

Case 7: Did one complaint get the novel banned?

Overview

Students read a short story in which a group chat claims that one parent’s complaint got a novel “banned” from Anika’s school library. They compare the claim with the district’s reconsideration notice, the committee input form and the ALA’s example procedure. They map where the novel is in the review. They then write input to the review committee that is tied to the selection criteria.

Before this case

Students should already be able to:

- tell a law from a policy and from professional guidance
- summarize a court decision’s holding and its limits
- write for a peer audience in a neutral tone

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- distinguish law, adopted policy and professional guidance in library challenges
- represent Pico accurately, including its lack of a majority opinion
- explain why state rules vary and courts disagree
- recommend a concrete route for student participation

Materials

- This chapter, one copy per student
- Evidence A and B
- A summary of Island Trees School District v. Pico (1982), the ALA toolkit and one district policy
- A chart: law, policy and guidance

The task in this edition

Task: Write a briefing on the law and policy of school library challenges for student council.

Students make: Briefing, 450—550 words

Pacing

Opener (page 126): 4 min. Short on time: 3 min. Read What happened aloud.

Key terms (pages 127 and 128): 5 min. Short on time: skip.

Look at the evidence (pages 132 and 133): 8 min. Short on time: 6 min. Students fill in the Evidence A boxes only.

Key idea (pages 134 and 135): 10 min. Short on time: 8 min. Read the key idea and one In the news source only.

Sort the evidence (page 136): 8 min. Short on time: skip.

Practice (page 137): 5 min. Short on time: skip.

Your task (pages 138 and 139): 10 min. Short on time: 10 min.

Pacing, continued

Your draft (page 140): 25 min. Short on time: 25 min.

Check your work (pages 141 and 142): 6 min. Short on time: 3 min. Collect briefings and score them with the rubric yourself.

Questions to discuss (pages 143 and 144): 10 min. Short on time: 5 min. Use question 3 as an exit ticket.

Talk about this case at home (page 145): at home.

Periods: full chapter 91 minutes; one period 60 minutes.

Standards

RI.11-12.1 Back up an analysis with the strongest evidence from the text, including where the text leaves things uncertain.

W.11-12.2 Write an explanatory text that conveys complex ideas clearly and accurately.

W.11-12.5 Strengthen writing by planning, revising, editing or rewriting, focusing on what matters most for the purpose and audience.

SL.11-12.1.c Keep a discussion moving with questions that probe reasoning and evidence, and make sure the full range of views is heard.

SL.11-12.1.d Respond to different views, pull together what each side says, resolve conflicts where possible and name what still needs research.

Case 7 plan, continued

Standards, continued

- D2.Civ.10.9-12** Analyze how personal interests and perspectives affect the use of civic virtues, democratic principles and rights. In this case: Students analyze how personal perspectives shape views on constitutional rights.
- D2.Civ.12.9-12** Analyze how people use and challenge laws at different levels to address public issues. In this case: Students analyze how people use and challenge policies about school materials.
- D4.8.9-12** Use deliberative and democratic strategies and procedures to make decisions and act at school and in the community. In this case: Students apply democratic procedures by preparing input for a review.

Codes of ethics

- **ALA Code of Ethics:** Principle 2 (of 9)
- **Code of Ethics of the Education Profession:** Principle I: Commitment to the Student, item 2
- **Credo for Ethical Communication:** “We strive to understand and respect other communicators' intent...” (one of nine unnumbered principles)

Heat map

- ■ □ **Opener (page 126):** Medium
- □ □ **Key terms (pages 127 and 128):** Low

Heat map, continued

- □ □ **Look at the evidence (pages 132 and 133):** Low
- ■ □ **Key idea (pages 134 and 135):** Medium
- ■ □ **Sort the evidence (page 136):** Medium
- □ □ **Practice (page 137):** Low
- ■ □ **Your draft (page 140):** Medium
- □ □ **Check your work (pages 141 and 142):** Low

Try it at your school

Find your library’s reconsideration policy.

