

## Community Library Programs That Work



# **Community Library Programs That Work**

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## **Building Youth and Family Literacy**

Beth Maddigan and Susan Bloos



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**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Maddigan, Beth.

Community library programs that work : building youth and family literacy / Beth Maddigan and Susan Bloos.

pages cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-61069-263-2 (pbk.) — ISBN 978-1-61069-264-9 (ebook)

1. Libraries and community—Canada—Case studies. 2. Libraries and community—United States—Case studies. 3. Family literacy programs—Canada—Case studies. 4. Family literacy programs—United States—Case studies. 5. Libraries—Activity programs—Canada—Case studies. 6. Libraries—Activity programs—United States—Case studies. 7. Communities—Study and teaching—Activity programs. 8. Community education. I. Bloos, Susan. II. Title.

Z716.4M33 2014

021.2—dc23 2013029493

ISBN: 978-1-61069-263-2

EISBN: 978-1-61069-264-9

18 17 16 15 14 1 2 3 4 5

This book is also available on the World Wide Web as an eBook.

Visit [www.abc-clio.com](http://www.abc-clio.com) for details.

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ABC-CLIO, LLC

130 Cremona Drive, P.O. Box 1911

Santa Barbara, California 93116-1911

This book is printed on acid-free paper ∞

Manufactured in the United States of America



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# Acknowledgements

We acknowledge all the contributors to this treasury, community advocates, and literacy programming enthusiasts we have met in the two years of taking this work from vision to reality. Instrumental in shaping this collection in its final stages, we gratefully acknowledge Katharine Perak for her friendship, encouragement, expertise, and many hours of rewriting, proofreading, finessing, hand-holding, and being our go-to grammar phone-a-friend.

In addition, many other people in our lives have supported us along the way:

Beth: The staff of the Cambridge Libraries, Newfoundland & Labrador Public Libraries, and most recently the fabulous team at the Curriculum Materials Centre have all been instrumental in testing, suggesting, proofreading, and protecting my sanity and occasionally closed door. I am grateful to my family and friends for all their support: my siblings and in-laws, my nieces and nephews, my wonderful friends in Ontario and in Newfoundland. Finally, a few specific people need to be singled out: Zoey Johnson and Susan Whitten for searching tirelessly for programs that fit the model during the environmental scanning phase; Ann Marie Colford for listening, analyzing, and supporting; Jane Gamberg and Joy Maddigan for reviewing all the troublesome bits every time I asked (and for the occasional kick in the derriere); and last but not least my patient, protective, and perfect husband Bob.

Susan: Thank you to the staff of the Kitchener Public Library: to Sonia Lewis and Ann Wood for their mentorship and support; to all responsible for creating, planning, marketing, and executing library programs; and especially to the Forest Heights Community Library staff who serve our community with excellence every day. I acknowledge Janet Zomer and Wendy Bonza, two long-time community partners, who are truly visionary and make amazing things happen. I am grateful to my parents, Barb and Henry Bloos, for being wonderful models of community mindedness and innovation. To all of my family and friends, particularly Sandy and Linda Bloos, Paul and Sophie Russwurm, Nick Chaput, Ingrid Bloos, Lucy Beiler, and Lee Horton, thank you for being the best cheerleaders ever. Finally, to Julia Cameron who taught me about audacity and the silencing of the blurt.



# Introduction

Contemporary communities are defined by modern lifestyles: work communities, social communities, school communities, and neighbourhood communities. These communities change more rapidly than those of previous generations. A goal of many libraries, schools, and literacy organizations is to foster opportunities for exchange between community members; especially those that wouldn't have an opportunity to meet, talk, or share ideas in the normal course of their daily lives. In the chapters that follow, you will be introduced to 41 programs and projects that provide such opportunities. Some of the projects are on a grand scale and aim to reach thousands; others are simple, local initiatives that provide opportunities for exchange between a few dozen participants. The choices were deliberate and aim to give your organization a starting point or a spark of inspiration to build your own literacy-rich communities.

These programs range from small single-library initiatives to broad multifaceted projects that include several partners and multiple communities, but all share a common denominator—a community literacy focus. Community literacy is formed by the engagement of participants in activities that nurture discourse—written and spoken communication. Community members, individually and collectively, are involved in projects that develop literacy skills, especially unconstrained reading skills, such as vocabulary and comprehension. Fostering this development through engagement is the focus of community literacy programming.

We, as the authors of this book, have gathered the programs and sorted them into broad categories to aid readers in discovery. These threads and themes tie programs together in each chapter, but it is the diversity of these initiatives that gives strength to this philosophy. Community literacy involves “a way for people to acknowledge each other’s multiple forms of expertise through talk and text and to draw on their differences as a resource for addressing shared problems” (Higgins, Long, and Flower 2006, 9). Community literacy is strengthened when community members take the opportunity to engage with others from different backgrounds, socio-economic statuses, and family compositions. The benefits of this type of programming are felt by all community members, but they can be especially impactful on young people. The authors of this book believe that as community literacy institutions, such as libraries and schools, take advantage of these types of opportunities they will redefine themselves in ways that increase their value to the community.

In addition to its focus on building youth and family literacy, *Community Library Programs That Work* illuminates educational strategies, learning models, and philosophies for community development. Each of the programs in this book features an element of one or more of the learning strategies and models outlined below:

- *Place-Based Learning* integrates civic engagement, conservation, and stewardship activities by building on the strong ties that citizens have to their communities. Place-based curriculums incorporate a values-driven approach—students learn through activity that will have a direct result and planned positive impact on the

community. Initiatives include social, economic, and environmental objectives (Clark 2012, 4).

- *Community-Based Learning* sets educational achievement within the context of local community. Experiential learning, apprenticeship opportunities, and life-long learning are all examples of types of opportunities set within the community (Clark 2012, 4).
- *Intergenerational Programming* brings elders and youth together for varied interactions, experiences, and exchange. While often the skills demonstrated come from the older person, the key to success using this model is balance. Voices, opinions, and ideas of both generations must be heard and given room to be expressed. This can lead to innovations and creative solutions neither party could have invented on their own (Cumming-Potvin and MacCallam 2010, 322).
- *Intent Participation* is a tradition used by many cultural groups, especially indigenous communities, to pass skills and knowledge on from one generation to the next. Young people are encouraged to pay close attention to an elder performing a task or demonstrating a skill. Over time, they collaborate and take on aspects of the task, eventually mastering it on their own. The learning takes place naturally through involvement. This strategy has been adopted by many learning communities, including voluntary organizations, interactive museums, and collaborative schools (Rogoff et al. 2003, 75).
- *Service Learning* is exemplified by projects that identify a community problem and empower students to find a creative solution. When students have an opportunity to tackle real world issues and work towards implementing a resolution, genuine service learning takes place (Gonsalves 2011, 37).
- *Early Literacy and Family Literacy Programming* have evolved in the last decade, as research in brain development has generated a greater understanding of the need for parent education and pre-literacy skill development opportunities for children long before school entry (Association for Library Service to Children and Public Library Association 2011, 1–11).
- *Every Child Read to Read® 2nd Edition* is a newly established standard for program delivery by public libraries. The 2nd edition uses a vocabulary that is easier to read and translate for parents and program participants that aren't familiar with technical jargon. In addition, there is an emphasis on the development of unconstrained reading skills, including vocabulary and comprehension. Unconstrained reading skills continue to improve as children grow into lifelong readers (Association for Library Service to Children and Public Library Association 2011).

All these strategies empower participants to be involved in their own literacy development and to share aspects of that development with others in the community. Libraries and schools hoping to engage youth and families in this new digital age must look for opportunities, embrace flexibility, and be fearless and open-minded about inevitable change. In an interview published by *Library Journal*, innovator Eli Neiburger spoke about the role of participant involvement for libraries: “Many library people are stuck in a 20th-century authority model, unwilling or unable to make use of the audience as a critical resource. Be the facilitator for the space, the resources, and the ground rules and help your users assemble their own organization” (Danforth 2009, 40). The programs included in *Community Library Programs That Work* are designed with an engaged participant group in mind.

## RATIONALE AND METHODOLOGY

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Community-based programming, gathering members of any community and engaging them in a common task or activity, is not a new concept for public libraries or schools. Rooted in place in their communities, literacy institutions have opportunities to engage citizens every day. To take advantage of these opportunities, build participation, and welcome non-traditional users, it is necessary to innovate; to challenge established practices; and to look for new ways to provide services. Building a slate of community-focused programs, rooted in the unique nature of the community with flexibility for evolution and change, is a progressive and growing field for libraries, schools, and community centres. This book aims to give literacy institutions inspiration for new programming regardless of the level of establishment they have currently achieved within their own community. In the process of gathering programs for this book, we learned that the spectrum for community involvement is wide and some libraries are finding it difficult to know where to begin to build their slate of programs. Therefore, included in this collection are several traditional programs designed to be early starting points. Community-based programming can begin with a very simple initiative, such as hiding a storybook character in the library stacks and inviting community members in to search for it (see “When in the Library Is. . .” in Chapter 9). Or, programmers might opt instead to take advantage of an established initiative and utilize resources offered online before beginning to develop their own (see “Embracing Diversity” in Chapter 5, or “Storytime Anytime” in Chapter 9 for examples).

Supporting this evolution of library programming, Eli Neiburger also advises institutions to focus on the qualities that make them unique in the community—“that vision of the library as being beyond just books (but still filled with them) is critical to establish if we want to remain valuable to our communities after our place in the content delivery chain is gone and forgotten” (Danforth 2009, 40). Every community has its own dynamic, spawned by the people that inhabit it, the jobs they do, the relationships they build, and the connections they make. Learning about your institution’s community and taking time to choose to add programs that intentionally develop community literacy is a step that schools, public libraries, and community centres are learning to take. Building communities that value literacy is one of the responsibilities of Jacqueline Van Dyk, Director of Libraries and Literacy for the British Columbia Ministry of Education. Van Dyk provides leadership for public libraries in British Columbia and she believes that “in a thriving library, people feel a real sense of ownership over the library itself, not just the services it provides or the information it shares” (Van Dyk 2012, 1).

To help libraries and schools better understand how they can position themselves to be viable institutions long into the future, we chose to compile a diverse treasury filled with community-focused programs that librarians and teachers can use for inspiration; replicate verbatim; or reimagine more appropriately for their own communities. To find these programs, we put out a call on listservs in Canada and the United States. We conducted a free webinar hosted by The Partnership, Canada’s network of Provincial and Territorial Library Associations. Additionally, we completed an environmental scan and contacted libraries and schools that seemed to be providing a style of programming that would fit with our vision for the treasury.

Potential contributors were provided with a list of criteria for the type of community-focused programs we hoped to include. Using the educational principles we value and strategies working in our own library systems, we outlined the criteria we hoped to use to shape the programs chosen for inclusion. These criteria are:

- Local community involvement through partnerships, collaboration, or cooperation
- Engaged youth and/or families
- Accessibility—cultural, physical, financial
- Support networks—elders, parents, caregivers, teachers, mentors
- Collaboration to mutual benefit
- Literacy or pre-literacy connections
- Innovation or uniqueness
- Consideration of place—in-house, in the community, or virtual
- Potential for replication

Our search produced submissions of approximately 200 programs that met a majority of the criteria and fulfilled our vision of inspiring librarians and teachers to look more closely at their own communities and provide opportunities for exploration and literacy exchange. Of those 200 valuable programs, 41 are highlighted in the pages that follow. These 41 programs represent:

- Communities of all sizes from small towns to large cities
- Participation for preschoolers, school-age children, young adults, and entire families, including multiple generations
- Public library-focused initiatives, school programs, and a few from community literacy organizations
- Investments of all sizes from modest budgets of less than \$100 to major initiatives requiring thousands of dollars of funding
- Tradition and diversity—both in style and participation
- Partnership programming and single-institution endeavours

## ABOUT THIS BOOK

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*Community Library Programs That Work* is a guide for anyone working in a literacy organization who hopes to strengthen their programming and align themselves more closely to their community's needs. It contains specific, step-by-step program descriptions from diverse institutions that have demonstrated best practices in their programming. To improve the usability of the book, we have taken some liberties in the style and design of the programs:

- Programs have been rewritten in the authors' voice to provide consistency and readability.
- This book was designed to be published as a single volume, and therefore all the material submitted by the originating institutions could not be included with every program. The authors attempted to provide enough information to allow



readers to recreate or adapt the programs for their own settings, but if more detail is required, contact information for the original submitting libraries; schools and literacy groups is included.

- The majority of the programs in this book were designed for, and submitted by, public libraries. Many will be useful for other community literacy organizations and schools. However, to avoid excessive duplication of terms, like library and library staff, the programs have been written presuming replication by a library.
- Some program details were interpreted and represented by the authors in a fashion we hope holds true to the original program. If errors or omissions lead to programs being misrepresented, we encourage readers to contact the publisher and errors will be corrected in all future editions.
- Where details were not readily available, but the authors felt inclusions were necessary for clarity, they have been provided by the authors as examples of how the program could run.
- The “How it Works” section of each program is presented as a set of directions for replicating the program as described. The authors attempted to marry the vision of the submitting library to these directions for future offerings at other institutions.
- Two program submissions were accepted for inclusion, despite the fact that they had not yet run in their home institutions because they were conceptually strong. These programs have been written in the same tense as all other programs for consistency.
- Each program write-up includes a list of potential community connections that can be used to strengthen the program and develop the audience. In some cases, these connections are drawn from details provided by contributors, in others they have been provided by the authors of this work to demonstrate how the program can be run with a community literacy and participatory focus.
- To inspire readers to adapt programs to the needs of their own community, sidebars have been included with many programs. These Ramp Up or Scale Down boxes include instructions for broadening programs to deepen community impact, or simplifying programs for accessibility or affordability.

We hope you find the programs included in this book as inspiring, exciting, and delightful as we have. And they are only the beginning. Dozens of wonderful programs were cut from this treasury because they did not fit the chapter themes; they included technologies that could date the program; or there was simply not enough space to include them all. We hope these extra programs and more from your communities will build the basis for a future network of community-minded professionals interested in community literacy.



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## Chapter 1

# Getting Started

Choosing programs and developing initiatives are commonplace activities for libraries, schools, and community centres all over the world. For inspiration, we look inside and out. We begin by attempting to determine the needs of our users, and then we develop programs and initiatives to respond to those needs. Sometimes we are successful and sometimes we misstep. If you are attempting to hone a community focus for new programs and initiatives at your institution, this book is a great place to start. You will find a wide variety of programs, from simple to complex. Whether you are just starting community programs or have longstanding relationships and are fine-tuning, you are likely to find inspiration from this collection. The slate programs also vary based on the need for an established community network. Some elaborate programs in this treasury not only would be difficult to implement without pre-existing community connections, but we have also included a sampling of programs that can be starting points to making those connections, if your institution is starting from scratch. Wherever you are on the spectrum and before you choose your next new initiative, take this opportunity to look inside for a moment and consider your users and potential users. If you haven't looked around your community lately, take some time and explore the changes and new developments. Carefully consider the population you will draw from, before you choose what to offer them.

## THE PEOPLE IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

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Connections, networking, and socialization are terms that have acquired new meaning in this millennium. There was a time when these words stood for the relationships that were important in your home and work life, but rapid technological advancement has changed some of the connotations for this terminology. Technology has permeated the social fabric of most of the towns and cities in North America and it has made extraordinary things possible, but it has also created a layer of separation for some members of our society. At both ends of the socio-economic spectrum, technology has changed opportunity and investment. Members of our society that face economic disadvantages struggle to keep up with the latest technologies. These people may encounter difficulty applying for jobs, giving their children Christmas presents, and registering for government services. Towards the other end of the socio-economic spectrum, the upper middle class in our society not only face very

different problems, but deal with daily technological challenges as well. Ubiquitous mobile technologies see many people connected to devices for a significant portion of the day. Missing a Facebook post might mean missing a preschooler's birthday party, and forgetting a smart phone could leave dozens of unanswered texts.

In our rapidly changing world, what defines a community? It is more than physical locality, though that is certainly still a primary factor for most organizations. Public libraries have catchment areas that are geographically defined and the user base usually consists of residents that pay taxes, a small percentage of which partially funds the operation of the library. School communities tend to be made up of the families of students. However, for the purposes of program development, the logistics of defining your community are less important than the networks of people that work together to form the fabric. These are the people that will hear about your upcoming program and potentially participate. Thinking of the community not as a physical space, but as the people that inhabit it and their interconnected series of networks, is a concept explored by Alison Gilchrist in her work *The Well-Connected Community*, "The networking approach to community development opens up access and communication routes across the social and political landscape" (2004, 120). In keeping with this idea of community as building upon the relationships between people, the idea of public space can also be intertwined. People, in order to engage in community literacy activities, need a space or place to inhabit. Libraries, schools, and community centres that bring people together for a purpose, such as community literacy, are building their organization's place in the "democratic public sphere" (Buschman and Leckie, 18). By offering free programs for the members of any community, we are giving citizens a place to gather, engage in discourse, and develop relationships. In doing so, we support their personal pursuits and reaffirm the idea that "the public library cannot then be seen as a single kind of space, but should rather be understood as a site that supports a variety of relationships and hosts a variety of realms" (McKenzie et al. 2007, 131). The programs in this book happen in public libraries, schools, community centres, and in other community locations like parks and neighbourhood businesses. They happen in person and online, in groups gathered together physically and between people that will never meet. Regardless of the venue, these programs join people and create the possibility of relationships, which these authors would argue are the fundamental framework of communities.

Communities, like technologies, are evolving but not losing their importance. Knowing your next-door neighbours might not be valued in contemporary society in the same way it was for our parents. But the relationships we consider important are the ones we use to build our contemporary communities, whether those communities exist because of academic, recreational, social, cultural, or familial connections. Geographic considerations are less important, but our towns and cities still require access to services. Two institutions that continue to play an evolving role in society are schools and public libraries. Both still require physical structures, though how they are used and what happens inside has changed over time. The value of the local school and public library as the pre-eminent literacy institutions in many communities has placed these organizations with an ideal vantage point for building impactful collaborations and community-focused initiatives aimed at fostering literacy for children, teens, and their families. Studies show young people involved with organizations that support civic engagement are "more likely to engage in acts that support their communities" (Goering and Henderson 2012, 96). Those young people are the ones

we hope to inspire as the programs in this book are reimagined by your institution and the ideas shared with families in your community.

## PARTNERING AND COLLABORATING FOR SUCCESS

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Partnerships and collaborations are a natural fit for community-focused programs, because different community organizations can fulfill their own objectives while sharing expertise and costs with other institutions or businesses to provide valuable community-oriented opportunities. Public libraries and schools involved in community programming have seen an evolution in best practices in the last decade, and partnership and collaboration are highlighted in progressive programming. These were key criteria for the programs featured in this guide and over 30 of the initiatives included are built on genuine community collaboration.

In a floundering economy, the economic advantages of partnerships are highlighted; however, community collaborations can produce much more value than simple cost savings. Library consultant, Stephen Abram, winner of the Canadian Library Association's 2011 award for Outstanding Service to Librarianship, notes that impact and innovation are also key to successful partnering: "In times of economic challenge, creativity can increase. We can build new partnerships and find new, improved ways of doing things that may be more cost-effective and impactful. There is a theory that innovation and creativity increase in times of resource constraint" (Abram 2011, 21). As institutions look for ways to be viable and vibrant in difficult economic times, creative solutions manifest. So, while economic benefit should not be the only motivator, it can be a strong motivator, and as partnerships are established your institution will benefit from new ideas, perspectives, and connections.

Betsy Diamant-Cohen, author of the popular "Parent-Child Mother Goose Program," is a proponent of partnering for children's library services. She advocates for library staff to make an effort to move out of their comfort zone and reach out to organizations in the community that will make suitable partners. The simple act of a phone call or casual lunch meeting can often establish the groundwork for a partnership (Diamant-Cohen 2010, xi). Tiffany Auxier, youth and young adult services manager of the Hinsdale Public Library in Hinsdale, Illinois, discusses the benefits of establishing partnerships between public service agencies in any community, including working towards like-minded goals. She also acknowledges that barriers exist, including staff time and limited budgets. She suggests collaborative programming as a solution: "Collaboration between agencies can maximize the expertise and interests of staff members, share costs, attract a broader audience, and increase community awareness about each organization" (Smallwood 2010, 153). When you collaborate to offer programs, you take advantage of new avenues to reach your target audience.

Partnership programming requires the entire team to be simultaneously open-minded and strategic. When you are sourcing partners for a potential program, here are some tips to keep in mind:

- *Get to know your community.* Hone in on the talents, skills, and expertise in your neighbourhood or professional community.

- *Find the right collaborators.* Know your strengths and look for partners with complementary skills and institutional objectives.
- *Be open to invitation.* Be willing to work on projects initiated by others that match your library's strategic directions.
- *Know your project.* Define, redefine, revise, and continually return to project objectives and needs of your target audience.
- *Establish clear responsibilities.* Outline tasks, deadlines, and expectations for all partners. Consider things like equipment needs, meeting locations, and budgetary obligations.
- *Listen, respect, and learn.* Ensure the voice of each collaborator at the table is heard.
- *Compromise when necessary.* Know your non-negotiable elements and be willing to give (at least a little) on other aspects within your authority.
- *Communication is key.* Give regular project updates to all the stakeholders, ensuring everyone is on the same page at all times.
- *Evaluate and reflect.* When the project is complete, prepare an evaluation report for all the stakeholders and consider potential improvements for the next offering.

—(Maddigan and Bloos 2012, 434)

These tips first appeared in *Voice of Youth Advocates*, December 2012 issue, in an article written by the authors of this book *about* writing this book. These “Top Tips for Collaboration” are reprinted with permission.

Engaging the right people, from your home institution and through partnerships, is fundamental to the success of any collaboration. By establishing clear responsibilities and following up on expectations, you will make it easier for all partners to fulfill their roles and be more invested in a project. Most people want to do their job well and are willing to share ideas and expertise, but few people have the luxury of extra time. Establish clear directives and follow-up when people inevitably miss deadlines. If your organization is taking a lead role, accept the fact that you will be responsible for gathering what you need to bring an idea to fruition as an initiative.

## COMMUNITY MAPPING

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Knowing your community and understanding it from many angles and perspectives is crucial, as you begin to explore and choose potential programs and initiatives. There are many methodologies for community mapping that take a variety of perspectives. Some suggest embedding staff into the community by taking an active role on-site in social service agencies (Singh 2008, 51). Others promote a geographic approach—defining the physical attributes of your community and mapping the buildings in relationship to one another (Blake, Martin, and Du 2011, 18). The approach the authors of this book have used successfully, and one that promotes looking at your community from a variety of perspectives, was developed by Anne Marie Madziak, library development consultant and leadership program coordinator for the Southern Ontario Library Service. First appearing

as an appendix of *Creating the Future You've Imagined: A Guide to Essential Planning*, this guide to understanding your community is an excellent tool for staff at all levels to use as a way to see their library's community as a dynamic organism. While the focus is on public libraries, the approach and lessons are also valuable for schools and other community organizations.

### ***Six Ways to Describe Your Community***

*By Anne Marie Madziak*

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Public libraries are deeply inclusive institutions, uniquely positioned to serve every member of the community, regardless of age, education, language, background, socio-economic status, or life experience, as well as contribute to the well-being of the community as a whole. Viewing the community through multiple lenses makes it easier to capture the complexity and vitality of community life. The following six approaches will assist in compiling a rich array of community information to be used in the planning and assessment of library service. While some prompts will seem more relevant than others, responsive and dynamic public library service is rooted in every aspect of community life and well-being.

