



## Greenrock Writers' Retreat June 23 -26, 2011

### Audience

Each summer, Greenrock serves approximately 20 students entering grades 9 - 12 from Clinton, Eaton, Genesee, Ingham, and Shiawassee counties, including students from Flint and Lansing. Although many participants are talented writers who are committed to their art, others are struggling writers looking for ways to improve their writing skills. Greenrock welcomes all writers, regardless of proficiency.

### Funding

Greenrock is funded through camp registration fees. The current cost is \$275.00. This fee covers MSU dormitory room and board and use of facilities, daily field trips, t-shirts, books, etc. Unfortunately, there are no scholarships offered for Greenrock.

### Objectives

Teachers affiliated with Red Cedar Writing Project (RCWP), Michigan State University's site of the National Writing Project, are committed to improving the teaching and practice of writing in the nation's schools and communities. Adopting a research-based approach to curriculum development and with an awareness of the Common Core Standards and Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations, the RCWP Teacher Consultants who facilitate Greenrock seek to

- build student engagement in and commitment to writing through differentiated writing activities,
- engage students in the types of assessment that occasion the growth of writers and the further development of writing.

### Description

Twenty-three high school students from 15 school districts participated in the Greenrock retreat from June 24 - 27, 2010. Greenrock students included 5 freshmen; 6 sophomores; 8 juniors; 2 seniors; and 2 freshman in college (who requested special permission to return for another summer).

This year's theme was "Curiouser and Curiouser!" from Lewis Carroll and refers to the power of writing to pull an audience in, to spark their imagination and their desire to continue reading. Whether found in detective fiction, suspenseful thrillers, or musings about the puzzles of daily life, challenging mysteries can capture the imagination and truly grip an audience. "Curiouser and Curiouser!" also accounts for the ways writing may be used to push the boundaries, to investigate life's mysteries, and to express one's own curiosity. This year's theme also serves as a reminder to pursue personal curiosities. The camp addressed the following elements:

- writing in ways that capture an audience and foster engagement with the text,
- finding wonder and awe in the seemingly mundane,
- pursuing inquiries through written expression.

Additionally, students read *Down the Rabbit Hole* by Peter Abrahams and discussed this novel in the Greenrock Book Club examining curiosity and mystery elements in the novel.



Greenrock is crafted around the importance of creating a space for high school students to write and discuss writing within a community of writers. The theme received a positive response from students.

### Impacts - Student Comments

*"I'll miss Greenrock to pieces! I always make more friends than I do at my other camp, even longer ones...I love the creativity, and this community of writers will last me a life time. I only wish it could be longer!"*

*My favorite part of Greenrock this year was "EVERYTHING except the end."*

*"Greenrock is one of my very favorite weekends in the whole summer. As far as family goes, it's excellent, and as far as writing goes, there's nowhere better. A lot of this will get answered in my anthology piece, but I love Greenrock so very much. If I could come again, I would, a thousand times more. Greenrock is excellent, and like Spartacus said, Greenrock is about us, it's about family."*

*"I really enjoyed my experience at Greenrock this year. Everyone was friendly and there was always lots to do. I had fun meeting new people and exploring myself as a writer. I think everyone would enjoy this camp because there's something for everyone."*

*"I really liked Greenrock this year. It's the highlight of every summer for me. I love being able to write anywhere and everywhere. And being able to have time to spend with friends and to create bonds. Greenrock in one simple word is amazing."*

In 2010, all 23 student participants agreed that they wanted to return in 2011.

### Information

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