- Ask your school librarian how book challenges are handled
- Find the written policy on the district website
- Learn whether students can give input during a review
- If a review is happening, read the whole book before commenting

Who to ask: School librarian or media specialist, public library staff, school board clerk

Safety: Don’t post names of people who filed a challenge or who spoke at a meeting. Disagree with ideas, not individuals.

Sources

- Penguin, “Matilda by Roald Dahl: authorized extract,” No date listed

Sources, continued

- American Library Association, “Selection and Reconsideration Policy Toolkit: formal reconsideration,” No date listed
- American Library Association, “Selection and Reconsideration Policy Toolkit: selection criteria,” No date listed

Case 7: Did one complaint get the novel banned?

A group chat says one parent's complaint got a novel banned, so Mari and Gia check what the school library's notice says.

On your own Read What happened and underline the word in the group chat that may go too far. About 4 minutes.

Your role: You're the one who reads the library notice before anyone replies "banned." **New skill:** Find what stage a process has reached.

Gia, Mari and Sami talk around a table on a rooftop terrace at sunset.

What happened

On Thursday night, a message about a novel in the library at Anika's high school appears in a group chat. The message says one parent complained, so the novel is now banned and gone from the library. Gia replies that this is censorship.

On Friday, the school library posts a notice about the novel. Mari reads it and compares it with the group chat. Gia deletes her first reply, because she had not read the notice or the novel.

Your question: Is the novel really banned, and what can people who care about it do next?

Mari works the counter at the neighborhood bookshop. She switches between print and audio, and she is halfway through the novel on audio. Gia is planning a discussion at the bookshop. First, both of them want to know what stage the library's process has reached.

Pacing

Full chapter: 4 min.

Short on time: 3 min. Read What happened aloud.

Say this

"The chat says "banned." What would you need to see before you repeat that word?" — List answers on the board: stage, policy, who decides.

Watch for

Misconception: Students treat a complaint as a removal.

Listen for: "One complaint and it's gone." **Then:** Ask which document would show the book is gone. Write "Check the stage" on the board.

Support

- Read What happened aloud while students follow along.

Heat check

Medium. Book challenges can bring up students' political or religious views.

Cool-down: Say: "Today we check what happened, not who is right about the book."

Key terms

On your own Read each key term and its example, then write your first guess in the box. About 5 minutes.

Challenge A challenge is a formal request to remove or restrict a book or other library material.

En español: impugnación

In this case: A parent's request about a novel at Anika's school started a review. The novel stays available while the committee reads it.

Reconsideration policy A reconsideration policy is a library's written process for reviewing a challenge to a book.

En español: política de reconsideración

In this case: The library's notice follows district policy: a committee review, the selection criteria, written input by the 15th and an appeal.

Selection criteria Selection criteria are the written standards a library uses to decide which materials to include.

En español: criterios de selección

In this case: The committee judges the whole novel against the district's selection criteria. The input form asks which criteria your comment addresses.

Who is involved

Mari

Works the bookshop counter

"The chat says the book is gone from the library. The notice says it stays available during the review. Those can't both be true."



Gia

Planning a book discussion at the bookshop

"I called it censorship before I'd read the notice. Now I'm planning a discussion at the bookshop, so I'd better get this right."

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

✂ Short on time: skip this page.

💬 Say this

"Which key term names what the parent did, and which names what the committee will use?" — Wait for "challenge" and "selection criteria."

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students hear "challenge" as "ban." **Listen for:** "A challenge means they took it." **Then:** Reread the key idea: a challenge starts a review. On its own, it does not remove a book.

📖 Support

- Pair students who share a language to explain each term in their own words.
- Show the process as a flowchart: request, review, decision, appeal.
- **Cognates:** reconsideration (reconsideración), criteria (criterios), committee (comité), decision (decisión), appeal (apelación), process (proceso), novel (novela), district (distrito), censorship (censura).

