

ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY:

Censorship in the Libraries and the 1st Amendment

Prompt: "All of us can think of a book that we hope none of our children or any other children have taken off the shelf. But if I have the right to remove that book from the shelf -- that work I abhor -- then you also have exactly the same right and so does everyone else. And then we have no books left on the shelf for any of us."
--Katherine Paterson, *Author*

Write an argumentative essay to a newspaper reflecting your views on censorship in libraries. Do you believe that certain materials, such as books, music, movies, magazines, etc., should be removed from the shelves if they are found offensive? Support your position with convincing arguments from your own experience, observations, and/or reading.

Success indicators:

- Carefully consider the intended audience (a newspaper staff and its readers) and use word choice and syntax that is appropriate for that intended audience
- Similarly, use a formal and fair tone that would be more likely to appeal to the intended audience
- Introduce a clear, arguable and specific claim (argument) related to the prompt
- Develop that claim throughout the essay (through the use of claim topic sentences to start paragraphs and concluding sentences to wrap up paragraphs and transition to the next paragraph)
- Provide relevant, specific and accurate evidence for the claims and counterclaims being made (reference to specific 4th Amendment court cases can be one effective way to do this, among others); this evidence is essential in order to support the argument and claims being made
- Identify counterclaims and point out strengths and weaknesses of claims and counterclaims made in the email message to the school board; this helps you to communicate your awareness that this is a complicated issue
- Include a thoughtful conclusion that supports the main argument you made and considers the significance of the issue

Each of these indicators shows up in the scoring guide printed on the back.

Resources:

On the History Haus (historyhaus.weebly.com), go to the "Unit 2: Constitutional Amendments & Rights" page; resource links are posted at the top of the page.

Due dates:

You will have two class periods in which to write the paper during class, using Revision Assistant (revisionassistant.com) software: **Thursday, Dec. 8** and **Monday, Dec. 12**. You may continue to write & revise the paper out of class, which is highly recommended if you are behind the targets for completion at the end of class.

The first draft is due to Turnitin Feedback Studio (turnitin.com) at the end of class on **Thursday, Dec. 8** (even if not fully completed yet). *Note: It is strongly recommended that you copy & paste your draft from Revision Assistant to Google Docs, so that you have a backup.*

The final paper is due to Turnitin Feedback Studio (turnitin.com) at the end of class on **Monday, Dec. 12**. *Since this paper generates FOUR 4-3-2-1 scores, it is a significant part of the grade. This paper can also be used as an Essential Skills sample for argumentative writing, in order to graduate.*