

FICTION: BANNED BOOKS

2-8+

20'

10+

COMPONENTS

Lie-brarian's Setup

- A** 1 Dry-erase Marker
- B** 56 Book Cards
- C** 1 Lie-brarian Board
- D** 60 Clue Tokens
- E** 9 Lie-brarian Ability Cards
(see pg. 5)

Guessers' Setup

- F** 1 Dry-erase Marker
- G** 10 Guess Boards (5 blue, 5 red)
- H** 1 Alphabet Board
- I** 3 Fact/Fiction Tokens
- J** 10-Minute Timer (not provided)
- K** 9 Guesser Ability Cards (see pg. 5)

GAME OVERVIEW

Fiction: Banned Books is a Wordle-inspired game of deception. One player acts as Lie-brarian, choosing a secret word from a classic work of literature. The other players work as a team, using logic and literacy to deduce the secret word as quickly as possible.

They have 10 guesses and two 10-minute time periods to deduce the secret word, but beware! The Lie-brarian's clues will always contain exactly one lie. The Guessers win if they figure out the word, and the Lie-brarian wins if the time or guesses run out.



PROLOGUE

Before starting, the Lie-brarian draws 1 book card, selects a **yellow** word on it, and secretly writes it at the top of their board. The Guessers may see the back of the book card. The Lie-brarian tells the Guessers **1 letter** that is in the secret word (but not where it appears), then starts the 10-minute timer for the first half of the game.

1. GUESS

The team guesses a 5-letter English word that is not a proper noun. All 5 letters must be unique. They write the guess on a blue guess board, hand the guess board to the Lie-brarian, and pause the timer.

The Guessers may continue discussing while the timer is paused.

2. DECEIVE

Record Correct Clues

The Lie-brarian writes the guess in the first slot on their board and records honest clues in the **top half** of the square (🔒).

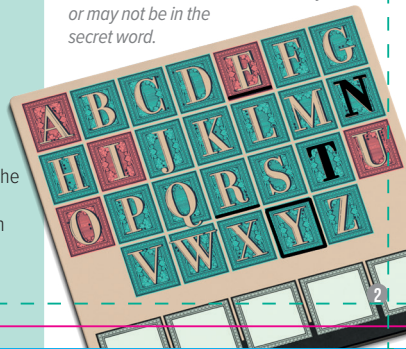
- ✓ if that letter is in the same position as in the secret word.
- ✗ if that letter does not appear anywhere in the secret word.
- ~ if that letter is in the secret word, but in a different position.

If the secret word was "READY" and the guess was "ENTRY", the correct clues would be:



R	E	~	Correct letter, wrong spot
E	N	X	Letter not in secret word
A	T	X	Letter not in secret word
D	R	~	Correct letter, wrong spot
Y	Y	✓	Correct letter, correct spot

Guessers can use the alphabet board to record clues about what letters may or may not be in the secret word.



Change Exactly One Clue

The Lie-brarian then **must** choose exactly **one** clue to lie about, changing any single clue (X, ~, or ✓) into any other clue.

The Lie-brarian records the new set of clues (with exactly one lie) in the **bottom half** of each square and circles their lie (🔒).

Share the Clues

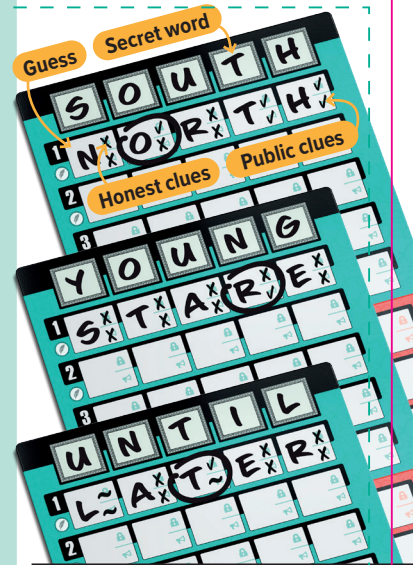
The Lie-brarian **double-checks** that they have correctly written 4 honest clues and 1 lie on their board. They then share their 5 bottom-half clues with the Guessers by returning the guess board and placing a clue token with the appropriate symbol under each letter.

Once the Lie-brarian places the last clue token, they unpause the timer. The Guessers may immediately begin making their next guess.