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

🔑 Answer key

Any first guess is fine. Students return to it on the My take page.

Your first guess

Before you look at the evidence, what do you think happened to the novel?

My first guess is ___, because ___.

➤ My first guess is that the school removed the book quickly, because the chat reports it as already banned.

Notes

[illegible]

This page continues page 127. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 127.

Reading passage

Where is the book in the process?

On your own Read the passage. At each Stop and think box, pause and answer the question in your head or with a partner. About 5 minutes.

Words to know

- **Challenge:** A challenge is a formal request to remove or restrict a book or other library material.
- **Reconsideration policy:** A reconsideration policy is a library's written process for reviewing a challenge to a book.
- **Selection criteria:** Selection criteria are the written standards a library uses to decide which materials to include.
- **Claim:** A claim is a statement that something is true. You can check a claim with evidence.
- **Correction:** A correction is a public statement that replaces wrong information with accurate information.

The story: Two messages, two days

On Thursday night, a claim about a novel in the library at Anika's high school moves through a group chat. One parent complained, it says, so the novel has been banned and removed. Gia answers with the certainty of someone who cares about the freedom to read: "censorship, full stop." The reply fits her values. It does not fit the evidence, because there is no evidence in the chat yet.

The evidence arrives Friday, when the school library posts a notice. Mari, who works the bookshop counter, reads it against the chat. She is dyslexic and moves between print and audiobooks, and she is halfway through this novel on audio. She points out the contradiction plainly. The chat says the book is gone. The notice says it remains available during the review. Both cannot be true.

Gia deletes her first reply. She had not read the notice or the book. She is now organizing a discussion at the bookshop and wants it to be useful, which means getting people to the input form before the 15th with something to say. She also sets a boundary that many online arguments skip. Nobody goes after the parent who asked for the review, because that parent used the process too.

Your role is to read the library notice before anyone replies "banned."

? Stop and think. The chat collapsed a complaint, a temporary change and a final decision into one word. Why is that collapse so common?

Pacing

Reading: about 5 min (723 words). Short on time: read it aloud together, pausing at each Stop and think.

? Stop and think

1. **After “The story: Two messages, two days”:** The chat collapsed a complaint, a temporary change and a final decision into one word. Why is that collapse so common?
2. **After “Stages, not verdicts”:** What should a careful correction leave out, given what the notice does not say?
3. **After “Professional guidance, state law and the courts”:** How can someone oppose removing a book and still respect the parent who filed the challenge?

Stages, not verdicts

The new skill in this case is finding what stage a process has reached. It depends on two earlier ones. From Case 1, you go to the original source, here the library's notice. From Case 3, you know that a **correction** replaces wrong information with accurate information where people saw the mistake.

The notice describes a sequence. A request for reconsideration has been received. The title remains available during the review. A committee will read the full work and evaluate it against the district's selection criteria. Written input is due by the 15th. The committee's decision may be appealed. A **challenge** is a formal request to remove or restrict a book or other library material. It opens that sequence, but it does not end it. A **reconsideration policy** is a library's written process for reviewing a challenge to a book, and **selection criteria** are the written standards a library uses to decide which materials to include.

With the sequence in view, the chat's **claim** can be judged precisely. It collapses three different events into one: a complaint, a possible temporary change and a final decision. Only the first has happened. The notice also has gaps. It does not name the novel, list the committee members or quote the criteria, so a careful reply should not fill those in.

Mari's approach to the input form shows how to join the process rather than just comment on it. The form asks whether you have read the entire work and which criteria your input addresses, with a 300-word limit. She is finishing the book first. Her experience with books like this explains why she cares, but it is not the policy, so she plans to connect the two.

? Stop and think. What should a careful correction leave out, given what the notice does not say?

