

## THE BLUES EYE BY TONI MORRISON

### **Bluest Eye was banned:**

Reasons cited have included, “**sexually explicit material**,” “lots of graphic descriptions and lots of disturbing language,” and “an underlying socialist-communist agenda.” One complaint simply called it a “bad book.”

### **Themes In the Book:**

Poor use of the Word of the LORD. Symbolism well advanced of students; Black slang, use of Nigger, (trigger word), racist conversation, White supremacy, Smoking, sex between two teenagers while 2 white men watch, prostitutes, hating men, victimhood, violence against women, fear of parents, fighting, bullying, pitting white skin against black skin, talk about blacks hating themselves, sex outside of marriage, animal cruelty, middle-class contempt for the poor, gun violence, segregation, beating children, murder, beating women, indifferent about killing, raping your 11 year old is ok because of the life you have lived, suffering abandonment, sexual humiliation and racism, pedophile of two young girls, character who describes himself as a misanthrope, Mental illness, language, domestic abuse, alcohol, child abandonment

### **Content on Pages:**

**Page 10** – Percola was having her father’s baby

**Page 11** – We had dropped our seeds in our own little plot of black dirt just as Percola’s father had dropped his seeds in his own plot of black dirt.

What is clear now is that of all of that hope, fear, lust, love and grief, nothing remains but Pecola and the unyielding earth. Cholly Breedlove is dead, our innocence too. The seeds shriveled and died; her baby too.

**Page 15** – Well, that old crazy nigger she married up with didn’t help her head none.

**Page 22** – Dismembering of dolls was not the true horror. The truly horrifying thing was the transference of the same impulses to little white girls. The indifference with which I could have axed them was shaken only by my desire to do so.

**Page 38** – When he was still very young, Cholly had been surprised in some bushes by two white men while he as newly but earnestly engaged in eliciting sexual pleasure from a little country girl. The men had shone a flashlight right on his behind. He had stopped, terrified. They chuckled. The beam of flashlight did not move. Go on, they said. Go on and finish. And, nigger, make it good.”

**Page 102** – I feel his flank just graze my behind. I don't move even yet. Then he lift his head, turn over, and put his hand on my waist. If I don't move, he'll move his hand over to pull and knead my stomach. Soft and slow like. I still don't move because I don't want him to stop. I want to pretend sleep and have him keep on rubbing my stomach. Then he will lean his head down and bite my tit. Then I don't want him to rub my stomach anymore. I want him to put his hand between my legs. I pretend to wake up, and turn to him, but not opening my legs. I want him to open them for me. He does and I be soft and wet where his fingers are strong and hard. I be softer than I ever been before. All my strength in his hand. My brain curls up like wilted leaves. A funny, empty feeling is in my hands. I want to grab holt of something, so I hold his head. His mouth is under my chin. Then I don't want his hand between my legs no more, because I think I am softening away. I stretch my legs open and he is on top of me. Too heavy to hold and too light not to. He puts his thing in me. In me. In me. I wrap my feet around his back so he can't get away. His face is next to mine. The bed springs sounds like them crickets used to back home. He puts his fingers in mine and we stretches our arms outwise like Jesus on the cross. I hold on tight. My fingers and my feet hold on tight, because everything else is going, going. I know he wants me to come first. But I can't. Not until he does. Not until I feel him loving me. Just me. Sinking into me. Not until I know that my flesh is all that be on his mind. That he couldn't stop if he had to. That he would die rather than take his thing out of me. Of me. Not until he has let go of all he has and give it to me. To me. To me. When he does, I feel a power. I be strong, I be pretty, I be young. And then I wait. He shivers and tosses his head.

