

Think Like the Banned

Title: *Bad Kitty*

Author: Nick Bruel

Publication Date: 2005

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

Dasun A., 9th Grade: “Bad kitty series” was written by Nick Bruel October 1, 2005. In the “Bad Kitty” story, a kitten named “Kitty” is a normal cat until her owners fail to bring home her favorite foods, instead giving her healthy foods and vegetables. She goes savage and wrecks the home until her owners bring home her favorite foods.

Sabrina P., 11th Grade: *Bad Kitty* by Nick Bruel (November 2010). A hungry kitty gets mad because her family runs out of cat food and has only vegetables and other healthy food, so she starts being very naughty. Then they come home with food for her and she starts being nice.

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

Dasun A., 9th Grade: I was aware that this book and other books in the series existed prior to writing this as I read it when I was in grade school. I also own some of these books.

Sabrina P., 11th Grade: Yes.

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?*

Dasun A., 9th Grade: I assume this was targeted due to the actions Kitty causes when she doesn’t get her favorite foods and things. Many of the things she did could have been considered as a bad influence to children.

Sabrina P., 11th Grade: It encourages bad behavior by showing the cat doing terrible things in a funny way.

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

Dasun A., 9th Grade: I would compose an argument saying “Bad Kitty” could influence children in a bad way and could cause them to do things similar to Kitty if they don’t get their way.

Sabrina P., 11th Grade: "This shouldn't be shown to children because they'll pick up on the deviant behavior of the cat and they'll stop listening to their parents and other authority figures."

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

Dasun A., 9th Grade: I would argue that the book doesn’t actually influence children to do bad things when they don’t get what they want, instead shows children what happens when you act like Kitty.

Sabrina P., 11th Grade: "I don't think kids will take this book that seriously. If it negatively influences some kids, that should be up to the parents' individual discretion to know what their kids are reading and discuss it with them, and it should not be removed from the library as a whole."

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)?*

Dasun A., 9th Grade: I feel as if the book is presented in an unbiased way.

Sabrina P., 11th Grade: No, I don't see an agenda here.

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?*

Dasun A., 9th Grade: I wasn't able to find any positive information or messages in this book.

Sabrina P., 11th Grade: The bad kitty does eventually fix her behavior, make amends, and apologize.

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 appropriate for?

Dasun A., 9th Grade: I would say that this book is appropriate for all ages above 2, the book is colorful and able to give joy to children.

Sabrina P., 11th Grade: 5 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?

Dasun A., 9th Grade: This book would fit into the themes of what I read back as a child.

Sabrina P., 11th Grade: Yes, I read similar books.

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

Dasun A., 9th Grade: I would pick this book out to read to a child as it looks colorful and fun. I think some adults should read a book instead of letting little kids read by themselves. After reading these books adults should talk with the kids and explain that the things "kitty" is doing is not acceptable.

Sabrina P., 11th Grade: Yes, depending on how well-behaved my child is. I would read it to my kid, but would make sure to emphasize not to be like bad kitty if my child was a rebellious type. It's a fun book.

BONUS QUESTION: Can you think of another book that you have read (picture book or novel) that contains the same themes as this book?

Sabrina P., 11th Grade: Yes, it's similar to the Skippyjon Jones series.