#### ***Describe Your Community in Terms of Social and Economic Factors***

Things to think about:

- Demographic breakdown (age, language, education, etc.) and how it compares to that of your region and/or neighbouring communities
- Employment
  - Largest employers; major industries
  - Small businesses/home-based
  - Service industries
  - Opportunities for new graduates/young people
- Economic well-being
  - Downtown vitality
  - Development
- Education/learning
  - Number of elementary schools? Private?
  - Secondary schools? Post-secondary? Vocational?
  - Are students bussed?
  - Home schooling—is it a significant trend?
  - Continuing education/learning opportunities
  - Distance education
  - Access to technology; Internet
  - Access to other libraries

*(continued)*

*(continued)*

- Community identity and awareness
  - Media—newspapers (weekly; daily); radio; television; others
  - Public gathering places

### ***Describe Your Community in Terms of Lifestyles and Interests***

Things to think about:

- What do people do to socialize/meet other people?
- Do public gathering places attract families? Seniors? Teens?
- What are the typical traffic patterns of residents?
  - Where do they shop for groceries? Clothes? Books? Home repair?
  - Where do they go to see a doctor? Financial advisor?
- Is it a commuter community?
- Do people work from home?
- What do people do on a Sunday?
- What do people do for recreation?
  - Public/private recreational facilities (e.g., golf, curling, etc.)
  - Sports teams with a high profile
- Are residents interested in home improvement? Renovations? Gardening and landscaping?
- Does your community experience large fluctuations in population during different seasons?
- Are there annual/special events that draw crowds?
- Geography—are there physical features that divide the community geographically (e.g., a major highway people don't typically cross; rivers, lakes, etc.)?
- Are there geographic features that result in particular interests (e.g., wildlife conservation, boating, etc.)?
- Are there other special interests widely shared in the community?
- Are there smaller communities within the community served by the library?
- What do residents appear to value?

### ***Describe Your Community in Terms of Groups and Affiliations***

Things to think about:

- Which of the following exist in your community?
  - Churches, faith communities, religious organizations
  - Civic organizations
  - Community/rate payers' associations
  - Service clubs
  - Chamber of commerce/business associations
  - Cooperatives



- Environmental interest groups
- Social justice groups/initiatives
- Ethnic clubs/associations
- Mutual support/self-help groups
- Women's/men's groups/organizations
- Scouts/Cubs/Brownies/Junior Farmers
- Clubs—common interests; hobbies (e.g., gardening, book clubs, investment clubs, etc.)
- Age-related clubs/organizations (e.g., teens, seniors, etc.)
- Arts/cultural groups, organizations, and events
- Other groups or affiliations?
- Are there gaps? Areas of concentration or duplication?
- Do some groups have a high profile in the community?
- Imagine being a newcomer—how easy is it to get “plugged in”?

### ***Describe Your Community in Terms of Agencies and Services***

Things to think about:

- What health care services exist in your community?
  - Do residents have access to family doctors? Hospital? Alternative healthcare?
- What social service agencies exist in your community?
  - Nursing homes/retirement homes
  - Day cares
  - Youth services (e.g., Big Brothers, Big Sisters, Boys and Girls Club, Early Years, etc.)
  - Affordable housing
  - Services for economically disadvantaged
  - Counselling services
- Other not-for-profit organizations—what services do they provide? To whom?
- Are there government offices in your community? What kinds of services?
- Are there gaps? Barriers?

### ***Describe Your Community in Terms of Changes Occurring***

Things to think about:

- Is the population increasing? Decreasing?
  - Are certain ages or segments of the population increasing or decreasing?
  - Is the community becoming more multicultural?
  - Are certain people moving away?
- Are there residential developments being planned?
  - What kind of housing? Who is the target population?
  - Are services (roads, sewers, etc.) being planned to accommodate new developments?
  - Are there new employment opportunities? New businesses?

(continued)

(continued)

- Where is the nearest large anchor store (e.g., Target, WalMart)?
- What is the rate of vacancy in the downtown core?
- Are area schools stable with sufficient enrolment? New schools being built?
- Are there new organizations? Agencies? Services?
- Are the health/social needs of the population changing? Are these new needs being met?
- Is the crime rate increasing? Decreasing?
- Are there community initiatives to deter crime and/or promote community pride?
- New parks, recreation facilities, other amenities?
- New festivals or events? Performing groups?
- Is there public transportation? Other transportation issues?

### ***Describe Your Community in Terms of Community Assets***

Things to think about:

- Take an inventory of all the good things about your community . . .
- What are the natural assets in your community (e.g., rivers, lakes, wooded areas, and other topographical features)?
- What are the built assets (e.g., buildings, parks, paths, public space, infrastructure, etc.)?
- What are the social assets (e.g., the social aspect of living in the community; skills and strengths of individuals; and local associations/organizations, etc.)?
- What are the economic assets (e.g., local economy, jobs, tourism, attractions, businesses, etc.)?
- What are the service assets (e.g., health and education, agencies, facilities, etc.)?
- What successful events have taken place? What were the components contributing to success?
- Community-wide initiatives (e.g., Communities in Bloom, One Book One Community, major fundraising, etc.)
- Stories that illustrate the community at its best
- Who are key players in the community? Why?
- Are there skills that are dominant locally?
- Examples of citizens making something happen
- Important achievements of Municipal Council
- Problems turned into opportunities

Having reviewed these lists, or completed your own community mapping exercise, plan to do a refresher after several years. As communities grow, shrink, change, and evolve, this type of exercise should be repeated every five years, or as any major development or local initiative is announced.

By understanding the community that your library or school is a part of, you will be able to choose the best programming strategies. Knowing your community helps you integrate a healthy percentage of your population in ways that benefit all parties. Ultimately, the goal is to strive for inclusive communities, welcoming for everyone—“an inclusive community provides supports to foster the development of strong friendship networks that secure an individual’s place in the community. These support networks develop naturally in places where relationships form spontaneously” (Frazee 1999, 3). Take time to ensure your institution is one where community members feel welcome, supported, and inspired. With an intentional, strategic programming lineup, your institution will be one step closer to becoming one of those places. With careful planning, and constant revision based on the evolution of your community, your centre will become more than the gathering place. It may become the source of inspiration and the focus of a well-developed community.

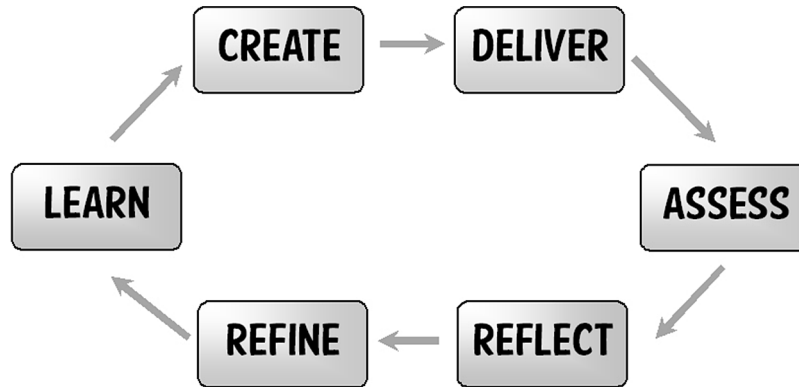
## COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING MODEL

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Program development involves planning, implementation, and reflection. Libraries use many program design models and most follow a formula that includes these planning, implementation, and reflection stages with varying emphasis. Presuming you have mapped out your community and now recognize some holes in your programming lineup, it is time to start thinking about new programs that will work for your community. Before you begin to flesh out a new program, whether it is one you find in this collection or one of your own design, it is important to strategically consider each stage of program development. This will give your program its best chance of success.

Chrystie Hill, in her publication *Inside, Outside and Online*, discusses uncovering five “common practices among library practitioners actively pursuing their work through a community-building lens.” These common practices are assessment, delivery, engagement, iteration, and sustainability—all key for the longevity and effectiveness of programs (Hill 2009, 22–25). Hill’s list outlines many of the features we feel are integral to design, deliver, and evaluate successful programs. The model we have developed and will discuss is not revolutionary. It draws upon and modifies aspects of some other models, including those used in the field of instructional design. The instructional design model, ADDIE (Assess, Design, Develop, Implement and Evaluate), was created by the Center for Educational Technology at Florida State University for the US Armed Forces (Swanson 2006, 51) and has some characteristics similar to the model we present, though the application of each is different. The model we have chosen to promote for a community-centred approach reflects and augments some other established models, but its major difference lies in its application and emphasis, which are explained in detail below.

Before you tackle any new program, it is worthwhile to review the model and make notes on issues, plans, and questions you have about each stage. The model is designed to be cyclical; when you complete all the stages the first time, be sure to revisit them if you plan to offer the same program again. For special events and one-off programs, keep notes on the model and when the time comes to plan a new special event, review some of the past successes and missteps.



Recommended Program Design Cycle

Each stage of program design includes points to consider, review, and check off your list before moving on to the next stage. The lists under each of the components of the model are not meant to be exhaustive; just starting points to get you thinking about your program in broad, strategic terms.

### ***Learn***

- Explore your library's mission and mandate
- Map your community
- Find and approach partners (if applicable)
- Define objectives for your program or event

### ***Create***

- Plan for mutual benefit with partners (if applicable)
- Choose ingredients, activities, timing, and so on.
- Communicate to internal and external stakeholders—staff, administration, library board, parent council
- Market the program to the larger community, focusing extra effort on the target audience

### ***Deliver***

- Set up—seating, views, traffic flow, supplies, materials, displays
- Review/adjust environmental controls
- Double-check technology and functional considerations
- Engage—listen, demonstrate, discuss

### ***Assess***

- Obtain participant feedback—formal and/or informal
- Consult partners and collect feedback (if applicable)
- Gather statistics (attendance, circulation, outcomes)
- Make notes on what worked/what didn't

- Consider timing, enthusiasm, and overall effectiveness
- Review objectives and measure fulfillment

***Reflect***

- Evaluate anticipated and unexpected successes
- Evaluate challenges
- Consider possible improvements
- Explore possibilities for program enhancement
- Contemplate potential new partners, ideas, or programs

***Refine***

- Modify goals and objectives
- Apply relevant experiences and adjust planned delivery
- Implement planned improvements and begin again

By planning your program strategically and building in tools for evaluation, feedback, and refinement, you are working towards success; if not in the first iteration, then in ones that will follow. Using this model as both a development and a reflection tool will help you understand where to build in extra time, extra staff, and extra resources for the next delivery.

## **PROGRAM BUDGETS**

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“Doing more with less and being creative with resources” (Walter 2010, 84) has been a credo that children’s librarians have understood for the last 30 years. There is rarely a surplus of funding for youth programming; however, programming is expensive. Minimally, funding is required for staff time in planning and delivery, program supplies, and marketing materials. Compounding the problem when resources are scarce is the fact that it can be difficult to accurately gauge anticipated audiences for new programs. Community-focused programming is similar to other types of library programming in public libraries and family literacy programming in schools. However, because community programming has, at its core, an intentionally inclusive design, it may require extra resources to target non-traditional users.

The programs in this treasury include budget figures, as reported by the submitting institution; but a word of caution to readers: many submitting libraries and schools indicated the use of materials on hand or in kind resources and donations. If these types of materials and resources are not available to you, you will need to factor in higher budget costs or be creative and find alternate solutions. Use the defined budget as a starting point to get a sense of the scope of the initiative, but as you reimagine the practicalities for your own institution, you will need to redraft the budget to match your local realities in terms of participation, space, and materials.

Partnerships, as we mentioned in a previous section, can seem attractive because they allow the sharing of the resource burden. This is absolutely true and can be very beneficial. However,

with partnership programming soft costs may increase—more staff time and resources will be required to coordinate meetings, ensure proper communication between partners, and potentially to fulfill all partners' objectives. Organizations shouldn't see this as a deterrent, but should be aware so they can factor in the appropriate amount of staff time required.

If you are looking specifically for programs that can be done with minimal funding, pay close attention to the passive programs outlined in this treasury. Passive programs are those that libraries set up and community members complete on their own time, when it is convenient for their lifestyle. Instead of bringing a group together in one place at a specific time with a staff member to lead them, a passive program is set up to run itself. Participants sign up, or are introduced to the program, and receive the ingredients necessary to begin. The starting point is often an outlined task or objective that they fulfill with library or community resources. In this book, 16 of the programs included are designed for asynchronous delivery or have elements that participants can complete at their own time and pace. Passive programs are a great way to advance community literacy because they allow for flexible scheduling and are often less intimidating than being a part of a group. They engage participants at their own pace, but frequently participants meet as they complete the program and spontaneous discourses occur between community members that might only have the library program in common. Some of these programs happen online and take advantage of social networking opportunities for community engagement and exchange.

## EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK

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Outcomes and evidence are often required to demonstrate if a program has met its outlined objectives, and are an essential part of the program design model introduced earlier. Evaluation and feedback are an excellent way to gauge success from the perspective of the participants and the hosting institutions. However, program evaluation is not included as a specific section for each of the programs detailed in this treasury, though we acknowledge that it should be. Most of the submissions received did not include a prescribed mechanism for feedback and evaluation. This is not surprising; in our experience, formal evaluation of program objectives and outcomes is an element that is often neglected. In fact, one of the authors of this treasury, and a firm believer in measurable evaluation, freely admits that it is the one area of community programming that she will be pursuing more aggressively in the future. When appropriate, submitted evaluation tools and strategies have been included in the "How it Works" section of the program description.

As we try to save money, cut corners, and do more with less, the time it takes to conduct valid evaluation is a tempting piece to cut. It doesn't add value to the program itself; cutting a feedback mechanism can save time and resources and participants won't complain or miss it. But systematic and measurable evidence that proves a program meets its outlined objectives is not only a useful tool for program development, but it is also a powerful tool for protecting your programming budget.

Evaluation does not need to be expensive. As you design a program and consider its objectives, carefully consider tools you may already have on hand to calculate a program's

success. Use circulation statistics, membership counts, and unsolicited feedback. Consider providing a guest book for participants to sign and comment about your program or services. Include an online mechanism on your website to solicit feedback. The value of libraries and schools using their web presence to build online communities has the added benefit of providing another tool for feedback. “Just as the library is more than a repository for books, a library’s online presence can also be more than a space to describe the libraries collections and programs. Libraries can use social software to build community with their web presence. A library’s online presence can become a community forum, a space to share ideas, and a place where community members can connect with one another” (Farkas 2007, 85). By establishing an online feedback mechanism, you give participants an anonymous venue for valuable input into programs and services.

## **MOVING FORWARD: YOUTH, COMMUNITIES, AND LITERACY**

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Communities are changing; schools and libraries are evolving. How we define community, school, and library is different today than it was 10 years ago, and this transition can be a difficult one for staff and community members rooted in the traditions of these iconic institutions. Even the concept of literacy is changing. It is no longer sufficient to decode your first language and learn to be proficient in speaking and writing. In today’s society, we must also develop critical and technological literacies to keep abreast with society’s rapid pace of change. Professor Emeritus Dr. Virginia A. Walter, author of several seminal works on library youth services and former children’s services coordinator for the Los Angeles Public Library, looks at a new definition of community in a global age. She delves into the benefits of intergenerational exchange and examines how the information-seeking behaviours of young people evolve through impactful exchanges with the adults that assist them. Dr. Walter recognizes that contemporary families are living in a global society, and the library can aid them and guide their communities as a new generation of global citizens is developing (Walter 2010, 69).

So, where do we look for the community in which our children can thrive and our teens can develop the skills they need to take the next independent steps in their lives? What would that community look like and how can we build it? Virginia Walter provides more insight:

Good communities for children would offer them rich, stimulating, safe environments in which they could explore the world outside their homes and families. There would be places to play and places to develop as unique individuals—arts and crafts centers, athletic facilities, parks, playgrounds, and public libraries. There would be public spaces where children could have meaningful interactions with people from all generations. There would be opportunities to observe people at work and to participate in the life of the community, perhaps by serving on community youth councils, planning civic events, or volunteering to help other people.

—(Walter 2001, 101)

The programs found in *Community Library Programs That Work* are designed to help move us towards that vision of a vibrant neighbourhood and local community. But, included among the local community programs are others, independent of the geographic community. We recognize that every family does not define their community by where they live. Many families travel for schooling and library services or prefer to connect to virtual spaces; therefore, programs are included in this treasury that allow for passive and online participation.

No matter how we define community, the best programs we can offer are the ones that will involve the families we serve. Schools, libraries, and community centres all recognize that it is not enough to provide spaces and opportunities for children and students to grow. It is crucial to involve and excite the whole family in literacy development “by establishing stronger relationships and connections with families, parents are more likely to get involved at the school and students are more likely to make greater gains in reading and math skills” (Galindo and Sheldon 2012, 103). Transform your institution into one where residents come to gather, learn, create, and connect. As families recognize the importance of community engagement, they become the foundation for our literate, vibrant communities.



## Chapter 2

# Programs That Build Community

Communities have cornerstones and monuments that help build civic pride and municipal engagement—the town hall, local church, park, museum, art gallery, or community centre. Many communities also have at least one public library and school. The perception that community members hold of these latter institutions can be a benefit or a curse, but it is often both. If citizens aren't regular library users or if they didn't enjoy the time they spent in school, the ideas they hold of these institutions may be clouded by intimidation and rigidity. However, both schools and libraries hold an established place in the community and an inherent respect. Having a library in your neighbourhood will increase property values, and the local school is often a gathering place for families. So, how do you take your institution from an underutilized idea of a nice place to have in the neighbourhood to an engaged centre for youth and their families? The answer lies in leveraging the positive connotations and dispelling the myths by collaborating with other agencies; bringing families and teens into your institution; and getting staff out into the community making connections, meeting new people, and listening to ideas.

Community literacy organizations play an important role in creating physical neighbourhoods and virtual communities. Staff members at all levels are community ambassadors and must be empowered to embody this role. One way to help them fulfill their mission is to create opportunities to bring institutional values and visions into the community through outreach and blended in-house and in-community programming. Five programs have been highlighted in this chapter, and each one provides an opportunity for young people to simultaneously engage with the library and other community institutions—parks, transit, local businesses, and service organizations. All five programs have library staff engaged outside the walls of the library with members of the community and shine a light on the library as an institution rooted in community engagement, not bricks and mortar.

Community engagement is a phrase that has been used so often by civic and academic institutions that it has virtually lost its meaning (Ferlazzo 2011, 11–14). But it does still

provide a vision: of families, teens, and adults engaged in activities in and around the community that might spark unlikely friendships and civilized debates; people meeting and learning more about their neighbours; families moulding and revising their values and opportunities; teens volunteering to help seniors and learning more than they teach; new dads sharing proud baby stories and moms chatting about great parenting websites while preschoolers giggle over their latest story time book. Integral to bringing this vision to reality is revising preconceived notions of the institutions and agencies that make up the civic side of your community. Staff provide visibility and leadership as the face of those institutions, both inside during day-to-day operations and, perhaps even more importantly, outside in the community.

In Chapter 1, we presented the tools for foundational work in community engagement—mapping your community; learning the demographics; choosing and establishing potential partnerships; designing programs that are flexible; and engaging with the potential for growth and development. This chapter provides the first set of inspirational programs:

- *Community Quest*. A team challenge for families to learn more about the library and neighbourhood businesses
- *Storywalk*®. An initiative that pairs a walk in the park with reading a picture book
- *Let Us Surprise You*. A community contest that challenges potential library users to find posters and answer trivia questions for a chance to win a prize
- *Newcomers Bus Tours*. An innovative partnership for newcomers that pairs the library with the local transit authority
- *Geocaching: Treasure Hunting in Your Neighbourhood*. Another team challenge for families inspired by the international geocaching movement

These programs, like those in subsequent chapters, were chosen not only because they match the criteria for the community programming model outlined in Chapter 1, but also because they can be adopted or adapted for most communities and neighbourhoods—urban or rural. If your community is not large enough to warrant a bus tour for newcomers, consider the walkabout option. If your library or school does not have a park within walking distance, choose to put a Storywalk® in the playground. Highlighted programs are an intentional mix of large and small budgets, intricate partnerships, and solo ventures. Community literacy is built, in part, by bringing people together to talk, socialize, learn, and explore (Higgins, Long, and Flower 2006, 9). The families in your community can benefit from opportunities like the five described here, as well as by the ones you are inspired to adapt and create.

# Community Quest

Red Deer Public Library  
Red Deer, Alberta  
Canada



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## Target Audience

This program is designed for families, particularly those with children in Grades 3 and up.

## Community Connections

- Local businesses
- Recreation centres
- Parks and/or landmarks
- Schools
- Museums
- Galleries
- Emergency services, such as fire and police

## Program Description

In a scavenger hunt-style game, based on the popular television series *Amazing Race*®, teams are invited to visit destinations in the community, complete tasks, solve clues, and record their progress before heading back to the library for a celebration.

Targeted towards families with children in elementary school, teams must include at least one adult. All destinations are within walking distance of one another and include stores, museums, parks, schools, emergency services stations, recreation centres, and other places of interest. Participants must complete tasks, or Hurdles, either individually or as a group, at each place to earn a clue that will help them find the next location. Along the way, they encounter additional challenges called Speed Bumps, where they must answer a question or solve a puzzle to gain extra bonus points. Speed Bumps are designed to steer teams in the proper direction.

The program takes approximately three to four hours to complete. All teams are requested to return to the library by a certain time, even if they have not made it through the entire course.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Utilizes a familiar and popular television show platform to encourage participation and garner excitement about the library and community
- Provides an active teamwork-focused family activity
- Promotes family oriented businesses and locations in the city
- Strengthens the relationship between the library and other local organizations and businesses to encourage future collaboration and cross-promotional opportunities
- Instills pride in the community and bolsters community spirit

## How It Works

Approach family oriented businesses and organizations within walking distance of your institution to see if they would be interested in participating in the Community Quest. Once participating locations have been established, divide the scavenger hunt route into zones for easy reference.

Provide staff at the various destinations with a package that includes a thank you letter for their participation, instructions for the Hurdle the teams must complete at their location, plus all the necessary supplies. Some locations may wish to donate the supplies required. Design Hurdles that can be completed in 10 minutes. Location staff should also receive complete written instructions and envelopes containing the clue to find the next destination. This envelope is given to the team once they have completed the task to the satisfaction of the staff.

Participants register their teams at the library in advance. Encourage them to bring a digital camera or smart phone with a camera to record their progress throughout the event.

On Community Quest Day, ask participants to meet at the library for a general introduction. Hand out Quest packages that include a welcome letter; map of the downtown area; a tourism pamphlet; information about the Speed Bumps along the route; a place to record answers to the bonus questions; and the cell phone numbers of the event coordinators. In the package, provide teams a clue to find their first destination.

Challenge teams to be the fastest clue earners and make their way promptly to the different destinations. Teams must survive the Speed Bumps and collect information to earn bonus points and ensure they are on track. Many Speed Bumps require a group photo; so, encourage participants to be creative and have fun. Instruct families to meet back at the library at a designated time for the closing celebrations. Have teams begin at a variety of initial destinations to avoid overcrowding.

Examples of Hurdles include:

- *Baby food eating.* The entire team must help devour the pureed delights.
- *Poetry writing.* Using magnetic poetry words on large baking sheets, the team creates a five-line poem and takes a picture.
- *Metal? Or plastic?* Teams that choose metal must find a 1975 penny from a bucket filled with pennies. For the plastic challenge, teams must correctly count the beads on a necklace.
- *Firefighter gear.* One team member must don all the parts of a firefighter uniform at the fire station.
- *Pasta Poppers.* Teams must fill a two-litre pop bottle to the marked line with cooked pasta.
- *Masked make-up.* Two blindfolded team members apply make-up to one another.
- *Combination platter.* Using a basket of plastic eggs filled with number combinations on slips of paper, teams must find the correct three combinations to unlock a box containing puzzle pieces. The puzzle must then be assembled.

Once the Hurdle is complete, give the group a clue to find the next location. For example, “Travel to a building that houses artefacts and exhibits. It is next to a swimming pool” or “Go into the building where you can borrow books, music, movies, kits, and even toys!”

Approximately 12–15 locations can be visited during this event.

Place Speed Bumps along the way between destinations that are designed to steer participants down certain streets while avoiding others. At the Speed Bumps, teams must solve puzzles or answer bonus questions. Be sure to instruct them to take a picture to record their visit. Speed Bump challenges can focus on interesting features of buildings, statues, art, or local history. An example of a Speed Bump used by Red Deer Public Library is “The Cenotaph is one of the oldest pieces of public art in the city. Have your photo taken on a bench in the park surrounding the Cenotaph. In what year was the Cenotaph constructed?”

When teams return to the library, download their photos and show them at the celebratory event. Serve refreshments and invite all participants to choose a bag containing small prizes, with the winning team choosing first.



