

## Active & Passive Programming Ideas

### YALS Fall Conference

Katie Spofford - Wadleigh Memorial Library, Milford, NH

#### Teen Book Clubs

“Chicks with Sticks”

Attendance: 4-10

Cost: about \$5/month for cookies & juice

Appeals to girls, gives teens something to do while chatting about the book, and also gives something else to talk about if book discussion fizzles.

“Pizza & Pages”

Attendance: 2-12

Cost: between \$10-20 (you might be able to work out a deal with a local pizzeria)

This does work to bring teens in, but I had trouble getting kids to read the book, and their attention fizzled after the pizza was gone.

- With both book clubs, a core group emerged, and eventually once those teens aged out it was time to end the book club. I don't do sign-ups for the book clubs, I'll have a rough idea of how many kids will come based on the # of books checked out. A registration for the pizza book club might have been useful – I tend to do registrations for more expensive programs

“Book Speed Dating / Book Crush Party”

More of a one-off event, maybe around Valentine's Day. Collect all the ARCs you can. Teens get 5 minutes to check out their “date” (look at the cover, read the description on the back, read the first line/page/chapter) and rank them. This is helpful for collection development.

“How well do you know your book crush?” included questions like What color are his eyes? Etc.

Book Crush bingo – had the teens come up with a list of characters they had a “book crush” on, then they filled out a blank bingo sheet. Used Hershey kisses to play.

## Cupcake Wars

Attendance: 10-15 (could have more)

Cost: beginning \$50, with some decorating supplies on hand under \$20

Set up: Each teen gets 1 cupcake, 1 square of fondant, 1 butter knife. Each table gets a container of white frosting and set of food coloring. A separate table for various frosting colors with piping tips, sprinkles, colored sugar, etc. Another table set up with 5 categories. As teens enter they are given a number. Give teens about 45 minutes to decorate, when they are finished they can put their cupcake in whichever category they choose with their number. Once everyone is done, teens can vote for their favorites in each category. Once they turn in their votes, they can take a second cupcake to decorate with the leftover supplies at the table while I tally votes. For prizes I have given things like cookie cutters, chef hats, and brightly colored cupcake mixes (these you can get for \$1 at Walmart).

## Make Your Own Monster / Zombie / etc.

Attendance: 5-12

Cost: \$10 – embroidery floss, large needles, craft felt, buttons, stuffing

Pre-cut the shapes when possible. Pre-thread the needles when possible and prepare to be threading needles for most of the teens. Make sure they decorate the front before sewing the two sides together. Most teens do not know anything about sewing, so use a simple stitch, be sure to explain how you need a thread tail longer than the needle to tie off. This will often take longer than an hour. Monsters can be more creative, but I've done zombies and skeletons where I pre-cut the pieces, they can still be creative in how they decorate the face/hair/bones, etc.

Some fun variations are using knit socks or gloves to make animals – you can buy extras at a dollar store because teens will bring in gross old socks. I'm surprised to get a lot of boys at these events – most of the girls will have some basic sewing skills but boys will not.

## Make a Gift programs

A lot of teens don't have extra money to buy gifts so these programs have been fairly popular – also they can keep them for themselves. These can be expensive for supplies. Some ideas:

- Spa Gifts – colored/scented bath salts (Epsom salts mixed with food coloring & essential oils), sugar scrub (look on Pinterest for recipes). Teens will overuse essential oils or scents!! Cost for ingredients & small canning jars, have ribbon and labels.

- Personalized Mugs - \$1 white mugs from dollar store & Sharpie Paint markers. Stencils and some idea pictures are helpful.
- Photo frames – either cardboard (free) or wooden frames teens can paint or embellish.
- Cookie Mix Jars – Find various recipes online, make sure to attach instructions with ribbon to attach to jar when finished. Most of the time will be spent on writing recipe & embellishing jar.

