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<th>109.1. RESOURCE MATERIALS - CHALLENGES/RECONSIDERATION</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1. Purpose</strong></td>
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<td>Any parent/guardian, resident, or employee of the school district may formally challenge learning resources used in the district's educational program. This policy is for the purpose of considering the opinions of those persons in the schools and the community who are not directly involved in the selection process.</td>
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<td><strong>2. Guidelines</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Request For Informal Reconsideration</strong></td>
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<td>The school receiving an objection regarding a learning resource shall try to resolve the issue informally:</td>
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<td>1. The principal or other appropriate staff member shall explain to the objector the school's selection procedure, criteria, and qualifications of those persons selecting the resources.</td>
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<td>2. The principal or other appropriate staff member shall refer the party to the person (librarian, department chairperson, or teacher) responsible for the selection to explain the particular place the questioned resource occupies in the educational program, its intended educational usefulness, and additional information regarding its use.</td>
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<td><strong>Pol. 109</strong></td>
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<td>3. If the objector wishes to file a formal challenge, the principal shall provide a copy of the district Selection of Learning Resources policy and Request for Reconsideration of Learning Materials form to the concerned party.</td>
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<td><strong>Request For Formal Reconsideration</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Preliminary Procedures:</strong></td>
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| 1. The principal of the school receiving an objection regarding a learning resource shall send the objector a letter (Appendix A), along with copies of items specified in this policy. Notification of the objection shall immediately be
reported to the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, department chairperson or supervisor, district library coordinator, and the library media specialist or teacher.

The following shall be sent with the response letter to the objector:

a. Instructional goals and objectives.

b. Learning resources selection policy.

c. Procedures for dealing with challenged materials.

d. Request for Reconsideration of Learning Materials form.

2. Each school will keep on hand and make available to a concerned individual the Request for Reconsideration of Learning Materials form. All formal objections to learning resources must be made on these forms.

3. The Request for Reconsideration of Learning Materials form shall be signed by the objector and filed with the building principal and Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction.

4. The request for reconsideration shall be referred to a reconsideration committee at the school level for reevaluation of the resource.

The Reconsideration Committee

1. Upon receipt of a request for formal reconsideration of a learning resource, the building principal shall call into action the members of a reconsideration committee from the following membership as appropriate:

a. The district library coordinator to act as chairperson.

b. One (1) staff member of the reconsideration committee chosen by the staff of that school at the beginning of each school year to serve for that year.

c. One (1) member of the library media professional staff at each building involved.

d. One (1) member of the community and/or one (1) student chosen by the district library coordinator with input from the building librarian.

e. One (1) member of the community library staff.
f. The district reading supervisor and/or educational technology coordinator.

g. The building principal.

2. The Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction will arrange for a reconsideration committee meeting within fifteen (15) working days after the objection is received, time to be extended if unable to acquire additional copies of the challenged resource.

3. The reconsideration committee may choose to consult district support staff and/or community persons with related professional knowledge.

4. Each member of the reconsideration committee shall read and review the challenged resource, appropriate selection checklists, reviews of the challenged resource, and judge whether it conforms to the principles of selection outlined in the district's Resource Materials - Selection Policy.

5. The committee shall keep in mind the following Instructions to Evaluating Committee (Appendix C).

Resolution

1. The reconsideration committee shall:

   a. Read and/or examine the challenged resource.

   b. Determine professional acceptance by reading critical reviews of the resource.

   c. Weigh values and faults and form opinions based on the material as a whole rather than on passages or sections taken out of context.

   d. Discuss the challenged resource in the context of the educational program.

   e. Discuss the challenged items with the individual objector when appropriate.

   f. Prepare a written report.

2. The written report shall be discussed with the individual objector if requested.
3. The written reports shall be submitted by the district library coordinator to the school building principal, Assistant Superintendent, Superintendent and the Board. The report need not be unanimous. It may be composed of separate majority and minority reports.

4. A copy of the written report shall be retained by the building principal and the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction.

5. Written reports, once filed, are confidential and are available only by obtaining permission from the Superintendent or his/her designee.

6. The decision of the reconsideration committee is binding for the individual school.

7. Notwithstanding any procedure outlined in this policy, the objector shall have the right to appeal any decision of the reconsideration committee to the Board as the final review panel.

**Guiding Principles**

1. Any resident or employee of the school district may raise objection to learning resources used in a school's educational program despite the fact that the individuals selecting such resources were duly qualified to make the selection, followed the proper procedure, and observed the criteria for selecting.

2. Principals shall orient their staffs annually to policies 109 and 109.1. Staff should be reminded of their professional responsibility in the selection and objection rules. The right to object to learning resources is one granted by policies enacted by the Board.

