

# *Think Like the Banned*

**Title:** *Skippyjon Jones*

**Author:** Judy Schachner

**Publication Date:** 2001

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

**Kaitlyn M., 11th Grade:** The picture book series Skippyjon Jones by Judy Schachner which was published in 2001 is about a Siamese cat named Skippyjon Jones who thinks he is a Chihuahua. The book series follows Skippyjon Jones and his adventures with his imaginary Chihuahua friends, Los Chimichangos.

**Sabrina P., 11<sup>th</sup> Grade:** Skippyjon Jones: Class Action by Judy Schacter (July 2011). Skippyjon Jones wants to go to school, but his mom says school is for dogs. He goes into his closet and imagines what it would be like to go to school with a bunch of dogs.

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

**Kaitlyn M., 11th Grade:** I was aware of the existence of this book prior to starting this project because I remember seeing this book series in my elementary school library. I also think that I have heard people talk about this book because the name seems to be familiar.

**Sabrina P., 11<sup>th</sup> Grade:** I'm not sure. I read a lot of Skippyjon Jones books when I was younger but don't think I knew about this one.

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?*

**Kaitlyn M., 11th Grade:** I think this book was targeted in the Top 100 Challenged Books Lists because this book could include stereotypes of Mexican people and the Spanish-speaking community.

**Sabrina P., 11<sup>th</sup> Grade:** Some people might think it encourages rebellion. Some might also be biased because of its inclusion of Spanish culture.

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

**Kaitlyn M., 11th Grade:** If I was arguing in favor of banning this book, my argument would be that it can be offensive to some people because the character uses a mix of Spanish and English when he talks. The way that the character speaks in the book could be taken out of context and twisted around and displayed as offensive.

**Sabrina P., 11<sup>th</sup> Grade:** "This book encourages rebellion because Skippyjon and his friends skip obedience class and Skippyjon goes against his mother's wishes."

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

**Kaitlyn M., 11th Grade:** If I was arguing against banning this book, my argument would be that the storyline of the book series is good and it is a good beginner book for young kids because of the bright and colorful illustrations.

**Sabrina P., 11<sup>th</sup> Grade:** "I really don't think kids are going to see this in a realistic fashion and try to emulate Skippyjon. It's a celebration of creativity, not a pipeline to drugs."

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)?*

**Kaitlyn M., 11th Grade:** I think the information in this book is pushing an agenda in a negative way because the book could have easily been written without making the character talk in the way that he did so that it wouldn't offend people.

**Sabrina P., 11th Grade:** There's no real agenda here except encouraging kids to be creative.

*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?*

**Kaitlyn M., 11th Grade:** In the book, the positive information that I can cite is that Skippyjon Jones always has a good and positive energy.

**Sabrina P., 11th Grade:** Enjoy your youth, have fun, and go to school. It's teaching that school is fun and helping kids get excited for that.

*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?*

**Kaitlyn M., 11th Grade:** I think this picture book could be appropriate for 1st to 2nd or 3rd graders because of the illustrations and the short phrases that have a continuation throughout the book.

**Sabrina P., 11th Grade:** 4 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?*

**Kaitlyn M., 11th Grade:** When I think about the picture books I've read as a child I think that this book would stand out as an anomaly because of the way the book is depicted. I don't think that I have read any other books that are similar to this one.

**Sabrina P., 11th Grade:** This is part of one of my favorite childhood series.

*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.*

**Kaitlyn M., 11th Grade:** If I was a parent, I think that maybe I would pick out the book because of its colorful illustrations but if I went into further detail and flipped through the pages then maybe I wouldn't pick this book and read it to my child.

**Sabrina P., 11th Grade:** Yes, definitely. It's fun, encourages creativity, and it's just a good time.