

# *Think Like the Banned*

**Title:** *Jacob's New Dress*  
**Author:** Sarah and Ian Hoffman  
**Publication Date:** 2014

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:** Jacob's New Dress by Sarah and Ian Hoffman (2014). A boy named Jacob likes to wear dresses when he and his friends play dress-up at school. Another boy named Christopher thinks that the fact that Jacob wears dresses is weird and dresses should be for girls only.

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

**Sarina P., 11<sup>th</sup> Grade:** No, but I've heard of similar books.

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:** Some people probably thought it would encourage boys to break gender roles and destroy masculinity.

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 book is trying to undo traditional masculine values and turn young boys into women. I miss the days of real men when we would do things like go to war and colonize. #merica

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:** Thanks for your valued input, Kyle. I'm terribly sorry that the snowflakes are out here encouraging self-expression. I know that's really difficult for you to handle. I really don't think this book is going to force masculine men to dress femininely. In fact, Jacob's dad even points out that he wouldn't like to wear a dress. The book is not trying to convince people to dress a certain way, it's only encouraging people to dress in a way that makes them feel comfortable.

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 agenda here is to promote self-expression and acceptance of others, which is a positive agenda.

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:** The book encourages kids to be themselves and not let other people's criticism get them down.

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:** It's about preschoolers, so I'd say ages 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 think it would have stood out as being too "out there," but I don't think I read about these more controversial topics because I don't think books like this existed yet. I'm happy to read them now.

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, I would. I think society puts way too much emphasis on how people (especially kids) are and are not allowed to dress and I appreciate that this book shows that it's okay to not dress the same as everyone else.