

This letter is a part of our Civics Action Project. Our project is about book bans and their negative consequences. It is a culmination of all the information we have learned about book bans.

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## Everything you Need to Know About Book Bans

Book challenges have increased significantly in recent years, mostly in Texas and Florida. Book challenges are not as present in Massachusetts, in fact no books have been completely banned either. A book challenge is different from a book ban, a challenge is an attempt to remove a piece of work from a library or school curriculum and a ban is the total restriction of it.

Books are challenged for many reasons but most of them can be boiled down to the challenger believing the material is not appropriate for students to read. For example, the book “The Perks of Being a Wallflower” was one of the most challenged books in 2023, with 68 total. The reasons for the challenges are including content that is sexually explicit, LGBTQ+ content, and discussions of rape, drugs and profanity. As you can tell from these reasons, diverse books tend to be challenged more than books with less diverse stories.

The effects of book bans are overwhelmingly negative for multiple groups. For students, they have a decreased interest in reading and will read more if they are allowed to read banned books. For teachers, their students will score higher on reading tests when they can have books

that have been challenged in their classrooms. Librarians have also been harassed by parents to have books removed from their libraries.

“Top 10 Most Challenged Books of 2023” *American Library Association*

<https://www.ala.org/bbooks/frequentlychallengedbooks/top10>

“Banned Book FAQ” *American Library Association* <https://www.ala.org/bbooks/banned-books-qa>

“New First Book Study Tackles National Issue of Banned Books” *First Book* 3 October 2023 <https://firstbook.org/blog/2023/10/03/new-first-book-study-tackles-national-issue-of-banned-books/#:~:text=In%20the%20survey%2C%2072%20percent,choice%20to%20read%20banned%20books>

Farkus, Mackenzie “Banned Books: The Catcher in the Rye” *The Simmons Voice* 27 September 2017 <https://simmonsvoice.com/8495/2017-2018/banned-books-the-catcher-in-the-rye/>

“About Banned & Challenged Books” *American Library Association* <https://www.ala.org/bbooks/aboutbannedbooks>