

YALSA Board of Directors Meeting
ALA Annual Conference, Seattle
January 25 - 29, 2013

Topic: The Hub Manager Midwinter Report

Background: Gretchen Kolderup, the Member Manager of The Hub, YALSA’s YA literature 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 May, traffic to The Hub has continued to grow in leaps and bounds. The 2012 Best of the Best Reading Challenge was wrapped up successfully and received positive reviews from participants, and the 2013 Morris/Nonfiction Reading Challenge has been launched. The reading challenges, our month-long themes, and a few provocative posts that were linked from outside our normal sources have helped spread YALSA’s name into the YA book blogging world and to other non-members. Progress with some of the goals outlined in the last report has been steady but slow, so those goals have been re-established and new ones have been set. I’m eager to see The Hub continue to grow and develop in 2013!

Statistics

Snapshot (June-December)

- Published 319 posts, an average of 10.4 posts per week (compared to 9.7 posts per week for the previous seven months)
- Attracted 155,349 pageviews, an average of 726 per day (compared to 639 pageviews per day for the previous seven months)
- Received 903 comments (compared to 1,241 comments in the previous seven months, which included our comment-heavy Best of the Best Reading Challenge)
- Invited 3,108 votes in Monday Polls, an average of 111 responses for each poll (compared to 105 votes per poll in the previous seven months)
- We’ve grown to 36 regular bloggers (from 33 in my last report), including one teen blogger

Page views

June 2012*	12,962	June 2011	7,642
July 2012	17,927	July 2011	7,941
August 2012	16,940	August 2011	11,584
September 2012	15,952	September 2011	10,033

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October 2012	29,002
November 2012	20,976
December 2012	41,590

October 2011	15,619
November 2011	15,376
December 2011	14,848

** The Hub, along with all of ALA's blogs and wikis, was down about a week and a half in June 2012 and was intermittently up and down for a few more days after that.*

Top referrers (for 2012)

1. Search Engines (70,065)
 - a. Google Search (51,509)
 - b. Google Image Search (13,371)
 - c. Bing (1,733)
 - d. Yahoo Search (863)
 - e. Google Mobile (326)
2. Twitter (16,769)
3. Facebook (12,527)
4. Other blogs (8,716)
 - a. theartofnotwriting.tumblr.com (1,048)
 - b. bookshelvesofdoom.blogs.com (834)
 - c. thebillfold.com (687)
 - d. blog.schoollibraryjournal.com (675)
 - e. stackedbooks.org (665)
 - f. howpublishingreallyworks.com (464)
 - g. yahighway.com (451)
 - h. readingrants.org (329)
5. Google Reader (3,967)
6. Email referrals (3,246)
7. ALA and YALSA's web presence (2,277)
 - a. ala.org (1,560)
 - b. American Libraries Magazine (460)
 - c. yalitsymposium.ning.com (257)
8. Blogging dashboards and backends (1,990)
9. Google (1,542)
10. ala-publishing.informz.net (1,470)

Top search terms (for 2012)

1. yalsa the hub (2,450)
2. teen hub (860)
3. the hunger games poster (752)
4. team peeta team gale (642)
5. smile raina telgemeier (468)
6. grumpy cat meme (419)
7. seventeenth summer (369)
8. if you like downton abbey (297)
9. how many copies of the hunger games have been sold (253)
10. yalsa top ten (245)

Accomplishments and notes

- **Finished running the Best of the Best Reading Challenge** (which 126 people signed up for and 26 people reported completing). Feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive, with some saying they:
 - Read more than they would have during the three months when the challenge was going on
 - Realized they could fit more reading into their day than they'd thought
 - Read titles they normally wouldn't have
 - Felt like participating in the challenge improved their readers' advisory skills
- Installed a **new social sharing plugin** that makes it easier to share Hub posts through various social media outlets, especially Facebook
- Reached out to **Spectrum Scholars, Emerging Leaders, and YALSA Protégés** to recruit new bloggers
- **Overhauled our post categories and began eliminating redundant tags** to improve our SEO and discoverability
- Began working on a **video for the YALSA Academy** about The Hub
- Devoted October to **31 Days of the Next Big Thing** to promote the YA Lit Symposium
- Published **feature posts** on each of the books on the **Teens' Top Ten list**
- Announced the **Morris and Nonfiction Award shortlists**, began featuring each title on the list, and launched the **Morris/Nonfiction Reading Challenge**, which encourages participants to read each title on either shortlist before the announcement of the winners at the Youth Media Awards announcement.
- Published a post on the **depiction of characters of color on book covers**, including their frequent whitewashing, which was picked up by various authors and non-YA lit blogs and quickly became our most-viewed post, surpassing even award announcement posts

Goals and Further Considerations

General goals

- Continue to **develop the Hub Advisory Board's role** in both large projects and the day-to-day operations of the blog
- Continue to **address how we can increase our coverage of timely events**
- Find ways to **spread The Hub's (and YALSA's) name** beyond our current readership, especially to non-librarians
- **Recruit more teens to blog for The Hub** to share the teen perspective with our readers and help those teens develop their writing skills
- Improve our **reporting on diversity in YA lit**
- Find ways to **work more closely with other YALSA media outlets, committees, and task forces** and with other ALA divisions and partners

Specific featured events and initiatives

January Additional posts promoting Midwinter events
Video and liveblog coverage of BFYA Teen Feedback session and YMAS
Morris/Nonfiction Reading Challenge ends

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- February** Posts promoting selected lists and awards
Posts promoting ALA affiliates' lists and awards
Best of the Best Reading Challenge begins (under a different name TBD)
- March** Best of the Best Reading Challenge continues
Teen Tech Week posts (TBD, lots of variety)
- April** Best of the Best Reading Challenge continues
Teens' Top Ten posts (TBD based on blogger interest, continuing into May)
- May** Best of the Best Reading Challenge continues
Teens' Top Ten posts continue
BEA coverage
- June** Best of the Best Reading Challenge concludes
Posts promoting events at Annual
Coverage of events at Annual, including BFYA Teen Feedback session

Respectfully submitted,
Gretchen Kolderup