

Teacher's Guide for *Free To Speak – The Speech We Hate*

Vocabulary

Censorship - the suppression or prohibition of any parts of books, films, news, etc., that are considered obscene, politically unacceptable, or a threat to security

Expression - the process of making known one's thoughts or feelings through any medium, such as speech, writing, or art

Free speech - the right to express any opinions without censorship or restraint

Freedom of expression - the right to express any opinions without censorship or restraint

Obscenity - the state or quality of being obscene, offensive, or disgusting by accepted standards of morality and decency

Offensive - causing someone to feel deeply hurt, upset, or angry

Satire - the use of humor, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule to expose and criticize people's stupidity or vices, particularly in the context of contemporary politics and other topical issues

Sensitivity - the quality or condition of being sensitive; having or showing empathy or a high degree of awareness and understanding of the feelings of others

Taboo - a social or cultural custom prohibiting or restricting a particular practice or forbidding association with a particular person, place, or thing

Critical Thinking Questions

These questions can be used for group discussions or can be responded to in writing. Select the questions that you find most relevant to your curriculum or allow your students to choose those they wish to discuss.

1. How might the banning of "Rafiki" reflect the broader cultural and political attitudes towards LGBTQ+ rights in Kenya?
2. What ethical considerations should be taken into account when balancing the protection of free speech and artistic expression with cultural and traditional values?
3. Can humor be an effective tool for changing people's minds about controversial or taboo topics? If so, how?
4. How has humor been used historically to challenge authority and prevailing social norms?
5. How did the TV show *All in the Family* challenge prevailing norms and redefine popular culture, and what role did humor play in enabling the show to address controversial

topics such as race, gender, and sexuality in a way that was both entertaining and thought-provoking?

6. Does the power of humor lie in its ability to provoke, or in its ability to bring people together? Why?
7. Are there certain subjects that are off-limits for humor? If so, what are they and why? If so, who should determine what subjects are off-limits?
8. Is humor an effective way to address serious topics such as war, discrimination, and social inequality? Why or why not?
9. To what extent should artists and entertainers be responsible for the social and political impact of their work? Should they be held to a higher standard than other members of society?
10. What are the potential consequences of college students becoming hostile towards comedians?
11. How can society determine the line between free speech and obscenity, particularly in the arts? Who should decide and why?
12. How do societal and cultural differences impact the interpretation of humor, obscenity, and free speech? Can a consensus ever be reached on these issues?
13. Should the government or private institutions regulate what content is considered acceptable for public consumption?
14. What are the ethical implications of book banning and censorship, and how do they impact free speech rights in society?
15. What is the role of censorship in society, and what are some potential consequences of overly restrictive censorship laws?
16. How does the Tennessee Youth Coalition's activism for free speech compare to historical examples of youth-led social movements?
17. To what extent do the actions of the Island Tree School District in the Pico case reflect a lack of respect for intellectual freedom and diversity of thought?
18. What is the role of parents in determining what their children should read in school, and how does this intersect with issues of academic freedom and individual rights?
19. How can schools and communities balance the need to protect young people from harmful or inappropriate material with the importance of fostering critical thinking and intellectual freedom?
20. What are some of the underlying values and beliefs that drive arguments for and against book banning, and how do they reflect broader cultural and political trends?
21. How does the restriction of free expression in colleges and universities affect academic and artistic discourse?

22. What responsibilities do artists and academics have in promoting free expression and challenging censorship?
23. In what ways can a university's commitment to free speech be compromised by its need to maintain its brand and secure funding?
24. What is the impact of censorship on marginalized artists and academics?
25. What are the ethical considerations of suppressing offensive speech and ideas in universities?
26. How does censorship of art or academic work affect the development of critical thinking and creativity in students?
27. What are the consequences of restricting exposure to opposing perspectives in higher education?
28. How can universities strike a balance between promoting free expression and protecting students from harmful or offensive speech?
29. How does the media influence the way we perceive controversial issues, and how can we become more critical consumers of media?
30. What can we learn from historical examples of censorship and artistic suppression, and how can we apply these lessons to modern-day debates about free speech and artistic expression?

Socratic Seminar

Adapt this model as best suits your situation and time limits.

Topic: Censorship and the arts

Preparation: Participants will watch the video, ***Free To Speak - The Speech We Hate***, read and review primary documents, then respectfully discuss and debate the ideas surrounding free speech as it applies to politics and societies in general.

Structure: Circle discussion with facilitator asking guiding questions.

Introduction (10 minutes): The facilitator will introduce the topic and provide an overview of the readings and primary sources. Participants will briefly introduce themselves and share their initial thoughts or questions related to the topic.

- Explain that the seminar will be divided into four rounds of discussion, each with a guiding question.
- Emphasize the importance of listening to and respectfully considering other people's perspectives.
- Encourage participants to support their arguments and perspectives with evidence from the readings and primary sources.

- Review the rules of engagement and remind participants to focus on the ideas presented, rather than the individuals presenting them.
- Be prepared to adjust the discussion questions or format as needed to ensure that the conversation remains focused and productive.

Round 1 (15 minutes): Guiding question: What is the role of censorship in protecting society's values?

Round 2 (15 minutes): Guiding question: How does censorship impact the representation of marginalized groups?

Round 3 (15 minutes): Guiding question: How do cultural differences impact the interpretation of free speech and obscenity?

Round 4 (15 minutes): Guiding question: Should all forms of art be considered appropriate for public display or consumption? Who should decide what is or is not appropriate?

Conclusion (10 minutes):

- Summarize the key points made during the discussion and highlight any areas of consensus or disagreement.
- Encourage participants to continue to reflect on the topic and consider other perspectives.
- Thank participants for their engagement and thoughtful contributions.

Primary Documents

Sources are suggestions and the seminar guide should be thoughtful as to which sources are offered to their particular group.

The U.S. Constitution, Bill of Rights, particularly the First Amendment

<https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution-transcript>

<https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/bill-of-rights-transcript>

Campbell v. Acuff-Rose Music, Inc. Supreme Court Case

<https://www.oyez.org/cases/1993/92-1292>

Board of Education, Island Trees Union Free School District No. 26 v. Pico by Pico

<https://www.oyez.org/cases/1981/80-2043>

Kahiu v. Mutua

<https://globalfreedomofexpression.columbia.edu/cases/kahiu-v-mutua/>

Lysistrata – Aristophanes | Summary, Characters & Analysis | Classical Literature

https://ancient-literature.com/greece_aristophanes_lysistrata/

English Translation of Lysistrata

<https://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Greek/Lysistrata.php>