Professional guidance, state law and the courts

The American Library Association recommends that libraries adopt a formal reconsideration policy, and its model process has a committee read the whole work (American Library Association, updated January 2018). Its separate guidance on selection criteria explains how libraries evaluate resources (American Library Association, updated January 2018). That guidance is professional advice. Districts adopt their own policies, and states write their own laws. Colorado legislators advanced a bill to require clear reconsideration policies (Chalkbeat Colorado, February 10, 2025). In Tennessee, reporters found that a revised state law changed the review steps and that some books quietly left shelves (Chalkbeat Tennessee, September 17, 2024).

The constitutional question remains unsettled. A law-firm analysis explains that the Fifth Circuit treated public library book removals as government speech, creating a split with the Eighth Circuit (Cahill Gordon and Reindel, September 22, 2025). The answer to whether a removal is legal can depend on where you live.

This page continues page 129. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 129.

Professional guidance, state law and the courts, continued

Professional codes sit on both sides of Gia’s evolving view. The ALA code says, “We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources” (ALA Code of Ethics, 2021). The NCA credo asks communicators to “understand and respect other communicators’ intent before evaluating and responding to their messages” (NCA Credo for Ethical Communication, 2024). Holding both is the discipline this case asks for.

? **Stop and think.** How can someone oppose removing a book and still respect the parent who filed the challenge?

Sources

Real source | American Library Association | January 2018

Selection and Reconsideration Policy Toolkit: formal reconsideration

Real source | American Library Association | January 2018

Selection and Reconsideration Policy Toolkit: selection criteria

Real source | Chalkbeat Colorado | February 10, 2025

Colorado bill to curb school library book challenges clears first legislative hurdle

Real source | Chalkbeat Tennessee | September 17, 2024

Under stricter Tennessee law, some school library books quietly disappear

Real source | Cahill Gordon & Reindel LLP (**law-firm** client alert) | September 22, 2025

Fifth Circuit Holds That Government Speech Doctrine Applies to Public Library Book Removals, Creating Circuit Split With Eighth Circuit

Real source | American Library Association (ALA) | 2021

ALA Code of Ethics

Real source | National Communication Association (NCA) | 2024

Credo for Ethical Communication

This page continues page 129. The notes for both pages are on the sheet for page 129.

Look at the evidence

On your own Read the notice and the input form, and fill in both boxes for each one. About 8 minutes.

Evidence A | Library notice

Reconsideration notice, posted Friday by the school library

A request for reconsideration has been received for one title in the library collection. Under district policy, the title remains available during the review. A review committee will read the full work and evaluate it against the district's selection criteria. Written input may be submitted by the 15th. The committee's decision may be appealed.

Look closely: Which sentence tells you where the book is right now? Underline it.

What it shows

➤ A request, not a decision: a committee reads the full work and judges it by criteria.

What it leaves out

➤ The criteria themselves, the committee's members and what the request objects to.

Evidence B | Input form

Review committee input form, due the 15th

Name and role (student, parent, staff or community member). Have you read the entire work? Yes or No. Which selection criteria does your input address? Comments, 300 words maximum.

Look closely: Who can send input? What does the form ask before your comments?

What it shows

➤ Input is capped at 300 words, and the form asks which criteria it addresses.

What it leaves out

➤ How comments count in the decision, and the full list of criteria.

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

✂ Short on time: 6 min. Students fill in the Evidence A boxes only.

💬 Say this

“Find the sentence that says where the book is now. Read it aloud.” — Wait for “the title remains available during the review.”

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students treat a review as a ban in slow motion. **Listen for:** “They’re reviewing it, so it’s basically banned.” **Then:** Ask what the notice says comes after the review: a decision, then a possible appeal.

📄 Support

- Give each document on its own half-page with the key sentence enlarged.
- Offer the notice as a read-aloud.
- **Cognates:** reconsideration (reconsideración), criteria (criterios), committee (comité), decision (decisión), appeal (apelación), process (proceso), novel (novela), district (distrito), censorship (censura).