## Supplies & Materials

- Envelopes for packages and clues
- Maps of Quest area and tourist information pamphlets
- Various supplies for Hurdles along with instructions
- Questions for Speed Bumps and paper to record answers
- Refreshments
- Computer and data projector

## Budget

Estimated costs are approximately \$100 for materials for the tasks, envelopes, paper, prize bags, and chips and pop for the closing party. Maps and tourist pamphlets may be available from local tourist centres free of charge. Small prizes can be donated by local businesses.

## Marketing & Promotion

Promote this program on the library website and in-house through posters, brochures, handouts, and by word-of-mouth. Send information to all participating locations, school boards, and community centres in the city.

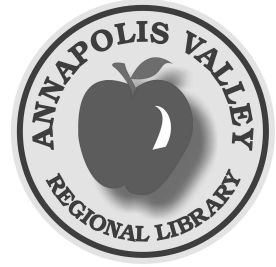
## For More Information

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Deb Isbister or Carrie Berg  
Librarian Assistants  
Red Deer Public Library  
Red Deer, AB  
403-346-4576  
<http://www.rdpl.org>

# StoryWalk®

Annapolis Valley Regional Library  
Bridgetown, Nova Scotia  
Canada



## Target Audience

This initiative is appropriate for all age groups.

## Community Connections

- Outdoor trail associations
- Municipal department responsible for parks and recreation
- Schools
- Neighbourhood associations
- Sports organizations
- Community centres
- Environmental interest groups

## Program Description

A picture book is replicated onto signboards with each board featuring a two-page spread of the book. A related suggested physical activity, such as hopping, skipping, or running, is included at the bottom of each sign. The signboards are laminated and mounted on stakes that are spaced out and installed on popular walking paths. As children and families walk along the path, they read the book and complete the suggested activities.

Originally created by Anne Ferguson of Montpelier, Vermont, and developed with the Vermont Bicycle & Pedestrian Coalition and the Kellogg-Hubbard Library, StoryWalk® is now installed in Jubilee Park in Bridgetown and in Port Williams Community Park in Kings County, Nova Scotia. The Annapolis Valley Regional Library also has three portable StoryWalk® sets for schools and community groups to borrow.

This project combines the benefits of literacy, physical activity, and time outdoors to experience nature, art, community, and family time. It provides a fun, active way to experience a book. It turns a picture book into a multimodal object and is a great way to remind people about reading and libraries in a non-traditional setting.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Combines literacy, art, and physical activity in an outdoor setting
- Provides a fun, interactive family experience
- Addresses inactivity and rising levels of obesity through active participation
- Encourages families to come to the library to share more stories
- Raises visibility of the library in a non-traditional setting
- Demonstrates the relevance of the library to different community groups and all community members

## How It Works

Contact the appropriate officials to get permission to install a StoryWalk® on trails, walking paths, parks, or playgrounds. Invite other community groups with a vested interest in the space to become partners and contribute to the initiative.

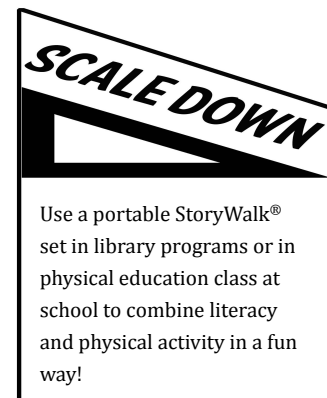
When selecting a picture book to use for a StoryWalk®, focus on something with minimal text, a great story line, and illustrations that do not cross the centre of the book. In Bridgetown, Nova Scotia, the book *Juba This and Juba That* by Helaine Becker is used. With permission from the publisher, copy the book onto panels of plastic board and mount onto sign posts. Staple boards to stakes and secure them by using heavy-duty Velcro. In Vermont, the library originally purchased two copies of the book, cut out the pages, and laminated them before affixing them to stakes and hammering them into the ground.

Add suggested activities related to the story to the bottom of the pages, to encourage children to become more active as they move from sign to sign. For example, Sign 2 for *Juba This and Juba That* says, “Juba is just waking up. Can you stretch your arms high over your head, and hold them that way to the next sign?” Sign 4 instructs, “Juba and the cat are running all around. Can you run in big zig-zags all the way to the next sign?”

The spacing of the storybook stakes varies depending upon the length of the walk; however, approximately 40 paces between pages works well. It is best if the next page can be seen in the distance from the previous page’s vantage point. For young children, a walk of a half a mile total distance is the maximum manageable.

Position a guest book with laminated pages and pencils in a weatherproof box at the end of the walk where participants can record the date, the number of people in the party, and any comments or suggestions. Consider placing participants’ names in a draw to win a copy of the book or some other prize.

The Annapolis Valley Regional Library has three mobile StoryWalk® sets for schools and other organizations to sign out and use.





## Supplies & Materials

- Suitable StoryWalk® book and copyright permission to use it
- Colour board upon which to print the pages, or three copies of the book to cut up, mount, and laminate (one copy for repairs)
- Four foot high mahogany stakes (will need 15–20 depending on length of story)
- Staples
- Velcro
- Guest book
- Weatherproof box
- Copies of books for prizes

## Budget

The project costs approximately \$3,000 in total for five sets of the StoryWalk® boards (design and printing), sign posts for two parks, stakes for temporary sets, launch parties, and copies of the book to give away as prizes.

## Marketing & Promotion

Invite local school groups and the general public to the launch of the project, which can be advertised on the library website, Facebook page, and Twitter feed. Issue media releases and schedule library staff interviews with local media. Encourage the author and illustrator of the selected work to actively advertise the initiative.

## For More Information

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Angela J. Reynolds  
Head of Youth Services  
Annapolis Valley Regional Library  
Bridgetown, NS  
902-665-2995  
<http://www.valleylibrary.ca>

## Acknowledgements

If interested in offering a StoryWalk® in your area, the trademark must be used and the following credit line must be provided in any promotional material and at the beginning of any StoryWalk®: *The StoryWalk® Project was created by Anne Ferguson of Montpelier, Vermont, and developed in collaboration with the Vermont Bicycle & Pedestrian Coalition and the Kellogg Hubbard Library.*

# Let Us Surprise You Community Contest

Innisfil Public Library  
Innisfil, Ontario  
Canada



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## Target Audience

This program is for families and people of all ages.

## Community Connections

- Local businesses and malls
- Local organizations
- City arenas and pools
- Community and recreation centres

## Program Description

Through partnerships with local businesses and organizations, four different poster designs with a fun trivia question on each are displayed in numerous locations throughout the community, such as: grocery stores, restaurants, banks, and arenas. Community residents are challenged to locate one of each of the four designs and answer the trivia question posed. The poster images, which are designed by locally based branding and design specialists Hardie and Company, picture the person referred to in the question.

Participants must submit correct answers to all four questions at once by visiting an Innisfil Public Library location and completing a contest ballot. For a complete and correct entry, the participant receives a contest T-shirt and the chance to win an iPad.

This month-long contest unifies the community in the excitement of a shared quest. It brings people to different neighbourhood locations and requires them to stop at the library to submit answers and receive a prize.

In a recent *Let Us Surprise You* contest, approximately 300 community members participated and posters were displayed in approximately 70 different locations throughout the town.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Increases community networks through relationship building
- Profiles the skills and services of local companies
- Encourages cross-promotion from participating businesses
- Enhances the library's profile and visibility in the community
- Promotes the library as a fun, non-traditional organization
- Mobilizes community members to visit different businesses and local organizations
- Boosts community spirit

## How It Works

Enlist a design company or utilize internal library staff to create and promote this contest. The contest runs for a month.

Design four posters, each with a different trivia question and silhouette of the person referenced in the question (see Program Resources for sample designs from Innisfil Public Library). Questions require some knowledge or research, such as "Famed writer Samuel Clemens chose his pen name from this commonly heard steamboat term" or "Working with French wine growers, Louis Pasteur developed this process to extend product shelf life and kill germs." Have the posters (16" × 20") professionally printed.

Ask library staff members to contact local businesses and organizations, such as restaurants, banks, and grocery stores, to solicit participants for poster displays and contest promotion. Once the venues have been established, distribute contest guidelines, trivia responses, and posters for display. Provide participating locations with a list of other poster sites so they can direct community members on the hunt.

Library staff and staff from participating organizations wear T-shirts promoting the contest throughout the month. Contest participants with complete and correct entries can also receive a T-shirt with the same design if the budget allows.

Contest participants are challenged to locate all four poster designs and answer each question to receive the T-shirt and ballot for an iPad prize draw. Allow one entry per person. At Innisfil Public Library, the Friends of the Library group donated the iPad grand prize.

## Supplies & Materials

- Four hundred T-shirts featuring the contest design
- One hundred posters to be distributed around town
- Ballots
- iPad grand prize
- Guidelines, trivia answers, and location participant lists



## Budget

For Innisfil Public Library, the cost for 400 printed T-shirts was \$3,500. Advertising and printing costs for posters was \$1,000. Consultation and poster design by Hardie and Company was donated, as was the iPad from the Friends of the Library.

## Marketing & Promotion

Send media releases with contest details to local print, radio, and television media prior to the start of the contest, and at the end of the contest to announce the results and winner. Make a promotional presentation to your town council during the first week of the contest. Consider filming a video of the mayor hunting for the posters and submit it to the local TV station; also post it on library's website and YouTube channel. In addition to website promotions, use social media, such as Facebook and Twitter, to provide daily updates on local winners, including photos of the winners in the library. Encourage staff to wear their T-shirts throughout the month of the contest. If you have them, use LCD monitors at all library branches to advertise the contest in house.

## For More Information

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Erin Scuccimarri  
Community Development Librarian  
Innisfil Public Library  
Innisfil, ON  
705-431-7410  
<http://www.innisfil.library.on.ca>

## Program Resources

**LET US SURPRISE**  
*You!*

Famed writer Samuel Clemens  
chose his pen name from this  
**commonly heard steamboat term.**

**KNOW HIS NAME?**  
WE'VE GOT 4 POSTERS AROUND TOWN.  
IF YOU'VE GOT 4 ANSWERS, YOU COULD  
WIN AN IPAD!\*

**ENTER To WIN!**

**more inside**

\*For more details, please visit your local  
branch of the Innisfil Public Library or visit  
[www.innisfil.library.on.ca](http://www.innisfil.library.on.ca)

Trivia questions appearing throughout town on posters designed by Hardie and Company Advertising Branding and Design. <http://www.hardieandcompany.com/>

# LET US SURPRISE *You!*

**17th century monk Dom Perignon failed to rid his wine of bubbles. His failure gave us this great drink.**

**KNOW THE DRINK?**

**WE'VE GOT 4 POSTERS AROUND TOWN. IF YOU'VE GOT 4 ANSWERS, YOU COULD WIN AN IPAD!\***

**ENTER to WIN!**

**more inside**

\*For more details, please visit your local branch of the Innisfil Public Library or visit [www.innisfil.library.on.ca](http://www.innisfil.library.on.ca)

 **INNISFIL PUBLIC LIBRARY**

[www.innisfil.library.on.ca](http://www.innisfil.library.on.ca)

Trivia questions appearing throughout town on posters designed by Hardie and Company Advertising Branding and Design. <http://www.hardieandcompany.com/>


**LET US SURPRISE**  
*You!*

**Working with french wine growers,  
Louis Pasteur developed this process to  
extend product shelf life and kill germs.**

**KNOW THE PROCESS?**

**WE'VE GOT 4 POSTERS AROUND TOWN.  
IF YOU'VE GOT 4 ANSWERS, YOU COULD  
WIN AN IPAD!\***

**ENTER  
TO WIN!**

 **INNISFIL  
PUBLIC LIBRARY**

[www.innisfil.library.on.ca](http://www.innisfil.library.on.ca)

*more inside*

\*For more details, please visit your local branch of the Innisfil Public Library or visit [www.innisfil.library.on.ca](http://www.innisfil.library.on.ca)

Trivia questions appearing throughout town on posters designed by Hardie and Company Advertising Branding and Design. <http://www.hardieandcompany.com/>




# LET US SURPRISE *You!*

This half of the infamous James-Younger gang is rumoured to have fled the wild west to hide out in Canada.

## KNOW THE FAMED AMERICAN OUTLAW?

WE'VE GOT 4 POSTERS AROUND TOWN.  
IF YOU'VE GOT 4 ANSWERS, YOU COULD  
WIN AN IPAD!\*

**ENTER TO WIN!**

 **INNISFIL PUBLIC LIBRARY**

[www.innisfil.library.on.ca](http://www.innisfil.library.on.ca)

*more inside*

\*For more details, please visit your local branch of the Innisfil Public Library or visit [www.innisfil.library.on.ca](http://www.innisfil.library.on.ca)

Trivia questions appearing throughout town on posters designed by Hardie and Company Advertising Branding and Design. <http://www.hardieandcompany.com/>

# Newcomers Bus Tours

Brampton Library  
Brampton, Ontario  
Canada

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## Target Audience

New residents to the country or city can participate in the bus tours.

## Community Connections

- Local transit company
- City hall
- Parks and recreation centres
- Local restaurants or markets
- Places of interest in the community

## Program Description

The Brampton Library, in partnership with the City of Brampton, Brampton Recreation, and Brampton Transit, offer free bus tours to introduce newcomers to the community. Newcomers might be a new immigrant to Canada settling in Brampton or any new resident of the city.

The tour highlights some of Brampton's attractions, such as parks, hospitals, places of worship, community centres, city hall, the library, and public transit stations. The Winterlights Bus Tours, offered in the month of December, feature a highlight of the festive light displays in addition to the regular stops. Floral Bus tours in August feature some of the city's most beautiful gardens and landscaping.

City and library staff members act as guides for the three-hour tour. Translation services are provided by Library Settlement Workers. The Library Settlement Worker program is funded by Canadian Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Workers are stationed in public libraries to help immigrants get settled in their new country.

Making the city a more receptive place for newcomers is the goal of these educational and enjoyable tours.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Helps newcomers to the city become acclimated and feel welcome
- Offers a free, family event
- Highlights services in, and the unique qualities of, the community
- Provides local history information
- Fosters an effective partnership between city facilities, organizations, and service providers working towards a mutual benefit
- Shares costs between partners making the project more feasible

## How It Works

Interested newcomers and their families contact the library to register for the tour. On the tour day, have participants meet at one of the library branches where the bus is waiting, and the tour begins. In Brampton, the Winterlights Bus Tours are offered on four separate evenings from 6:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M. in the month of December. The Floral Bus Tours are offered on four mornings in August from 10:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.

The bus stops at various local attractions. In some instances, passengers stay seated and listen to descriptions, while at other stops they disembark and get a more detailed overview of the featured service or location.

Brampton tour highlights include:

- A presentation from Brampton Transit, including a hands-on tutorial on how to use transit maps, bus tickets, transfers, and electronic payments
- A guided tour of one of the recreation centres to highlight programs and services available at the city's community centres, including using the seasonal recreation guide and featuring a popular outdoor trail
- A guided tour of one of the library branches promoting free family resources, English as a second language (ESL) and multilingual collections, and an opportunity to get a library card

Each participant receives a grab bag with flyers and information about the city and the library, plus a snack box provided by a local restaurant. Games and fun local trivia quizzes give riders the opportunity to win books about the city or free bus tickets and passes.



## Supplies & Materials

- City bus and driver
- Bus tickets, passes and books for prizes
- Grab bags with information pamphlets, flyers, and takeaways
- Refreshments

## Budget

This cost-effective initiative utilizes the internal resources of all partners to present this free program. City and library staff act as tour guides, Library Settlement Workers provide translation services, and City Transit provides the bus and driver. All partners contribute by providing prizes and giveaways, and a local restaurant supplies the snack boxes.

## Marketing & Promotion

Marketing initiatives can include media releases, advertising on the websites of all partners, Twitter and Facebook posts, posters at all library locations, and outreach to participating community partners.

## For More Information

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Sarala Uttangi  
Multicultural Services Coordinator  
Brampton Public Library  
Brampton, ON  
905-793-4636  
<http://www.bramlib.on.ca>

# Geocaching: Treasure Hunting in Your Neighbourhood

Anythink Libraries  
Rangeview Library District  
Thornton, Colorado  
United States



---

## Target Audience

Families with children of all ages are invited, but pre-teens and teens will learn the most about navigation using a Global Position System (GPS) device.

## Community Connections

- Municipal agencies—parks, landmarks
- Non-profit organizations—churches, schools
- Small businesses
- Local outdoor enthusiasts and trail associations

## Program Description

Families gather at the library for an information session outlining the basics of geocaching. Geocaching is an outdoor adventure game that uses navigation skills and treasure-finding tactics. During the program introduction, families are shown examples of the size of the cache they will be searching for. Each cache holds small tokens and a log book for searchers to record their find. Teams are given location coordinates for four hidden treasures and set out in different directions to avoid congestion. Along the way adults use smart phones and digital cameras to record their team's adventure. After an hour, teams return to the library, photos are shared, and everyone talks about the experience.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Gives all family members an opportunity to meet new people and make new friends
- Helps children learn or hone navigation and hiking skills
- Presents an opportunity for a family outdoor activity
- Establishes the library as a key community presence
- Provides digital literacy activities, including photography and GPS navigation

## How It Works

Choose four locations within walking distance (a half mile) of your facility. Locations must have appropriate hiding places, such as inside shrubbery, on a pole, or under a rock. If cache locations are on property owned by an organization, permission from that organization must be obtained in advance. At the Anythink York Street library program, one cache was hanging from a tree and one was lodged inside a fake sprinkler head! Prepare your cache by hiding tokens, a log book, and pencil or permanent marker inside a small, durable container, such as a plastic tub. Once you have hidden the cache in a secure place, get accurate GPS coordinates, using your GPS receiver. The best coordinates are obtained on clear days with no overhead interference (i.e., fog, canopy of trees, etc.). These coordinates are the ones you will provide to families gathered for your event.

On program day, participants gather in the library and are divided into teams. Assign an adult to each team to keep them together and to take pictures of the adventure along the way. If possible, assign library staff or volunteers to these roles. Give participants an introduction into the process of geocaching and instructions for finding the caches. Each team receives four tokens to replace the ones they will remove from the cache. Once they understand how to use their GPS or smart phone to locate the coordinates, demonstrate to participants how to use their keen observation skills and treasure-hunting abilities to find the cache. At the Anythink library program, staff showed participants examples of the style of container they would be looking for, to help them determine potential hiding places.

Teams embark on their adventure with four sets of coordinates that they are directed to find in turn. Once a cache is located, teams remove a token and replace it with the one they brought and sign the logbook. An adult gathers the team for a photo with the cache. After the cache is safely returned to the exact same hiding place where it was found, teams repeat the process with the next three cache locations.

After one hour, regardless of their success rate, teams return to the library to share pictures and reflect on their experiences.



Library staff demonstrate how interested families can become geocaching enthusiasts on their own time by joining with others from around the world at <http://www.geocaching.com/>

## Supplies & Materials

- Four sturdy, waterproof containers
- Tokens, such as key chains, shells, or small figurines
- Four small journals to serve as logbooks
- Golf pencils or small permanent markers
- Computer and data projector for photo display
- Posters and flyers for program marketing

## Budget

Supplies, including tokens and containers, cost \$60.00 to purchase for an anticipated group of 30 participants. Anythink library staff used personal GPS devices and smart phones, so no costs were incurred. Marketing materials were also taken from existing supplies.

## Marketing & Promotion

Use the library website and a printed calendar of events to advertise the program. At Anythink York Street Library, this program was offered as a part of a Family Night series that has regular participation from preschoolers to grandparents.

## For More Information

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Laci Wright—Children's Guide or  
Kathy Totten—Experience Expert and Branch Manager  
Anythink York Street  
Thornton, CO  
303-287-2514  
<https://www.anythinklibraries.org>





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## Chapter 3

# Programs to Explore Your Roots

Learning about our heritage and the heritage of others in our community can help transcend the social boundaries that children experience every day in classrooms, playgrounds, and other gathering places. The programs highlighted in this chapter were chosen for their diverse approaches to cultural interaction and exchange. In all the featured programs, children are exposed to the history and heritage of their community or their family, whether it is over a community meal or in a program that celebrates pioneer life.

Heritage and literacy are intrinsically connected. According to Donna and Sandra Norton, “Books are the major means of transmitting our literary heritage from one generation to the next” (Norton and Norton 2011, 3). Libraries and schools are often our communities’ leading literacy organizations and, as such, have a major role to play in providing opportunities for young people to explore and learn about their own heritage and that of their classmates and community peers. Cultural exchange leads to the understanding of diversity and difference. Multiple perspectives, approaches, and ways of living are shared and the value of these diverse histories is explored (Honold 2004, 283). Libraries are well positioned to provide these opportunities for cultural exchange through print and electronic collections, displays, artwork, exhibits, and programs like the ones featured in this chapter that reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of the community.

In the Introduction to this book, we explored the idea of learning through *intent participation* (Rogoff et al. 2003, 175). Children are given opportunities to observe and listen, and this passive participation is naturally and intentionally translated into collaborative participation. Many indigenous communities use this model or tradition as a way of transmitting key cultural values from one generation to the next. In fact, most cultures use this practice intentionally or naturally to expose young people to important traditions. Culinary practices are often transmitted from one generation to the next through intent participation. We learn the traditional dishes of our culture by watching our parents and grandparents make them, and interested young people are often invited to take part in the preparation of traditional fare as the skills to measure, mix, and bake are learned.

Eventually, the recipes become our own and we continue to value their place in our lives. Featured in this chapter is the program *Families Eating and Storytelling Together (F.E.A.S.T.)*, during which a traditional meal is shared and engaging activities provide an opportunity to learn about the other community members in attendance. Also in this chapter, the *Doorways* program run by organizations in St. Thomas, Ontario, exemplifies elements of intent participation. Children learn about writing and art from a local author and illustrator, and then work with local art and literacy organizations to write their own book celebrating their personal heritage.

Learning about our heritage from our parents, grandparents, and senior members of our communities instils a sense of pride and personal historical significance in the young people of our community. The power of communities acting as a collective and respecting what all members—teachers, doctors, factory workers, mothers—bring to the whole is one way to build a stronger, more vibrant community (Anuik, Battiste, and George 2010, 63). Two of the programs highlighted in this chapter give young people an opportunity to learn about life in a different era. In order to come to *Pioneer School*, community children first learn about their personal heritage and history from their parents and grandparents. They are then prepared to join in on the re-enactment of a typical day in an early Upper Canada schoolhouse. Participants in the *Reminisce and Record Your Family History* program have an opportunity to explore Reminisce Kits developed by the Maple Ridge Public library. Each kit contains stories, photos, and historical memorabilia, and is designed for use with community seniors to stimulate discussion and storytelling from the elders' past. The intergenerational family history program invites children, teens, and elders to come together for a workshop to explore the kits and use them to share personal stories, which are transcribed by a facilitator. Community organizations working together to delve into the history and culture of the community can lead to increased exposure for the community organizations to non-traditional members, and a cohesive cultural respect and long-term sustainability for the entire community (Oliver 2011, 169).

Does the staff of your school or library reflect the cultural diversity of your community? Often, this is not the case, as staff are employed for their educational and work experiences rather than their cultural or ethnic diversity (Linse 2011, 653). One way for your organization to better reflect your community and to be seen as a place where the community cultural values are upheld and celebrated is to engage in cultural programming that brings together diverse community members—both in age and ethnicity. Seek out programs that allow these diverse members of the community to explore their own heritage and share these explorations. Such opportunities for cultural exchange between and among children and adults will lead to a deeper understanding of one another and an appreciation and respect for your community's heritage.

# **F.E.A.S.T.**

## **(Families Eating and Storytelling Together)**

Tales & Trails Storytelling  
Corrales, New Mexico  
United States

---

### **Target Audience**

Families and community members of all ages and backgrounds are invited to participate in this program.

### **Community Connections**

- Local storytellers and musicians
- Restaurants and markets
- Agencies that serve families
- Schools
- Homeless shelters

### **Program Description**

Families and community members of all ages gather for a free meal and engage in activities that encourage conversation, the sharing of stories, and relationship building in a warm, safe, and friendly environment.

The three-hour event celebrates oral tradition, the importance of intergenerational communication, and ideally brings people of various cultural and economic backgrounds together to learn about one another. Participants listen to professional storytellers and musicians, have a chance to mingle while playing storytelling games, and enjoy a buffet-style meal of food donated by local restaurants or markets.