Fact/Fiction Tokens

The Guessers have 3 Fact/Fiction tokens to use during the game. At any time while the timer is running, they may declare they are using a token and point to a letter from the **most recent** guess they submitted.

If the Lie-brarian shared an honest clue for that letter, they place the Fact/Fiction token near the letter with **Fact** faceup. If it was a lie, they place the token with **Fiction** faceup instead.



Notes on Words

Although the secret words on book cards come directly from the book, they aren't necessarily thematically linked to it. Secret words may be plural, but proper nouns, archaic words, and very uncommon words have been excluded.

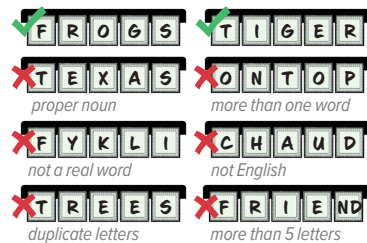
HALFTIME

After the Guessers make 5 guesses or the 10-minute timer expires, it's halftime.

- Discard any unused blue guess boards.
- Set a new 10-minute timer for the second half.
- Start using the red guess boards.

Legal Guesses

Each guess must be a single, correctly-spelled English word with 5 letters. Proper nouns aren't allowed. Repeat letters are only allowed when using **red** words.



Hard Difficulty

Use any or all of the following:

- Guessers get 1 Fact/Fiction token per half.
- Use an 8 minute timer instead of 10.
- The Lie-brarian may choose a **red** word.

GAME END

Repeat GUESS and DECEIVE steps until:

- The Guessers win by guessing the secret word.
- The Lie-brarian wins because the Guessers are out of guesses or the second 10-minute timer expires.

Red Words

Red words contain **duplicate letters**.

If players opt to allow these words, the Lie-brarian secretly picks a word of **either color** from the book card, without revealing which. During the game, the Guessers may use duplicate letters in their guesses.

When a guess contains a duplicate letter that appears **once** in the secret word, the Lie-brarian does the following:

- If either duplicate is a ✓, they mark the other as an ✗.
- If neither is a ✓, they mark the first instance as a ~ and the second as an ✗.



Since the secret word only has one O, the first O in the guess gets a ~ and the second gets a ✗.

ABILITY CARDS

Fiction: Banned Books includes 18 optional ability cards you can add to the game when you're ready to mix things up.

Setup

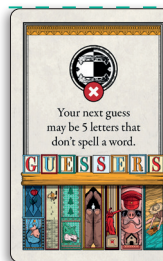
Before starting the Prologue, deal 2 random Lie-brarian ability cards to the Lie-brarian and 2 random Guesser ability cards to the Guessers. Each side selects 1 card and places it faceup in front of themselves, visible to everyone. Return all other ability cards to the box.

Guesser Abilities

The Guessers can use their ability by spending Fact/Fiction tokens. The icon on each ability card indicates how to use it:

- Discard a Fact/Fiction token to use this ability.
- Whenever you use a Fact/Fiction token, you may use this ability.

Guesser abilities can only be used when the timer is running. The Guessers may still use Fact/Fiction tokens normally, without using their ability. They may use any number of tokens during each guess, for either purpose.



This ability lets the Guessers discard a Fact/Fiction token to make a guess with any 5 letters. Since they have 3 tokens, they can use this ability up to 3 times per game.



Normally, the Guessers can only use Fact/Fiction tokens on their most recent guess. This ability lets them use Fact/Fiction on earlier guesses, but only for vowels.



Lie-brarian Abilities

The Lie-brarian's ability card is placed faceup where all players can see it. Each time a guess is submitted, the Lie-brarian **secretly** decides whether to use their ability. If they use it, they cross off the icon next to the guess on their board. They may only use their ability **once per guess**.

The number below the icon on the Lie-brarian's card indicates the maximum number of times they can use their ability during the game. Once they have marked that number of icons on their board, they can't use their ability again. An ∞ means they may use their ability as many times as they wish (up to once per guess).

The Lie-brarian's ability is always optional. They can choose to mark fewer icons than their card allows, or even decline to use their ability at all.

CREDITS

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With this ability, the Lie-brarian can choose to lie about 2 letters in a single guess, up to twice per game.



With this ability, the Lie-brarian can choose to give totally honest clues, as often as they like.