🔗 Stretch

- Ask why the form asks whether you read the entire work, and what that suggests about the criteria.

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

What is still missing from the evidence?

Notes

Key idea: book challenges

On your own Read the key idea and the code of ethics, then answer the question in the box. About 10 minutes.

A **challenge** is a formal request to remove or restrict a book or other library material. A challenge starts a review. On its own, it does not remove a book. A complaint, a temporary change and a final decision can happen at different times. Check which stage a process has reached before you repeat a claim.

A **reconsideration policy** is a library's written process for reviewing a challenge to a book. The American Library Association (ALA) recommends that libraries adopt one, and its example has a committee read the whole work. **Selection criteria** are the written standards a library uses to decide which materials to include. ALA's guidance is a professional recommendation, not a law. Each district's adopted policy and the applicable law govern its own process.

Whether removing a book breaks the law is a harder question. Federal courts disagree about how the First Amendment applies when a library removes a book. The answer can depend on where you live. Right now, the notice at Anika's school describes a review, and the novel is still available.

Professional standards

Real source | American Library Association (ALA)

ALA Code of Ethics: Principle 2 (of 9)

"We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources."

In plain words: Library workers who follow the ALA code support people's freedom to read and oppose censorship of library materials.

Question: The district notice says the title stays available during review. Does that match the group chat's claim that it's "gone"?

Your answer

The notice says ____, so ____.

➞ The notice says "the title remains available during the review," so the chat skips from a request to a removal that has not happened.

Case 7 | Key idea | Grades 11–12 educator edition

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

✂ Short on time: 8 min. Read the key idea and one In the news source only.

💬 Say this

"ALA's code says to resist efforts to censor library resources. Does keeping the book available during review fit that?" — Wait for evidence from the notice.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students treat the ALA code as a law.

Listen for: "The school is breaking the ALA law." **Then:** Say: "ALA's code is a framework for library workers. District policy and the applicable law govern the process."

📖 Support

- Read the quotation aloud. Point out the label: a real source, quoted word for word.

🔗 Stretch

- Use the NEA row. Ask how reading the whole work tests whether a reason to remove a book is reasonable.

🔥 Heat check

■ ■ □ **Medium.** The word "censorship" can start a debate about real books or groups.

Cool-down: Keep the talk on this notice. Ask what the notice says, not which side is right.

Notes

A state debated requiring clear reconsideration policies, showing a challenge is a process, not an instant ban.

A state law changed the review steps, so you have to check which rules and stage actually applied.

Sort the evidence

On your own Fill in the diagram to show who decides at each stage, which rules apply and where input goes. About 8 minutes.

Replace “banned” with the real chain of decisions. Who decides at each stage, which rules bind them, and where can a student’s input land?

Keep, restrict or remove the novel after review

Who decides

The school review committee, which reads the whole work and votes
District-level appeal and, finally, the school board

Under which rule

District reconsideration policy and selection criteria
State law and unsettled First Amendment case law (Pico had no majority opinion)

Who lives with it

Your way in

➤ Written input on the committee form by the 15th

Whose perspective is missing?

Whose view is missing from these documents? What would you ask them?

The view that is missing is _____. I would ask _____.

➤ The committee’s view is missing. I would ask how it will weigh written input against the selection criteria, and who decides an appeal.

Pacing

Full chapter: 8 min.

✂ Short on time: skip this page.

Say this

“Replace “banned” with the real chain of decisions. Who decides first?” — Model the first decider together: the review committee.

Watch for

Misconception: Students name the parent as the decider.

Listen for: “The parent decided.” **Then:** Point to the diagram: the parent can ask, the committee decides and the board hears appeals.

Support

- Let students write D, R or A (decider, rule, affected) before they write sentences.

Heat check

Medium. The missing-perspective question can invite personal reasons a book matters.

