to read-themed bookmark that can be reproduced and made available for library users





RESOURCES



Advocacy and Action for Libraries

<u>Advocacy in Action: Local Library Awareness Campaigns</u> from WebJunction, with a catchy graphic

Ready, Set, Activate: Library Advocacy Toolkit from the Illinois Library Association

"Students and Activists Are Organizing to Keep Libraries Safe and Funded" by Rainesford Stauffer at Teen Vogue

The History of Quilting and Activism

"World Quilts: The American Story" from the International Quilt Museum

What the Artist Saw: Faith Ringgold by Sharna Jackson and Andrea Pippins

Cassie's World Quilt by Faith Ringgold (book)

Story Quilts: Appalachian Women Speak by Shannon Hitchcock and Sophie Page (book)

The Quilts of Gee's Bend by Susan Goldman Rubin (book)

Stitch By Stitch: Cleve Johnson and the AIDS Memorial Quilt by Rob Sanders and Jamey Christoph (book)

The Katha Chest by Radhiah Chowdhury and Lavanya Naidu (book)

Show Way by Jacqueline Woodson and Hudson Talbott (book)

A New Deal for Quilts by Janneken Smucke (book)

Banned Book Clubs

<u>How to Start a Banned Books Club</u> from the ACLU and <u>How to Start a Banned</u> Books Club from Book Riot

<u>The Banned Books Book Club</u> by Reclamation Ventures, a monthly virtual banned books club open to all

<u>The Authors Guild Banned Books Club</u> from The Authors Guild, a monthly virtual banned books club open to all

Banned Book Club by Kim Hyun Sook and Ryan Estrada (book)



Utilize these resources for your own knowledge or as supplemental activities.

All links can also be found at **BooksUnbanned** .com/toolkit



Scenario

There is word that teen services at your local public library are going to be cut. This means there will be no librarian to run programs or do outreach to teens in town. The librarian who has been doing that job will still be employed, but the time she spent on teen-related services will be spent elsewhere.

The reason given for the elimination of teen services from the library administration is that teens are not coming in and using the dedicated teen space enough to justify keeping it. Program attendance for teens is low—the last teen program, a movie night with pizza, only had three people show up—and the number of teens who participate in the annual summer reading program has dropped every year for the last 10 years.

The information provided is light and does not explain much of the who, what, where, or when of the situation. That's purposeful. If you're asked questions as facilitator, some things you can share to give attendees more information:

- The administration did not make this decision. It came from the library board, but the administration has not said if they agree with the decision.
- Teen books would still be purchased for the library, though part of the materials budget could be shifted to another area of the library in the future. It is believed teens aren't reading as much as they used to, so that money might be better used to purchase more large print material.
- The information about this came from a flier in the teen services area that someone took a photo of with their phone and shared with their friends. The sign is still in the teen area and there is a link attached that asks for any feedback about the future of teen services. There has not been information posted elsewhere in the library, and it does not appear to be on the library's website or social media.
- There is no teen advisory board in the library, though prior to the current teen services librarian taking the job about 10 years ago, there was a very active group.
- Book challenges and other pushback to the library have not been an issue in this particular library.

Scenario

There is word that teen services at your local public library are going to be cut. This means there will be no librarian to run programs or do outreach to teens in town. The librarian who has been doing that job will still be employed, but the time she spent on teen-related services will be spent elsewhere.

The reason given for the elimination of teen services from the library administration is that teens are not coming in and using the dedicated teen space enough to justify keeping it. Program attendance for teens is low—the last teen program, a movie night with pizza, only had three people show up—and the number of teens who participate in the annual summer reading program has dropped every year for the last 10 years.

Activity

How would you develop an advocacy campaign to keep teen services a part of your public library? Work together to develop a single advocacy campaign that will raise awareness of the issue. Once the advocacy campaign is decided among each group, group members will outline how they would accomplish their campaign.

Questions to Consider

- What tasks are necessary to run the advocacy campaign? Think about the big
 picture stuff here—when things will happen, who needs to be contacted, and things
 like where/how verification of information about the change to teen services will
 happen. Where and how would word be spread that the campaign was happening?
- Who in the group will (hypothetically) take on what tasks and why? If there are
 tasks not assigned to a person, who will take them on? Are there skill sets or social
 connections that your group does not have but that the tasks would require? If so,
 how would you build those among your members? Where and who might you reach
 out to help you out?
- Where and how will work on the advocacy program take place? You work online through a digital tool or have in-person meetings at school, a coffee shop, or even the library itself?
- After the advocacy campaign is complete, where and how will success be measured?

Pick one type of advocacy from the low effort, medium effort, and large effort categories and answer the following questions.

do you need to work with an adult (if so, who?)