### **Outcomes & Benefits**

- Provides an opportunity for people of various ages and backgrounds to get together in a social context
- Encourages the sharing of personal stories and bonding between generations

- Highlights the importance of oral tradition in society
- Strengthens communication between family or community members
- Reminds people of the importance of eating together as a family
- Supports healthy living and encourages children to make good choices

## How It Works

*F.E.A.S.T.* is a flexible program suitable for small or large groups in a variety of settings. As presented, the format of the program places the meal and storytelling games between sessions by professional storytellers and musicians; however, this too is adaptable.

Prior to the event, contact storytellers and musicians to discuss the nature and goals of the event, thus ensuring that appropriate stories and songs are chosen. Ask local restaurants or markets if they would like to donate food. To make this less time consuming, create a written description of the program's purpose and goals to give to prospective donors. It is recommended that restaurants or markets provide food as opposed to hosting a potluck, as this ensures that safe food practices are upheld. Volunteers pick up the donated food and deliver it to the venue.

*F.E.A.S.T.* runs by invitation to ensure that there is enough food and that the facility can accommodate everyone. Most often, invitations are sent to agencies that serve families, community schools, and homeless shelters. Ideally, your feasters will be a multicultural and economically diverse audience. You can offer a limited number of free tickets to each organization, keeping in mind that approximately 30 percent of those distributed will not be used.

Fun place mats picture activities to get children to draw, write, and engage in conversation (see sample under Program Resources). The place mats can also feature the “who, what, why, when, and where” of shared family meals.

Begin the event by sharing *The Endangered Stories Act* (see full text under Program Resources). The audience will then enjoy professional storytelling and music. Next, participants indulge in a buffet-style meal, during which community members engage in storytelling games and mingle. Use *The Human Treasure Hunt*, a Bingo-style card with story prompts instead of the usual numbers, as an icebreaker activity. Participants find other feasters who have experienced what is described in the prompts by chatting with one another and asking questions. When they find an appropriate person, they ask to hear a bit about their story and then have the storyteller sign their name in the appropriate space on the card. When designing *The Human Treasure Hunt* cards, consider the community members attending your event and choose prompts accordingly. The most effective prompts get people of various ages talking to one another, and can be followed with the question “tell me more” or have a special local flavour. For instance, in New Mexico, participants may be asked to “Find someone who can tell you how to make tortillas from scratch.”

Sample prompts might include the following. Find someone who:

- Has had the same friend for 50 years
- Can touch their nose with their toes
- Has read the original *Little Mermaid*
- Has been in a hurricane, tornado, flood, or earthquake
- Has been locked out of the house
- Has been lost or separated from a companion
- Has lived or travelled on three or more continents
- Has helped a family member who doesn't speak English access services
- Remembers an oft told proverb or saying from a parent or grandparent
- Had a doctor who made house calls
- Has been helped by a total stranger
- Moved frequently as a child
- Can name 10 birds local to the area
- Can tell a story about a scar
- Is carrying a family photo in a wallet or purse
- Had a very close friend move away
- Can tell about how they got a nickname
- Knows how their parents first met

The activity continues until someone completes their card by finding all the people or until time is up. If time allows, a debriefing and sharing of interesting stories follows the activity. If a more sedentary version of this activity is desired, some story prompts can be left in the centre of the tables where people eat, in order to encourage conversation at the table.

The evening ends with a final set of storytelling and music. Thank your participants and the community organizations represented at the gathering and give them an opportunity to share information about their services to the guests.

## Supplies & Materials

- Invitations to an event
- Food
- Tables and chairs for participants and buffet
- Warming trays, or means of reheating donated food
- Tablecloths and place settings
- Activity place mats
- Copies of *The Human Treasure Hunt*
- Copies of *The Endangered Stories Act*
- Selection of books on collecting family stories, food, and folktales for display

## Budget

Recruit volunteers who donate time to coordinate the event; locate and schedule the talent; solicit food donations; and send out invitations. If funds allow, give an honorarium to the storytellers and musicians. The hosting organization can provide the facility and cover printing and supply expenses. All food is donated by local restaurants and food markets.

## Marketing & Promotion

Since this is a free event by invitation only, almost all marketing can be done by telephone and e-mail. Send letters to program managers, school principals, and executive directors describing the purpose and nature of the event. Distribute press releases to the local media.

## For More Information

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Bob Kanegis and Liz Mangual  
Tales & Trails Storytelling  
Corrales, NM  
505-890-7075  
<http://www.librarystorytelling.com>

## Acknowledgements

If you implement a *F.E.A.S.T.*-inspired program, please send a brief informal report to the Tales & Trails Storytellers at [info@librarystorytelling.com](mailto:info@librarystorytelling.com).

## Program Resources

### The Endangered Stories Act

#### An Act of the People, Not of Congress

##### *Proclamation*

In Order to Honor the rich heritage of oral traditions that exist in all cultures and among all people; and,

Recognizing, the Power of Stories to enrich individuals, families and communities; and,

Aware, of the Power of Stories to transmit values that help make life sustainable to our own and future generations; and,

Conscious, of the Power of Stories to link us to each other through the recognition and celebration of both diversity and our common heritage; and,

Whereas, a Story told for the last time and not passed on will become irretrievably extinct, lost forever to the people and the future;

Therefore, We The People create the Endangered Stories Act and acting on its behalf;

Promise to ask our Elders to tell us their Stories, to share with us stories of their origins, accomplishments, hardships, and their hopes and dreams for the future;

Pledge to strengthen our listening and our voices; to find and tell our own Stories; and,

Commit to find a tale that speaks to us and to become the Caretaker of that Story.

We will tell and retell that Story and find another person to pass it on to, thus preserving it for posterity.

We hereby ratify the Endangered Stories Act and add our voices to begin its implementation today!

*(c) 1995 by Bob Kanegis and Liz Manguel*

*All are welcome and encouraged to reprint for free distribution.*

*bob@storyconnection.com*



Literacy activities and conversation starters on tables prior to the meal to guide participant engagement





Design by: Noel Chilton  
Sponsored by: City of Albuquerque, Albuquerque Business Education Compact and Tales and Trails Storytellers. For more information visit: [www.schoolstorytelling.com](http://www.schoolstorytelling.com) and [www.abec-web.org](http://www.abec-web.org)

Literacy activities and conversation starters on tables prior to the meal to guide participant engagement

# Doorways

St. Thomas Public Library  
St. Thomas-Elgin Public Art Centre  
St. Thomas, Ontario  
Canada



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## Target Audience

Students in Grade 2 work with adult mentors in this program.

## Community Connections

- Elementary schools
- Art gallery or centre
- Local authors and illustrators

## Program Description

Grade 2 students from local schools visit the public library and art centre for a series of writing workshops featuring a local author, classroom teachers, and library and arts centre staff. These mentors guide students throughout the process as they write and illustrate a book, highlighting their family and community heritage, traditions, and celebrations. The program culminates in a celebratory book launch at the art centre.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Increases familiarity with the library and art centre
- Improves children's knowledge about their community and personal cultural heritage
- Profiles a local author and/or illustrator
- Builds relationships between community agencies and with local schools
- Brings the community, including invited municipal leaders, together in a celebratory fashion

## How It Works

Contract a local author/illustrator to visit area schools and introduce Grade 2 students to the process of writing and illustrating a book. Teachers follow up this visit by preparing children to write their own book. Explicit instruction and parental involvement help children compile notes for their book on:

- Attributes that make them a special individual
- Aspects of their home that are unique and memorable
- Characteristics of their family tree, including their birthplace and languages spoken at home
- Celebrations and traditions enjoyed by their family

Schedule a library visit for students where they share stories about their family celebrations and hear about others' celebrations. After the librarian reads books about children from around the world and their unique traditions, the children glue prepared pages of their book onto the template designed in the shape of a house (see sample under Program Resources).

The next step in the book-making process involves a visit to the art centre, where children employ a variety of techniques to illustrate their book, including drawing, collage, and photo manipulation. They begin with a cover design, then create a Popsicle stick version of themselves to travel through the book, and finish by completing the illustrations for the four interior pages.

Recruit a team of volunteers to compile and bind the books. The program concludes with a celebration at the art centre. Children, families, teachers, funders, and other members of the local community come together for refreshments and to enjoy the book showcase.



Completed student heritage books on display at book launch.

## Supplies & Materials

- White cover stock
- Coil bindings and access to a binding machine
- Popsicle sticks
- Paper
- Glue
- Crayons, pencil crayons, markers
- Yarn for hair on person
- Decorative papers for decorating person
- Large Ziploc bags to store all the parts while children are working on their books

## Budget

The budget for this program will depend largely on the fees of the contracted local author/illustrator. Approximate costs include \$500 for materials; \$1,500 for author/illustrator fees, travel, and accommodations; \$250 for the book launch reception; and \$250 for promotional materials.

## Marketing & Promotion

Because this program targets strictly Grade 2 students, it involves a narrower marketing focus.

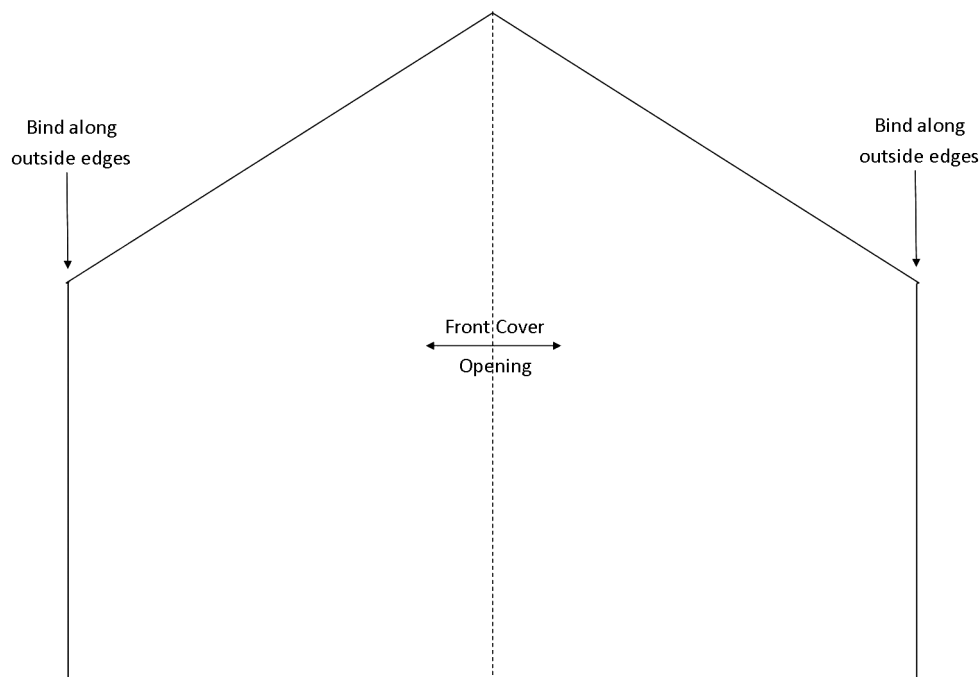
Invitations can be extended to Grade 2 classes in every local school. This program fulfills outcomes from the Grade 2 Ontario school curriculum and can be modified to meet the specific needs of the curriculum in your area. *Doorways* can be marketed to potential funders through presentations and the distribution of an information booklet. Funders should receive ongoing news about the program and invitations to the culminating book launch, along with all the participants, their families, and local municipal leaders.

## For More Information

Need more information about this program or detailed page-by-page templates and instructions? Please contact:

Heather Robinson  
Children's and Teens' Services Department Head  
St. Thomas Public Library  
St. Thomas, ON  
519-631-6050  
<http://www.st-thomas.library.on.ca>

## Program Resources



Enlarge and copy for each page of the heritage booklet. Cut along perforated line for the cover and pages one through three.

*Page 1: Me and What Makes Me Special*

Writing: Name, birthday, grade, school, and list of favourite things

Illustration: Self-portrait

*Page 2: Where I Live and Who Lives with Me*

Writing: Home and its inhabitants

Illustration: Student's family and their unique attributes

*Page 3: Exploring My Family Tree*

Writing: Heritage, including student's birthplace and family's story

Illustration: Flags, maps, photographs, landmarks, and/or costumes that represent the family's heritage

*Page 4: My Traditions*

Writing: Two favourite family traditions

Illustration: People, customs, and symbols of the student's featured familial celebrations

# Day in the Life of a Pioneer Student

Wellington County Library, Fergus Branch  
Fergus, Ontario  
Canada



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## Target Audience

Children in Grades 1–6 are invited to participate in this program. Parents, grandparents, and siblings can join in on the discussion and fun from the sidelines.

## Community Connections

- Elementary schools
- Museums
- Costume shops
- Local businesses
- Antique stores

## Program Description

Children in Grades 1–6 experience life as pioneer children in a re-created one-room schoolhouse, made available by the Wellington County Library in partnership with the Wellington County Museum and Archives and Dufferin County Museum and Archives. The stage is set by transforming a room in the library with paper wainscoting and a black paper chalkboard. Historical pictures and props, including a flag, desks, and a wood stove, add to the authentic atmosphere.

Participating children are instructed to dress the part with girls in long skirts, aprons, and stockings and boys in long-sleeve shirts and suspenders. Participants also bring along their own pioneer-style snack in a basket or wrapped in brown paper—apples, hard-boiled eggs, bread and jam, baked potatoes, or raw carrots are suggested.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Engages children in an interactive learning experience
- Promotes reading and the library in a fun, educational way
- Enhances awareness of local history
- Increases circulation of related library materials
- Fosters exchange of personal stories between generations
- Nurtures relationship between local museums, community members, area businesses, and the library

## How It Works

Register children in advance, keeping in mind that 15 participants is the ideal size for authenticity. Upon registration, give each child a “Getting Ready for School” booklet that provides program details as well as guidance and suggestions on appropriate dress, snack foods, and, optionally, props they can bring from home including historical items of interest. Design this booklet with your community’s local history in mind. For example, in Wellington County girls were asked to wear long dresses or skirts and blouses; aprons; stockings or socks; and shoes with their hair tied back or bonneted. Boys were instructed to wear collared, long-sleeved shirts; suspenders; pants; and socks and shoes. All students were reminded to pay close attention to their personal hygiene.

Before the program begins, secretly enlist one student to be unruly and direct him or her to make trouble in a predetermined manner at established intervals. The program follows a detailed format to ensure that the re-enactment is historically accurate.

To begin, ring the bell and ask students to line up, enter the classroom, and remain standing at their desks. After teachers greet the students, everyone sings the national anthem from the time period or another appropriate patriotic song. For historical accuracy, and if appropriate for your community’s history, the Lord’s Prayer may be recited as it was in Fergus, Ontario; however, this is up to the programmer’s discretion. At this point, the unruly student opens a paper bag of popcorn and drops some onto the floor. The teacher then brings the student to the front of the class for verbal correction and instructs the student to pick up the popcorn with admonishment to behave in the future. Then, it is time for hygiene inspection, where students are expected to stand quietly and await their turn. In Fergus, Ontario, in keeping with historical tradition, teachers perform the inspection noting that “cleanliness is next to Godliness” and check hands, fingernails, teeth, and behind ears.

Next, engage the group in a discussion about what looks different in this staged classroom compared to their modern classroom. Highlight items of particular interest, such as a portrait of the queen or president, a replica of the nation’s historical flag, clothing, the woodstove, and the role of the students in keeping the classroom heated.

Pioneer class continues with students standing for a spelling bee, followed by recess. After 10 minutes, distribute slate boards and chalk to each student and conduct an arithmetic

lesson. The children write the answers to simple math questions on their slate. At this point, the unruly student is cued to misbehave by speaking out of turn. Historically, the consequences of such actions would require the student to sit on the dunce stool and wear the dunce cap. But, once again, this is up to the discretion of the programmer.

The next part of the lesson plan is show-and-tell. Invite students to share a story or anything of interest. Students that have brought along historical objects from home get a chance to share about their personal heritage; others might enlist the assistance of parents and grandparents to describe what might have been a typical day for a child during their youth.

Share a historically relevant book that you have chosen ahead of time with the group. In Wellington County Public Library, the book *Ice Horse* by Candice Christiansen is read, as it highlights an ice harvesting operation similar to one that would have happened on the river that runs behind the library. To end the scripted portion of the day, school is dismissed and students leave in an orderly fashion.

Children keep the slate boards and chalk as souvenirs of their pioneer school day. After dismissal, everyone has an opportunity to pose for pictures. Stage a picture area where children can engage and investigate props, costumes, and artefacts borrowed from local museums and businesses or brought from home. Encourage family members to share stories and discuss heritage, memories, and ancestry.

## Supplies & Materials

- Various books—as used for research to ensure historical accuracy and displayed for participants to borrow (see the Bibliography of Research & Resource Materials)
- Printouts of copyright-cleared photos mounted on construction paper
- A white Bristol board dunce cap rolled into the historical shape (optional)
- Piano stool for dunce stool (optional)
- Tables and chairs used as desks
- Costumes for teachers and photo shoot
- Wood stove
- School bell
- Set of slate boards and chalk
- Other historical props as available from program partners

### RAMP UP

Invite classes from area schools to the library to have the pioneer child school experience when it corresponds with their studies in the curriculum.

### RAMP UP

If your community has indigenous populations or residents with international heritage, consider a partnership program designed to show what life was like for children of those residents 100 or 200 years ago. These programs might showcase life in your own area for indigenous populations or might demonstrate historical cultural practices from another part of the world for second or third generation residents.



## Budget

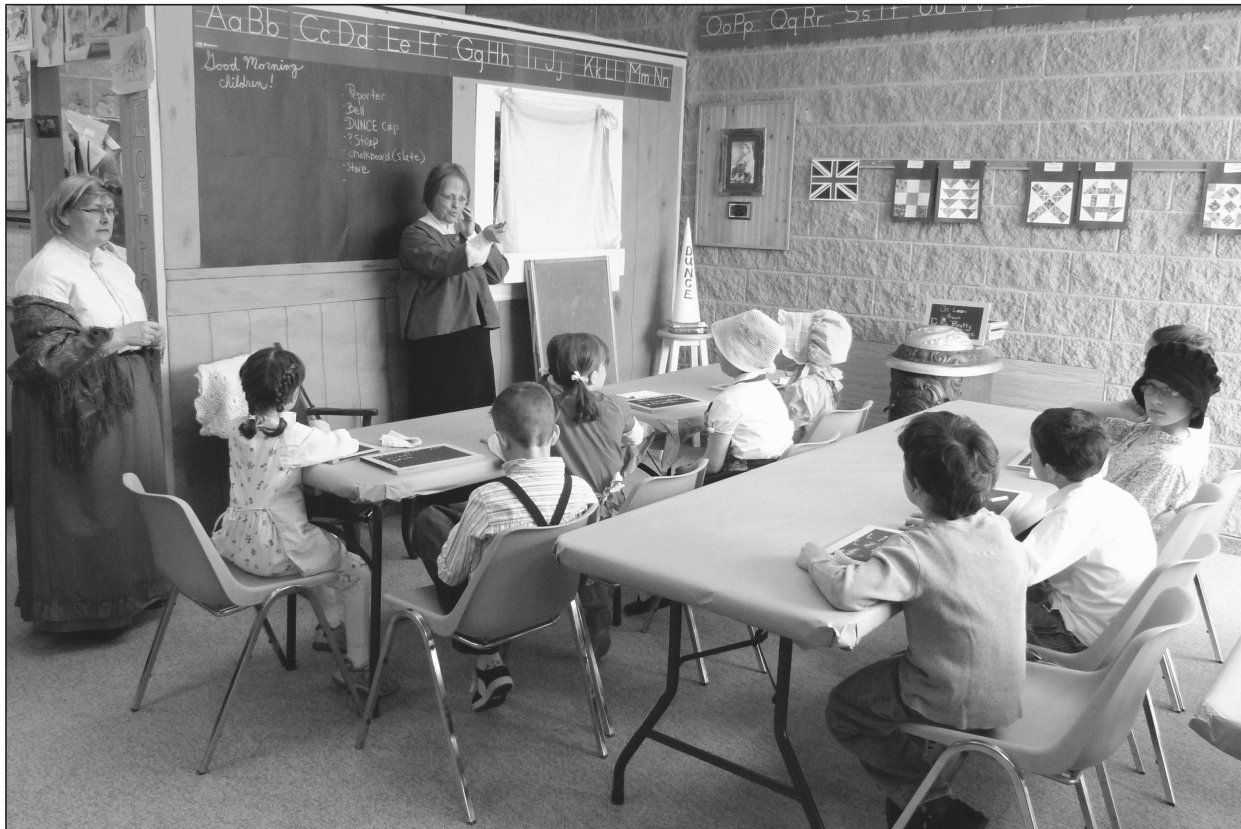
Approach local businesses, library staff, or community members to contribute props, such as a wood stove, school bell, and piano stool. Local museums can often provide authentic costumes for participants in the re-enactment. Existing library supplies and materials can be used to create and decorate the setting of the classroom.

A local contracting company can be enlisted to prepare slate boards for a modest cost (approximately \$40). Those used by Wellington County are constructed with a half-inch medium density fibre board cut to size (8-inch × 12-inch). The boards are taped off and painted with blackboard paint to provide a 10-inch × 6-inch writing surface.

In Wellington County, local advertising, as detailed below, is paid for by the library.

## A Day in the Life of a Pioneer Student

Reprinted with permission from the Fergus Elora New Express (Wednesday, March 23, 2011)



**SCHOOL'S IN** – Fergus Library children department staff Penny Presswood (left) and supervisor Pat Kermath (right) run a 19th-century pioneer class in the children's department last week, one of the library's March Break activities. Decorated with an authentic wood stove, dunce cap, photo of Queen Victoria and other typical classroom items, the class offered students a look back at the one-room schoolhouse of the past - complete with slates for writing lessons. The county library branches' March Break theme was Wild West Fun, and all 14 branches had western or pioneer themed storytimes and activities planned.

*News Express/Francis Baker*

As appeared in *Fergus-Elora News Express* on Wednesday, March 23, 2011. Photo Credit: Francis Baker.

## Marketing & Promotion

Advertise this program in your traditional library brochure or newsletter, in local newspapers and on posters in the library. Enlist area schools to assist in promoting the program to all local families. In addition, word of mouth from library staff and all partners creates a buzz and proves an effective means of increasing participation.

## For More Information

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Patricia Kermath  
Assistant Branch Supervisor, Children's Services  
Wellington County Library, Fergus Branch  
Fergus, ON  
519-843-1180  
<http://www.wellington.ca/Library>

## Bibliography of Research & Resource Materials

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# Reminisce and Record Your Family History



Maple Ridge - Pitt Meadows - Katzie  
Community  
Literacy Committee

Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows Katzie Community Literacy Committee  
Maple Ridge, British Columbia  
Canada

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## Target Audience

Elders and their families, especially pre-teens and teens, interested in actively engaging in storytelling and listening participate in this program. Professionals working with seniors can also make use of these kits.

## Community Connections

- Literacy groups
- Seniors networks
- Seniors societies
- Local service clubs
- Schools
- Youth groups

## Program Description

Elders, their children, grandchildren, and professionals working with seniors are invited to a workshop where they learn about reminisce kits—boxes containing short stories, skits, quizzes, music, photos, movies, and memorabilia intended to stimulate memories and promote family storytelling. Participants are taught how to make their own kits and are encouraged to share their personal stories with family members.

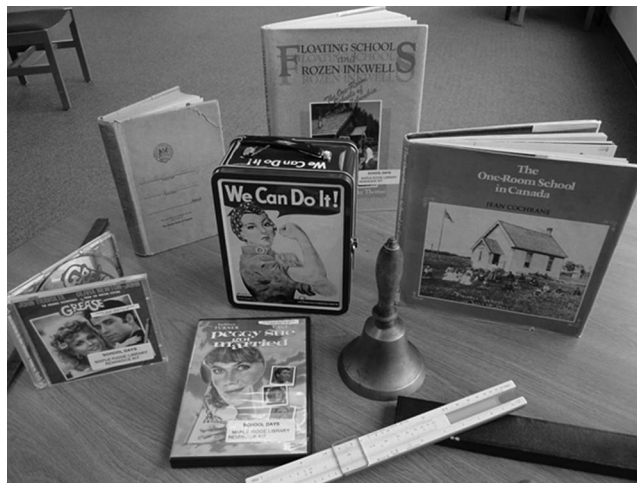
The Community Literacy Committee hosts the event with the support of Maple Ridge Public Library, the Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows Seniors Network, and the Ridge Meadows Seniors Society.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Offers a literacy-based program to a multi-generation audience
- Encourages family storytelling
- Advocates oral tradition and story sharing
- Stimulates memory in the elderly
- Enhances family relationships and understanding
- Raises awareness of kits available at the public library
- Produces a keepsake
- Promotes awareness of community literacy organizations

Programmers can most effectively demonstrate the goal of this program to participants, if the library has pre-existing reminisce kits to stimulate memories and engage in conversation.