Cool-down: No student has to share why a book matters to them. Answer about the characters.

Practice: choose a response

On your own Choose what to check first and explain why, then fix the two marked lines. About 5 minutes.

A group chat says, “One parent complained, so that novel is banned.” What should you check first?

☒ **A** Find the library’s policy and where the review stands.

☐ **B** Ask everyone in the chat whether they like the book.

☐ **C** Read the passage people are upset about, then decide.

Why I chose it

➤ **A. Only the policy and the notice can show the stage. B confuses popularity with a decision, and C skips the whole-work standard.**

Improve a draft

A student’s first draft

This is so messed up. One parent complains and **1** now the whole school can’t read the book?? That’s literally censorship and it’s illegal because of the First Amendment. **2** Whoever complained is a terrible person and should mind their own business. Everyone should go to the board meeting and yell at them until they put it back. Books like this are the only ones some of us actually finish. I read part of it last year and it was actually really good. I’m so done with this school honestly.

Rewrite each marked phrase so it says only what the evidence supports.

Rewrite phrase 1

➤ **The novel stays available while the committee judges the whole work.**

Rewrite phrase 2

➤ **The parent used the policy. Our input should answer the criteria, not the person.**

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 5 min.

✂ Short on time: skip this page.

💬 Say this

“The chat says one parent got the novel banned. What do you check first?” — Hold a quick vote before any discussion.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students choose to read the disputed passage and decide. **Listen for:** “Just read the bad part.” **Then:** Point to the notice: the committee reads the full work.

📖 Support

- Read the three options aloud before students choose.

🔥 Heat check

■□□ Low.

➤ Answer key

A revised version: Update on the novel: it isn’t banned. A parent filed a reconsideration request, which starts a review under the district’s policy. The book stays on the shelf while a committee reviews the whole work against the selection criteria, and there’s an appeal step after the decision. If you care about it, you can send written input to the committee by the 15th; the librarian has the form. Tie it to the criteria and your own reading, and please don’t go after the parent who asked. People are allowed to use the process too.

Other notes on the draft:

- “it’s illegal because of the First Amendment” The law here is unsettled and varies. Don’t claim a verdict.

Grades 11–12

Your task

On your own Read the steps and fill in the planner boxes before you start your draft. About 10 minutes.

Write a briefing on the law and policy of school library challenges for student council.

Use: Pico summary, ALA toolkit and a district policy.

You'll make: Briefing, 450–550 words

Time: 60 minutes

- 1 Reread Evidence A and mark each stage the notice describes.
- 2 Fill in the chart: which rules are law, which are policy and which are guidance.
- 3 Read the Pico summary and note why it has no majority opinion.
- 4 Note one reason state rules differ, using the In the news sources.
- 5 Draft three core paragraphs of your briefing in the Your draft boxes.
- 6 Finish the briefing on lined paper, 450 to 550 words, with a participation route.
- 7 Check your briefing with the questions on the Check your work page.

Prefer typing? Scan to open the online workspace.

Law, policy and guidance

Law: ____ Policy: ____ Guidance: ____

➡ **Law:** the First Amendment and state law. **Policy:** the district's reconsideration policy and criteria. **Guidance:** ALA's toolkit, which is not law.

Case 7 | Your task | Grades 11–12 educator edition

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

✂ Short on time: 10 min.

💬 Say this

“Sort every rule in this case into one of three bins: law, policy or guidance.” — Do the ALA toolkit together first.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Students say Pico banned book removals. **Listen for:** “Pico made it illegal to pull books.” **Then:** Ask how many justices joined the main opinion. With no majority, courts still disagree.

📎 Support

- Law/policy/guidance chart
- Model briefing
- Model sentence: “Courts disagree about how the First Amendment applies to library removals.”

🔗 Stretch

- Explain why Pico's plurality leaves the law unsettled and why state rules now vary.

