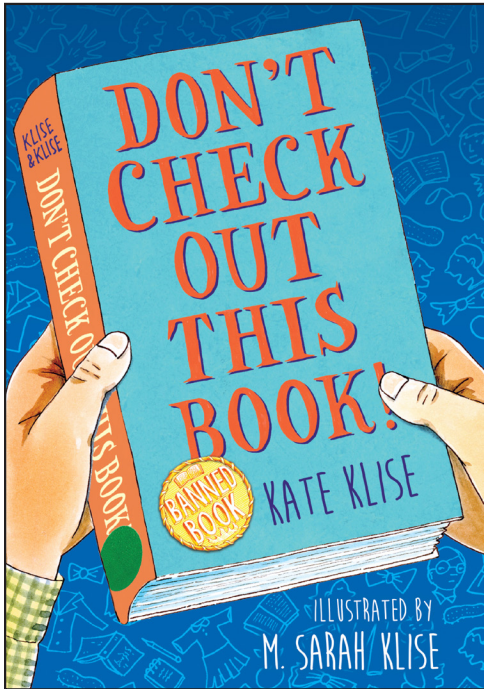


DON'T CHECK OUT THIS BOOK

by Kate Klise, Illustrated by M. Sarah Klise



BOOK TALK

Don't Check Out This Book! tells the story of events at Appleton Elementary School, where the brand-new librarian has created something called the Green Dot Collection: books that can be borrowed from the library without being checked out. Some members of the community object to the Green Dot Collection. Meanwhile, the school board president has imposed a student dress code that includes white gloves and bow ties sold only at her store. Students at the school organize to oppose the new dress code and save the library in a story full of puns and other wordplay.

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MIDDLE-GRADE FICTION

Ages 8–12, Grades 3–7

160 pages, 5½" x 8¼"

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

KATE KLISE is the award-winning author of more than 30 books for young readers, many of which are illustrated by her sister, M. Sarah Klise. On her way to becoming an author, Kate Klise worked as a babysitter, waitress, ice-skating instructor, and rosebush pruner. She was also a journalist and spent 15 years reporting for *People* magazine. When she's not working on a new book, she enjoys traveling around the country, sharing her best writing tips and tricks with aspiring authors of all ages.



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ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

M. SARAH KLISE has always had a fondness for creating colorful book reports, which began in elementary school with yarn-bound volumes on states and countries. In college, she enjoyed writing heavily illustrated letters home to her mother. Years later, she still does variations of all that when she illustrates books for young readers. She also teaches art classes in Berkeley, California.



(By the way, Klise rhymes with mice.)

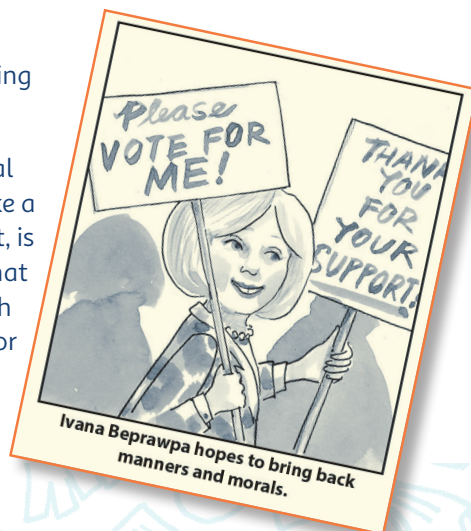
DON'T CHECK OUT THIS BOOK!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean for a book to be banned? Why do you think someone would ban a book? What does the idea of banned books have to do with the Green Dot Collection?
 2. What kinds of books might be in the Green Dot Collection? Is it a good idea to have a collection of books like this? Do you think it is a student's right to borrow books privately, as they can with the Green Dot Collection?
 3. The characters in this book are very black and white, meaning it is easy to tell the good guys from the bad. Do you think this was intentional on the part of the author? Do the characters seem realistic to you? Why or why not?
 4. What do you think of the puns and play on words that appear throughout the book? A lot of them have to do with apples, but there are others, too, including the characters' names.
- Here are some examples:**
- Ivana Beprawpa
Etta Toryal
Noah Memree
May B Danjerous
Sarah Bellum
- Apple examples:**
- The Daily Apple
Apple Pie Avenue
Baked Brie with Apples Avenue
Cy Durr
6. What clues did the author and illustrator provide that Ivana Beprawpa might not have the best interests of Appleton Elementary School in mind? Was there a point in the story when you felt you knew this for sure?
 7. At first, many of the citizens are wary of the Green Dot Collection. Even Penny Counter and Cy Durr are suspicious and don't approve. Why do you think they have this reaction before they even know what the Green Dot Collection is? Can you think of a similar situation in your school or town or elsewhere?
 8. What makes Penny Counter change her mind about Ms. Danjerous? When Penny first hears about the Green Dot Collection, she calls it "those kinds of books." What does she mean by that?
 9. "Children need boundaries." Ms. Beprawpa writes this in a note to the school principal. She thinks wearing uniforms and using library cards is the proper way to do things, and that doing things any other way must be wrong. Is she correct?
 10. Do the girls ever find out what "follow the money" means? How would you explain that phrase?
 11. Does your school have any rules you would like to change? What could you do to help bring about a change as May and Sarah do?

What reason would the author have for using wordplay in a story like this one?

5. A conflict of interest occurs when an official or person with some power or authority, like a president, mayor, or school board president, is in a position to make rules or give orders that enrich or benefit that person. Why do Sarah and May believe it is a conflict of interest for Ms. Beprawpa to require students to buy uniforms at her store? What do you think?



DON'T CHECK OUT THIS BOOK!

GUIDE TO STARTING A GREEN DOT COLLECTION

In the acknowledgments at the end of *Don't Check Out This Book!*, author Kate Klise and illustrator M. Sarah Klise tell us that this book is based on an actual Green Dot Collection put together by a school librarian.

Rita B. Dangerous describes the collection like this:

“Do you remember being young and having questions about things that felt embarrassing or scary or just plain weird—and not knowing where to turn for answers? I do. That’s why I created my Green Dot Collection. These are the books I wish I’d had when I was young and full of questions.”

In our ever-changing world, there is always a need for this type of collection. There will always be curious students looking for answers, unsure of where to seek them, and the school library is the perfect place to do so.

If you are interested in starting such a collection, pay attention to the needs of your particular community and students. For instance, if you have a large immigrant or refugee population, you might want books about the rights of people who are not citizens. You could create an informal survey for students to indicate anonymously what they would want to see in a special collection—one that doesn't require them to officially check out its books. Place the books in an area that is easy for students to access. Explain that this collection is for them. The Green Dot Collection is meant to address their concerns and questions in a nonjudgmental and safe environment.

SOME IDEAS FOR TOPICS TO INCLUDE:

- Homelessness / Living in a shelter
- Autism / Sibling or family member with autism
- Incarcerated parents
- Domestic abuse
- Mental illness
- Puberty
- Rights of undocumented workers
- Bullying
- Divorce
- Gender identity / LGBTQ
- Addiction (drugs, alcohol, gaming, etc.)

Make sure you continually add to the collection and keep it fresh. There will undoubtedly be new topics that young people will want to learn about. Try not to be concerned about books that don't get returned. This only means that a book was so important, someone felt the need to keep it. If it becomes an ongoing problem and you are losing many books, post a polite note reminding students that there are others who might want to borrow the book they have.

Reader's Guide by NAME TK



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