

Summary of freedom writers film

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Freedom Writers

Introduction

“ Freedom Writers” is a story of a multi-cultural high school class who, after realizing the lessons of the Holocaust, took the lead to end the periodic prevalence of failure and violence in their inner city. The movie described how an ordinary teacher gone beyond deeply rooted socio-cultural prejudices, amidst a struggling educational system, through writing, reading, and genuine interest and faith in her students. It portrayed typical scenes in an American urban sprawl in the ' 90s, during which homicide rates surge and high school students commonly involve, if not die, in gang-related violence (Hoechsmann and Low 161). In the movie, a neophyte teacher, Erin Gruwell, incited her students to make the most of learning. She introduced history in a different way, not only by taking pleasure in reading, but as well as by expressing students' experiences, thoughts, and emotions in writing.

Summary

In room 203 of Woodrow Wilson High School, during the fall of 1994, a new teacher, full of idealism, Erin Gruwell, met her “ unteachable” class, as dubbed by the school's administration. The class of “ at-risk” teenagers was a mix of Caucasian, Afro-American, Vietnamese, Latino, and Cambodian students, who grew in rough communities in Long Beach. Gruwell's passion for teaching was challenged by Latino, Asian, and Black gangsters, who hate one another and tried to put every class activity into chaos. Instead of losing hope or getting mad, Gruwell listened to every story and sentiments of her students, in order to enter into their very soul and gain an in-depth understanding on their personality. Gruwell's students have strongly

signified their lack of interest to their teacher and her lessons, and even made bets on how long their new teacher would last in their class, until an event happened that turned the scene into a character building situation. Ms. Gruwell saw a caricature of an Afro-American which infuriated her because of the stereotyping she has just saw is similar to that of that caused the Holocaust. Gruwell assigned reading books to her class to introduce the root-cause and morals of the Holocaust and required her students to keep their own diary. Many of her students revealed their own prejudices, grudges, and tales of abuse. Gruwell learned that her students are fighting not because of delinquent attitudes, but due to the cycle of grudges and biases prevailing in the inner city long before her students were born (Hoechsmann and Low 161). Gruwell taught them the most valuable lesson that they will never learn outside the classroom and will forever dwell into their hearts---equality and respect.

The school administration permitted Ms. Gruwell to handle the students as they progressed from freshman to senior years. The students came into a realization, changing their biases to one another into respect for each other's rights and dignity. They became united and formed the circle of " Freedom Writers" to give tribute to the " freedom riders" of the Civil Rights Movement (Hoechsmann and Low 161). Eventually, Gruwell's students earned their college degrees and landed onto jobs that they never dared to dream prior to meeting their best high school teacher--- Erin Gruwell. They traveled the world, published a book, and earned the admiration of the members of the Congress.

Analysis

"Freedom Writers" conveys the message of hope and one's capability of molding or changing someone else's future or destiny in an intellectual and emotional means. The film shows that socio-cultural diversity is the hardest and the most perilous to deal with in this world full of stereotypes and prejudices. In a pluralistic culture, we often love and respect those who known to us, but suspicious, and even antagonistic, toward strangers. This scenario is typical in various urban enclaves where individuals are divided into groups based on cultural background, gang, or race. Members of each social group are aggressive toward outsiders and consistently upping the ante of suspicion and violence. Ms. Gruwell's methods of teaching exposed her students to logical and mature life perspectives that encourage them to consider diversity and differences in life as a chance to learn and appreciate one another's unique socio-cultural background, break societal stereotypes, and shape their lives free from bigotry.

Literature Cited

Hoechsmann, Michael and Low, Bronwen E. Reading Youth Writing: "new" Literacies, Cultural Studies & Education. New York, NY, 2008.