

# *Think Like the Banned*

**Title:** *Draw Me a Star*

**Author:** Eric Carle

**Publication Date:** 1992

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

**Austin C., 8<sup>th</sup> Grade:** Draw Me a Star by Eric Carle. Its publication date was on February 2, 1998, and it's about an artist drawing different things.

**Sarina P., 11<sup>th</sup> Grade:** Draw Me a Star by Eric Carle (1992). It's about an artist who is asked to draw things, and how he creates his own world.

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

**Austin C., 8<sup>th</sup> Grade:** No, I did not.

**Sarina P., 11<sup>th</sup> Grade:** No.

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?*

**Austin C., 8<sup>th</sup> Grade:** It has images of a naked man and woman. Some parents and people might've considered this inappropriate and unsuitable to be a children's book.

**Sarina P., 11<sup>th</sup> Grade:** When asked to draw a couple, he draws imagery of naked people.

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

**Austin C., 8<sup>th</sup> Grade:** It is unsuitable to be a children's book because it contains images of a naked man and woman, which is inappropriate.

**Sarina P., 11<sup>th</sup> Grade:** "Kids shouldn't be exposed to naked bodies. They're way too young to see things that are considered sexual in our society."

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

**Austin C., 8<sup>th</sup> Grade:** The images of the nude people are not graphic, and the book does not give any inappropriate ideas or use inappropriate wording.

**Sarina P., 11<sup>th</sup> Grade:** "There's nothing inherently sexual about the human body. It's just what we've made it into as a society. Also, it's not graphically drawn and the genitals are abstract."

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)?*

**Austin C., 8<sup>th</sup> Grade:** I think it's presented in an unbiased way because I think the author wanted to use the raw form of the couple, but didn't have inappropriate intentions.

**Sarina P., 11<sup>th</sup> Grade:** There is no agenda except to normalize the human body, which should be positive.

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?*

**Austin C., 8<sup>th</sup> Grade:** Yes, I can. "It was a warm sun" (Carle 7). "It was a lovely tree" (Carle 8). "It was a good star" (Carle 16). These all describe that many aspects of the world are beautiful and should be appreciated.

**Sarina P., 11<sup>th</sup> Grade:** It encourages creativity and artistry.

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?*

**Austin C., 8<sup>th</sup> Grade:** I think this is appropriate for children because the controversial images aren't graphic, and the idea of the book is relevant.

**Sarina P., 11<sup>th</sup> Grade:** 2 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?*

**Austin C., 8<sup>th</sup> Grade:** I think it would fit into the themes of picture books I read back then, because many of the picture books were abstract, and this one wouldn't differ much.

**Sarina P., 11<sup>th</sup> Grade:** Yes, it would. I read other Eric Carle 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.*

**Austin C., 8<sup>th</sup> Grade:** I would because I do not think the book's idea itself is inappropriate. Even though some certain images might be considered unsuitable by some people, I think they're okay because they aren't graphic and are used for the purpose of transmitting a positive message.

**Sarina P., 11<sup>th</sup> Grade:** Sure, I didn't think the nudity was particularly bad and I'd like to encourage creativity in my hypothetical children.

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

**Austin C., 8<sup>th</sup> Grade:** No, I cannot.