

AMULET BOOKS TEACHING GUIDE

CAMP ROLLING HILLS

BY STACY DAVIDOWITZ

PRE-READING ICEBREAKERS

Why icebreakers? Well, icebreakers warm up your body and mind, break down barriers, and help create a safe and fun space in preparation for all the reading, writing, and discussion!

Icebreaker #1: Boom Chicka Boom

This icebreaker is a call and response cheer represented in *Camp Rolling Hills: Crossing Over*.

I SAID A BOOM CHICKA BOOM (2X)

I SAID A BOOM CHICKA ROCKA CHICKA ROCKA CHICKA BOOM (2X)

UH HUH (2X)

OH YEAH (2X)

ONE MORE TIME (2X)

REAL LOUD! (2X)

And repeat! Instead of “Real Loud” you can say “Real Slow” or “Real Soft” or “Real Funny” or “Real Weird,” etc.

Icebreaker #2: What’s your favorite part of summer?

Everyone shares!

To make it really fun, walk around with a roll of toilet paper or a bag of marshmallows and ask each camper/student to take however much he or she wants, up to five. For each sheet of toilet paper or for each marshmallow taken, the camper/student shares one summer favorite.

THREE BIG THEMES

FRIENDSHIP

Friendships are the glue of Camp Rolling Hills. You’ve got forever friends like Slimey and Melman, new friends like Bobby and his cabinmates, and friendships with a dollop of crush like Slimey and Bobby. The friendships form, morph, stretch thin, and snap back even stronger.

Do you have a best friend? How has your friendship evolved? What is your first memory with that friend? Your favorite memory with that friend? Have there been any instances that have brought you closer?



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FIRSTS

At Camp Rolling Hills, the characters experience so many firsts: first best friends, first kisses, first raids, first robot explosions, first s'mores, and more!

Do you remember the first time you experienced something special? What was that like? Did it change you in any way? Inspire you?

BEING TRUE TO WHO YOU ARE

Slimey, Bobby, Melman, and Steinberg learn to be true to who they are, because at camp, when you embrace your inner weirdness, everyone around you embraces it, too.

How would you describe yourself? Is there anything about you that you've tried to hide or change? How did that feel? Is there anyone in your life that you feel you can be 100 percent yourself with? What is that like, being totally true to who you are?

Share your favorite summer camp memories, or, if you've never been to camp, share your favorite BFF stories at #camprollinghillsseries.

CAMP ROLLING HILLS: BOOK ONE

Are We There Yet?!

On **page 2**, Slimey makes a *Things to Do Now That I'm in Anita Hill Cabin (Upper Camp!)* list. What does that list tell us about Slimey's character? Make your own To Do list that says something about who YOU are.

When You've Got a Nickname . . .

On **pages 11-12**, TJ and the Captain banter over the PA system. If their back and forth wasn't cut off by feedback, how might their conversation continue? What else might they say to welcome the campers to Camp Rolling Hills? Write the next eight lines of dialogue, keeping in mind their tone and dynamic. Have fun!

In this chapter, we meet the campers of San Juan Hill Cabin. Make a chart of all the campers' nicknames and the story behind how they got them. Next, make up a nickname for yourself and write how you would explain it to Bobby if you were a San Juan Hill camper.

Icebreakers

In this chapter, the San Juan Hill Cabin and Anita Hill Cabin campers participate in icebreakers to get reacquainted before the summer kicks off. Make up your own icebreaker! Feel free to explain using a list, diagram, or prose.

WANTED: Boyfriends

In this chapter, the Anita Hill Cabin campers and counselor unleash their opinions about having a boyfriend. Compile their opinions into a Pros and Cons list for Jamie. If you were Jamie, what would you do?

Treading Lightly

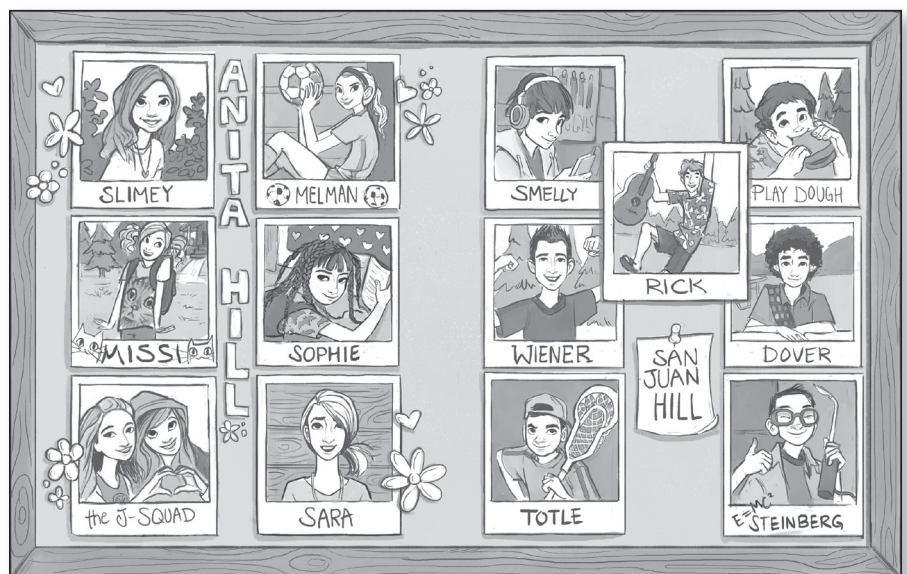
On **page 61**, Slimey is worried all her feelings are going to explode uncontrollably, like a Mentos-infused Pepsi. Have you ever had a lot of bottled up feelings like that? Write a diary entry either from Slimey's perspective or your own perspective, getting those feelings of the past or present off your chest.