📋 Standards

Common Core: RI.11-12.1; W.11-12.2; W.11-12.5; SL.11-12.1.c; SL.11-12.1.d.

C3 Framework: D2.Civ.10.9-12; D2.Civ.12.9-12; D4.8.9-12. The Case plan sheet gives each code in plain words.

What Pico left open

- Pico (1982) had no majority opinion, so courts still disagree about how it applies to removals.

Written input on the committee form by the 15th, tied to the criteria

[illegible]

07 Answer key

- Distinguishes law, policy and guidance
- Represents Pico accurately
- Neutral in tone
- Recommends a student participation route

Your draft

On your own Write your draft in the boxes, using your planner from the page before. About 25 minutes.

The situation and the stage

👉 A group chat says a novel at Anika’s school was banned after one complaint. The library’s notice says otherwise. A request for reconsideration was filed, and the title remains available during the review. A committee will read the full work against the district’s selection criteria. The decision may be appealed.

Law, policy and guidance

👉 Three kinds of rules apply. The district’s adopted policy and state law govern this process. The American Library Association recommends that libraries adopt reconsideration policies, but its toolkit is professional guidance, not law. Above both sits the First Amendment, and there the law is unsettled.

Why the law is unsettled

👉 *Island Trees School District v. Pico* (1982) had no majority opinion, so it did not settle how the First Amendment applies to book removals. Federal courts still disagree. A 2025 law-firm alert reports a split between the Fifth and Eighth Circuits over public library book removals. State laws also differ, so the answer can depend on where you live.

Case 7 | Your draft | Grades 11–12 educator edition

🕒 Pacing

Full chapter: 25 min.

✂ Short on time: 25 min.

💬 Say this

“Your reader is on student council. What can they do before the 15th?” — Ask for one sentence that names the participation route.

👁 Watch for

Misconception: Briefings predict a court outcome. **Listen for:** “The courts will force them to keep it.” **Then:** Ask which source predicts that. None does.

🔥 Heat check

■ ■ □ **Medium.** The legal debate can turn to real books and political groups.

Cool-down: Say: “We explain the rules. We don’t rule on any real book.” Return to the chart.

👉 Answer key

What to notice in the sample:

1. States the stage from the notice.
2. Separates guidance from law.
3. Represents Pico accurately.
4. Explains variation without predicting an outcome.

Check your work

On your own Answer the Check your work questions, mark your level in each rubric row and write one change you made. About 6 minutes.

Do you distinguish law, policy and guidance?	☒ Yes ☐ No
Do you represent Pico accurately, including the lack of a majority opinion?	☒ Yes ☐ No
Is your tone neutral?	☒ Yes ☐ No
Do you recommend a student participation route?	☒ Yes ☐ No

How your work is scored

Mark one box in each row.

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
Evidence	☐ Repeats “banned.”	☐ Mentions a complaint without stage.	☐ States the current stage from the policy.	☐ States stage, next steps and input route.
Reasoning	☐ Declares a legal verdict.	☐ Treats outrage as the argument.	☐ Separates complaint, review and decision.	☐ Connects input to criteria and notes legal uncertainty.
Audience & purpose	☐ Attacks people.	☐ Rallies without direction.	☐ Gives a useful participation route.	☐ Invites participation while respecting other readers and the parent.
Revision	☐ No change.	☐ Tone only.	☐ Corrects the stage and removes attacks.	☐ Explains how each change helps the chat act accurately.

Pacing

Full chapter: 6 min.

 Short on time: 3 min. Collect briefings and score them with the rubric yourself.

Say this

“Mark your level honestly. Then make one change and say why.” — Ask for one corrected stage or one removed attack.

Watch for

Misconception: Students keep a legal verdict in their reply.

Listen for: “It’s illegal, period.” **Then:** Point to the Reasoning row: the law here is unsettled and varies.

Heat check

 Low.

