

# *Think Like the Banned*

**Title:** *And Tango Makes Three*

**Author:** Justin Richardson and Peter Parnell

**Publication Date:** 2005

1. *What is the title, author, publication date, and plot (in 1-2 sentences) of this picture book?*

**Sarina P., 11<sup>th</sup> Grade:** *And Tango Makes Three* by Justin Richardson and Peter Parnell, 2005. *And Tango Makes Three* is about the first penguin in the Central Park Zoo with two dads.

2. *Were you aware of the existence of this book prior to starting this project?*

**Sarina P., 11<sup>th</sup> Grade:** I'd heard about the story, vaguely.

3. *This book was challenged and/or banned in America frequently enough for it to be included in The Top 100 Challenged Books Lists (between 1990-2021) compiled by the American Library Association. Why do you think this book was targeted?*

**Sarina P., 11<sup>th</sup> Grade:** Because people are homophobic.

4. *Think like a Book Prosecution Lawyer: If you were arguing in favor of banning this book, what would your argument be?*

**Sarina P., 11<sup>th</sup> Grade:** "This is going to make kids gay. Penguins can't talk, so how do you even know they're gay? Stop pushing an agenda."

5. *Think like a Book Defense Lawyer: If you were arguing against banning this book, what would your argument be?*

**Sarina P., 11<sup>th</sup> Grade:** "First of all, I doubt that simply knowing that same-sex couples exist is going to turn kids gay. Also, you're talking about the 'influence on the children' as if the book is trying to convince children to take hard-core drugs, when it is literally about penguins in love. If a story about a penguin couple raising their penguin kid is so offensive to you, you may need to do some self reflection."

6. *The contents of this book may be inflammatory to some people. Do you think the information/plot of the book is presented in an unbiased way, or do you feel like it is pushing an agenda (if so, is it a positive or negative agenda)?*

**Sarina P., 11<sup>th</sup> Grade:** The book was probably created with at least one goal being to normalize gay couples. Although this may technically be an agenda, the author is only using a true story and isn't trying to manipulate the facts in any way, so it doesn't seem morally wrong to me.

7. *This book presents information that may be useful and uplifting for some people. Can you cite any positive information or messages in the book?*

**Sarina P., 11<sup>th</sup> Grade:** A positive message is that gay couples can be good parents.

8. *Children's picture books are typically written for 2 to 8 year olds. One of the most frequent reasons children's picture books are challenged or banned in the United States is that they are considered to be "Unsuited for Age Group." What age group do you think this book is appropriate for?*

**Sarina P., 11<sup>th</sup> Grade:** 3 and up.

9. *Think about the picture books you read as a child: Would this book fit into the themes of what you read back then, or would it stand out as an anomaly?*

**Sarina P., 11<sup>th</sup> Grade:** I don't remember reading books exactly like this but I don't think it would have stood out, at least not in a negative way.

*10. Pretend you are a Parent: If you were in a library, would you pick out this book and read it to you your child; why or why not? Explain your answer.*

**Sarina P., 11<sup>th</sup> Grade:** Yes, it's really cute and explains gay relationships in a wholesome way.