

How I Would Get My Friends Hooked on Books

By: Jason Romero

It is true to say that many kids, including some of my friends, are reluctant readers. We need to find a way to get them motivated to read. I am a reluctant reader myself, and I know how frustrating it can be to be told to read a book and find it boring. The unfortunate truth about some kids is that when they hear that something is forbidden, they become intrigued by it. That is the foundation of my idea on how to get kids hooked on books.

My idea for how to do this is to use a form of reverse psychology and introduce them to classic books that may have been unfortunately banned from some libraries. Books like The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn and One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest have been prohibited for silly reasons. I could tell a friend that I am reading a book that has been banned somewhere because it has adult content and some bad words, for example. Then I would show them my copy of The Catcher in the Rye. Or I could tell them that I am reading a book that "promotes disobedience towards adults" (James and the Giant Peach), or one that "glorifies witchcraft" (Harry Potter).

Personally, one book that I enjoyed reading is The Giver, which has been excluded from some libraries for mentioning suicide, and some thought it was too twisted. When I was younger, I loved the book A Light in the Attic. I was surprised to learn that some libraries banned it, saying it promotes disrespect, horror, and violence. Younger kids may be curious about a book that has the word "fart" in it 24 times (Walter the Farting Dog). Telling students about the histories of these books may spark interest in reading them.

Along with telling my peers about these "bad" books, I could create a list about the criticisms of the books. I would not mention the titles until a student asks about it. Telling teachers and librarians about my list and suggesting they share it with their students without it being a mandatory assignment may also help get the word out. Doing this may get some kids curious to find out more

about the books. After kids have enjoyed reading these books, hopefully they will become more open-minded to other books. I believe this idea would interest students and teachers, and would catch on as a way to get kids hooked on books.