

Student Model Rereading Essay #2

Rereading *Zach Files*

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I still smell grilled cheese sandwiches dipped into chicken soup. Every summer my mother would send me to this program where kids would go in order to prepare for the upcoming school year. Reading time always took place right before lunch, and we would always smell what the teacher was cooking as we read. My favorite lunch of all was soup and sandwiches: especially grilled cheese with chicken soup. I'd always dip my grilled cheese into the soup and then take a bite until I ate the whole sandwich. Then I'd drink the remaining soup straight out the bowl without the spoon. I can distinctly remember the smell of the grill cheese and chicken soup because I associate it so closely with the book, *Zach Files* by Dan Greenburg.

My physical environment comes to mind when recollecting reading *Zach Files*. I remember there would always be a fan blowing in my face when I'd be reading because summer time would always be very hot and there were no air conditioners at the program. I remember we would always read in the biggest room because most of the kids like to sit or lie down on the mats while they read. I personally preferred sitting at a desk and reading. I wasn't too flexible as a child, being that I was a bit husky. Certain positions such as sitting down Indian style or just laying down could be at time uncomfortable for me. So I found it less distracting to read while sitting at a desk. The walls of the program were ancient and of a rusty white color. One could tell the walls hadn't been painted in 20 years because the paint was chipping off, and beginning to yellow.

The last thing I remember, or should I say don't remember, when remembering my reading *Zach Files* is the actual reading of *Zach Files*. To be honest I don't remember much about what the series was about. I solely remember loving them tremendously. I recall the series *Zach Files* being about a kid name Zach who always had to solve all of these bizarre mysteries because crazy things would always happen to him. That's all I personally recall about the book, without picking it up and looking through it.

After rereading the book my memories felt enhanced. Rereading *Zach Files*, brought about a weird satisfaction, one which I can't really describe any other way besides rejuvenating. I felt young again—well younger again. As I picked up the book in class for the first time in nearly 10 years and sat down to read it, I found myself sitting down in a chair looking at the rest of the kids laying down on the mats reading; I'm too husky to lay on the mats.

The kids on the mats stare at me as I'm rereading. Do people not laugh while reading anymore? I noticed I was the only one smiling and laughing sporadically, as I read. My first time reading *Zach Files* I don't remember laughing nearly as much. This time around I'm able to understand the jokes in the book in its entirety, especially the jokes about smoking cigars and drinking "schnapps." It feels good

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to laugh. After laughing one feels relieved; as though they had something stored up and had just been waiting to let it out.

As I sat in my chair and read I could smell the soup and sandwiches being made. It seemed like the other kids couldn't smell it. Since I knew Mrs. Lewis wasn't going to scream out "lunch time!" and soon after set the lunches on everyone's assigned tables, I figured I'd go home and make soup and sandwiches for myself. I made a large bowl of chicken soup and 3 grilled sandwiches. I sure don't remember eating this much the first time reading this book. It was amazing to eat the soup and sandwiches again. My taste buds were exploding from the excitement. I'm certain it wasn't my cooking, why did my tongue suddenly want to jump out of my mouth and run around naked? My memories seemed more vivid then ever.

Something unexpected happened while I was rereading *Zach Files*. Memories completely unrelated to the book began coming to mind. Memories I had stored and locked in the archives and never thought to use again. It seemed that rereading this book not only helped me reminisce about my memories reading the book my first time around but also about what my life was like at that time. Memories of school, family, trips to the Dominican Republic, friends, play-dates, and toys all came back. I was being ambushed by all of my fondest forgotten memories, and it was the most amazing beat down ever.

I've learned many things from rereading *Zach Files* and from the project as a whole. I've learned that sometimes a rereading can be more significant and meaningful than the original reading. It's also not a bad thing to try and relive the more juvenile moments of your life; in fact it's refreshing. Lastly I learned that memories can be one of the most valuable things in someone's life; memories are the only way to keep people and objects alive forever. Most people think when they finish a book they should just put it away and never go back to it. Some even go as far as assuming that they won't benefit from rereading the book and that it'll just be boring. I say, don't knock it until you've tried it.