3. No parent/guardian of students within the school district has the right to determine reading, viewing or listening matter for students other than his/her own children.

4. The Pleasant Valley School District supports the Library Bill of Rights and Freedom to Read, adopted by the American Library Association. When learning resources are challenged, the principles of the freedom to read/listen/view must be defended as well.

5. Access to challenged material shall not be restricted during the reconsideration process.
6. The major criterion for the final decision is the appropriateness of the material for its intended educational use.

7. A decision to sustain a challenge shall not necessarily be interpreted as a judgment of irresponsibility on the part of the professionals involved in the original selection and/or use of the material.

References:

School Code – 24 P.S. Sec. 510

Board Policy – 109
Dear ___________________________.

We appreciate your concern over the use of ____________________________________ in our school district. The district has developed procedures for selecting materials, but realizes that not everyone will agree with every selection made.

To help you understand the selection process, we are sending copies of the district's:

1. Instructional goals and objectives
2. Learning Resources Selection Policy Statement
3. Procedure for Handling Objections

If you are still concerned after you review this material, please complete the Request for Reconsideration of Learning Materials form and return it to me. You may be assured of prompt attention to your request. If I have not heard from you within two (2) calendar weeks, we will assume that you no longer wish to file a formal objection.

Sincerely,

Principal
APPENDIX B
REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LEARNING MATERIALS

Title:_________________________________________ Book  Periodical  Other

Author:_____________________________________________________________________________________

Publisher:___________________________________________________________________________________

Request initiated by:___________________________________________________________________________

Address:____________________________________________________________________________________

City:______________________________ State:__________ Zip:________ Phone:____________

Do you represent: ____Yourself
____Organization:(name of organization)
____Other Group:(name of group)

1. To what, in the work, do you object? (Please be specific. For example cite pages, filmstrip, frame, URL's, etc.)
   Use attachments if necessary. _________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________________________________

2. If the work is a book, story or article, complete Section 2, otherwise skip to Section 3.
   2.1 Did you read the entire work?____ If not, what part?________________________________
   2.2 What do you feel might be the result of reading this work?_______________________________
       ___________________________________________________________________________________
   2.3 Are you aware of judgments of this work by literary critics?_____________________________

3. Complete Section 3 if Section 2 was left blank, otherwise skip to Section 4.
   3.1 Did you view/examine the entire work?____ If not, what part?________________________________
   3.2 What do you feel might be the result of using this work?_________________________________
       ___________________________________________________________________________________
   3.3 Are you aware of judgments of this work by knowledgeable professionals?___________________

4. Is there any thing good about this material?___________________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________________________________________

5. For what age group would you recommend this work?___________________________________________

6. What do you believe is the theme of this work?_______________________________________________
   _______________________________________________________________________________________

7. What would you like your library/school to do about this work?
   ____Do not assign/lend it to my child.
   ____Return it to the staff selection committee/department for reevaluation.
   ____Other. Explain:_______________________________________________________________________

8. In its place, what work would you recommend that would provide an equally valuably picture and perspective of this subject?
   _______________________________________________________________________________________

Signature:______________________________ Date:_______________________
APPENDIX C

Factors to be Considered in Selecting Trade Books

For trade books the following criteria are of primary importance:

A) Literacy Quality

- Literary quality relates to style of writing or the arrangement of words and sentences that best expresses the dominating theme. It includes sentence structure, dialogue and vocabulary. Literary quality is not affected by format or illustration.
- Characterization is an aspect of literary quality. An effectively realized character acts quality. An effectively realized character acts and speaks in a way that is believable for that character.
- Plot is another aspect of literary quality. The incidents of a story must be interrelated and carry the reader along to its climax.
- Still another aspect of literary quality is a story’s theme, in which the philosophy of the author is expressed in the meaning of the story and often reflects developmental values in the growing-up process.

B) Appropriateness

- Factors to be considered in assessing the appropriateness of books are children’s interests, the age level and/or maturity of children in relation to the book being considered and the content, format and illustrations. While the format and illustrations are not directly related to the elements considered under literary quality, they should complement the text as well as be evaluated on the basis of artistic standards.

C) Usefulness

- An important aspect of usefulness is the purpose for using books in relation to curriculum objectives.
- Basic to the selection of any book is the suit-ability of the text; by no means is this to be construed to mean controversial materials will not be used.
- Accuracy is important in non-fiction and in fiction in regard to theme, setting, characters and incidents.
- Authenticity is important in fiction and biography, especially in those books with a historical background.
D) Uniqueness

- All books are unique. Their uniqueness may be a result of their theme, plot, style of writing, characterization, format or illustration. Such books may have a special place and use in the classroom and library. Teachers must know what it is about a book that makes it unique, and must share this information with others.

