

YALSA Board of Directors Meeting
ALA Annual Conference, Chicago
June 28 – July 2, 2013

Topic: The Hub Manager Annual Report

Background: Gretchen Kolderup, the Member Manager of The Hub, YALSA’s YA lit blog, has provided the Board with a semi-annual report. The purpose of the blog is to provide an online resource for teens to use to find reading recommendations. This blog focuses on young adult literature and provides teens and the librarians who serve them with a definitive web connection to blog posts, images, booklists, and videos and more all related to teen reading.

Action Required: Consent

Overview

Since my last report in January, The Hub has continued to grow steadily. We’re in the last few weeks of the 2013 Hub Reading Challenge, which has attracted hundreds of participants and continued to spread YALSA’s brand beyond just teachers and librarians. We have also begun to work more closely with the YALSAblog to cross-promote and cross-post content. While my term as member manager is coming to a close, I’m excited to see how The Hub will continue to grow and innovate with new ideas and new leadership.

Statistics

Snapshot (January-May)

- Published 247 posts, an average of 11.2 posts per week (compared to 9.7 posts per week in January through May of last year)
- Attracted 148,733 page views, an average of 985 each day (compared to 696 page views per day in January through May of last year)
- Received 1,550 comments (compared to 1,092 in January through May of last year)
- Invited 2,709 votes in Monday Polls, an average of 135 responses for each poll (compared to 103 per poll in January through May of last year)
- We’ve grown to 40 regular bloggers (from 36 in my last report), including 6 semi-regular teen bloggers (compared to 1 in my last report)

Page views

January 2013	25,776	January 2012	15,872
February 2013	32,901	February 2012	14,889
March 2013	30,151	March 2012	20,196
April 2013	32,316	April 2012	29,400
May 2013	27,589	May 2012	25,526

Top referrers (since May 2012)

1. Search Engines (80,312)
 - a. Google Search (65,351)
 - b. Google Image Search (10,067)
 - c. Bing (2,188)
 - d. Yahoo Search (1,060)
2. Twitter (19,781)
3. Facebook (10,774)
4. Other blogs (4,653)
 - a. theartofnotwriting.tumblr.com (1,185)
 - b. thebillfold.com (702)
 - c. stackedbooks.org (622)
 - d. bookshelvesofdoom.blogs.com (421)
5. Email referrals (3,903)
6. Google Reader (3,027)
7. AL Direct and American Libraries Magazine (1,700)
8. Tumblr tags and dashboards (1,580)
9. ala.org (1,509)
10. Non-Tumblr bogging dashboards/backends (1,251)

Top search terms (since May 2012)

1. yalsa the hub (2,208)
2. teen hub (776)
3. the hunger games poster (503)
4. grumpy cat meme (492)
5. smile the book (387)
6. how many copies of the hunger games have been sold (313)
7. books like the fault in our stars (296)
8. no choirboy (255)
9. seventeenth summer (235)
10. zombie (206)

Accomplishments

- Finished the successful **Morris/Nonfiction Reading Challenge**, which received positive feedback from participants and one of the honored authors
- Launched the **2013 Hub Reading Challenge** (the successor to last year's Best of the Best challenge), which
 - includes YALSA's Best of the Best titles as well as titles from the Stonewall Award and the Schneider Family Book Award
 - has over 300 participants (compared to 126 total for the Best of the Best challenge)
 - has been covered on multiple non-ALA blogs and websites
 - included a chat on Facebook, Twitter, and Goodreads that fell flat, probably because it was hosted so late in the challenge period
- With the appointment of a new manager for the **YALSAblog**, **increased our cross-promotion and cross-posting of content**, including posts that were published on both blogs and posts on the same topic (like hard-of-hearing patrons) but with a different focus

for each blog (with The Hub hosting a book list and the YALSAblog post focusing on programs and services)

- Continued to **explore issues of diversity in YA** lit with posts on LGBTQ titles on best-of-the-best lists, specific types of disability and their representation in YA lit, biracial characters, “reverse racism,” coming out stories, and “boy books” vs “girl books”
- Began increasing our coverage of **nonfiction** with a recurring feature on memoirs, interviews with nonfiction authors, and lists of nonfiction suggestions to pair with popular fiction titles
- Began a **recurring interview series with YA authors** focusing on their teen years and their writing process, with the final question asked by the previous author interviewed
- Began a recurring feature, “**Jukebooks,**” that **pairs music with YA titles** to increase our inclusion of audio, video, and interactive content
- Ran our first ad on the blog in a sidebar for the month of May

Goals and Further Considerations

- Finish the **YALSA Academy video** about The Hub and why YALSA members should read the blog or even become one of our bloggers before my term as Member Manager ends
- Work with the Hub Advisory Board and the **new Member Manager** to make the **leadership transition** a smooth one
- Work with the Hub Advisory Board to sum up the blog’s successes and areas for improvement to **give the new Member Manager some ideas for new directions**, including the following possibilities:
 - Improve our ability to respond to current events and controversies quickly, perhaps through a rapid-response team
 - Increase the inclusion of audio, video, and interactive content (like the Monday Polls)
 - Publish more readalike lists for blockbuster titles, since these net us a lot of traffic from search engines and grow our reputation as a readers’ advisory resource
 - Find ways to work more closely with publishers to reveal exclusive news
 - Increase partnerships with other organizations to increase our reach
 - Increase our coverage of and commentary on non-book pop culture
 - Evaluate the failure of the Hub Reading Challenge chat and make modifications for future challenges

*Respectfully submitted,
Gretchen Kolderup*