

Quarter 3 FY2010 up through March 12 Compared to Quarter 3 FY09 up through March 25

By Millie Davis

During Quarter 3 FY2010 up through March 12, NCTE has fielded about the same number of challenges that it did a year ago during the same time period. However both years put together don't come close to matching the 17 challenges we experienced during Quarter 3 of FY08. I have no predictions as to the slowdown in challenges except that I'm certain it's not for lack of texts being challenged—both the [American Library Association](#) and the [National Coalition Against Censorship](#) (NCAC) continue to report significant challenge activity.

This quarter, in fact, NCTE joined NCAC in two letters in support of challenged works: Judy Blume's *Forever* which was challenged in a school library in Florida and a play of the *Emperor's New Clothes*, which was cancelled in an elementary school in Washington.

Dismaying is the fact that for at least two out of the seven challenges, the school had no policy for handling challenges to materials. Without such a policy, materials selected by teachers and librarians are unprotected from challenges from anyone about anything and resolutions to those challenges are totally at the discretion of the school's or district's administration—simply put, the text doesn't get a fair trial.

Below is a chart comparing the Quarter 3 FY2010 and the Quarter 3 FY2009 challenges and numbers of challenged texts. A few things to know as you compare the numbers are the following:

- Number of challenges = number of individuals who reported challenges.
- Number of works challenged is usually higher because often challenges involve more than one work.
- The bimonthly *SLATE Newsletter* features Censorship Challenge Reports by quarter. See <http://www.ncte.org/action/slate> .

January 2010	February 2010	March 2010	Q3 FY2010 Totals
2 challenges / 2 texts / signed on 1 letter of support with NCAC	3 challenges / 3 texts / signed on 1 letter of support with NCAC	2 challenges / 3 texts	7 challenges / 8 texts / signed on 2 letters of support with NCAC
January 2009	February 2009	March 2009	Q3 FY2009 Totals
1 challenge / 1 text	3 challenges / 3 texts / 1 interview with student doing an I-Search paper on challenged books.	2 challenges / 2 texts	6 challenges / 6 texts / 1 interview with student doing an I-Search paper on challenged books

Listing of 3rd Quarter Challenges Reported January-March 12, 2010

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Mark Twain (11th grade honor students, TN). Challenge to teaching methods. Sent resources.

The Bluest Eye, Toni Morrison (10,11,12 English class, MN). Graphic scenes. Sent rationales and resources.

Emperor's New Clothes, (elementary school play cancelled, WA). Not supportive of the Human Dignity policy, the anti-harassment policy, and Peace Goals. Signed on NCAC letter.

Flight, Sherman Alexie (10,11,12 English class, MN). Graphic scenes. Sent rationales and resources.

Forever, Judy Blume (school library, FL). Signed on NCAC letter.

Gaviotas: A Village to Reinvent the World, Alan Weisman (6th grade literary teacher blacked out words in required reading, CO). Parent questioned teacher's censoring book. Sent resources to parent.

How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents, Julia Alvarez (Senior AP class, IL). Sent rationale and resources.

Looking for Alaska, John Green (12th grade general English class, OH). Sent rationale and resources.

The Lords of Discipline, Pat Conroy (9th grade summer reading list, GA). Sent rationale and resources.

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