E) Breadth of Coverage

- Books may present problems of stereotyping with respect to sex and to race. Religion, politics, and questions of morality or patriotism are issues about which there are considerable differences of opinion. The importance of such books may lie mainly, or only, in their historical viewpoint and should be presented as such to children who read them. Teachers and librarians should be aware of these considerations and should make every effort to provide materials which present alternate points of view. Historically there have always been those who have recognized the offensive of these materials. Children, like adults exposed to new ideas, can accept or reject them, based on input from all viewpoints. All opinions require protection under the First Amendment.

Language Arts, February 1978, NCTE
The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

1. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

2. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

3. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

4. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

5. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

6. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 18, 1948.
The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove books from sale, to censor textbooks, to label "controversial" books, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid that censorship and suppression are needed to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as citizens devoted to the use of books and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating them, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

We are deeply concerned about these attempts at suppression. Most such attempts rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary citizen, by exercising critical judgment, will accept the good and reject the bad. The censors, public and private, assume that they should determine what is good and what is bad for their fellow citizens.

We trust Americans to recognize propaganda, and to reject it. We do not believe they need the help of censors to assist them in this task. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

We are aware, of course, that books are not alone in being subjected to efforts at suppression. We are aware that these efforts are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, films, radio and television. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of uneasy change and pervading fear. Especially when so many of our apprehensions are directed against an ideology, the expression of a dissident idea becomes a thing feared in itself, and we tend to move against it as against a hostile deed, with suppression.

And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with stress.

Now as always in our history, books are among our greatest instruments of freedom. They are almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. They are the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. They are essential to the extended discussion which serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures towards conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.
We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those which are unorthodox or unpopular with the majority.

   Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept which challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. Publishers, librarians and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation contained in the books they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what books should be published or circulated.

   Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to determine the acceptability of a book on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.

   A book should be judged as a book. No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish which draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.

   To some, much of modern literature is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters taste differs, and taste cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised which will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept with any book the prejudgment of a label characterizing the book or author as subversive or dangerous.

   The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for the citizen. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large.

   It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive.
7. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a bad book is a good one, the answer to a bad idea is a good one.

The freedom to read is of little consequence when expended on the trivial; it is frustrated when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of their freedom and integrity, and the enlargement of their service to society, requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all citizens the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of books. We do so because we believe that they are good, possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.


A Joint Statement by:

American Library Association
Association of American Publishers

Subsequently Endorsed by:

American Booksellers Association
American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression
American Civil Liberties Union
American Federation of Teachers AFL-CIO
Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith
Association of American University Presses
Children's Book Council
Freedom to Read Foundation
International Reading Association
Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression
National Association of College Stores
National Council of Teachers of English
P.E.N. - American Center
People for the American Way
Periodical and Book Association of America
Sex Information and Education Council of the U.S.
Society of Professional Journalists
Women's National Book Association
YWCA of the U.S.A.
I. Statement

Teachers of English language arts must make daily decisions about materials and methods of instruction, choosing from increasingly broad and varied alternatives in order to serve students who are themselves increasingly diverse, both linguistically and culturally. Guidelines help teachers of English language arts to make those decisions. NCTE advocates and supports guidelines that help teachers avoid censorship. NCTE opposes censorship wherever it appears.

II. Distinctions between Censorship and Professional Guidelines

Censorship and guidelines sometimes appear similar because both involve selection from myriad alternatives. However, censorship and professional guidelines may be distinguished one from the other. Whereas the goal of censorship is to remove, eliminate or bar particular materials and methods. The goal of professional guidelines is to provide criteria for selection of materials and methods.

III. Censorship Distinguished from Professional Guidelines: Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of Censorship</th>
<th>Examples of Professional Guidelines</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Exclude Specific Materials or Methods</td>
<td>1. Include Specific Materials or Methods</td>
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<tr>
<td>Example: Eliminate books with unhappy endings.</td>
<td>Example: Include some books with unhappy endings to give a varied view of life.</td>
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<td>2. Are Essentially Negative</td>
<td>2. Are Essentially Affirmative</td>
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<td>Example: Review your classroom library and eliminate books that include stereotypes.</td>
<td>Example: Review your classroom library. If necessary, add books that portray groups in nonstereotypical ways.</td>
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<td>3. Intend to Control</td>
<td>3. Intend to Advise</td>
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<td>Example: Do not accept policeman. Insist that students say and write police officer.</td>
<td>Example: Encourage such nonlimiting alternatives for policeman as police officer, officer of the law or law enforcer.</td>
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<td>4. Seek to Indoctrinate, to Limit Access to Ideas and Information</td>
<td>4. Seek to Educate, to Increase Access to Ideas and Information</td>
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<td>Example: Drug abuse is a menace to students. Eliminate all books that portray drug abuse.</td>
<td>Example: Include at appropriate grade levels books that will help students understand the personal and social consequences of drug abuse.</td>
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<td>5. Look at Parts of a Work in Isolation</td>
<td>5. See the Relationship of Parts to Each Other and to Work as a Whole</td>
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<tr>
<td>Example: Remove this book. The language includes profanity.</td>
<td>Example: Determine whether the profanity is integral to portrayal of character and development of theme in the book.</td>
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IV. Practical Suggestions for Writing Professional Guidelines

