

Talking Points Around Materials Challenges (from the [United Against Book Bans toolkit](#)):

How To Talk About Book Bans

Below are a set of talking points which should be customized to reflect your own voice. These can be tailored to talk about a specific book that is being challenged or used more generally to oppose book bans. The points can be used for writing a letter to your local school or library board, your state legislators and governor, or as the basis of your public comments given to any elected bodies. They can also be used to help you draft a letter to the editor of your local newspaper or in speaking with members of the media. All of these actions are important ways you can help have an impact on the issue of book bans.

- **Reading is a foundational skill, critical to future learning and to exercising our democratic freedoms.**
- **We can trust individuals to make their own decisions about what they read and believe.**
- **Parents have the right to guide their children's reading, but parents should not be making decisions for other parents' children. Specifically, a small group of parents should not dictate what books other people's children are allowed to read.**
- **Books are tools for understanding complex issues. Limiting young people's access to books does not protect them from life's complex and challenging issues.**
- **Young people deserve to see themselves reflected in a library's books.**
- **Removing and banning books from public libraries is a slippery slope to government censorship and the erosion of our country's commitment to freedom of expression.**
- **Please reject any efforts to ban books and allow individuals and parents to make the decision about what they can read and believe.**

Answers To Common Questions About Book Bans

Q: How do I handle difficult conversations with individuals seeking to ban books, especially parents concerned about what their kids are reading?

A: We must trust individuals to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We also believe that parents have the right to guide their children's reading and education. At the same time, individuals should not be making decisions for other readers or for other parents' children. Specifically, a small group of parents should not dictate what books other people's children are allowed to read.

Q: What if someone says that children are too young to begin reading a book that addresses sexually explicit topics?

A: We recognize that there will be disagreements over certain content. However, individuals should not be making decisions for other readers or for other parents about what is appropriate.

Services, materials, and facilities that fulfill the needs and interests of library users at different stages in their personal development are a necessary part of providing library services and should be determined on an individual basis.

Reading materials available in the library are available to students for personal selection; they are not required books. Banning these materials will remove access for all members of the community.

Q: What if someone argues that they don't want their children being taught political views that they find objectionable, such as critical race theory?

A: School educators and librarians are professionals who are trained to not impose their own thoughts and opinions on which ideas are right, but to make knowledge and ideas available so that people have the freedom to choose what to read. Further, librarians and educators respect the rights of parents to decide which book their children are exposed to. They work closely with parents to help them decide the best books for their children.

Libraries provide access to books that offer teachable moments for readers of all ages and expand our understanding of people with different backgrounds, ideas, and beliefs.