When creating kits, begin by investigating the history of your community and establish themes that relate to local history. Choose the cultural group, era, and media styles most appropriate for your area. At the Maple Ridge Public Library, four reminisce kits are available for loan to community members working with seniors or to library staff for outreach programs: The War Years, School Days, Family, and Entertainment.



COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL

Using the library's kits and their own personal memory boxes, a family history consultant and retired library staff member from Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows, co-present this one and a half hour workshop during an afternoon. Three volunteers, who are also seniors, help facilitate the program.

After you recruit your own local experts, begin the program with a welcome, a thank you to the partners, and an introduction to the speakers. The speakers share their own memories and teach participants about the importance of capturing family stories and collecting memorabilia to create their own reminisce kits. Participants are provided with written instructions on how to assemble their own kits.

A refreshment break gives participants the opportunity to view the materials on display, which at the original workshop include the library's reminisce kits, the presenter's personal kit, Literacy Committee information, and a Seniors Network exhibit.

After the break, conduct a demonstration using one of the sample kits. For instance, if using the School Days kit, you can ring a school bell and read a short story or poem. Ask participants fun quiz questions designed to be discussion starters. Have a facilitator work with small break-out groups to engage with the props included in the kit and to stimulate conversation and memories of school. If desired, the facilitator transcribes a participant's story that can then be taken home.

Conclude the program with the full group sharing some of their stories and posing questions to the facilitators. Distribute prizes and handouts before thanking everyone for their participation.



## Supplies & Materials

- Reminisce kit of some kind that includes theme related props, books, music, movies, short stories, activities, quizzes, and so on.
- Paper and pens for recording stories
- Refreshments (coffee, tea, water, juice, cookies)
- Handouts with instructions to create personal kits

## Budget

Each kit costs approximately \$100 to create and fill with assorted contents. The total cost for this program itself is approximately \$43 for paper, pens, and thank you gifts for speakers and volunteers. A facility room, presenter time, library staff time, refreshments, and a newspaper ad can all be in-kind donations.

## Marketing & Promotion

Partnering with the Seniors Network and Seniors Society helps get the word out to the target audience. Send a print and e-mail version of the program poster to the partners and have them distributed through the respective networks. Deliver print posters to community centres, the seniors centre, and the local hospital. Send out a press release and ask your local newspaper to donate ad space. Free online community forums and community agency websites can also announce the program.

## For More Information

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Shanti Ang  
Literacy Outreach Coordinator  
Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows Katzie Community Literacy Committee  
Maple Ridge, BC  
604-721-3738  
<http://communityliteracy.ca>

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## Chapter 4

# Programs for Reaching Out to Everyone

Socially inclusive practices and initiatives are fast becoming part of the fabric of school, library, and community foundations. As societies become more aware of the need for including individuals that feel excluded from mainstream programming, schooling, and many other institutional offerings, new models for service delivery are developing. These models are imperfect—sometimes well-intentioned but misguided, sometimes based on ulterior motives, such as fiscal restraint. However, the more focus that is placed on the importance of social inclusion in our libraries and schools, the more likely we are to build communities that respect all members. In a discussion paper prepared for the Provincial and Territorial Library Directors Council of Canada, Wendy Newman identifies public libraries as an appropriate venue for inclusive service delivery: “Because their services are equitable and inclusive by design, tradition, and even legislation, public libraries excel in service roles and opportunities relevant to immigrants, aboriginals, persons with disabilities, the poor, and residents of rural and remote areas” (Newman 2004, 22). However, while equipped and designed with universal access in mind, the reality for many libraries is that only a small portion of potential participants take advantage of these services: “Socially excluded individuals do not engage with library programming for the same reasons they do not engage with the library in general: their needs and interests are not addressed by program content or delivery, and they feel uncomfortable and unwelcome” (Singh 2008, 88). Libraries and schools need to expand on traditional and established practices by developing progressive partnerships; by getting out into the community for service delivery; and by emphasizing and training staff in the soft skills necessary for a welcoming environment—empathy, open-mindedness, and intentional unbiased interpersonal exchange.

In this chapter, we focus on five programs from two very different streams: two programs are focused on ensuring that everyone in the community has equitable access to resources

and three programs target specific underserved populations and aim to give these individuals access to services that were formerly out of reach, or at least perceived that way. Carol Smallwood, in *Librarians as Community Partners*, provides examples of best-practice programming that support both streams of socially inclusive community practice (Smallwood 2010, 24, 52, 132). As an example of a program that aims for universal accessibility, *Bikemobile* is a mobile library program from the Greater Victoria Public Library in British Columbia that demonstrates that cycling library services to every corner of your community does not require expensive transportation and equipment. *Computer Buddies*, a program out of the Hanover Public Library, is an informal computer instruction program that pairs teen volunteers with members of the community that need extra help with computer technologies. Community members seeking assistance may be seniors trying to master social networking or job seekers that haven't created a resume in many years.

The second focus of this chapter is on programs that target specific socially disadvantaged populations. For this treasury, teen parents, incarcerated fathers, and economically disadvantaged Grade 3 students have been chosen and programs that exemplify positive aspects of socially inclusive practice are highlighted. Programs like these might work well in your community, but you may find that your population has more pressing needs and you may choose to develop programs for immigrant families, homeless teens, youth or parents with disabilities, and so on. It is imperative that genuine social inclusivity start with a review of your own community and the people that do not or are unable to take advantage of existing community literacy programming. *Storybook Dads* is an excellent example of a proactive literacy initiative. Incarcerated fathers are unable to visit the library with their children and do not have many opportunities to provide positive examples of reading and sharing books with their families. Library staff from the Adult Literacy Services Branch of the Toronto Public Library secured funding and developed an opportunity for inmates to record themselves reading aloud. These recordings and copies of the books read aloud were delivered to the inmates' families. *Early Literacy for Teen Mothers* from Multnomah County Library in Portland, Oregon, targets young parents, especially parenting or pregnant young women. In partnership with several other community organizations, the library developed outreach story time programs for teen parents, delivered in settings familiar to the families. *Digital Literacy and Storytelling* from Memorial University is a community program giving Grade 3 children access to identical tablet computers for use in school, at home, and through a local after-school program. With access to the same technology devices as their peers, children have an equitable playing field to engage socially and collaboratively as they work on projects together.

"Inclusive services in traditional institutions" is almost an oxymoron—schools and libraries can be perceived as venues for literate established members of the community, and therefore inaccessible to many that hold these perceptions. And yet, the opposite is what most public and school libraries are trying to achieve. We are attempting to build institutions that welcome every potential participant, especially those that are unable to buy their own books and create literate social networks. Recently, some ground-breaking projects have exposed some of the problems that our institutions have in the pursuit of delivering inclusive services. High quality education that starts after birth and continues



through employment is one solution to the disjointed, inaccessible services we offer in some of our communities.

Cradle-to-career programs seek to provide children living in poverty with a high-quality birth-to-employment education through a continuum of services that include health, social and economic supports in addition to school. School-family-community partnerships and data-tracking of student progress are central to the cradle-to-career model, which asks not just educators but all community service providers to take responsibility for student outcomes. . . Although philanthropic funding for cradle-to-career programs remains uneven, and federal funding is an increasing challenge for all such initiatives, early results of this reform model are capturing the attention of more and more at-risk communities across the country. With partnerships and shared goals as key elements, cradle-to-career programs unite communities by stressing collaboration and accountability over competition and isolation. This is aimed at encouraging success for every child and ending intergenerational cycles of poverty.

—(McLester 2011, 32, 38)

Another project has changed the way services are delivered in many Canadian urban public libraries. *The Working Together Project*, funded by Human Resources and Social Development Canada, had two main objectives: working directly with socially excluded individuals, groups, and communities to find out what these groups need from their library, and outlining the barriers to accessibility and proposing solutions (Singh 2008, 9). Out of this project came a valuable resource, *The Community Led Libraries Toolkit*, a roadmap for re-envisioning and delivering library services. Libraries and schools interested in building communities that are socially inclusive and literacy-rich can use this resource to rethink the way services have traditionally been delivered and move towards a progressive model that includes genuine involvement for all members of the community.

# Early Literacy for Teen Mothers



Multnomah County Library  
White Shield Early Intervention Centre  
Portland, Oregon  
United States

---

## Target Audience

This program is designed for pregnant and parenting teens.

## Community Connections

- Organizations working with pregnant and parenting teens
- Teen centres
- Literacy organizations

## Program Description

The White Shield Early Intervention Center (EIC), a residential centre for pregnant and parenting teens, and Multnomah County Library have developed a strong partnership to educate and support young mothers in teaching their children early literacy skills. This multifaceted collaboration recognizes that pregnant and parenting teens are transitioning to a new, and often difficult, stage of life. It has, at its core, the library's commitment to ensuring that all members of the community have access to library resources. The program includes in-library and outreach programming:

- *Every Child Ready to Read* workshops (see Chapter 9 for detailed information)
- *Born to Read*. Fostering parents role in reading to their babies from infancy
- *Early Words*. Promoting language and literacy development from birth to five years
- *MotherRead*. Teaching literacy skills to adults and helping them pass those skills on to their children

Parenting teens have opportunities to interact with library staff during monthly outreach visits to the EIC. In addition, teens are enrolled in regular library programming and special efforts are made to ensure they feel welcome and included.

## Outcomes & Benefits

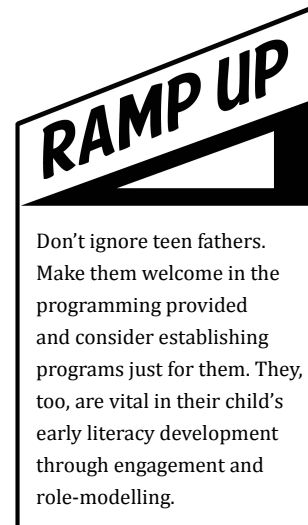
- Provides library services to an underserved population of teens
- Promotes life-long literacy
- Facilitates access to library services and resources
- Builds community partnerships
- Provides an opportunity for teen residents to learn and understand the importance of early literacy skill development
- Allows teen residents time to interact with another adult to practice communication and co-operation

## How It Works

Establish a relationship with the organization in your community or region that serves pregnant or parenting teens. After determining the needs of the teens, develop a series of in-library and off-site programs designed to empower teen parents to foster early literacy skills with their child. Provide a monthly outreach visit to the teen parenting site during which young children (birth to 24 months) and their mothers have an opportunity to enjoy songs, action rhymes, and books. Mothers learn early literacy tips to help their children succeed in school and children are exposed to language through various modalities, including songs, stories, and one-on-one interactions.

If large fines, lost library cards, and/or lost materials have been a hindrance to the teens' use of the library, work with library administration to provide an amnesty program. Young women struggling to cope with motherhood can be relieved of a significant financial burden, demonstrating that the library is the place where they and their children are welcome.

Educate the young women about library resources, such as access to computers; books on parenting; low cost options for entertainment (DVDs, CDs, and free downloadable materials); information about health issues; and support for education and job seeking. Over the years, the Multnomah County Library and the EIC have come to value early literacy enough to run a weekly early literacy program, helping these young families build literacy into their daily routines. EIC staff provide the majority of the sessions, but the library staff continue to visit and model best practices and new innovations at monthly sessions.



## Supplies & Materials

- Infant and toddler books for sharing
- Early literacy story time supplies, such as bubbles, puppets, musical shakers, and scarves
- Collections of rhymes and songs

## Budget

Many libraries will have access to the materials used in the program and these materials can be reused from week to week. The purchase of a class set of board books for sharing is approximately \$200 for 15 books. The cost of fine forgiveness may be significant for the library, but is deemed a worthwhile investment. Consumable materials include printed song and rhyme sheets, library brochures, and program handouts valued at \$50.

## Marketing & Promotion

Since the program is offered directly to a target group, it does not need promotion. Teen mothers visit and learn about the library. Then, when they make the transition to independence they know how to find out about upcoming programs, new resources, and public access computer use.

## For More Information

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Susan Smallsreed  
Youth Librarian  
Northwest Library, Multnomah County Library  
Portland, OR  
503-988-5560  
<http://web.multcolib.org>

# Storybook Dads

Toronto Public Library  
Toronto, Ontario  
Canada



---

## Target Audience

Incarcerated men with young children in their lives participate in this initiative.

## Community Connections

- Prisons
- Detention centres
- Volunteer organizations with prison access
- Local book stores

## Program Description

Librarians from Toronto Public Library visit incarcerated men at the Toronto East Detention Centre to record the inmates reading to a young person in their lives, whether it be their own children, nieces, nephews, grandchildren, or younger siblings. An audio CD of the recording, along with a copy of the book that is read, is sent to the child.

In this family literacy program, fathers can share a reading experience with their children even when they are unable to do so in person on a regular basis. By modelling reading, they enforce the message that reading is important. This experience also helps the child feel closer to the absent parent.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Provides an opportunity for inmates to contribute to their child's reading development through role modelling
- Builds closer links between families of prisoners and the public library
- Fosters a relationship between the inmates and their children or families
- Supports the literacy needs of the inmates
- Develops pre-reading skill acquisition in children of inmates

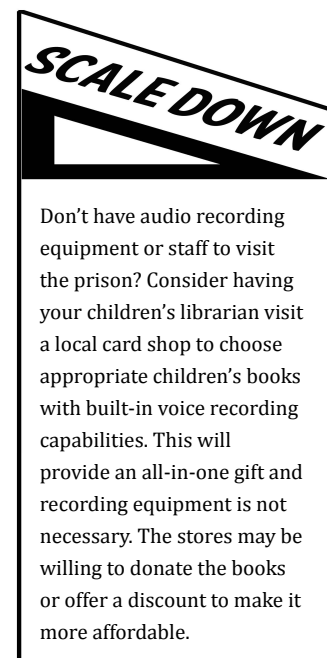
- Brings library awareness and services to a marginalized group who cannot visit the library
- Promotes a close working relationship between community institutions

## How It Works

Begin by contacting the volunteer services coordinator at the detention center and create participant information forms. Library staff may need to undergo a police reference check in order to interact with the inmates.

Purchase audio recording equipment if not already owned, or partner with a store or a school that may have the necessary equipment on hand. Create posters and display them in common areas of the prison where they will be visible to the inmates. Inmates who are interested in participating give their name to a guard who informs the volunteer services coordinator. The coordinator verifies that the man is allowed to have contact with the child before recording takes place.

Meet with each prison participant to describe the project and gather information about the child, including age, grade, gender, reading level, and interests, so that an appropriate book can be selected for sharing. While meeting with the inmate, the project staff member of Toronto Public Library also gauges the inmate's literacy level using a brief adult literacy assessment tool. If the inmate has difficulty reading, the librarian assists by reading the sentences and having the inmate repeat. Later, the librarian's voice is removed from the recording, so it is only the inmate's voice that remains. Audio files can be edited using a free, open-source audio editor.



Continue to visit the prison weekly to record and to meet with new, interested participants.

Purchase new copies of the shared books and mail packages, including the CD, story, and library information to the child. If a family literacy event is being held, an invitation can be enclosed in the package.

Through this process, inmates learn the importance of early literacy and are introduced to the concept of pre-reading skill development. Toronto Public Library staff have noted that, on the recording, many of the inmates encourage their child to keep reading and take the opportunity to assure the child of their love.

This program can also be done in women's prisons. Kitchener Public Library does an annual program around Christmas where staff visit the local women's prison, video record

the inmate reading to her child, and create a kit of the book and DVD to send to the child as a gift.

## Supplies & Materials

- Camcorder, such as the Zoom H4N Handy recorder, 32 GB memory card
- External microphone
- External CD burner (with LightScribe capability)
- Audacity free audio editing software
- Laptop computer for audio file editing
- (LightScribe) CDs
- Mailing envelopes
- Children's books
- Labels for books and envelopes
- CD sleeves or cases
- Posters to promote program to inmates

## Budget

At Toronto Public Library, a Cultural Strategic Investment Fund grant from the Ministry of Tourism and Culture of \$31,000 paid for all expenses related to this project, including the project librarian's salary, recording equipment, books, mailing envelopes, and all other supplies.

## Marketing & Promotion

Posters displayed in the common areas of the prison promote the project to the inmates. Word of mouth is the best form of advertising for the program, as those who first participate generate excitement and encourage others to become involved.

## For More Information

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Barbara Baillargeon  
Librarian, Adult Literacy Services  
Toronto Public Library  
Toronto, ON  
416-393-7131  
<http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca>

## Acknowledgements

Storybook Dads is inspired by two programs out of the United Kingdom—the Storybook Dads project <http://www.storybookdads.org.uk> and Big Book Share <http://readingagency.org.uk/children/big-book-share>



# Digital Literacy and Storytelling

Memorial University of Newfoundland  
St. John's, Newfoundland  
Canada



## Target Audience

This program is designed for elementary school students in Grade 3.

## Community Connections

- Schools
- Boys & Girls Clubs or any other youth community centres
- Computer store or local community funding association

## Program Description

This partnership between an elementary school, a non-profit after-school program run by the Boys & Girls Clubs of Canada, and the university's faculty of education, involves Grade 3 children engaged in digital storytelling development on tablet computers. Using free and inexpensive literacy- and numeracy-rich Android tablet applications (apps), children select images, create text, capture video, and use voice-over to create digital stories. Children's creations are shared at a community celebratory event.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Exposes children from an economically disadvantaged area to mobile technology devices they may not have access to at home
- Stimulates creative and critical thinking in participating children
- Helps parents recognize quality apps for children
- Improves community and digital literacy for families
- Builds a closer relationship between a neighbourhood school and after-school program
- Highlights the university's community engagement program

## How It Works

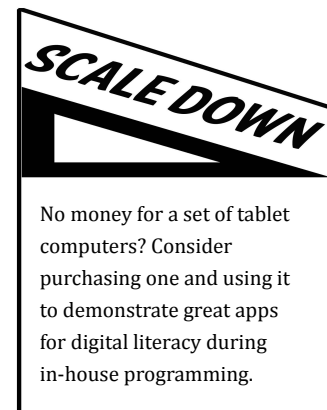
Purchase approximately 30 tablet computers. A Grade 3 teacher and a university librarian work together to load age-appropriate apps for journaling, creative writing, visual literacy, and story design. The students in the Grade 3 class work during school time with the tablet computers to take pictures, load video, and design unique personal stories.

Interested students from this class, who also frequent the neighbourhood Boys & Girls Club or another after-school program, use the same type of tablet during their after-school homework help and computer club sessions. In addition, these participants take the tablets home and explore different apps with their families, including digital books and math games.

After students become familiar with the mobile devices, the lead researcher and librarian from the university conduct formal and informal digital literacy instruction sessions for students, parents, and teachers. These sessions focus on selecting the best free or inexpensive apps to bolster children's digital literacy, traditional literacy, and math skills.

The classroom teacher and lead researcher work together to build an individualized set of apps for each of the 10 students participating in the project at school and through the after-school program. Match apps to the skill level and needs of each participating student. Children can use the tablets to create digital stories of their own design, highlighting personal interests, and reflecting recreational and creative pursuits.

Have every student complete a digital story to be uploaded to a local server and shared at a gathering of parents, siblings, schoolmates, teachers, and funders.



## Budget

In Newfoundland, this project is funded through a grant generously provided by the Jimmy Pratt and Margaret and Wallace McCain Family Foundations. To replicate a similar project, it would require \$200 each for Android tablet computers, \$20 per tablet for apps, and \$200 for pizza and juice to serve at the digital story showcase.

## Marketing & Promotion

This project is designed for a select audience. Each participant is approached individually and appropriate parental permissions obtained. The culminating event is an invitation-only gathering, and invitations are sent to funders; staff at the after-school program; parents and siblings of children in the Grade 3 class; and other classes from the school.

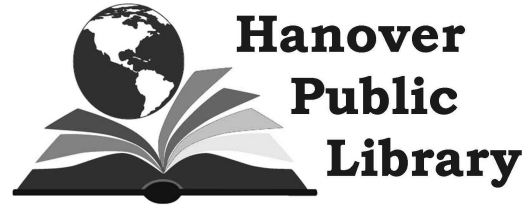
## **For More Information**

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Dr. Anne Burke—Associate Professor  
Beth Maddigan—Education Librarian  
Faculty of Education  
Memorial University of Newfoundland  
St. John's, NL  
709-864-3404  
<http://www.mun.ca/educ/home>

# Computer Buddies

Hanover Public Library  
Hanover, Ontario  
Canada



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## Target Audience

This program is intended for any adult, particularly seniors, who need assistance learning new technologies. Teen volunteers provide the instruction.

## Community Connections

- Seniors centres
- Computer stores
- Community centres
- Adult basic education facilities
- High schools

## Program Description

Adults who need help learning new technology are paired with tech-proficient teens who want to teach them. Teens gain volunteer experience, service learning credit, and hours towards their high school diploma requirements. Communities vary on the needs and requirements of citizens, and this program can be customized accordingly. Towns and cities hit hard by the economic downturn have seen an increased need for resume writing assistance and basic software knowledge. Communities with large senior populations report an increase in requests for assistance after Christmas, when older adults may be left bewildered by how to operate a new device. Regardless of the community, however, an increase in technology access and a decrease in cost for mobile devices have led to increased technology assistance demands in public libraries and community centres.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Provides an opportunity for teens to utilize their knowledge and skills in a one-on-one teaching capacity
- Results in more proficient adult computer users

- Bridges the gap between generations by enhancing communication, fostering understanding, and creating positive connections
- Promotes the library as a gathering place offering relevant and timely services and programs to the community

## How It Works

Contact local high schools and recruit interested teen volunteers. Students gain invaluable experience plus hours to fulfill community service requisites that are increasingly a part of high school graduation requirements.

Invite adults via the library website, newsletter, or other publicity to contact the library and book a one-on-one tutoring session with a student buddy. Teens teach basic computer skills or assist with improving proficiencies using various technologies, such as electronic book (eBook) readers, iPads and tablets, laptops, digital cameras, smart phones, and other Personal Digital Assistant devices. Teens can also offer sessions to assist adults with Internet applications, e-mail, social media, resume writing, and web searching.

Arrange a mutually agreeable time for the student and adult to meet at the library to begin the process. Make a note upon registration if an adult needs assistance with a particular type of technology. Pair up students who are comfortable and proficient with the device or skill required with the registered adult. Ask the adult to bring in their device and access the library's wireless network, or alternatively reserve a public use computer for the tutoring session.

Three times a year, the Hanover Public Library also hosts a drop-in *Computer Buddies* session where multiple volunteers are available and adults are encouraged to come in with a device or question to receive help.

## Supplies & Materials

- Reservation system
- Public use computers
- Free wireless network

## Budget

The costs for this program include only the printing of flyers and posters and staff time. The Hanover Public Library has access to a regular place in the local paper to advertise events. Institutions replicating this program may want to purchase advertising space.

## Marketing & Promotion

Issue a press release to the local newspaper as an effective means to get the word out to the public. Create flyers and posters and distribute them in the library. At Hanover Public Library, *Computer Buddies* is also promoted by word of mouth in other computer training programs that the library offers.

## For More Information

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Norma Graham  
Hanover Public Library  
Hanover, ON  
519-364-1420  
<http://www.hanover.ca/library>

## Acknowledgements

*Computer Buddies* is adapted from similar programs offered at the Vaughan Public Libraries and Mississauga Library System in Ontario, Canada.

# Bikemobile

Greater Victoria Public Library  
Victoria, British Columbia  
Canada



GREATER VICTORIA  
PUBLIC LIBRARY

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## Target Audience

The *Bikemobile* reaches community members of all ages and backgrounds and attracts library users and non-users alike.

