

**THE FREEDOM WRITERS DIARY: HOW A
TEACHER AND 150 TEENS USED WRITING
TO CHANGE THEMSELVES AND THE
WORLD AROUND THEM BY ERIN
GRUWELL, FREED**



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FOR USE IN SCHOOLS AND LIBRARIES ONLY. Straight from the front line of urban America, the inspiring story of one fiercely determined teacher and her remarkable students. As an idealistic twenty-three-year-old English teacher at Wilson High School in Long beach, California, Erin Gruwell confronted a room of "unteachable, at-risk" students. One day she intercepted a note with an ugly racial caricature, and angrily declared that this was precisely the sort of thing that led to the Holocaust--only to be met by uncomprehending looks. So she and her students, using the treasured books Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl and Zlata's Diary: A Child's Life in Sarajevo as their guides, undertook a life-changing, eye-opening, spirit-raising odyssey against intolerance and misunderstanding. They learned to see the parallels in these books to their own lives, recording their thoughts and feelings in diaries and dubbing themselves the "Freedom Writers" in homage to the civil rights activists "The Freedom Riders." With funds raised by a "Read-a-thon for Tolerance," they arranged for Miep Gies, the courageous Dutch woman who sheltered the Frank family, to visit them in California, where she declared that Erin Gruwell's students were "the real heroes." Their efforts have paid off spectacularly, both in terms of recognition--appearances on "Prime Time Live" and "All Things Considered," coverage in People magazine, a meeting with U.S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley--and educationally. All 150 Freedom Writers have graduated from high school and are now attending college. With powerful entries from the students' own diaries and a narrative text by Erin Gruwell, The Freedom Writers Diary is an uplifting, unforgettable example of how hard work, courage, and the spirit of determination changed the lives of a teacher and her students. The authors' proceeds from this book will be donated to The Tolerance Education Foundation, an organization set up to pay for the Freedom Writers' college tuition. Erin Gruwell is now a visiting professor at California State University, Long Beach, where some of her students are Freedom Writers.

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Features

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Most helpful customer reviews

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Great Inspirational Read!

By Emi Bevacqua

As a mom to two, I cannot give enough credit to the average teacher, who manages to wrangle 30 kids per class on a daily basis. And then, to read the true life challenges and victories of Erin Gruwell, a brand new teacher in Long Beach who brings her classroom full of at-risk teenagers so far beyond par, they reach outright excellence.

Such an inspiring read, and one which I'm actually glad I missed at the height of its glory, so that I was able to enjoy this 10th Anniversary Edition which includes an Afterword by teacher Erin Gruwell plus some where-are-they-now-esque journal entries!

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

I saw the movie!!

By Kindle Customer

Such a grand story. I had to buy the book so I could learn more about this wonderful teacher and her incredible students.. such an inspiring story. I would wish that all our children have teachers to meet their needs such as these children got. I have incredible great grandchildren who I live with. I can only hope I can guide and inspire them as these wonderful kids continue to do. I will definitely save this story to share with others.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

Read with her autobiography

By E. Spira

I showed my sophomore English students the movie after one of their state testing days when they needed a break. They LOVED it; they insisted we play the line game, and asked me why I didn't work two part-time jobs to take them to dinner at a fancy hotel. Truly though, the film made an impact. I bought a few copies of Freedom Writers' Diary, and those were borrowed instantly. I also borrowed a copy of Erin Gruwell's memoir, Teach with your Heart, which really tells the story behind the stories in the Diary. All these products were wonderful, and as someone who teaches grade-level students who are hard to reach with anything remotely literary, this story struck a chord with them and for once, I had kids ASKING to write. Students saw bits of their own lives in the work, and the importance of education in pulling themselves up by their own bootstraps. This book is definitely recommended for anyone in education, or who simply wants a little inspiration to achieve success in their own lives.

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She went on to say, "Things are based on seniority around here." So, in other words, I was lucky to have a job, and keeping Sharaud and his posse another year would be pushing the envelope. Instead, I'd be teaching freshmen—"at risk" freshmen. Hmm ...not exactly the assignment I was hoping for.

So, starting tomorrow, it's back to the drawing board. But I'm convinced that if Sharaud could change, then anyone can. So basically, I should prepare myself for a roomful of Sharauds. If it took a month to win Sharaud over ... I wonder how long it's gonna take a bunch of feisty fourteen-year-olds to come around?

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