Although the primary concern here is the distinction between censorial and advisory statements, other matters must be considered in the actual writing of guidelines. Writers need to:

1. *Respect the role of the English language arts teacher as a professional with broad knowledge of language, literature and cultural traditions.*

2. *Identify clearly the events and concerns that led to development of the particular set of guidelines.*
   This information might help the English language arts teacher in one school setting (rural, independent, suburban or urban) to understand the usefulness of guidelines developed elsewhere.

3. *Specify the professional objectives the guidelines are expected to reach.*
   Guidelines are less likely to have censorial effects if their content is closely linked to the purposes of English language arts instruction, to the function and philosophy of the school, to the particular student population, and to the aims of the curriculum as a whole.

4. *Write in plain English, providing clear, current definitions of professional terms as needed.*

5. *Respect the concerns and convictions of both external critics and professional colleagues who have opposing ideas about either principles or practices.*
   Guidelines are abstractions, and honest differences of opinion will exist about translating abstractions into concrete teaching and selection of materials.

6. *Build in procedures for review and revision.*
   Guidelines should make clear the date of adoption and the sponsoring group(s) and should provide for periodic review and revision. The teaching community is committed to continued research and study and to the dissemination of insights that prove to be valid and useful.

--Approved by the NCTE Board of Directors, 1982.

Single copies of this statement are available free upon request, and may be copied without permission from NCTE. Multiple copies are available at a bulk rate of U.S. $5 per 100, prepaid only. Send request to NCTE Order Department, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, IL 61801.
The following statement was prepared by the Intellectual Freedom Committee of the International Reading Association and was adopted by the International Reading Association Board of Directors at its winter Board Meeting in January, 1985. It was originally published in the October, 1985 issue of the Association’s journal The Reading Teacher.

The International Reading Association supports freedom of speech, thought and inquiry as guaranteed in the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States. Censorship infringes upon that freedom by denying individuals the right to select what they read and by limiting access to alternative points of view. Free inquiry is necessary to a democratic society.

In the spirit of freedom, members of the International Reading Association are committed to advancing reading comprehension and literacy at all ages and stages. Reading comprehension must go beyond literal understanding, to interpretation and evaluation of what is read. The First Amendment makes this critical perspective possible by permitting the publication of materials which represent diverse points of view. Helping students develop this critical perspective, however, requires an enlightened educational program, with curricula that provide for: (1) freedom to choose from a rich choice of classroom and library materials dealing objectively with many facets of a diverse society; (2) freedom to discuss issues identified by such reading; and (3) freedom to defend collective and individual positions against challenges from groups and individuals with different points of view.

IRA supports the rights of parents to monitor the materials that their children are required to read, and IRA believes that no student should be forced to read materials which he or she finds morally offensive. IRA further believes, however, that formal channels should be established for handling criticisms of school materials, and that parents and others should use these channels when filing a complaint.

Many communities and institutions have found that the best defense against censorship comes from developing procedures for dealing with challenges before challenges actually occur. The use of standard procedures for text selection is essential for answering challenges of materials and for maintaining the right of students to select what they read. Such standard procedures should set forth policies for book selection in academic libraries and classrooms. The determination of normal procedures for text selection should include development of the following: (1) There should be policies for the selection of printed materials. These policies should be developed with input from community groups, including teachers, students, parents and civic leaders. Policies must be written and approved by appropriate governing bodies (board of directors, trustees, etc.). (2) There should be written guidelines for identifying and handling complaints. (3) There should be a system for openly communicating with civic, religious, educational and political bodies in the community. (4) There should be systematic methods for disseminating positive information about intellectual freedom through newspapers, radio and television.

Members of the International Reading Association must determine whether guidelines and procedures for selecting materials and answering challenges exist in their agencies and schools. If such guidelines do not exist, members should push for their adoption. These guidelines and procedures allow the school system to respond in a careful, considered manner to challenges against materials used in the schools. This can provide insurance against incidents which may inflame a community and endanger academic freedom.

Association members are encouraged to reproduce this statement to share with educators in their communities.