

In order to replace your lowest major grade, **pick 5 of the journal prompts** and write at least half a page for each.

Freedom Writers Journal Prompts:

Journal 1- First day of school

At the beginning of The Freedom Writers Diary, students describe their thoughts after meeting Ms. Gruwell and having her class for a few days. What were your first impressions of your teacher and class when you arrived? Do you feel differently now?

Journal 2- Racial Segregation at school

Ms. G writes about people being labeled in her school with words such as “bone head, remedial or basic.” She goes on to describe students labeled based on their ethnicity. Describe how you might be labeled if someone was to judge you before getting to know you. Explain why it is important to get to know someone before categorizing them.

Journal 3- Adults don't 'get it'

What are some of the rules of teenage life that adults just don't understand? How does one earn respect from another? What are the problems with wanting respect, deserving respect, earning respect, fighting for respect? Do you agree that people often look, act and dress just like the people they hate? Why or why not, and why do you think this is?

Journal 4- Death of a friend or family member

Have you been to the funeral of a friend? Have you had other important people die in your life? How does death affect the way you feel about people and life? Does it change the way you live or would like to live?

Journal 5- Fitting In

How important is it to do things to fit in to have friends? To what lengths have you gone to fit in? Have you ever done something as part of a crowd that you later felt bad

about when you were alone? As teenagers, why do you think fitting in is so important? What lengths have you seen others go to fit in?

Journal 6- Without someone to look up to

The writer explains his struggles of not having a father as he grew up and his realization that his friends also had to grow up without a father figure: "I felt sorry for him. I knew how hard it was to grow up without a father." Have you or someone close to you, grown up without a parent figure? Describe how this has affected you or the person close to you

Journal 7- Physical Appearance

The writer of this entry describes being fiercely picked on due to her appearance: "I heard people shouting, 'Hey Fatso!' 'You big buffalo!'" Have you ever teased someone about something without thinking about the ill effects it has? Have you ever been a victim of bullying because you look different than others? Describe.

Journal 8- Home

The writer of this entry describes how Ms. Gruwell's classroom and the other students are "home," since this student doesn't have a permanent home. Is there a place where you feel completely relaxed and accepted? If you don't feel at "home" anywhere, explain why.

Journal 9- Culture

The writer in this entry describes some of the labels that she feels are attached to their specific culture. What positive or negative labels have been attached to your race(s)? If you misheard something about your culture, what would you say to fix someone else's mind set?

Journal 10- Change for the Better

Who looks up to you? Who are you a role model to? How important is it to you to do the right thing, knowing this person looks up to you? Is this a responsibility you take seriously? How does this help you live your life better?