Answer key

How to assess: The briefing is scored for the law-policy-guidance distinction, an accurate account of Pico’s plurality, neutral tone and a concrete participation route.

Proficient looks like:

- **Evidence:** States the current stage from the policy.
- **Reasoning:** Separates complaint, review and decision.
- **Audience & purpose:** Gives a useful participation route.
- **Revision:** Corrects the stage and removes attacks.

This image shows a single page of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

Questions to discuss

On your own Write a short answer to each question, then complete the sentence frames below. About 10 minutes.

- 1 Whose reading experience is missing from the crew’s discussion of the novel?

➤ Readers at Anika’s school are missing, including the family that filed the request. Mari and Gia are discussing a book neither of them has finished.

- 2 Gia says nobody should go after the parent who asked for the review. Why might that matter for her bookshop discussion?

➤ Gia wants a discussion that helps people write input tied to the criteria. Attacking the parent adds a target but no reason the committee can weigh.

- 3 How does calling the same action a “review,” a “restriction” or a “ban” change what people think happened?

➤ “Review” names a process, “restriction” a partial limit and “ban” a final removal. Only “review” matches the notice.

My take

My claim: ____.

➤ My claim: the chat skipped three stages, so a reply should name the stage and the deadline.

The best evidence is ____, because ____.

➤ The best evidence is the notice, because it describes a review, criteria, input and an appeal.

⌚ Pacing

Full chapter: 10 min.

✂ Short on time: 5 min. Use question 3 as an exit ticket.

💬 Say this

“Answer with a detail from the notice or the form, not a feeling about the parent.” — Post the question numbers and hear one answer per question.

➤ Stretch

- Ask how Gia’s bookshop invitation could name the book, the stage and the deadline without naming the parent.
- Going further: Find the institution, its written policy and the decision process before you make a claim about rights. Which of the three does the district notice tell you about?
- Going further: What problem does a proposed restriction on a book claim to solve? Which readers’ experiences or other options are missing from that proposal?
- Going further: Design a library notice that explains where a book review stands, and write a short guide for interviewing a librarian. Test whether a student can name the next document to ask for.
- Going further: Ask your school librarian how book challenges are handled. Find the written policy on the district website, and learn whether students can give input during a review. If a review is happening, read the whole book before you comment.
- Find your district’s reconsideration policy and summarize its stages
- Research how your state’s laws about school library materials have changed recently

My take, continued

Someone who disagrees might say ____.

Someone who disagrees might say a review can discourage reading while it runs.

The limit of the evidence is ____.

- The limit of the evidence is that we don't know the criteria or what the request says.

I would change my mind if ____.

☒ I would change my mind if the district's policy allowed removal during a review.

Notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. On the left side, there is a vertical black margin line. The top-left corner of the page is rounded. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

This page continues page 143.

Heat check

■ ■ □ Question 1: Medium. Students may feel pressed to share why a book matters to them personally.

Cool-down: Say: “Answer about the characters, not yourself.” Nobody has to share a personal reason.

Question 2 cool-down: Say: “We discuss the request, not the person.” Return to what the notice says.

Talk about this case at home

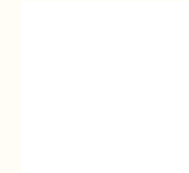
Case 7: Did one complaint get the novel banned?

In this case, a group chat claims one parent's complaint got a novel banned from a school library. Your student compared that claim with the library's notice and learned how a book review works.

Questions to talk about

- 1 What is the difference between a book being reviewed and a book being removed?
- 2 Where could someone find out how a library decides which books to keep?
- 3 How can people disagree about a book without attacking each other?

Nobody needs to share personal stories or private information to talk about this case.



See the case online.

Case 7 | Talk about this case at home | Grades 11–12 educator edition

Pacing

At home: this page takes no class time.

Say this

“Bring this page home, or read it with someone you trust.”
— Nobody needs to share their views on any real book.