



Greenrock Writers Retreat

June 23 – June 26, 2016

Audience

Greenrock Writers Retreat is for 8th – 12th graders. This year's community of writers featured 34 high school students from many different school districts across Michigan. The Greenrock retreat ran from Thursday, June 23 to Sunday, June 26. Of the 34 writers who participated, 5 were male, 29 were female, and 8 students were returning Greenrockers.

Rachel Sonnenberg was the new college mentor this year. Rachel's role was helping with supervision and taking photographs throughout the weekend to include in the anthology.

This year's theme for the retreat was "Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover." Through this theme, we will explore the misconceptions and missed opportunities that come with assuming before knowing. We will also explore how we and others benefit from diversity and what can be learned from these experiences.

Students had the opportunity to explore this theme through reading *Eleanor & Park* by Rainbow Rowell. Activities included a flap copy activity. Students were given the opportunity to write flap copy of their life, imagining their own futures. A second activity involved writing an autobiographical song which students could veil with metaphorical lyrics.



Funding

Greenrock is funded primarily from registration fees of \$325 per camper. Greenrock also receives financial support from the Red Cedar Writing Project (RCWP).

Fees include a journal, novel, a 2016 Greenrock Anthology, housing and meals in the residence halls, and MSU Dairy Store ice cream.

Objectives

Greenrock is crafted around the importance of having a space for high school students to write and discuss writing with a community of writers. Each workshop is designed to encourage participants to view writing as personally meaningful and pleasurable, as well as to improve participants' writing abilities. This fits with the Red Cedar Writing Project theme of leading a writerly life and adding to the list of writing tools for each camper's 'writing toolbox.'

Outcomes

Camper Feedback:

- "I don't know how realistic this is, but a lot of people (including me) would love if this camp were a week long or even just a day or two longer."
- (In response to the question what was your favorite part of Greenrock) "Oh gosh, everything. I liked meeting people and the community."
- "Why is the world not as cool as this group?"
- "I enjoy being around such an accepting group of writers willing to help you improve your skill."
- (In response to the question what was your favorite part of Greenrock) "The read around. My motivation, mood, and heart went up 100%. Finding something like I found in people here that you don't hear from people you know well is unreal. Beautiful."
- "I always have trouble sharing my work, but everybody here was really supportive."
- "I get to be myself here. I finally fit in here..."
- "I liked writing in various spots on campus and getting an early college experience."

Contact hours between Teacher Consultants and campers totaled 1822.

Additional Significant Information

- Greenrock has a high rate of returning attendees, which bodes well for future recruitment efforts.
- We serve a high number of faculty children and youth, which contributes to faculty retention and investment in the community.
- Final note: It would be good to take these writing camps into the community in order to broaden access and fulfill our land-grant mission.

Contact Information

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