Striking a Chord

This chapter ends with Bobby's dream. Choose a character and write what you think they're dreaming about at that exact same moment.

Battle of the Sexes

In this chapter, the boys and girls compete in a game of Newcomb, but behind the scenes there's a whole lot of drama. From the perspective of a Sports Announcer, write the J-squad/Play Dough/Slimey/Bobby conflict, play by play.



A Reason to Smile

On **page 93**, Slimey says, “It feels good to be weird!” What do you think she means by that? Do you agree? If so, write one thing that makes you weird and why you’re proud to share it.

On **pages 94-95**, Bobby writes a letter to his Dad and then a letter to his Mom. What are the differences between the two letters, and why do you think he chose to write them that way?

The Midsummer Dance

This chapter is told from Bobby’s perspective. How do you think Slimey is feeling from the moment she gets ready for the dance to the moment Bobby asks her to go backstage? Write Slimey’s *internal monologue*.

On **page 118**, Tottle shares his values system: STARFISH. Create your own values system, using an acronym.

On **page 119**, Sophie writes fan mail to author, Georgina Whitefoot. As Georgina Whitefoot, write Sophie back, answering her questions and giving her the advice she seeks.

Campstock

This is the talent show chapter! If you were to perform, what would you do? Would you need any of the characters in the book to help you? Write a talent show act for yourself, incorporating at least one other character to assist you in any way.

Operation Scapegoat

On **page 151**, Bobby thinks that maybe the brothers of San Juan are at long last united. After reading this chapter from beginning to end, do you agree? Why or why not?

If you were a San Juan Hiller raiding Anita Hill Cabin, what job would you prefer and why?

Write the raid from the perspective of an inanimate object in Anita Hill.

Hell Hath No Fury

On **page 161**, Sara tells Slimey to “Make strong choices.” What choices does Slimey make in the raid of San Juan Hill Cabin, and do you think those choices are strong? Why or why not? What would you have done differently?

After reading this chapter, how do the two cabins compare? Make a Venn Diagram, recording what’s unique about each of the cabins and what similarities they share.

Face-Off

On **pages 174-182**, Bobby and Slimey go from being very angry at each other to resolving their fight. In Play Format, write another way their fight could be resolved.

Something Fishy

On **page 195**, Slimey decides she needs to talk to Melman before she finds Bobby. Why do you think she feels that this is important? What if Slimey hadn’t talked to Melman? As Melman, write a letter to Slimey, telling her how you feel.

Getting to First

In this chapter, the underwear is finally found! Write an alternate scavenger hunt clue that could lead a San Juan Hiller to his underwear. Try writing it using rhyme. Next try writing it as a Haiku.

The Case of the Missing Underwear; Status: Solved

In this chapter, the San Juan Hill Cabin boys are so excited to get their underwear back! It seems like a great opportunity for a cheer. Write your own cheer to commemorate this underwear-moment in time.

All the Songs on My iPod Make Me Think of You

Bobby writes Slimey a super sweet-sauce song. Write original lyrics for Slimey to sing to Bobby.



Ten Months for Two

On **page 221**, Slimey explains a camp tradition to Bobby. Create your own camp tradition that could connect the Rolling Hills campers all through the lonely winter months.

Check out the collage of bus notes at the end of the book! Write a bus note to your character of choice. Next, write a bus note from that character back to you! Congrats, you've made a Camp Rolling Hills penpal.

CAMP ROLLING HILLS: CROSSING OVER: BOOK TWO

The Gang's All Here

On **page 1**, Steinberg introduces Chaim Roboto, his internal processor. If you had your own Chaim Roboto how might he be different from Steinberg's? What would you name him/her?

This chapter ends with the staff welcoming the incoming campers with a cheer. Write your own cheer to kick off the summer!

