

To believe is to
succeed



Elizabeth Rodriguez Freedom Writers Diary Book Report Read 015, Section 71
Instructor - Kimberly Jefferson To believe is to succeed One morning a teacher by the name of Erin Gruwell woke up to get ready for the first day of school at Wilson High, but she had no idea that she was going to be the one to save these students from their damaged lives and help them succeed in life.

From the beginning the head of the English department was not at all happy she told Ms. Gruwell that she was making them look bad. Bad in what way Ms. Gruwell thought. When Ms.

Gruwell entered the class room she found a piece of paper with a drawing of one of the students and she became outraged and felt the students needed to learn more about history, that??™s when all the work for her began. The students were not sure that Ms. Gruwell would make it as their teacher because they were the ones that nobody wanted to bother with and were considered losers. When you have someone in life that is willing to take a chance on you and believes in you like Ms.

Gruwell did , you can really learn what life is about and get over the obstacles that are holding you back. This is what the Freedom Writers Diary is all about. In Diary 2 freshman year there is one student who was confused about why he was in this class with these other students that were not of the white race like him. He felt these were all troubled kids and that he should be across the hall with all the other Distinguished Scholars which are almost all white. He felt that having all these troubled students together in one class would create a disaster.

As the weeks went by it didn't get any easier, fights broke out some of the students had friends that were either hurt badly or killed. Also some of the students had trouble at home they had to deal with. By this time Ms. Gruwell was already frustrated but she wasn't sure if it was because of the students or the system, but she did not give up she just kept trying harder. Finally it worked some of the students were learning a lot and trying their best to do good. When the Sophomore year started the students were happy that Ms.

Gruwell was going to be their teacher again and of course she got some new students that the other teachers did not want. As they went further into the semester the students were introduced to new books that Ms. Gruwell got for them about the tragic lives of other people like Anne Frank , Zlata Filipovic and scheduled trips for them to meet Zlata and Miep Gies who was the woman that kept Anne Frank alive in her attic. After all this the students learned how the holocaust destroyed many lives and how some survived to write about their tragic encounters that happened during WWII . In Diary 47 one of the students was amazed how someone who lived 10, 000 miles away could have such an impact on him. Knowing how Zlata lived in Bosnia he would never have thought that she was just like them a normal teen.

As the story goes on with the Freedom writers they began to see how lives can change and how they and others can overcome the obstacles that life puts in their paths. For these students and as well as for me I believe that courage and faith can help us all succeed in life. As they continued to learn the history of others they began to understand their own life and learned how to deal with situation that caused them so much pain. In Diary 73 Junior year one of the students had to edit a story about a young girl having to go

through an abortion and he felt the his secret coming to haunt him and wondered if that??™s what his girlfriend went through also. In the story a counselor told the young girl “ If you need to, just squeeze my hand,” he wondered if his girlfriend had anyone there to support her. He was sad because he wasnt there to hold her hand. He realizes now what she went through, and through all that he is glad that they are still together. Reading about other peoples pain opened up their minds more about their own pain and it helped them deal with it.

All the diary entries were amazing and all the students had different feelings , but they all knew they werent alone. All the support they received from Ms. Gruwell and the history of the Holocaust gave the students the inspiration to open up and write about their lives. Senior Year 1998 was even more exciting for the students , because most of them knew they were going to graduate, some still had their doubts but they didnt give up. In Diary 139 one of the students said “ I cant believe it! Im actually going to be the first person in my family to graduate!!! This student had the support of her parents and they listen to her while she rehearsed her speech that she wrote to enter a Graduation Class Speaker contest which of course she won.

All the students at Wilson High School that were part of the Freedom Writers Diary graduated and their lives changed forever. While reading this book even I was proud of that class, life can be good if you put your heart and soul into it.