### Ghost Photos

Attendance: Will depend on how many laptops you have access to

Cost: Free, unless you count printing out the photos (on regular paper). Will also need a digital camera (or more, ask teens to bring in their own), a tripod, and a photo editing program that allows use of layers, and props (white sheets/nightgowns, capes, old-timey costume stuff)

Basically, teens will take two pictures: one of the background with no one in it, and another with a person in it – the camera needs to stay stationary so both photos will match up if placed one on top of the other. Using Photoshop or a similar program (like Pixlr), make the photos black & white, layer the two images and change the transparency levels on the top one (with the person in it). Save & print! Teens can work in pairs or small groups. This might also work to have one group at a time create their ghost photo. Great way to teach photo editing and history about cameras.

### World War Pun / Pun & Games

Cost: a punny prize (can find lots at places like Newbery comics), index cards

Attendance: 3-5 (need at least 3)

The game is played similar to Cards Against Humanity or Apples to Apples. Print out “black cards” - pun memes. Each teen then has to come up with a pun in response to the black card, write on index card. This works well if you have several teens who really enjoy puns. Some teens will not understand puns (at all!).

### STEAM programs

Arduino Mood Lamp – supplies were pricey (over \$50 for 10 kids, and naturally not all registrants showed up). This craft did not involve soldering, but it was difficult explaining the instructions to the teens to get all the LED lights and connectors plugged into the correct place

(the pictures in the instructable weren't super clear, but it might have helped to have a visual aid because I ended up walking around to show the example I made). One of the arduinos refused to work. But the end product was pretty cool, just not sure how much kids really learned about coding.

<http://www.instructables.com/id/How-to-Make-an-LED-Ambient-Mood-Light-A-Beginner-/>

Bristle Bots – This was a very successful program. Supplies include: Dollar Store toothbrushes, 1.5V watch batteries, small pliers, double-sided tape. You can explain a little about electrical circuitry, but they'll figure it out through trial and error. For some reason I remember having pre-soldered some parts and a couple of kids managed to break the wires off, but since a couple registrants didn't show I had extras on hand. They had fun decorating with pipe cleaners and duct tape to make them look like bugs and put them in an area (paper box lid) to "fight." You could also buy extra regular toothbrushes so they can add to the base of their bristle bot.

<http://www.instructables.com/id/How-to-Make-a-Better-Bristlebot>

Upcoming ideas:

Escape rooms - basically a scavenger hunt with the clues leading to keys and locks.

Adulting 101 - for older teens & returning college students, covering basic adulting skills: cooking, cleaning, car care/maintenance, finances, etc.

How to find ideas: Pinterest, YALSA listserv, instructables

## PASSIVE PROGRAMS

### Teen Anime Club

Average Attendance: 4-15

Cost: Mostly for food (20 bags of popcorn for \$5 at Walmart, juice mix) and art supplies (Sharpies, colored pencils, and copier paper). More if doing a special activity.

Formed when teens asked for one, have run it for about 8 years now. Originally started with showing anime, but mostly seemed like they just wanted social time to talk about it. Allowed teens to guide the direction of the club - they decided to vote for president/v.p. For the most part it's fairly passive, just putting out art supplies, we have a binder for their creations. We also play games (anime Pictionary, jeopardy), candy sushi, cosplay, skits, anime thanksgiving (Ramen noodles), Yankee swap. Expect for attendance to vary with time of year and annually, as members age out and younger teens discover anime/manga.

### March Madness

Cost: under \$5 (for posterboard/presentation board)

Can use many types of things to vote on, doesn't have to be in March! I did a "Superhero Showdown" for the Unmask SRP. Made up ballots each week, then tallied votes. I did not bother with having teens choose winners in advance for a prize, and still many teens were very invested in this particular showdown.

### QR Code Scavenger Hunt

Helps if your library has iPads or other devices that can read QR Codes (many free apps out there), but most people have a device of their own to use. You will also need a way to upload a photo and have a URL for that photo to create the "clues." (Plug the URL into a QR code generator like <http://www.qrstuff.com> to create the codes). The first QR code will be on a flyer or poster announcing the scavenger hunt. You can have clues that are pictures of where the next code is, or text riddles. Give them a way to prove they have completed the hunt (I had them take photos with the final clue) and a box of small prizes at the circulation desk.