Girls Being Girls

On **page 21**, Melman feels a "pull from her hamstrings to her heartstrings." Why does she feel this way? As Melman, write a diary entry about how this summer feels different from last summer.

Kiki 2.0

In this chapter, the Hamburger Hillers try to help Steinberg build his robot, using random objects in their cabin. If you were to make a robot using random objects in your room/house/apartment, what would you use and for what purpose? What would you name your robot and why?

Kicking Butt

In this chapter, Melman feels conflicted about being at Camp Rolling Hills, where she can't possibly practice goalkeeping as much as she could if she were at home. Create a Pros and Cons list for Melman to help her justify her decision to spend her summer at Camp Rolling Hills.

Man Up

Read **pages 54-58** and write Melvin Evans' *inner monologue*. What is he thinking and feeling during the tryout?

On **page 59**, Steinberg creates a Fourteen-and-Up Boys' Soccer rubric. Create your own rubric from Melvin Evans' perspective. How might the two rubrics differ?

The Mystery of Melvin

On **page 63**, Melman explains why she's so self-conscious about her first name, Bethany. If you had to choose another first name for Melman, what would you choose and why?

On **pages 65-67**, Melman is told she can't play on the boys' soccer team. Do you agree with this rule? Why or why not?

Robo-Hills Challenge

This chapter is the Robotics Contest. Without worrying about *how* you'd create it, write a description of the most innovative robot you can think of. What are its talents and special skills?

Write a part of this chapter from the perspective of Kiki 2.0.

Ghost Court

This chapter is about Ghost Court, where campers achieve camp fame by getting called out for embarrassing stuff. What's something funny slash embarrassing that's happened to you? Write your story and then imagine the verdict and punishment—what would TJ make you do?

All Cogged Out

On **page 112**, Steinberg thinks: "If not a robot inventor, then who am I?" What is something that defines you? How would you feel if that special something was taken away? Write a letter to Steinberg explaining how you would feel if you were in his shoes. How might you make him feel better?

A Leap of Faith

Melman is seriously torn about Totle. Write a letter to Melman, offering your advice

Princess Bethany

In this chapter, Melman gets a makeover. Create a totally original product, and pitch it to Jenny in the form of a scripted commercial.

Write a part of this chapter from the perspective of a beauty product.

The Tale of Mujina

On **pages 144-45**, the Hamburger Hillers tell ghost stories. Write your own ghost story!

Seven Minutes in a Canoe

On **page 168**, Melman says, “I just think I’m different.” Have you ever felt that way? Write a poem titled “I Just Think I’m Different” from Melman’s perspective or your own.

The Curse of Mujina

In this chapter, Steinberg thinks of a way to “redeem his rep with the guys.” Write an alternate way for Steinberg to redeem his reputation, and describe how you imagine it would play out.

An Inconspicuous Conference Over Croutons

On **pages 181-182**, Melman has an internal monologue about gender equality. Write an empowered speech for Melman that gets across her concerns as well as her promise for justice!

Makeover the Melman Way

On **page 189**, the Faith Hillers take cabin photos dressed as the Beefy Bros. Melman doesn’t think she can make the Little Ealings understand camp as the amazing, addicting, life-changing place it is, but she does think that these pictures say it all. Describe a picture you have of you and your friends. What does the picture say about your friendship?

Miss(ter) Rolling Hills

On **page 190**, Steinberg whispers his new mantra: “History is about to be made.” Does he make camp history? In what way?

On **pages 195-196**, what does Steinberg learn about himself? What’s the lesson here?

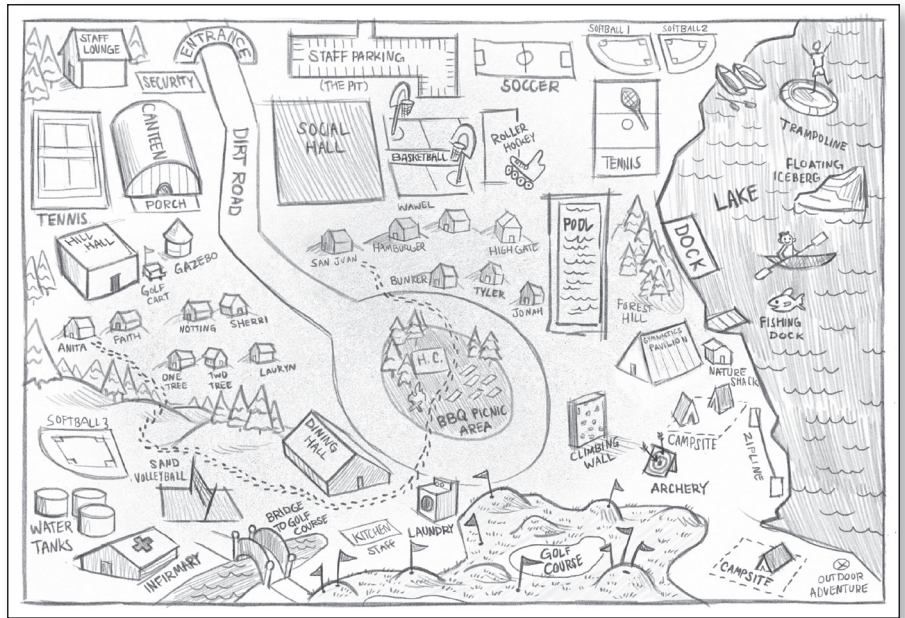
The campers write letters to all sorts of people, but we don’t read any responses until **page 201** when Melman gets a letter back from Lucy Evans! Write a response letter as one of the “outside camp” characters to one of the Rolling Hills campers. For example, Christopher to Jenny; or Moses ‘n’ Sam to Steinberg; or Grandma to Missi; or Li’l Bro to Wiener.