**Page 115 –116** - She tickled his ribs with her fingertips. He giggled and grabbed his rib cage. They were on top of each other in a moment . She corkscrewing her hands into his clothes. He returning the play, digging into the neck of her dress and then under her dress. When he got his hand in her bloomers, she suddenly stopped laughing and looked serious. Cholly, frightened, was about to take his hand away but she held his wrist so he couldn't move it. He examined her then with his fingers and kissed his face and mouth. Cholly found her muscadine-lipped mouth distracting. Darlene released his head and shifted her body and pulled down her pants. After some trouble with the buttons, Cholly dropped his pants down to his knees. Their bodies began to make sense to him and it was not difficult as he had thought it would be. She moaned a little but the excitement collecting inside him made him close his eyes and regard her moans as no more than pine sights over his head. Just as he felt an explosion threaten, Darlene froze and cried out. He thought he had hurt her but when he looked at her face she was staring wildly at something over his shoulder. He jerked around.

Two white men with flashlights..."get on wid it, nigger," make it good, nigger, make it good. With a violence born of total helplessness, he pulled her dress up, lowered his trousers and underwear. Come on, coon. Faster. You ain't doing nothing for her.

**Page 126 – 127** - The tenderness welled up in him and he sank to his knees, his eyes on the foot of his daughter. Crawling on all fours toward her, he raised his hand and caught her foot in an upward stroke. Pecola lost her balance and was about to careen to the floor. Cholly raised his other hand to her hips to save her from falling. He put his head down and nibbled at the back of her leg. His mouth trembled at the firm sweetness of the flesh. He closed his eyes, letting his finger dig into her waist. The rigidity of her shocked body, the silence of her stunned throat, was better than Pauline's easy laughter had been. The confused mixture of his memories of Pauline and the doing of a wild and forbidden thing excited him, and a bolt of desire ran down his genitals, giving it length and softening the lips of his anus. Surrounding all of this lust was a border of politeness. He wanted to fuck her – tenderly. But the tenderness would not hold. The tightness of her vagina was more than he could bear. His shoulder seemed to slip down to his guts and fly out into her and the gigantic thrust he made into her then provoked the only sound she made – a hollow suck of air in the back of her throat. Like the rapid loss of air from a circus balloon.

Following the disintegration – the falling away - of sexual desire, he was conscious of her wet, soapy hands on his wrists, the fingers clenching but whether her grip was from a hopeless but stubborn struggle to be free or from some other emotion, he could not tell.

Removing himself from her was so painful to him he cut it short and snatched his genitals out of the dry harbor of her vagina. She appeared to have fainted. Cholly stood up and could see only her grayish panties, so sad and limp around her ankles.

**Page 129** – He could have been an active homosexual but lacked the courage. Bestiality did not occur to him and sodomy was quite out of the question for he did not experience sustained erections and could not endure the thought of somebody else's. And besides, the one thing that disgusted him more than entering and caressing a woman was caressing and being caressed by a man.

And since he was too diffident to confront homosexuality and since little boys were insulting, scary and stubborn, he further limited his interests to little girls. They were usually manageable and frequently seductive. His sexuality was anything but lewd; his patronage of little girls smacked of innocence and was associated in his mind with cleanliness. He was what one might call a very clean old man.

**Page 133:** With only occasional and increasingly rare, encounters with the little girls he could persuade to be entertained by him, he lived rather peaceably among his things admitting to no regrets.

**Page 138** – Let me tell you now about the breasts of little girls. I apologize for the inappropriateness (is that it?) the imbalance of loving them at awkward times of day and in awkward places and the tastelessness of loving those which belonged to members of my family. Do I have to apologize for loving strangers?

**Page 139** – I have seen a bad man too, and an unhappy man too. But someday I will die. I was always so kind. Why do I have to dies? The little girls. The little girls are the only things I'll miss. Do you know that when I touched their sturdy little tits and bit them – just a little – I felt I was being friendly? I didn't want to kiss their mouths or sleep in the bed with them or take a child bride for my own. Playful, I felt and friendly.... I gave them mints, money, and they's eat ice cream with their legs open while I played with them. It was like a party. And there wasn't nastiness and there wasn't any filth, and there wasn't any odor and there wasn't any groaning – just the light white laughter of little girls and me.

## **RED FLAGS**

Sexual Content  
Child abuse, Child sexual abuse  
Graphic sexual, explicit content  
Incest

## **CONCLUSION**

Not appropriate literary content for K-12 schools