## Community Connections

- Local bike store
- Farmers market or community gathering places
- Popular family venues, such as parks and beaches
- Community festivals and events

## Program Description

A bicycle pulling a book-filled trailer is the “little mobile-library on wheels.” The staff cyclist pedals around the community, issuing library cards and lending library books to anyone interested in borrowing. The *Bikemobile* also appears at festivals, parks, beaches, and the local Farmer’s Market.

Library materials are made more accessible by bringing them out into the community and encouraging borrowing. Passersby are introduced to resources they may not be aware are available at the library, and interaction with the library staff member encourages them to visit and discover more.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Raises the profile of the library in and around the community
- Showcases the library as an innovative organization
- Serves those who may not be able to come into the library, in an eco-friendly manner
- Inspires community members (patrons and non-patrons alike) to read
- Encourages people to come into the library to return materials, to discover more, and to become regular users

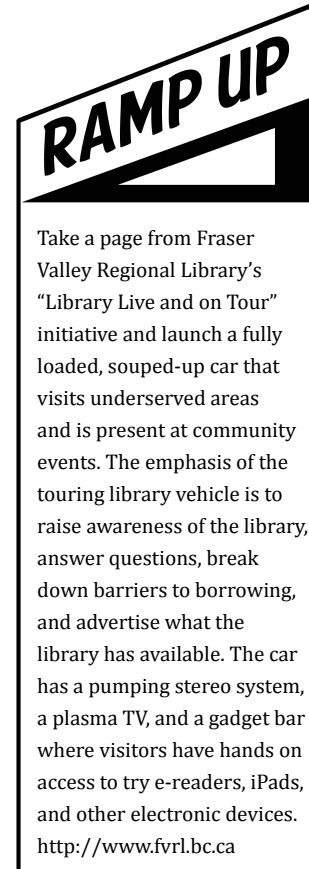
## How It Works

Develop a focused and specific *Bikemobile* collection that includes materials for various ages with a range of genres and formats, including picture books, graphic novels, and thrillers. Use a rotating collection of regular library materials, if purchasing a separate collection is not possible.

Have the library's marketing department or a contracted designer develop a logo and signage. Hang signs on all sides of the *Bikemobile* so that it is easily identifiable. Print the graphic on a T-shirt for the library staff member to wear while on cycling duty.

Armed with a trailer full of library material, new library cards, registration forms, and a clipboard with paper, the staff member cycles around the community, stopping at regular intervals to interact with people. If an existing library patron wants to sign out books, note their library card number along with the item barcode. If individuals want to join the library, give them a library card registration form to complete, verify their identification, and issue a card immediately. Once back at the library, input all information into the computer circulation system. Alternatively, you can use an iPad or laptop computer equipped with the library's circulation system to issue library cards and sign out materials remotely, if this service is available through your Integrated Library System. If your library uses an internet-based or cloud-technology system, check for wireless hotspots.

At Greater Victoria Public Library, the *Bikemobile* makes regular stops at popular locations, such as the Farmer's Market on Saturday mornings. If customers would like to know in advance where the *Bikemobile* will be, they can check the library's website or sign up to receive regular Twitter updates.





## Supplies & Materials

- Bike
- Bike trailer
- Signage
- T-shirt with logo
- Variety of library materials
- Cards
- Registration forms

## Budget

The cost of a bike is approximately \$200 and a bike trailer is approximately \$350. The signs designed by the library's marketing department cost approximately \$30 and the T-shirt approximately \$25. Professionally prepared press releases cost approximately \$50.

## Marketing & Promotion

Send press releases announcing the *Bikemobile* initiative to various media outlets. Place signage at all library branches and post information on the library website. Create and post a logo with the tagline "Bikemobile . . . A little library on wheels!" on signs adorning all four sides of the bike trailer. Send out tweets to the public via Twitter to announce where the *Bikemobile* will be visiting.

## For More Information

This program was submitted by Avi Silberstein, then Outreach Librarian and *Bikemobile* cyclist, for the Greater Victoria Public Library system. Mr. Silverstein has since become the Library Director at Grand Forks and District Public Library in Grand Forks, British Columbia, Canada.

Need more information about the program? Please contact:

Patricia Eaton  
Director of Public Services  
Greater Victoria Public Library  
Victoria, BC  
250-413-0382  
<http://www.gvpl.ca>



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## Chapter 5

# Programs to Connect Globally

Children growing up in this century are more globally aware and socially conscious than previous generations. This level of cultural exchange leads to enlightening interactions. By learning about communities very different from our own, we learn to appreciate our own community strengths and can plan to build on our weaknesses. The programs highlighted in this chapter include an international postcard exchange; a cultural celebration with deep local community ties; an online resource with video performances of rhymes and songs in 15 languages from a myriad of different cultures and communities; and a virtual cultural exchange between pre-teens in two European countries. This range of programming is provided as a snapshot into the expanse of opportunities available for libraries and schools, regardless of budget and connectivity concerns.

How can we broaden our vision of community? One simple way is to look beyond our national borders to other countries and examine new traditions, practices, and beliefs. Virginia Walter writes that libraries have a role to play in preparing our children to be “more competent and compassionate global citizens” (Walter 2010, 69). By highlighting resources in the print and electronic collections of our libraries and by emphasizing appropriate programming and storytelling opportunities, we will help children in our communities embrace diversity beyond local exposure.

Many opportunities exist to open classrooms and libraries to counterparts across the globe. Videoconferencing (with a free online service, such as Skype) is a popular classroom practice that allows children to connect with classes, book clubs, and virtually any other gathering of students in other countries (Crane 2009, 1, 3–13). Projects, ideas, and information can be shared and both groups will learn from their distant contemporaries. James Bellanca and Terry Stirling advocate for skilful collaborations and cultural exchanges using online tools in classrooms:

With a relevant and meaningful 21st century curriculum teachers will be able to take advantage of boundless opportunities to engage students in learning, not

only from and with one another in the classroom, but also from and with peers from other classrooms, schools, cities, states and nations. When they learn how to do this well the visions of classrooms without boundaries will be transformed into daily lessons.

—(Bellanca and Stirling 2010, 20)

Cultural programming has been popular in libraries and schools for decades. To ensure that this style of program is relevant and meaningful for your community; two key elements must be carefully considered during the planning stages of program development: targeting specific, relevant populations and including key community organizations. In the American Library Association's *Cultural Programming for Libraries*, Deborah Robertson echoes this sentiment and advises libraries that by targeting specific audiences, planning will take shape more easily and evolve naturally. In addition, targeting local cultural connections will make it easier to identify key partners, such as community organizations, leaders, and, as the planning evolves into presentation, potential audiences (Robertson 2005, 24).

The programs highlighted in this chapter emphasize this targeted approach: The *Diwali Festival* program run by Surrey Libraries is an example of selecting one specific cultural group that is well-represented in the local community. By emphasizing these connections, the library was able to identify a specific population within the community and gain valuable insight and partnerships with the local government. Other libraries have had success with this approach, as well. The Pubic Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County's award winning Día de los Niños/Día de los Libros program celebrates children, literacy, and culture by highlighting a specific target audience (Smallwood 2010, 129). Many other examples exist, but finding the one that is right for your community involves an investigation of the cultural activities celebrated in your local neighbourhoods, churches, and community centres.

Other initiatives target multiple groups and have a broader perspective. If your library has been successful with small-scale cultural programming, this is the next logical step. You might consider a program that targets multiple cultural organizations represented in your community, like the *Embracing Diversity* initiative developed by the Burnaby Public Library. This featured program is an online initiative, but other institutions have demonstrated successful in-library initiatives that encompass many cultural groups. For example, collaboration is happening in Queensland, Australia, in the city of Logan. The Beenleigh Public Library runs a program called the 171 Clubs. One hundred and seventy-one is the number of distinct cultural groups that make their home in the city. The library hosts cultural presentations that include dance, music, and song, costume parades, and culinary demonstrations. An example of a strong partnership program, library staff credit the local community organization Assisting Collaborative Community Employment Support Services Inc. with finding and preparing many of the speakers to engage audiences of 60–100 participants (Australasian public libraries and information services 2011, 120).

Social media and online connections might come to mind immediately when you consider connecting to other countries and cultures in the world, but sophisticated technology is

not necessary to make a connection with the foreign countries you have chosen to target. The Caledon Public Library hosts a postcard writing exchange, *Postcards from Around the World*, for the young people of that community. Children write the text of each card making them personal and relatable for their peers on a global scale. The cards contain enthusiastic endorsements of favourite books and pastimes. In return, children get to see similar expressions of personal community and cultural connections from various countries, including Australia and Singapore. The program has printing and mailing expenses, but the budget is modest and sophisticated technologies are not required. *Let's Dream Together* is another example of a program that connects children from different countries. Part of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institution's (IFLA) Sister Libraries Programme, children in Romania and Serbia interact virtually and through the mail with an online book discussion group and exchange of friendship books. Technology is used to enhance elements of this program and adds an interactive element for the students to enjoy their cross-border peers.

Many of us live in communities other than the one we grew up in and many communities have populations with rich heritages that their neighbours know little about. Positive opportunities for sharing will aid the growth of the entire community. However, an appreciation for traditions and experiences outside of our own is, perhaps, even more important if your community is culturally homogenous. Using examples like the ones highlighted in this chapter will help your community's youth gain an appreciation for their neighbours, whether they are immigrants living in the apartment next door or virtual neighbours from a country on the other side of the world.

# Postcards from Around the World

Caledon Public Library  
Caledon, Ontario  
Canada

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## Target Audience

Children aged 6–10 from various countries participate in this initiative.

## Community Connections

- Global community groups serving children
- IFLA
- Amateur or professional photographers and artists
- Tourism board

## Program Description

Six- to ten-year-old residents of Caledon exchange postcards with children in other countries as part of an interactive, literacy-based cultural exchange.

On the back of the postcard, children indicate their age and gender and are encouraged to share a well-loved book, author, or series; their favourite pastime; or something significant about their home town or city. The front of the postcard features pictures that capture the unique and beautiful qualities of the area. A virtual map depicting the various locations allows participants to track and view the postcards online.

Caledon Public Library staff work with local schools and youth organizations to promote participation in the initiative. IFLA is initially enlisted to help find interested partners in other countries. Once potential international partners have been identified, direct communication between Youth Services staff of Caledon Public Library and staff from the other libraries or schools begins.

Six of the current international postcard exchange libraries and schools are:

- Doncaster Library from Victoria, Australia
- Narodna Biblioteka Pozega, Serbia

- Dandenong Library from Victoria, Australia
- Claysmore Prep School from Dorset, United Kingdom
- Tampines Regional Library from Tampines, Singapore
- New Brighton Library from New Brighton, New Zealand

Over 200 children in Caledon and over 150 children from other countries participated in the initial postcard exchange.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Provides a forum for cultural exchange to enrich knowledge and understanding of life in other countries
- Engages youth in reading and writing through an interactive, rewarding experience
- Demonstrates to youth the importance of literacy skills
- Enhances the library website by connecting the program to the library's virtual space in an interactive way
- Strengthens relationships between area libraries, schools, and youth
- Fosters partnerships on an international level

## How It Works

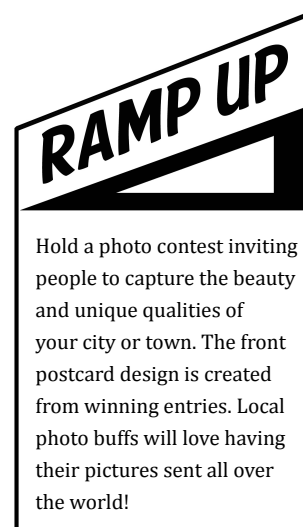
Contact IFLA to seek out possible international partners. Once international interest is established, get in touch with local schools to solicit participation.

Enlist library communications staff or contract a graphic designer to create postcards highlighting the beauty and unique features of your city or town. Print postcards in colour on cardstock.

Drop off bundles of blank postcards at participating schools and instruct teachers to work with their students to write the postcards. If teachers are unable to return completed postcards to the library, offer to drop by and pick them up. This program requires at least two full months to execute.

Divide the completed postcards, creating one package of cards to send to each international library or school. Before mailing, scan the postcards into a digital format so that they can be uploaded to the library's website.

Library IT or designated staff create and maintain a virtual map on the library's website to track the world-wide



participation. Free web 2.0 tools can be used to create the applications. At Caledon Public Library, Silverlight V4 using Visual Studio 2010 and NET4 were used to create the map. The map shows participating locations so that postcards can be viewed and tracked.

Promote the program in the library and at events by having children create postcards on the spot

## Supplies & Materials

- Postcards (cardstock, colour printing/photocopying)
- Stamps
- Envelopes
- Software for mapping tool
- Scanner

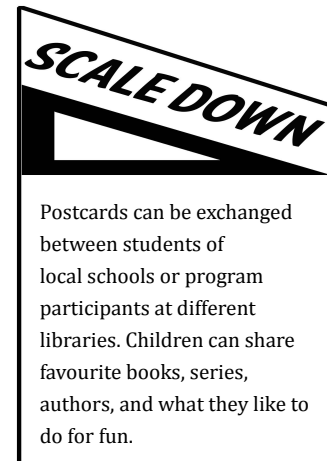
## Budget

Approximately \$612 in total is spent to offer and advertise this program, including \$125 for 330 double-sided postcards, \$50 for posters produced in-house, \$10 for mailing costs, and \$238 for paid ads in local media. In Caledon, the one-time cost to hire a graphic designer and to create a banner was approximately \$189.

## Marketing & Promotion

E-mail or call local schools to promote the initiative to Grade 1–6 teachers. Advertise the program on the library's website, in press releases, on a community calendar, and through radio public service announcements. The program can also be posted on the library's roadside sign, if applicable.

In-house, use posters and signs to advertise the initiative. Set up a station where blank postcards are displayed and can be completed on the spot. Consider enlisting a local graphic designer to create a banner that will draw attention to the program and postcard station. Actively market the project by word-of-mouth and cross-promote it in other library programs, during outreach visits, and at community events.





## **For More Information**

Need more details about this program? Please contact:

Leo Scardicchio  
Youth Services Assistant  
Caledon Public Library  
Caledon, ON  
905-857-1400  
<http://www.caledon.library.on.ca>

# Diwali Festival

Surrey Libraries, Fleetwood Branch  
Surrey, British Columbia  
Canada



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## Target Audience

People of all ages and backgrounds are invited to participate in this event that celebrates a cultural holiday.

## Community Connections

- Local government officials
- Multicultural centres
- Settlement workers
- Institutions working with immigrants
- Local dancers and musicians

## Program Description

In conjunction with a local Member of Legislative Assembly's (MLA) office, the library co-hosts a three-hour authentic Diwali celebration, including music, dancing, refreshments, contests, and time to socialize. Co-hosting the program allows the library to reach out to the incumbent's constituents and introduce them to the library while also offering a unique cultural event to the whole community.

Diwali, popularly known as the festival of lights, is primarily a Hindu celebration that originated in India and is a national holiday in several South Asian countries. Dependent upon the cycle of the moon, Diwali is usually celebrated in October or November.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Draws potential new users into the library
- Creates an opportunity to connect in a casual, familiar environment with the South Asian community of new immigrants who have been in touch with a local government office, but have not yet gone to the library

- Shares a cultural celebration with the community at large enhancing understanding and acceptance
- Diversifies programming and shows library support for multicultural events
- Tests the feasibility and reception of library programs that diverge from traditional literacy-based programs
- Establishes a closer working relationship with local government representatives

## How It Works

Connect with a government office that represents area constituents to plan this event. Order or create invitations to mail out to residents and distribute throughout the library system and to other community organizations. Also, promote the event through a variety of print and online mediums. Distribute colouring sheets that fold to become greeting cards. Children can colour them and create invitations to invite their own guests to the event.

Create a prominent display of books and other materials in the library featuring ethnic holidays, India, Diwali, Indian foods, Indian customs, and the history of India. Register participants in advance to ensure you have adequate supplies and refreshments on hand. On the day of the event, decorate the library with borrowed or donated items, such as pictures, tapestries, garlands, and lamps. Contact a caterer and order Indian food, such as tea, samosas, and sweets. Book South Asian singers and dancers for entertainment.

On the evening of the event, set up a greeting table featuring library brochures and copies of the government's newcomer resource guide. At the Surrey Libraries, the MLA and the multicultural librarian welcome participants to the event. Special guests talk about the importance of Diwali and share their personal thoughts and experiences of the festival.

Hold a quick door prize raffle halfway through the program where all participants have an opportunity to win a donated prize. Later, hold a second contest with audience members answering simple questions, such as the meaning of Diwali, how it is celebrated in their house, or their favourite thing about the festival. Present everyone who answered a question with a clay lamp. At Surrey Libraries, the lamps were donated by the MLA's office.

Conclude the more formal portion of the program with songs performed by Punjabi singers and a dynamic performance by a dance group. Afterwards, thank all participants and serve refreshments. As guests mingle, pictures can be taken.

## Supplies & Materials

- Invitations
- Posters, handbills, display cabinet, or display tables
- Colouring sheets
- Tables and chairs

- Sound system
- Diwali decorations
- Food and beverages
- Tablecloths, napkins, plates, cups, and cutlery
- Mini clay lamps for prizes

## Budget

At Surrey Libraries, all materials were donated by the MLAs office with the exception of two cases of water. Cultural organizations and other sponsoring bodies may wish to contribute funds, decorations, or food.

## Marketing & Promotion

Advertise this program through posters, handbills, and greeting cards that are displayed at the library. Mail invitations to local constituents and promote the event through the partnering organizations' websites and social media.

## For More Information

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Melanie Boyle  
Information Services Librarian  
Surrey Libraries, Fleetwood Branch  
Surrey, BC  
604-598-7354  
<http://www.surreylibraries.ca>

# Embracing Diversity: Sharing Our Songs and Rhymes



Burnaby Public Library  
[www.bpl.bc.ca](http://www.bpl.bc.ca)

Burnaby Public Library  
Burnaby, British Columbia  
Canada

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## Target Audience

All ages—videos, handouts, and booklists featured on the *Embracing Diversity* website can be used by anyone interested in learning about different languages and cultures. People who work with children can make use of the song and rhyme videos to foster inclusivity for all community members.

## Community Connections

- Organizations serving children and families
- Multicultural centres
- Settlement workers or those that assist new residents
- Film/video producers
- Performers

## Program Description

*Embracing Diversity* is an online public education project that encourages learning about cultural diversity and promotes inclusiveness. Viewers explore their cultural heritage through children's songs and rhymes. The resources are designed for use by community advocates who serve children and families; by families themselves; and by all who endeavour to create welcoming and inclusive communities. All project resources are presented online ([www.embracingdiversity/bpl.bc.ca](http://www.embracingdiversity/bpl.bc.ca)) and include:

- Videos of children's songs or rhymes in 15 languages (two per language), performed by native speakers
- Video interviews with the performers
- Transcripts and translations of song lyrics and rhyme text

- Lists of books and other library materials that focus on the countries where these languages are spoken
- Thematic ideas for programs that feature the songs and rhymes
- Videos of five welcoming phrases in each of the 15 languages
- Resources for information on topics, such as cross-cultural understanding, raising bilingual children, and the importance of learning and maintaining first languages

Burnaby and New Westminster are growing communities representing many cultures, and the languages reflected on the website represent these demographics. These include Arabic, Cantonese, Dari, English, Farsi, Filipino, French, Hindi, Korean, Mandarin, Punjabi, Russian, Spanish, Vietnamese, and Urdu. French and English, Canada's two official languages, are included to help welcome or orient newcomers to Canada.

A companion Vimeo channel features user-contributed videos, expanding the number of songs and rhymes available through the project and increasing the number of languages that are represented (<http://vimeo.com/channels/embracingdiversity>).

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Provides viewers with opportunities to appreciate cultural difference, share across cultures, and take a role in the development of welcoming and inclusive communities
- Increases community interest in, and capacity for, welcoming newcomers and including all residents
- Enriches cultural identity amongst newcomers
- Emphasizes first language learning as an evidence-based positive literacy practice
- Enhances collaborative partnerships and connections between community cultural agencies
- Gives performers an opportunity to demonstrate the pride they have for their culture

## How It Works

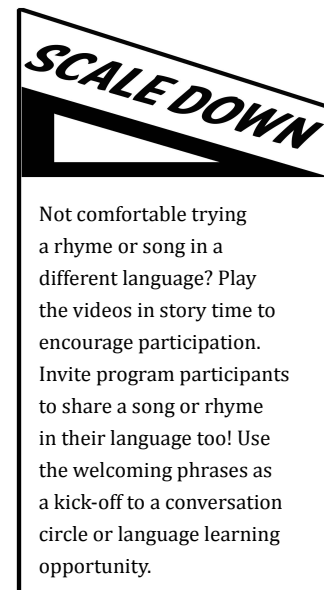
There are two ways you might choose to use this initiative. The simple way, and perhaps the initial step for any library inspired by *Embracing Diversity*, is to use the website videos, booklists, and thematic program plans to guide preschool and family program development. Host dynamic cultural programs for very young children and share the featured rhymes and songs.

Alternatively, to replicate this type of initiative you will need to enlist the assistance of many members of your community, and obtain access to video and audio equipment. In Burnaby, it took many partners make this project possible. It was initiated by the Burnaby Intercultural Planning Table and is funded by the Province of British Columbia through

the Welcoming and Inclusive Communities and Workplaces Program. Burnaby Family Life handles the financial administration. Burnaby Public Library designs and maintains the project website and conducts training sessions for community workers, such as librarians, early childhood educators, schoolteachers, and community program leaders. Simon Fraser University's Teaching and Learning Centre produces the videos, and translation services are provided by MOSAIC, a multilingual non-profit organization dedicated to addressing issues that affect immigrants and refugees as they settle in Canada. The ambitious project initially required dedicated staff, including a project coordinator, video producer, and translators. Performers and alternates are recruited through partner agencies.

If finances, time, or the level of community integration will prevent you from replicating this initiative, consider the needs and resources available in your own community and design a project that will fit. To begin, hold roundtable discussions with front-line community workers to gather input for resources, songs, and rhymes. Ask performers to choose a song or rhyme that is traditional or widely known in their homeland and not overtly political or religious. Song and rhyme selections might then be vetted by an advisory committee. Organizers meet with the performers to confirm final selections; to gather personal information from the participants; and to collect transcripts of songs and rhymes. Record the songs and rhymes in a single day-long session, if possible. Transcribe and translate rough cuts of the videos. This text can be used for video subtitles and training materials. If you are interested in contributing to the project, but don't have all the necessary equipment, follow the initial steps for choosing rhymes, welcome phrases, and performers. Finally, submit your videos to the *Embracing Diversity* Vimeo channel and become another partner in the project.

In Burnaby, the *Embracing Diversity* project was launched with a website filled with program ideas, book lists, lists of related websites, facts about the project languages, and community demographics. The online content and website functionality were reviewed and approved by the project partners before the site launch. After launch, further promotion and training for community advocates took place.



## Supplies & Materials

As an online project with a strong video component, requirements include manpower, technical expertise, software, and hardware. The videos on the main site are professionally recorded and recording equipment was made available free of charge. The Vimeo channel extension videos are filmed with a camcorder and tripod.

Handouts of songs, rhymes, and welcome phrases are available as free downloads from the website. A DVD and print guide is created for training workshop participants.

## Budget

Total expenses for this project included \$18,494 for project coordination, supervision, and design of print pieces; \$4,520 for project management; \$2,539 for publicity and three training workshops; \$3,636 for printing costs; \$16,791 for video production services and studio rental; \$2,490 for translation and transcription; \$311 for miscellaneous materials and supplies; \$506 catering for celebration/launch event; and \$172 for transportation. In-kind contributions were provided by the Burnaby Intercultural Planning Table, and included use of facilities, supplies, and more.

## Marketing & Promotion

The size of your initiative will determine the marketing plan needed. Minimally, make announcements in your in-house family programs and create flyers and bookmarks to hand out at community events. Pass out print publicity to associations or ethnic groups representing your project's languages.

The Burnaby Public Library hosts the project website and features it from the library's main web page and children's page. Publicity materials are distributed to community agencies and organizations in Burnaby and New Westminster, including schools and StrongStart Early Literacy Centres. In addition, all public libraries in British Columbia receive promotional materials. *Embracing Diversity* is promoted at the training workshops for community workers and at a professional development workshop for the Burnaby School District.