When the Lights Go Out

On **page 208**, Melman concludes that she might be immune to some things, but probably not love. How does Scottie help her come to that realization?

Man Down/Woman Up

The book ends midsummer. How do you imagine the rest of the summer plays out for Steinberg and Melman? Interview them to find out! Write a series of questions about “what’s next” and step into their shoes to answer them!



Q & A WITH AUTHOR, STACY DAVIDOWITZ

1. **Birth Date?** December 24th

2. **Hometown:** Merrick, Long Island

3. **Where do you live now?** Manhattan

4. What sparked your interest to become a writer?

I come from a theatre background—even earned my MFA in Acting—and both writing and acting allow me to step into alien shoes and play. But as much as I love acting, I find writing to be extra fulfilling—my characters can say what they want to say, I can say what I want to say, and I can take enormous risks while eating cereal in bed. It's awesome.

5. Why did you write about summer camp?

BECAUSE I LOVE IT. Anyone who knows me knows that I tend to write a lot about sleepaway camp. It's been a major part of my life since I was ten. Also, my family is in the camping industry. My mom runs a day camp in Long Island, my brother is the Assistant Director of the camp we grew up at, and my sister-in-law runs girls' side there, too. Plus, this series has given me the opportunity to write about kids living together, growing together, and learning together away from their parents. How special is that? Camp is a place where friendships blossom, self-confidence is fostered, and the high jinx is endless. The real question is: Why *wouldn't* I write about camp?

6. Was it super easy to write these books because they're about camp and you love camp?

Super easy? Nope. Writing books is hard! Before the camp series, I was exclusively writing plays and screenplays. I pretty much had never written prose. I think the last short story I wrote was in fifth grade about eating bagels at the beach.

The first *Camp Rolling Hills* book took years to write—it transformed from eleven points of view to five to two. It went from first person to third person omniscient to close third person. It went from present to past tense. Truly an adventure—I learned huge amounts. Content-wise, however, SUPER EASY. A lot of other stuff I write requires months of research. This series, it just flew out.

7. What did you learn at camp that has made a significant difference in your life?

I learned to take risks. To be my big ol' weird self. To resolve issues through song. To lead. To listen. To sleep through noise. To clap at skunks. To hide visiting day candy. To laugh so hard you can't breathe. To cry. To kiss. To compete. To open up. To raid. To love with all your heart. To roast the perfect marshmallow.

8. Advice for young writers?

Let your imagination ride the train to where miracles happen. Allow your characters to be your best friends. Have them join the circus. Be patient. And kind to yourself. Let your friends in on what you're writing. Be bolder than bold. Learn to love revising. Treat yourself to good snacks while doing all of the above. If you're ever stuck, email me, and I'll send you a very random prompt.

9. Any other interesting facts/info you would like to share about yourself and/or the books?

Sure! Did you know that *Camp Rolling Hills* was originally a musical?! That's right. *Camp Rolling Hills* is a musical with music and lyrics by Adam Spiegel and book and lyrics by David Spiegel and me. You can listen to the music and check out some production photos on the *Camp Rolling Hills* website.

StacyDavidowitz.com • camprollinghills.com • Instagram: @camprollinghills • Twitter: @CampRHbooks

Stacy Davidowitz is a playwright, screenwriter, and author based in Manhattan. Her plays and musicals have been produced regionally and internationally, and her most recent indie feature film is in pre-production. The author of the *Camp Rolling Hills* series, she has been published by Abrams Books, YouthPLAYS, Broadway Play Publishing, Steele Spring Stage Rights, and Indie Theater Now. Stacy also teaches theater and creative writing in the New York City public and private schools. Her alma maters are Tufts University, Columbia University, and Tyler Hill Camp, where she attended as a camper, counselor, and head staff.