



AMERICUS – READING GROUP GUIDE

Book Description:

Neal Barton just wants to read in peace. Unluckily for him, some local Christian activists are trying to get his favorite fantasy series banned from the Americus public library on grounds of immoral content and heresy. Something has to be done, and it looks like quiet, shy Neal is going to have to do it. With youth services librarian Charlotte Murphy at his back, Neal finds himself leading the charge to defend the mega-bestselling fantasy series that makes his life worth living. *Americus* is a funny, gripping, and relatable tale of life and local politics in middle America.

For Discussion:

Americus is a graphic novel, a story told in words and pictures. How do you think this story would be told differently if it was a novel, with only words? How would it be different if it was a movie, with just pictures?

Go talk to your school librarian and public librarian. Have they ever had books from their libraries challenged? Do they have a policy in place to deal with challenges?

Banned Books Week is a celebration and awareness-raising week at the end of September every year. Do you do anything to celebrate? What could you do?

Is your high school experience like Neal's? What do you think he could do to improve his situation?

Why do you think that people try to ban books? Can there be good (or at least well-meaning) attempts to get books banned? Are there any books *you* think should be banned? Entirely or just for certain people (like children)? Why?

Does the way religion is portrayed in this book match your own experiences with religion? What's the same? What's different?

The real world of Americus and the fantastical world of Apathea Ravenchilde in this book are in two different art styles. What effect does this have on the story?

Where do you think Neal's story goes after this? What about Danny's?

First Second Books