## For More Information

Coordination of the project was completed by Joyce Pinsker, Children's and Teen Coordinator for Burnaby Public Library, who has since retired, and Randi Robin, Children's Librarian, Burnaby Public Library.

Need more information about this program or want to contribute content to the Vimeo channel? Please contact:

Edel Toner-Rogala  
Chief Librarian  
Burnaby Public Library  
Burnaby, BC  
604-436-5431  
<http://www.bpl.bc.ca>



# Let's Dream Together

George Barițiu County Library Brașov  
Brașov, România



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## Target Audience

Eight- to twelve-year-olds interested in exchanging ideas and information with peers from another country participate in this international cultural exchange.

## Community Connections

- Schools
- Small businesses
- Local charity groups
- IFLA

## Program Description

The George Barițiu County Library Brașov and The Public Library of Indjija are paired in the Sister Libraries for Children's and Young Adult's Reading, an IFLA initiative. Pre-teen library patrons in each country participate in cultural exchange activities, including video introductions, friendship books, and a summer book club. Friendship books are collections of artwork, photographs, and information about the children's home country. When the friendship books are mailed, small gifts, including handmade cards, bookmarks, and friendship bracelets, are also exchanged. The program culminates in a shared summer reading experience. Children read a book from a prepared classic reading list, including the authors J. K. Rowling, Jules Verne, J. M. Barrie, and J.R.R. Tolkien, and meet online for a book discussion. Participating children are proud to represent their city and have opportunities to express their opinions, make new friends, and explore new online technologies.

IFLA's Sister Libraries program invites youth librarians with an interest in global relations or broadening their professional expertise, to register their school or public library to become a sister library. A library in one country is matched with a library that serves children and young adults in another part of the world. Standing committee members from IFLA serve as

Godmother Mentors and assist twinned libraries in the initial stages of relationship building and creating partnership activities.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Promotes sharing of ideas, experiences, and information from two nations
- Improves the reading culture for young people in both communities
- Fosters a broader cultural perspective and awareness for all participants
- Boosts children's civic pride and appreciation for other cultures
- Broadens the understanding of what it means to be a librarian serving children

## How It Works

Visit the IFLA Sister Libraries for Children's and Young Adult's Reading website at <http://www.ifla.org/node/1746> and download the registration form to begin the process of partnering with a library in another country. On the registration form, provide required information including:

- Type of institution—schools, public libraries, and other literacy institutions that serve children and young adults are welcome to register
- Contact information for the individual leading the initiative
- Address of your institution
- Languages spoken and read by librarians, children, and young adults
- Countries for partnership if a specific area of the world is preferred
- Reasons for wanting a Sister Library relationship

Once complete, e-mail the form to the program coordinator. Participants must be affiliated with a library that serves children, but membership in IFLA is not required.

Review the list of participating libraries on the Sister Libraries website and choose a library that has a common language. Make connections with the library through e-mail and begin a dialogue. IFLA provides Godmother Mentors to help support twinned libraries through the initial stages of the relationship.

The librarians in Braşov (România) and Indjija (Serbia) connect the children in their respective countries with three cultural exchange activities:

- *Drawing a Portrait.* A short documentary of video introductions is filmed, featuring greetings and brief biographies from each child participating in the program. This is the first contact for the partnered children.
- *The Friendship Book.* A collection of photographs, drawings, and poems are compiled and created by participating children with information about the city

they live in, their library, and their personal interests. Friendship books are exchanged in the mail along with small gifts, including bookmarks, handmade greetings cards, and friendship bracelets.

- *One Summer, Many Stories.* Paired librarians create a common reading list of popular and classic books for pre-teens. Participating children read books from the list throughout the summer. Before returning to school in the fall, children meet online to discuss and debate the books they read.

Partner libraries are responsible for choosing and developing the activities that will best suit their needs. The IFLA Sister Libraries brochure (2013) lists the following examples, reprinted with permission, for partnership:

- Share ideas on library programs
- Share information about practical issues, like classification, room design, technical issues, and so on
- Share difficulties and find solutions together
- Exchange information on good books; set up a children and YA books reading committee; and exchange book reviews
- Help select and buy good books
- Share good moments: exchange photos of activities and events
- Exchange professional training
- Do an exchange of staff for a short period

As the relationship with your sister library grows and flourishes, take some time to share your story and inspire others. Sharing might take the form of a blog entry on the Sister Libraries Blog (<http://sisterlibraries.wordpress.com>) or a video uploaded to YouTube (having obtained appropriate permissions) that may be featured on the IFLA Sister Libraries video site (<http://www.ifla.org/news/videos-by-sister-libraries>).

## Supplies & Materials

Supplies necessary for participation in this initiative are e-mail and an internet connection. However, it is likely that once the relationship of the partner libraries takes root, other cultural exchange ideas may develop, requiring supplies, such as:

- Art materials
- Letter writing supplies
- Books representing your community/country
- Tokens or artefacts representing your community/country
- Shipping materials and postage
- Digital camera
- Skype-enabled computer with large monitor or data projector and screen

## Budget

The budget for this program depends entirely on the chosen method of interaction between partner libraries. Relationships can be either formal or informal. Some libraries choose to draft a contract or Memorandum of Understanding, so roles and responsibilities are clarified. However, it is important to note that the budget of one paired library will likely be different from their sister library. Some partnerships are established between libraries from nations with varying access to supplies, materials, and equipment.

## Marketing & Promotion

Once relationships are established, marketing and promotion activities will depend on the programs being offered for participating children and teens. Minimally, promote the pairing on the library's website.

## For More Information

Need more information about the partnership between The George Barițiu County Library Brașov and The Public Library of Indjija? Please contact:

Claudia Popescu  
Head of LifeLong Learning Department  
Public Library George Baritiu Brasov  
33–35, Eroilor Boulevard  
500036 Brașov  
România  
+40–268–419338  
[http://www.bjbv.ro/en/default\\_en.php](http://www.bjbv.ro/en/default_en.php)

## Bibliography of Resource Materials

- IFLA Section for Children and Young Adults. 2013. "Sister Libraries." The Official Website of Sister Libraries for Children's and Young Adult's Reading, <http://www.ifla.org/node/1752>
- Rankin, Carolynn. 2012. "An Evaluation of the IFLA Sister Libraries Programme—Development, Challenges and Progress in the First Two Years of an International Network." Paper presented at World Library and Information Congress: 78th IFLA General Conference and Assembly, Helsinki, Finland, 2012. Netherlands: IFLA, <http://conference.ifla.org/past/ifla78/195-rankin-en.pdf>

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## Chapter 6

# Programs That Foster Reading and Writing

Libraries have a long-standing tradition of providing book-based programming for youth. Many public and school libraries have forums for young people to discuss what they are reading and find new materials to read. In this chapter, we highlight several programs that expand on that traditional library book-based programming concept. Featured are three programs that engage youth in reading books outside the regular school curriculum. That engagement is deepened when those students connect with other young people from different book clubs, schools, and, in one case, students from another country.

The second focus of this chapter is on programs developed to give community youth an opportunity to practise creative writing. These programs benefit from community partnerships, notably local authors donating their time as judges and mentors, to celebrate children's original stories and poems. Four programs were chosen to highlight several different approaches to the traditional writing contest, including two seasonal celebrations and a program that emphasizes the impact of a local historical figure. In all of the featured writing contests, young people submit original works; these works are evaluated, and winning entries are selected and celebrated.

This chapter emphasizes programs that put a twist on some established library fare: reading books and narrative writing. Many of the other chapters in this book will draw attention to ground-breaking initiatives and new concepts. In libraries, we often look for ways to demonstrate our value through innovation, and this book celebrates those initiatives. But, it is vitally important that, in these times of rapid change and knowledge mobilization, libraries do not lose sight of the core values that helped cement their place in societies. For youth, reading and writing practice helps place an emphasis on the unconstrained skills central to ongoing literacy development (Paris 2005, 184–202). Practising these skills in the library, or because the library is hosting a contest or competition, is a way to highlight the library's core value of advancing literacy within the community.

Reading for pleasure is a practice naturally associated with libraries: in schools and public libraries, children and young adults find a range of recreational reading materials available to borrow. Highlighting reading *outside* the curriculum is very important, especially for pre-teens and teenagers. Students at this age often lose their enthusiasm for reading and focus on other areas of their development (Iyengar and Ball 2007, 5). However, studies have shown that by placing an emphasis on reading for fun and encouraging young people to read materials they are interested in, we can help youth in our communities grow to identify themselves as readers. A recent study conducted by Dr. Vivian Howard, from the School of Information Management at Dalhousie University, emphasized the importance of reading for pleasure and highlighted adolescent's personal views on reading through focus group interviews. These students brought forward several compelling reasons to promote reading for pleasure:

- Improved literacy and cognitive skills
- Defining a career path
- Relaxation
- Greater understanding of the world they live in
- Empathy and social consciousness
- Empowering beliefs and the courage to act on those beliefs
- Increased understanding of the danger of high-risk behaviours
- Pure pleasure, including entertainment and escape
- Creativity and imaginative development
- Identification and reassurance

—(Howard 2011, 49–55. Reprinted with permission.)

Dr. Howard's study builds on the research of Stephen D. Krashen, Catherine Ross, and others and shows that, with this group of 12–15-year-olds, identifying as a reader, regardless of the favoured reading material, was a factor in personal growth and development.

Narrative writing, telling your personal story, and sharing an authentic view of the world is enhanced by critical literacy and writing skill development. Key to that development is feedback and confidence building. Writing about the highly developed and successful Writerscorps program, Judith Tannenbaum shares a strategy that brings writers to youth in places where they are already gathered to support them in self-expression. Tannenbaum believes that "central to the shared vision of community arts programs is the belief that each of us is the expert about our own life and story" (Tannenbaum 2008, 27). Developing youth writing programs is a role that libraries can continue to evolve, as the natural connection between the library, local writers, and youth is explored and deepened.

Giving young people and their families, friends, and supporters an opportunity to celebrate reading novels and writing stories is a valuable pursuit in a familiar venue. Programs that blend family involvement will promote a community reading culture and family literacy (Ness 2010, 141). Libraries can advance this type of programming in several ways that will garner long-term benefits for participants:

- Celebrate the work of many children, not just a select few winners. If a program is judged, select many promising writing samples and invite children to share their work.
- Publish the young author's works—in an anthology, online, in the local paper, or as a library newsletter. The tangible product is important for adolescents to take pride in their accomplishment.
- Read popular novels and allow young people a choice or vote in the selection of the reading material. While the importance of quality is not diminished, choosing titles with appeal will encourage young people to continue reading outside the program's parameters.
- Encourage critical reading and writing, paving a path for open exchange about the experiences. As young people learn to think critically about their own reading and writing, they will learn to apply these skills more broadly as citizens within a community.

# Battle of the Book Clubs

Kitchener Public Library  
Kitchener, Ontario  
Canada

Kitchener Public  
**LIBRARY**

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## Target Audience

High school students participate in this contest planned and executed by the library's teen advisory council.

## Community Connections

- Schools
- Organizations serving young adults
- Youth advisory councils (YACs) from different library systems
- Local book stores

## Program Description

Competitors test their mental mettle in a friendly book-based trivia competition between high school book clubs, as they challenge each other's knowledge of popular young adult titles.

Kitchener Public Library's YAC students challenge each other to answer trivia questions about favourite books and authors. The desire to expand and recreate these in-house battles inspired them to organize and manage a match between students in book clubs at local high schools. Aiming to replicate their own friendly competitions, YAC members read the selected books; develop the questions; create the competition structure; and assist in hosting the battle. They also create a trophy out of discarded books and help to design the battle logo (see picture under Program Resources).

In addition to the leadership provided by Kitchener Public Library's YAC, success of Battle of the Book Clubs is due to several additional factors:

- Existence of established book clubs at participating schools
- Prior professional contact with school librarians
- Kitchener Public Library's Teen Services Librarian's experience with the facilitation of book club meetings



## Outcomes & Benefits

- Increases awareness of the public library services, collections, and opportunities for youth
- Creates a youth-inspired, community-based event that teens plan, execute, and manage on an annual basis
- Encourages reading for pleasure while increasing literacy skills
- Fosters a positive partnership with secondary schools, teachers, librarians, and students
- Inspires increased involvement in school book clubs
- Promotes the library as a place for students to connect with like-minded peers

## How It Works

The teen services librarian contacts schools to see if they would like to participate. When at least two schools sign on, have both book clubs offer their own selection in addition to one chosen by the library's teen council. If the library owns Teen Book Club sets, choices can be limited to the available titles so that multiple copies of the same book are readily available. Local book stores could also be approached for donations.

Spend late fall/early winter with all participating students reading the novels and preparing for the event. Encourage school book clubs to come up with creative names for their teams. The public library's teen council members develop the questions and create the structure for the competition. Hold the battle in the spring at one of the participating high schools. Closer to the date, teen council members can determine their roles at the competition. They act as timekeepers, scorekeepers, judges, or as master of ceremonies.

Each event takes approximately an hour and a half from start to finish. Begin the program with an introduction and welcome to participating schools and the library's teen council. Introductions are followed by a review of the competition's structure and scorekeeping.

Three rounds of play feature two types of trivia questions in each round: regular and lightning. Regular battle questions are asked first. Ask each team, in turn, a question about a novel. Their captain must respond within 30 seconds. Regular questions are worth 10 points each. Only one answer can be given and, if it is incorrect, the opposing team has the opportunity to provide an answer immediately. Five points are awarded if the opposing team answers correctly. Address questions to teams alternately, regardless of the last correct answer. There are 12 regular battle questions per round.

Lightning round battle questions follow the regular questions and give teams an opportunity to accumulate points quickly. During a two-minute time period, ask a team 10 consecutive questions. Award 10 points for each correct answer in a lightning round. Unlike regular questions, teams can submit as many guesses as they wish through their captain, without penalty.

The highest scoring team wins and is presented with the coveted Battle of the Book Clubs trophy.

## Supplies & Materials

- Trophy
- Flip chart and markers
- Book club novel sets
- Snacks

## Budget

The trophy can be made by the teen council group members out of discarded books. Kitchener Public Library provides book club sets to the participating students and school libraries offer additional copies if necessary. Flip charts, markers, and snacks are usually donated by the host school.

## Marketing & Promotion

Schools advertise in-house to their students to entice participation in their book clubs. No outside marketing is required as this is a target audience.

## For More Information

*The Battle of the Book Clubs* structure is adapted with permission from a program originating with the Durham Region Libraries.

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Christy Gielser  
Teen Services Librarian  
Kitchener Public Library  
Kitchener, ON  
519-743-0271  
<http://www.kpl.org>

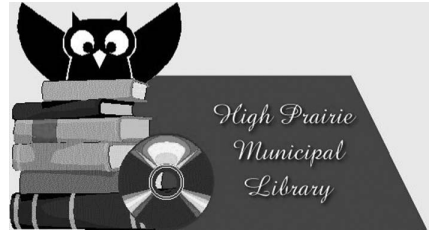
## Program Resources



Logo and trophy as designed by program participants and displayed at *Battle of the Book Clubs Challenge* competitions.

# Grade Five Challenge

High Prairie Municipal Library  
High Prairie, Alberta  
Canada



## Target Audience

Grade 5 students from different schools compete in this book-based trivia challenge.

## Community Connections

- Schools
- Authors/illustrators
- Local book stores

## Program Description

Grade 5 students from the two area schools compete in an annual Jeopardy®-style reading challenge. Public library staff choose an age-appropriate Canadian title for the competition. All participating students read the selected book and prepare to face off against their own classmates in a multiple choice challenge quiz to determine who will move on to represent the school in the town challenge. The top three students from each class compete against the contestants from the other school and demonstrate their knowledge by answering book-based trivia questions. Volunteers, not directly affiliated with either school, act as moderator and judges.

When possible, a Skype session is arranged for each school so that the students can engage directly with the author of the featured work. In this partnership program, teachers work collaboratively with the municipal library. The students are engaged in a friendly competition and are introduced to new Canadian authors and titles.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Involves older elementary grades with the library
- Promotes reading and reading comprehension

- Showcases national authors and titles
- Enhances school curriculum and learning outcomes
- Encourages a close working relationship between schools and the library

## How It Works

Contact teachers at local schools and reach out to the community to recruit volunteer moderators and judges for the competition. Select an age-appropriate title for the students to read and gather sufficient copies for the Grade 5 class at each school (see Program Resources for a list of books used in the past at High Prairie Municipal Library). Local bookstores can be approached for donations. Allow students one month to read the book. Have library staff make up 20 multiple choice questions and engage the class in a competition to determine the top three students who will move on to represent the school at the final challenge. Provide the three finalists from each school with a specially printed T-shirt promoting the featured title and have the students wear them during the challenge.

If possible, arrange a Skype session with the author for the classes at both schools so that the students can gain a better understanding of the author, the title, and the writing process. This offers students a great opportunity to ask questions and interact with an author in real time.

Create a Jeopardy®-style question panel out of poster board and paper (see picture under Program Resources). The challenge takes the form of the popular television trivia game with a moderator and judges. The teams select questions based on chapter headings and designated point values. Answering questions correctly builds up their score. The team with the most points wins and has the honour of taking the trophy back to their school.

Teams are also given the opportunity to use three different lifelines, if they are stuck on a question. In “Ask a Librarian,” the library staff member reads a brief excerpt from the story that gives the answer to the question. For “Ask a Teacher,” the teacher gives a hint about the question or rewords it in an easier way. If the team chooses “Ask a Friend,” they may ask someone from the audience for the answer. The friend is given 30 seconds to give an answer, and the team then chooses to accept it or gives another response. Even if the team chooses not to go with the friend’s answer, the lifeline is used.

The volunteer host reads the questions to the team as they are chosen from the game board. A panel of three judges assist the host in the event of uncertainty over an answer. Other volunteers include a timekeeper who uses a stopwatch and a scorekeeper who keeps tabs on a white board.

Seat the two teams at separate tables and flip a coin to determine who will start. The first team has 15 seconds to choose a chapter and point value. If the question is not picked in the allotted time, they lose their turn. After a question is selected, the host reads it to the team, who then has 30 seconds to discuss the answer. After the time expires, they are given the option to answer or use one of their lifelines. If the team cannot provide an answer, the question passes to the opposing team, who has the opportunity to steal the points. If they cannot answer the question, no points are given.

During a brief 15-minute intermission, reload the board with questions from the final half of the chapters in the book. Once all the questions from each chapter of the book have been read, total the final points and declare a winning team.

In the event of a tie, ask a tiebreaker question until one team answers correctly to earn the winning point. Each team has one minute to answer the question. They are given a sheet of paper on which to display their answer within the allotted time. Each team then presents their answer by holding up the sheet for the host to see. If both teams get the answer right, repeat the process until the game is won.

Present participating members from both teams with a medal or other prize. At High Prairie Municipal Library, each participant on the winning team receives an autographed copy of the book; a small prize, such as a movie pass to the local theatre; and the honour of taking the grand prize trophy back to their school.

## Supplies & Materials

- Sufficient copies of the book for both classes to read
- Poster board and paper
- Medals
- Trophy
- T-shirts
- Books for prizes
- Karaoke machine or microphone and sound system
- Stopwatch
- White board

## Budget

Copies of the challenge books come from the library and school collections or are donated by bookstores. The three autographed prize copies cost approximately \$30. In High Prairie, tickets to the local movie theatre for the winning team are donated. Custom printed T-shirts for six contestants cost \$172. There is a one-time cost of \$15 for the trophy plus an annual cost of approximately \$3 for an inscribed tag of the winner which is added to the trophy each year. The cost of poster board and paper is approximately \$5.

## Marketing & Promotion

Most promotion is done at the schools and in the library where the event is advertised on posters. Approach the local newspaper to publish a write-up about the competition. If possible, have library staff promote the event on the local radio or television station.

## For More Information

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Kayla Killoran  
 Assistant Librarian/Program Coordinator  
 High Prairie Municipal Library  
 High Prairie, AB  
 780-523-3838  
<http://www.highprairielibrary.ab.ca>

## Program Resources



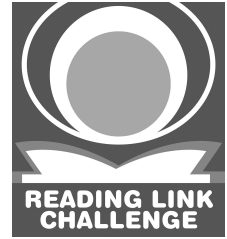
Jeopardy-style display board used by moderator during challenges.

### **Grade 5 Challenge Books 2009–2012**

Chan, Marty. 2011. *Barnabas Bigfoot: A Close Shave*. Saskatoon: Thistledown Press.  
 Chan, Marty. 2004. *The Mystery of the Frozen Brains*. Saskatoon: Thistledown Press.  
 Korman, Gordon. 1989. *Radio Fifth Grade*. New York: Scholastic.  
 McMahan, Chris. 2007. *Klutzhood*. Victoria, BC: Orca Book Publishers.

# Reading Link Challenge

Fraser Valley Regional Library  
Abbotsford, British Columbia  
Canada



## Target Audience

Teams of Grade 4 and 5 students participate in this series of challenges based on selected titles.

## Community Connections

- Schools in various districts, municipalities, regions, and countries
- Universities
- Conference centres

## Program Description

Elementary school students in Grades 4 and 5 compete in this book-based series of challenges that celebrates reading as a sport. Teams of seven students initially battle against each other in an “In School” challenge where they answer questions about six preselected titles. The winning team from each school moves on to the “Library Challenge” and competes against other schools in their district. That winning team progresses to the “Grand Challenge” level and goes up against teams from each of the participating municipalities. The final level is the “Global Challenge” where the winning teams from the Fraser Valley region, including Surrey and Coquitlam, go head-to-head with winners from Seattle and Kalamazoo Public Libraries in the United States via videoconference.

Along with the elementary schools as partners for the Fraser Valley Regional Library, the University of the Fraser Valley (UFV) students in the Library Technician program help to organize and execute this program. The “Global Challenge” is also held at UFV’s Videoconference Centre and the university donates prizes. The Kwantlen Polytechnic University, in Surrey, British Columbia, also provides support for this program by donating space and prizes.

This program is based on the 1930s radio show called *Battle of the Books*. Kalamazoo Public Library in Michigan and Seattle Public Library in Washington began a version of



this program in the 1990s. Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, and Fraser Valley Regional Libraries joined over the years. Between 2011 and 2012, 3,059 children from 98 schools across 15 school districts participated in the challenge. In Seattle, there were 2,500 students from 45 schools in 360 teams participating, resulting in 5,559 students in the United States and Canada reading the same books and becoming involved in the challenge.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Promotes the love of reading for recreation and for sport
- Encourages children to read for comprehension and retention
- Fosters team work, cooperative thinking, and school pride
- Enhances confidence and personal integrity
- Builds relationships between public libraries and local schools
- Introduces children to a variety of literature at a variety of reading levels
- Provides community children a means of interacting with children from other schools, regions, and countries

## How It Works

Assemble a team of librarians from participating regions to select the six titles. Selection criteria include books that have boy/girl appeal; low/medium/high reading levels; multicultural themes; and a minimum of two books must be written by a Canadian author. At least three of the six books must be the same as those used in the libraries in the United States. Take into consideration the budget and the availability of books in paperback form. At Fraser Valley Regional Library, the library provides the books for the teams.

Partner this team of librarians with library technician students from partnering universities to create the questions for all challenge levels. Different questions about the same six books are asked at each level of the competition. Each level has three rounds of 10 questions for a total of 30 questions that span from easy to difficult, and consist of multiple choice, short answer, and true/false.

For the challenges, select a maximum of seven students per team. Six of those students answer the questions and one acts as a runner to take the answer, in written form, up to the judge. Runners do not participate in the group consultations, but team members can be switched between rounds so that everyone has an opportunity to participate.

The quiz master announces the title of the book; asks a question; and repeats it once. Teams have 30 seconds to answer after the second reading. Give one point to each team that answers the question correctly. The team with the most points wins the challenge. In the event of a tie, one round of six additional questions takes place. Award a trophy to the winning team and issue prizes.