Low Effort:

- do you need access to money (how might you acquire that?)
- do you need to set up a social media account (who would be responsible for it/how would you determine how frequently you need to update it)
- do you need to show up to a meeting (what would you need to prepare)
- list any other considerations that might be required to engage in the advocacy

Medium Effort:		

Large Effort: _____

ı nır	iking about your own strengths and skill sets, list three types of advocacy that
app	eals to you on the list and answer the following questions:
•	what is appealing to you about this advocacy?
•	why do you think you'd be good at it?
•	is it a low, medium, or large effort action?

1.		
2.		
3.		
•	three types of advocacy that you'd like to engage in but are unsure where to st what skills do you need to learn or strengthen? who can you ask for help to learn more? do you have any worries or fears about engaging in this type of action?	:art:
1.		
2.		
3		

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1.	Where and how would you determine if the information you learned was true?
2.	Who might you turn to first in this situation?
3.	How would you address the people you need to talk to to get answers and to advocate on behalf of your beliefs? What about the beliefs of your fellow students?
4.	How can you find research and proof to back up your beliefs and argument that the books should remain in the school library?
5.	What skills do you bring to the table?
6.	What worries or fears do you have about your ability to navigate this scenario? Nothing is too big or too small. Remember that in addition to being a champion of books and reading, you're also a student, have friends, might have a job, might be involved in sports or other extracurricular activities, etc. You are still the person you are right now, so any stress you feel about those are valid, too.
7.	Who might you turn to if you feel stuck or feel like you're not being listened to?

Materials

Print outs of worksheets for each student

Set Up

Students will work solo for the first portion of this activity, then begin to team up
with others in the room, to develop a plan for how they would act in the presented
scenario.

Note to Facilitators

This activity is set in the school library, but it can easily be modified to be set in the
public library. The same skills and tools will be used; the difference will be who the
teens may talk to prior to and at the board meeting.

Scenario

A group of parents who want to get the books The Hate U Give and The Handmaid's Tale off shelves in your public school library. You learned this from a friend who heard it from their parents on a Facebook group for your school. You disagree with banning the books and want to make sure they remain on shelves. What would you do?

Activity

- Students will first work on this scenario by themselves for five or so minutes.
 During this time, they will write three elevator pitches explaining the situation—one they'd give to their friends, one they'd give to their parents/guardians/a close trusted adult, and one they'd give to an adult they don't know but know would care.
- Once the solo time concludes, students will pair up with one person in the room to talk about how they could combine efforts. What would they do as a pair and as individuals within the pair? Give students at least five minutes, but allow them to take longer if the conversations are robust. It is okay if there are odd numbers here. Students will practice their "friends" elevator pitches with one another and discuss where and how they might strengthen those pitches, as well as the pitches to a trusted adult and an adult who they may not know well.
- Then, student pairs will team up with another pair to talk about how they could combine efforts and what they would do as a group and as individuals within the group. It is okay if there are odd numbers here. They will once again practice those elevator pitches, editing and combining them in whatever way they see fit. It is okay if teens choose to craft three elevator pitches total as a group OR if each teen chooses to craft three of their own. The goal is practicing writing and speaking them to different audiences and making them as powerful as possible through community and coalition building.

Wrap Up Discussion Questions

- Where and how would you determine if the information you learned was true?
- Who might you turn to first in this situation?
- How would you address the people you need to talk to to get answers and to advocate on behalf of your beliefs? What about the beliefs of your fellow students?
- How can you find research and proof to back up your beliefs and argument that the books should remain in the school library?
- What skills do you bring to the table?
- What worries or fears do you have about your ability to navigate this scenario?
 Nothing is too big or too small. Remember that in addition to being a champion of books and reading, you're also a student, have friends, might have a job, might be involved in sports or other extracurricular activities, etc. You are still the person you are right now, so any stress you feel about those are valid, too.
- Who might you turn to if you find yourself stuck or feel like you're not being liste

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A group of parents who want to get the books The Hate U Give and The Handmaid's Tale off shelves in your public school library. You learned this from a friend who heard it from their parents on a Facebook group for your school. You disagree with banning the books and want to make sure they remain on shelves. What would you do?

Activity

First work by yourself to create an elevator pitch that you would give to the three different audiences lists. An elevator pitch is a 30 - 60 second summary designed to quickly communicate important information and create a lasting impression.

You'll then pair up with someone and talk about how they could combine efforts. What could you do as a pair and as individuals within the pair? What would you change about your elevator pitches? Who would say what?

Lastly, your pair will pair up with another pair and discuss how you would combine efforts and what you'd do as a group and individuals within the group. Edit and combine your elevator pitches. Decide who would say what.

Make sure you practice all your speeches out loud!

Solo Elevator Pitches

A friend:

A parent/quardian/a close trusted adult:

An adult you don't know well but one who would care:

	A friend:
	<u>A parent/guardian/a close trusted adult:</u>
	An adult you don't know well but one who would care:
Pair	· Up with a Pair
	A friend:
	A parent/guardian/a close trusted adult:
	An adult you don't know well but one who would care:

I want to be better at:	:are sllips AM These are causes important to me:	Because
Who can help me:	:e we I	These are my values:
	Things to Remember:	Advocacy Toolkit
Representatives: Senators:	;uoitat aka Me & Their Contact Info: Local Govt:	Read Books Unbanned. Books Unbanned.

ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

I am a
These are my values
These are causes important to me
Because
Marakilla ana
My skills are
I want to be better at
Things to remember
Things to remember

ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

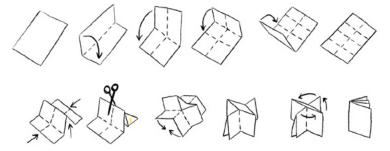
wno represents me include their names and contact information		
Local Government City Council, Library Boards, Education Boards, District Leaders		
Representatives		
Senators		
Anyone else		

A one sheet zine is simple to make and only requires a sheet of paper, a pair of scissors, and materials like markers, tape or glue, stamps, stickers or whatever you'd like to decorate it.

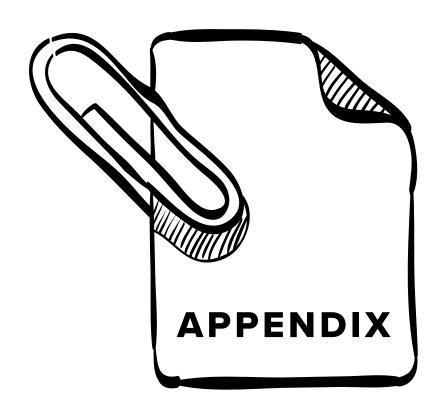
The one sheet method will create an eight-page zine: a cover page, back page and six interior pages. Any size paper can be used. Standard Letter (8.5 in \times 11 in) size is usually the easiest but using Legal (8.5 in \times 14 in) or Tabloid (11 in \times 17 in) size paper will give you bigger pages to work on.

Instructions

- Take one sheet of paper.
- Fold in ½ long ways or lengthwise (we call this a "hot dog fold").
- Unfold the paper, then fold in $\frac{1}{2}$ on the short side or widthwise (we call this the "hamburger fold").
- Unfold the paper flat. Fold the short ends of the paper into the middle crease. You are folding each half of the paper in half again.
- Unfold the paper flat and you should see eight boxes.
- Then fold it in half hamburger fold style.
- Cut through the folded edge down to the center crease (as shown on the next page).
- Unfold the paper flat. Fold longways ("hot dog"), hold the ends of the paper in the middle, and "pinch" or push to the center so that you see a diamond shape emerge in the center.
- Push the paper in completely so it creates a "plus" or "x".
- Flatten onto a table creating a rectangle and fold over as shown.
- Burnish all sides and edges with a bone folder or flat edge for a crispy, finished look.



For more resources on zine making visit: www.bit.ly/BZB-handbook

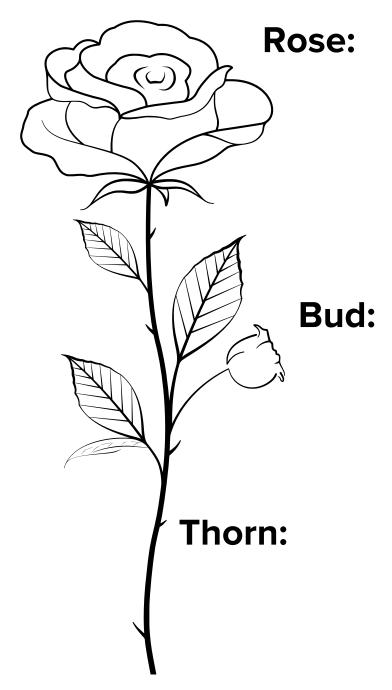


Reflection Activity

Rose: What went well, a success or win, something you learned

Bud: What is something that you could work on or something you are looking forward to exploring further

Thorn: What was a challenge or somewhere you need more support?



Facilitator Page ICEBREAKER QUESTIONS

The goal in the ice breaker is to get teens talking. It's an opportunity for every person in the room to have their voice heard, even if they are nervous or shy. This is especially powerful in situations where they may not speak up in future group discussions. Their voices were still in the room that day.

- What is your favorite holiday movie?
- If you had to eat one type of candy every single day for the rest of your life, what would it be?
- What superpower would you want to have?
- What is your favorite cartoon character?
- You are stranded on a deserted island. What two things would you want to have with you?
- If you had to participate in the Olympics right now, what sport would you choose? (No one said you had to be good at it!)
- What is your most used emoji on your phone?
- What musical instrument would you want to master?
- What is your favorite pair of pajamas?
- Did you have a favorite stuffed animal in childhood and if so, what was it? If not, what was your favorite comfort object or toy as a kid?
- What is your favorite restaurant and why?
- If you had to eat a crayon, what color would you pick?
- Is a hot dog a sandwich? Is a lasagna a sandwich?
- What would be your walk on song (i.e., what music would play whenever you entered a room or on stage)?
- Would you rather be a superhero or the world's best chef?
- If you won one million dollars, what would be the first thing you would do?