

Dear Rainbow Rowell,

I used to want everyone to like me, so I changed some things about me. I have noticed a lot of people tend to change themselves to make other people happy. I have seen kids in my school say things and do things they wouldn't usually do if they didn't want to be friends with this person. Kids would do things such as beat up someone to look "tough", or be rude to someone else to be "cool". I would change myself by buying clothes that I usually wouldn't wear just to be like other people. I would change how I act to make other people happy.

Your book *Eleanor and Park* changed that. I learned to be myself. You gave me the courage to be unique and to be my own person. Your book helped me so much to do those things. I have a new understanding to not change yourself so other people will like you. I relate to Eleanor because I am different and I am not like anyone else. Eleanor has a hard fitting in and a hard time finding friends because no one likes her. That helped me understand that if someone doesn't like you for who you are, do not be friends with them because they will just bring you down instead of rising you up.

I now understand that I need to BE MYSELF. I also learned that I don't need to change myself so other people will like me and be friends with me. Thank you Rainbow Rowell for giving me the courage to do that.

Sincerely,
Claire Francom, Grade 6