YALSA Board of Directors Meeting
ALA Annual Conference, Anaheim
June 22 - 26, 2012

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 December, The Hub has seen a large increase in monthly traffic and comments. We have also launched the 2012 Best of the Best Reading Challenge, which is partially responsible for these increases and has helped spread YALSA’s name into the YA book blogging world and to Goodreads. New goals have been established for the coming months, and I’m eager to see The Hub grow and develop further.

Statistics
Snapshot (December 1-May 24)
• Published 245 posts, an average of 9.7 posts per week (compared to 8.5 posts per week in the previous six months)
• Attracted 114,209 page views, an average of 649 each day (compared to 373 page views per day for the previous six months)
• Received 870 comments (compared to 418 in the previous six months)
• Invited 2,360 votes in Monday Polls, an average of 98 responses for each poll (compared to 78 per poll posted July-November)
• We've grown to 33 regular bloggers (from 26 six my last report)

Page views

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2010</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 2012</td>
<td>15,872</td>
<td>10,941</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 2012</td>
<td>14,889</td>
<td>9,517</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2012</td>
<td>20,196</td>
<td>6,862</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 2012</td>
<td>29,400</td>
<td>8,136</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 1-24, 2012</td>
<td>18,981</td>
<td>20117,944</td>
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</tbody>
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Top referrers (since May 2011)
1. Search Engines (34,615)
a. Google Search (25,672)
b. Google Image Search (6,929)
c. Bing (753)
d. Yahoo Search (419)
e. Google Mobile (243)
f. Ask.com (94)

2. Twitter (10,918)
3. Facebook (9,830)
4. Other blogs (3,771)
   a. bookshelvesofdoom.blogs.com (660)
   b. readingrants.org (478)
   c. howpublishingreallyworks.com (431)
   d. blog.schoollibraryjournal.com (410)
   e. yalsa.ala.org/blog (355)

5. Google Reader (2,746)
6. Blogging dashboards/backends (2,554)
7. Email referrals (2,359)
8. ala.org (2,071)
9. Google (1,388)
10. ala-publishing.informz.net (709)

*Top search terms (since May 2011)*
1. yalsa the hub (2459)
2. the hub disney (1050)
3. team peeta vs team gale (670)
4. teen hub (654)
5. seventeenth summer (530)
6. smile raina telgemeier (504)
7. post apocalyptic teen books (345)
8. best audiobooks for road trips (307)
9. the hunger games poster (280)
10. transgender manga (242)

**Accomplishments and Notes**
As of February, we are no longer publishing individual reviews of titles that have not been recognized in some way by YALSA. This has us to increase the breadth and depth of what we’re writing. For example:

- In December we ran a post analyzing what kinds of books and authors were honored on various journals’ “best of 2011” lists.
- In January we analyzed what kinds of books and authors have been honored by the Printz Award.
- In February we published a guide on finding great LGBTQ lit and ran a story summarizing contest.
- In March we wrote about the Hunger Games franchise from numerous angles including where it fits into the canon of dystopian literature, what trends it has inspired, a “by the
numbers” post, and teen reactions to the movie and hosted a Twitter conversation about library programs based around the franchise.

- In April we had an in-depth analysis of all of Laurie Halse Anderson’s works and further analysis and data visualization related to the news item that high schoolers are supposedly reading at a fifth grade level.
- In May we wrote about trends we see coming in YA fiction, posted a list of YA books each superhero in the Avengers might like (to coincide with the opening of the Avengers movie), and created an interactive map of the road trip in *Paper Towns*.

We also continue to post book lists on various timely topics, reflect on news and current events related to YA lit, and bring attention to YALSA’s awards and booklists (as we did with the announcement of the Teens’ Top Ten nominees in April).

In February, we also reached out to other ALA divisions and affiliates to highlight their selection lists and awards that feature YA titles such as the Stonewall Awards, the Amelia Bloomer list, and the Sydney Taylor Award.

At the beginning of April, we launched the 2012 Best of the Best Reading Challenge, which encourages our readers to experience as many of the 80 titles on the 2012 Best of the Best list as they can before the end of June. As of May 25, 112 people (including librarians, teens, and some of our own bloggers) have signed up for the challenge, and 23 people checked in via our most recently weekly post about the challenge. If participants finish 25 titles within the three-month period, they will be invited to create a reader response to a title that they read or listened to, which we’ll post on The Hub. Everyone who finishes the challenge will also be entered into a drawing to win a YALSA tote bag full of 2011/2012 YA lit (and a few of YALSA’s professional development titles, if the winner is a teacher or librarian). So far, participants have noted that the challenge has inspired them to read in genres and formats they otherwise might not have.

I have also begun working with each Hub Advisory Board member on individual projects that make use of their particular skills and interests. One of those projects has been to tidy up our tags and develop tagging guidelines for bloggers as well as re-evaluate our categories to better capture what we’re writing about and how. This should help us improve our SEO and provide those who use tags and categories to discover new content to do so more effectively. Another project is organizing a monthly blogger chat, which will provide us with additional content about upcoming titles for the blog as well as help to foster a sense of community among our bloggers.

**Goals and Further Considerations**

- Continue to develop the Hub Advisory Board’s role in both large projects and day-to-day operations of the blog.
- Many of our most-viewed posts are announcements about YALSA’s awards and selected lists or analysis of trends and current events in YA literature. Address how we can increase our coverage of timely events.
- Find additional opportunities for partnerships with other organizations to increase the breadth of what we cover, such as improving our reporting on diversity in YA lit or including more teen voices on the blog.
Beyond search engines, the sites that drive the majority of our traffic are Twitter, Facebook, other blogs, and email referrals. Continue to find ways to encourage sharing of our content.

Find ways to spread The Hub’s (and YALSA’s) name beyond our current readership, especially into the YA book blogging world and websites where YA lit enthusiasts congregate such as Goodreads.

Respectfully submitted,
Gretchen Kolderup