

Banned in the USA: The Growing Movement to Censor Books in Schools – key findings

PEN America, September 2022

What is a Book Ban?

PEN America defines a school book ban as any action taken against a book based on its content and as a result of parent or community challenges, administrative decisions, or in response to direct or threatened action by lawmakers or other governmental officials, that leads to a previously accessible book being either completely removed from availability to students, or where access to a book is restricted or diminished.

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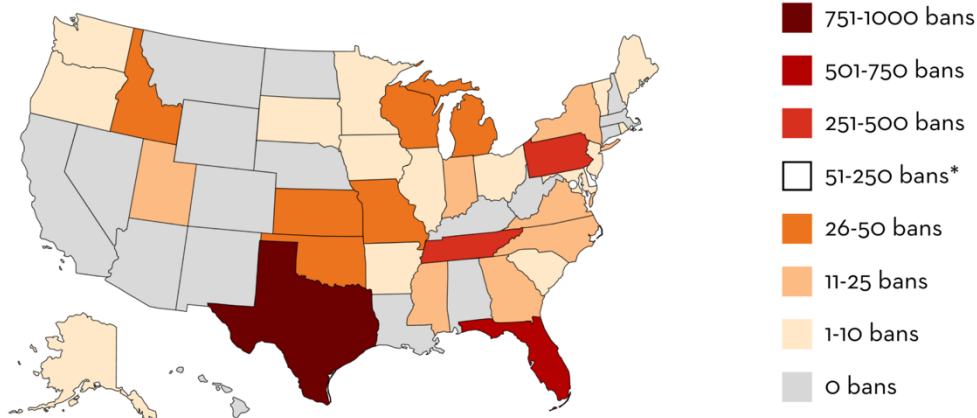
It is important to recognize that books available in schools, whether in a school or classroom library, or as part of a curriculum, were selected by librarians and educators as part of the educational offerings to students. Book bans occur when those choices are overridden by school boards, administrators, teachers, or even politicians, on the basis of a particular book's content. School book bans take varied forms, and can include prohibitions on books in libraries or classrooms, as well as a range of other restrictions, some of which may be temporary. Book removals that follow established processes may still improperly target books on the basis of content pertaining to race, gender, or sexual orientation, invoking concerns of equal protection in education.

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School Book Bans by State

July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022



Data from PEN America Index of School Book Bans, July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022.

Created with mapchart.net

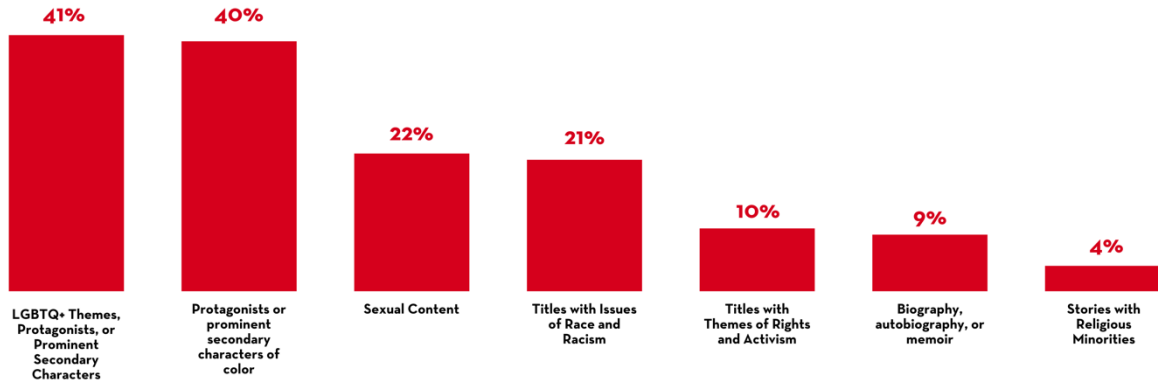
*There are no states with 51-250 bans

Subject Matter of Banned Content

By Percentage of Unique Banned Titles, July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022



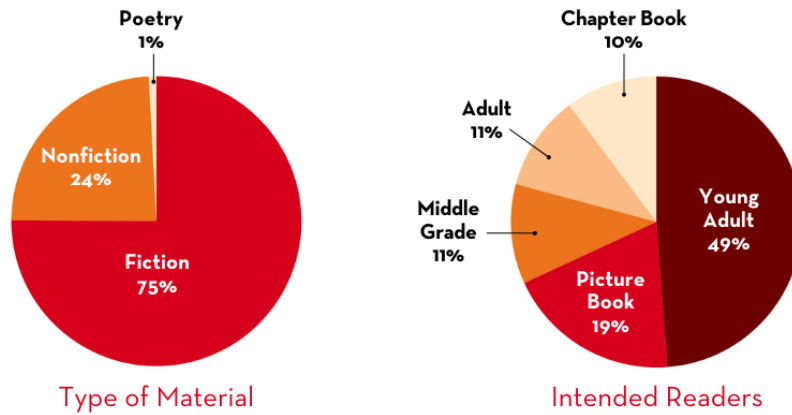
Note: many titles contain more than one type of content.



Data from PEN America Index of School Book Bans, July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022.

Types of Books Banned

By Percentage of Unique Banned Titles, July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022



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