Details and resources needed to run a similar competition, complete with a timeline, are available at <http://readinglink.bclibrary.ca>

## Supplies & Materials

- Timer
- Question cards, answer sheets (different colour for each team), and score sheets
- Team lists
- Set of books
- Pens, pencils, masking tape
- Prizes
- Evaluation forms
- Videoconferencing equipment
- Refreshments, including cookies, juice, cups, and napkins

## Budget

The cost of sufficient copies of all the books required for each team and as prizes is approximately \$10,500. Trophies, medals, plaques, and prizes cost \$1,607. Some prizes may also be donated by the partnering universities. Refreshments cost \$614, while printing and postage are approximately \$105.

## Marketing & Promotion

As it is targeted to students at participating schools, this program does not need to be actively marketed to the public. In 2007, the British Columbia Ministry of Education, Public Library Services Branch, approved a grant of \$44,000 to create a manual, resource materials, promotional materials, a video, and a website to promote the *Reading Link Challenge* program as a provincial initiative. Visit <http://readinglink.bclibrary.ca> for details.

## For More Information

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Ada Con  
Library Programs Coordinator  
Fraser Valley Regional Library  
Abbotsford, BC  
604-859-7141  
<http://www.fvrl.bc.ca>

## Program Resources

### ***Reading Link Challenge Books 2011–2012***

Banerjee, Anjali. 2010. *Seaglass Summer*. New York: Wendy Lamb Books.

Clements, Andrew and Mark Elliott. 2009. *Extra Credit*. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers.

DiCamillo, Kate. 2000. *Because of Winn-Dixie*. Cambridge, MS: Candlewick Press.

Hawking, Lucy, S. W. Hawking, and Garry Parsons. 2009. *George's Cosmic Treasure Hunt*. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers.

Look, Lenore and LeUyen Pham. 2008. *Alvin Ho: Allergic to Girls, School, and Other Scary Things*. New York: Schwartz & Wade Books.

Walters, Eric. 2007. *Safe as Houses: A Novel*. Toronto: Doubleday Canada.

# Seepe Walters Short Story Contest

Innisfil Public Library  
Innisfil, Ontario  
Canada



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## Target Audience

Students in Grades 3–12 have an opportunity to submit their writing to this annual contest.

## Community Connections

- Schools
- Authors
- Local government officials
- Organizations serving youth
- Local businesses

## Program Description

Youth in Grades 3–12 are invited to write an original short story submission for this writing contest, named for the journalist, local community activist, and a founder of the Innisfil Friends of the Library, Seepe Walters. Prizes are awarded for first, second, and third place in each of the three age categories: Junior (Grades 3–6), Intermediate (Grades 7–8), and Senior (Grades 9–12). One story is selected as the best story overall across all age categories, and the winning author receives the Seepe Walters Award and a \$100 cash grand prize. The top five stories in each age category are printed and bound in an anthology. Visits from a popular author in May/June kick off the contest and an awards ceremony is held at the end of the competition in November.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Engages local youth in creative writing
- Encourages life-long learning and literacy

- Brings the community together to recognize and celebrate local literary talent
- Gives the library a strong community presence
- Develops a collaborative working relationship with local schools and businesses

## How It Works

Select an author, preferably national, to visit schools to promote the program. Innisfil does this through the Canadian Authors Booking Service (<http://www.authorsbooking.com>). The author selection process could begin in December, with visit dates and times scheduled for May. Secure funding through the Friends of the Library or another source. If necessary, pursue grant proposals to various agencies, such as The National Public Reading Program and the Writers-in-the-Schools Program in Canada. Invite schools on a first come, first served basis to book an author visit. During the visits, the author talks about his or her personal experience and the writing process, and encourages students to pick up a pen or plug in and start writing.

Short story contest entries must be submitted on or before a September deadline, typed in 12-pt font, double spaced, and follow the minimum/maximum word count for their age category as outlined below:

- Grades 3–6: 250–1,000 words (1–4 pages)
- Grades 7–8: 500–2,000 words (2–8 pages)
- Grades 9–12: 1,500–3,000 words (3–12 pages)

As submissions are received, record details on a spreadsheet, such as the student's name, age, school, contact information, and the title of their story. Include only the title of the story and the author's grade as a header on each page of the entries, thus ensuring blind judging of the contest.

Recruit judges early in the process. Provide each judge with a package that contains instructions; suggested guidelines for evaluation; a copy of each story organized by age division; a grading matrix for every story; and a final results tally sheet.

Award prizes for the top five stories in each age category; in addition, winners have their stories printed in a collective anthology. Achievements are recognized at an awards ceremony held in November. Invite contest participants, whether selected as finalists or not, to attend the ceremony. Notify those that placed in the top five for their age category in advance. At the awards ceremony, announce the grand prize winner and rank placements in each category.

Present the authors of the top five stories in all three age categories with a copy of the printed anthology. Print additional anthologies for the public library collection, school libraries, and to present to judges and officials attending the awards ceremony.

Along with the anthologies, present award certificates of “Honourable Mention” to the fourth and fifth place winners. At Innisfil, a certificate with the author’s placement as well as a take-away plaque is given to each of those who win first, second, and third place in each category. First place winners also receive a \$30 Chapters bookstore gift card; second place winners receive a \$20 gift card; and for third place a \$15 gift card is awarded. The top prize is called the Seepe Walters Award, named after the competition’s benefactor. The winner of this award for best overall story receives a \$100 cash prize, as well as a permanent plaque to be displayed at the library.

Send letters of recognition to each school principal detailing how many of their students participated, their placements (if any), and congratulating them on their involvement. Invite various local media to attend the ceremony, and send news releases naming the winners and the details of the contest and celebration. Be sure to update the contest web page, listing the winners and their stories as well as a link to an online copy of the anthology.

Following the ceremony, send thank you notes to any officials who attended or participated in the event. Typically, this includes the mayor, council members, public library board, Friends of the Library, judges, and sponsors.

## Supplies & Materials

- Advertising materials, such as posters and bookmarks
- Anthologies, which are printed and bound by a printing company
- Certificates
- Prizes of a bookstore gift cards and \$100 grand prize
- Plaques
- Awards ceremony materials such as programs, decorations, and refreshments

## Budget

At Innisfil, the total cost for the author visits was approximately \$2,000. Thirty professionally printed posters cost a total of \$30. Take away plaques cost \$15 each for a total of \$45 and the main plaque engraving was \$5. Refreshments and supplies required for the ceremony cost \$60. All of the above costs were generously covered by the Innisfil Friends of the Library. A local Staples store contributed to the program by covering half the printing costs of the anthology, which left approximately \$200 for the library portion. Chapters bookstore sponsored the program by providing \$195 in gift card prizes, which were broken down into first, second, and third place prizes for each of the three age categories. Local residents contributed \$150 each year, \$100 of which went directly to the cash grand prize. The remaining amount was used to offset the cost of the plaques.

## Marketing & Promotion

The author visits to area schools effectively promote the program and inspire students to participate in the contest. In addition, posters and bookmarks can be delivered to the schools and posted in the library. Other promotional methods include screen ads in the library, a library web page, a website banner, and the library programming brochure.

Send out news releases to build interest and anticipation. Invite local media to the awards ceremony and issue additional news releases to announce the winners and to provide participation details at the end of the contest. Notify schools of the winners and give them a copy of the anthology. Suggest that schools conduct a re-presentation of the awards to their winning students, so that the young authors can be recognized amongst their peers.

## For More Information

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Kathy Hammer  
Children's Services Librarian  
Innisfil Public Library  
Innisfil, ON  
705-431-7410  
<http://www.innisfil.library.on.ca>

# St. John's Libraries Annual Ghost Story Writing Contest

Newfoundland and Labrador Public Libraries  
St. John's, Newfoundland  
Canada



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## Target Audience

Youth ages 7–17 are eligible to participate in this annual writing contest.

## Community Connections

- Schools
- Authors
- Museums or historic sites
- Local bookstores
- Neighbourhood ghosts—real or imagined

## Program Description

Budding authors ages seven and older are invited to write a ghost story in this annual contest that celebrates the rich culture and folklore of Newfoundland and Labrador. Stories of 500 words or less must be original works or the retelling of a known story in their own words. A local or visiting young adult or children's author acts as the celebrity judge and chooses from 18 finalists in three age categories; 7–9-year-olds, 10–12-year-olds, and 13–17-year-olds. The contest culminates with an awards ceremony for the finalists and their family, friends, and teachers. The celebrity judge tells stories and reads from the contestants' works as well as their own, before announcing the contest winners. Appropriately, and for spooky appeal, the *Ghost Story Writing Contest* ceremony is held on or near All Saints Day in early November right after Halloween.



## Outcomes & Benefits

- Celebrates local culture and folklore through storytelling and writing
- Promotes literacy and community
- Pairs budding authors with a well-established author who can provide mentoring
- Highlights the ghost story genre
- Supports school curriculum by developing oral and written storytelling skills
- Features local or popular authors
- Honours the achievements and talents of youth
- Engages local schools with the public library in a partnership project

## How It Works

Book a local or visiting author six months prior to the start of the program to act as the celebrity judge. The judge has the responsibility of:

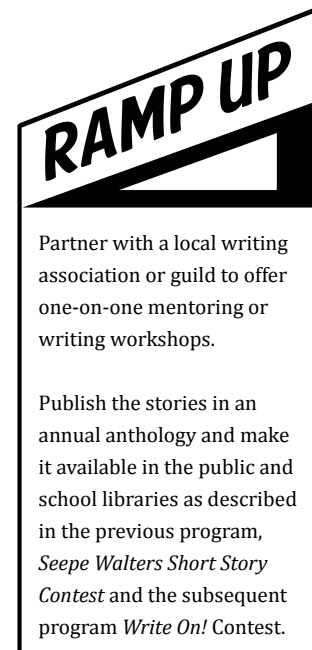
- Reading works of the 18 shortlisted finalists
- Selecting the winners for each category
- Telling original stories, traditional stories, and reading from the winning entries at the celebration

Because the target group is school age children from 7–17, start promoting the contest in late August, with entries due by mid-October. Invite summer program participants to start thinking up their scariest tales to develop for the contest. In the second week of September, make calls from each library location to neighbourhood schools to find classes interested in incorporating the contest into the fall curriculum. Create in-house library displays and drop off promotional materials to schools or send via e-mail. Schedule the awards ceremony to be held in early November, right after Halloween.

Submissions must be 500 words or less and original to the contestant or retold using their own words. Entries must be printed or typed double spaced, and be accompanied by an entry form that asks for contact information, age, the title of their story, and whether or not the story is original or retold.

Library staff select two entries in each age category from every participating location and pass them along to the judge one week prior to the awards ceremony. The judge chooses one winning story from each age category.

The winners are revealed at the awards ceremony when the judge reads from each winning work. Present each winner with a \$50 book store gift certificate. All participants receive



a small congratulatory gift bag, which includes a certificate of merit, a hardbound journal, a pen, and a handmade bookmark. Announce winners on the library and school websites; broadcast over the intercom at schools; and post on teacher blogs.

## Supplies & Materials

- Posters, flyers, or bookmarks to promote the contest
- Entry forms
- Prizes for finalists and winners
- Honorarium for celebrity judge author
- Cardstock for certificates

## Budget

The Library Board for St. John's Libraries provides funding for the support of this program. A \$100 honorarium is given to the celebrity author, three \$50 bookstore gift cards for the winner in each age category, and approximately \$100 for all other prizes combined. The cardstock for the certificates and paper for promotional materials and entry forms are part of regular library supplies.

## Marketing & Promotion

Announce the contest through posters, flyers, and bookmarks and post it on the library website and blogs. Schools can use various channels, such as their website, teachers' blogs, announcements, posters, and in-class participation, to promote the program and encourage their students to become involved. Enlist local free radio and print advertising to get the word out.

## For More Information

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Julia Mayo  
Library Technician II  
Michael Donovan Library  
St. John's Public Libraries  
<http://www.nlpl.ca>

# Write On! Contest

East Gwillimbury Public Library  
Holland Landing, Ontario  
Canada



**EAST GWILLIMBURY  
PUBLIC LIBRARY**

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## Target Audience

This program is designed for students in Grades 4–8.

## Community Connections

- Students
- Local authors and illustrators
- Local artists
- Local dignitaries
- Writing guilds and associations

## Program Description

Students in Grades 4–8 are invited to write a short story, poem, or essay for publication in a community anthology that is launched at a celebratory event and made available for circulation at the East Gwillimbury Public Library. Local authors judge the writings and select the stories for publication and a local artist provides illustrations for the annual *Write On! Contest* treasury. This program brings together schools, local artists, and local dignitaries in a community celebration of young writing talent.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Provides local students with the opportunity to be published
- Strengthens community partnerships by working with schools, local authors, and illustrators
- Creates a publication dedicated to the artistic talents of local young people
- Celebrates and encourages creativity in youth
- Showcases the talents of youth to parents, families, and local dignitaries

## How It Works

This program typically runs from January to October each year. Students must be in Grades 4–8 and live or go to school in the area to be eligible to participate. Contestants must acknowledge that the work is original and written in their own words. Submissions are limited to five typewritten pages. Participants must submit a photocopy, as it cannot be guaranteed that originals will be returned. Entries are handed in at the library and must be accompanied by an official submission form, which requires the writer's name, address, phone number, school, grade, and title of the work. Note that personal information should not be on the written piece itself. Publish the winning submissions in an anthology. Unveil the publication and award prizes at a book launch in October.

Contact local authors and illustrators and recruit them to participate in the *Write On! Contest* as judges or to provide artwork for the anthology. Ask students to submit their writings between January and June each year. The judges read the stories and make selections by mid-August. In early September, mail a letter and invitation to notify each young author whose writing has been chosen for inclusion. Send invitations to the *Write On! Contest* book launch to local teachers, principals, dignitaries, library board members, and city officials. The illustrator completes artwork by the middle of September and the booklet should be ready for printing by early October.

A ceremony held in October to launch the anthology includes a welcoming speech and congratulations; an unveiling of the work; a book signing by contributors; and the awarding of first, second, and third place prizes. In East Gwillimbury, the grand prize winner's name is engraved on the Barry Dempster Young Writer's plaque and presented to the recipient. This award is offered on behalf of the Library Board and is named after local author Barry Dempster, who served as a library board member and *Write On! Contest* judge. Serve refreshments before the celebration comes to a close. Make extra copies of the *Write On! Contest* booklet for circulation at the library.

## Supplies & Materials

- Contest entry forms
- Published anthology
- Room decorations for celebration ceremony
- Notification letters and invitations, envelopes, stamps
- Pens for book signing
- Refreshments, such as cake and drinks
- Bookstore gift cards for prize winners
- Plaque, engraved for grand prize winner

## Budget

In East Gwillimbury, this program is completely funded by the Friends of the Library. The printing of the anthology costs \$200. Book launch supplies are \$50 and the writer's awards total \$200. The judges and illustrator receive \$200 for their time and efforts.

## Marketing & Promotion

Promote this program via the library website, newsletter, and in-house posters. Send press releases to local newspapers. Distribute a newsletter to area teachers and conduct in-person visits with teacher-librarians to garner school support.

## For More Information

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Heather Alblas  
Children's Services Coordinator  
East Gwillimbury Public Library  
Holland Landing, ON  
905-836-6492  
St. John's, NL  
709-737-2621  
<http://www.egpl.ca>

# Poem-a-Day Contest

Cambridge Libraries  
Cambridge, Ontario  
Canada



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## Target Audience

Youth of all ages can celebrate National Poetry Month by becoming involved in this initiative.

## Community Connections

- Schools
- Arts centres or galleries
- Writing guilds or associations
- Bookstores

## Program Description

For National Poetry Month, poets of all ages are invited to submit an original work, in English or French, to this annual contest where 30 winning poems are selected, one for every day of the month in April.

Winning poets receive a booklet of the year's winning poetry and a gift certificate to a local independent bookstore. They are also invited to read their poem at a public "Evening of Poetry" event hosted by the Centre for the Arts. Winning poems are displayed at the Centre for the Arts, at all library locations, and on the library website. At the celebratory event, poets are recorded reading their poems and audio files are posted on the library website so that poems can be heard in the author's own voice.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Highlights poetry as a vital form of literature
- Celebrates National Poetry Month

- Features and honours the work of novice poets
- Provides an opportunity to teach youth how to write and enjoy poems
- Increases visibility and circulation of poetry-related materials in the library
- Offers an opportunity to participate in person or online in a literacy-based contest
- Nurtures a partnership with a community arts organization

## How It Works

Prior to the contest opening January 1, complete background planning, such as:

- Creating posters and press releases
- Writing promotional material
- Creating and updating submission forms and guidelines, and
- Booking the venue

In January, offer poetry-themed programs and conduct class visits to share poetry and to instruct students on how to find related materials in the library. As an enhancement to the curriculum, ask teachers to incorporate writing poetry for this contest into their classes. Teachers have the option of collecting all the poems and submitting students' entries all at once.

Entries can be sent by e-mail, mail, or handed in directly to any library branch. In Cambridge, the contest is open to participants from anywhere in the world. Close the contest on February 14 and deliver the poems to the judges at the beginning of March.

Select new judges every year and obtain their biographies and photos for contest promotion purposes. Three volunteer judges, most of whom are authors, poets, or part of a writers' collective, are assigned one category to review: children (ages 5–11), teens (ages 12–17), or adults (ages 18 and up). In Cambridge, French poetry submissions are also accepted, so a fourth judge chooses one winning French entry per age category. Ten winning selections from each category make up the 30 poems for the month. The judges select the finalists within a week of receiving the poems. Winners receive their prizes and are invited to share their poems at the “Evening of Poetry” community celebration. Notify unsuccessful entrants by letter, encouraging them to keep writing and submit again next year.

By mid-March, prepare the winning poems for the website, print them in the booklet, and format them for oversized display boards.

In April, display the *Poem-a-Day* boards at all library locations and issue a press release announcing the winning entries. In Cambridge, the third Friday in April marks the annual “Evening of Poetry.” Invite the entire community to celebrate the local writing talent at an appropriate venue; for instance, Cambridge Public Library uses the Cambridge Centre for the Arts. Poets, including the *Poem-a-Day* contest winners, read their poetry, and enjoy

live music and refreshments. Record the contest winners reading their poems and post the audio on the library website.

## Supplies & Materials

- Entry forms
- Posters, display boards
- Paper and cardstock for poetry booklet
- Gift cards for prizes
- Audio recording equipment
- Refreshments and entertainment for event

## Budget

Most of the costs for this program are in staff hours and printing, which can most often be absorbed by the library budget. Solicit prize donations from a local bookstore. The Cambridge Centre for the Arts provides the venue, refreshments, and entertainment for the “Evening of Poetry” event.

## Marketing & Promotion

Promotion focuses on posters, in-house library displays, on the library and the partner websites, and through various library programs and school visits. Place ads in the local activities guide, issue press releases, and have a library staff member promote the contest on a local television or radio show. Volunteer judges also use their various networks to support and promote the contest.

## For More Information

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Linda Foster  
Information Services Librarian  
Cambridge Libraries  
Cambridge, ON  
519-621-0460  
<http://www.cambridgelibraries.ca>



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## Chapter 7

# Programs That Encourage Personal Growth

Personal development is a life-long pursuit. Communities benefit from members that have active minds and bodies; members that participate in the life of the community by seeking out activities that will allow for growth and development. For young people, personal development is particularly important. Youth benefit from voluntary participation in activities of their choosing, especially those that emphasize “playfulness and planfulness, both of which are important to mental health and educational success” (Costello et al. 2001, 9).

In addition to personal evolution, young people that take advantage of programs that interest them and help them learn more about themselves are more likely to avoid risk-taking behaviours. According to Richard F. Catalano, a researcher with the Communities that Care program, positive youth development programs are approaches that seek to promote socialization, identity, resilience, and competence across social, emotional, and moral realms (Positive Youth Development in the United States 2004, 101–102). According to Barry Checkoway, professor of social work and urban planning at the University of Michigan, “Youth participation strengthens personal and social development, provides expertise for children and youth programs and services, and promotes a more democratic society” (Checkoway 2011, 340). If we give the young people in our communities opportunities to explore things they are interested in, to interact with community experts and leaders, and to socialize and engage in positive ways, we are helping not just the young participant, but the entire community.

The programs selected for this chapter are aimed at family, pre-teen, and teen audiences. All five programs engage participants in physical, social, or personal development.

- *Book Smart, Water Smart* is a partnership initiative between two established community institutions—public library locations and community pools. Families visit the library and obtain new memberships or renew existing ones and then receive information about water safety and free swim passes. This family program encourages the development of body and mind, benefitting both the library and the pool with new members and potential increases in future participation.
- *Teen Pampering* isn't just a day at the spa. Teens are engaged in a multi-week program that introduces them to local community experts and business owners who demonstrate trends in fitness, arts and crafts, and nutrition.
- *Engaging Huron's Youth in Art and Culture* features local filmmakers and visual artists demonstrating and assisting young people as they take a project from idea to fruition.
- *Reading Babysitters* is a partnership program that helps young people planning to earn babysitting money to start by learning all aspects of child care from safety, play, and nutrition to literacy. Future babysitters learn how to take advantage of free resources from the public library to add leisure reading fun into the time they spend with their young charges.
- *Choose Civility* is a public education initiative that started with the Howard County Library System in Columbia, Maryland. Communities, generally led by their local public library, make a conscious effort to encourage and reinvigorate respectfulness. The community-wide project has an impact on reducing bullying and improving relationship building.

By taking advantage of programs like the ones featured in this chapter, young people are building self-esteem, meeting new people, and learning about things that interest them and may help them lead more fulfilling lives. University of Michigan graduate student, Natalie Mulder, is an advocate for teen engagement through community service at the library. She suggests providing opportunities that appeal to teens' interests and plans for the future and utilizing community organizations to further these interests with volunteer and mentorship opportunities (Mulder 2011, 26). These types of opportunities and organized programs, like the ones outlined in this chapter, the preceding chapter (Chapter 6: Programs That Foster Reading and Writing), and the one that follows (Chapter 8: Programs That Spark Creativity), all help young people build self-esteem and further evolve their personal identity. Dr. Wilma Peebles-Wilkins, dean of the School of Social Work at Boston University, emphasizes the role positive self-esteem plays in the lives of young people in at-risk family situations, or young people that see themselves as different from the typical student in their class or neighbourhood, "Self-esteem building is particularly helpful for marginalized, or ethnic minority students when approaches emphasize identity development" (Peebles-Wilkins 2004, 4). As adults, many of us have gradually learned that embracing our differences is key to self-acceptance and building a society of independent thinkers. If we can help young people learn more about themselves and develop in ways of their own choosing, we can help them become more confident, well-rounded adults.

# Book Smart Water Smart

Kitchener Public Library  
Kitchener, Ontario  
Canada

# Kitchener Public LIBRARY

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## Target Audience

People of all ages participate in this initiative.

## Community Connections

- Public pools
- Water safety society
- City parks and recreation departments
- Local businesses for prize donations

## Program Description

For a two-month period, a free swim pass that can be used at any participating city pool is given to every community member registering for a new library card or to existing members the first time they use their card during the time frame of the campaign. After receiving their swim pass, each time patrons use their library card during the contest window, they are given a ballot to enter into prize draws.

This joint initiative is a partnership between Kitchener Public Library and the City of Kitchener's Aquatics Department. The campaign also promotes the Lifesaving Society's Water Smart Week. The campaign not only encourages library card registration and pool use, but it also emphasizes the minimum essential skills required to survive in an unexpected fall into deep water.

The inaugural *Book Smart Water Smart* program yielded a 30 percent increase in new library card registrations; circulation increased by 4,000 items compared to the same time period the previous year; pool use increased by 1,220 visits; and free swim passes were redeemed by new users 20 percent of the time.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Increases library membership and materials circulation
- Boosts participation at local pools (particularly of adults and seniors)
- Raises awareness of programs and services at both facilities
- Strengthens ties between facilities and enhances profile at city council
- Develops an understanding in the community of the swim to survive skills
- Opens doors for more joint initiatives with other city departments, such as transit and arenas
- Builds good will with customers

## How It Works

Have the city aquatics department contribute complimentary single-use swim passes. In Kitchener, 20,000 passes are provided. These vouchers are redeemable for any drop-in recreation program, such as public, family, and lane swims, or aqua fitness classes at any participating pool.

If possible, use the library's circulation system to flag customer records, helping to ensure each person receives only one complimentary ticket. Perform a global update to insert a patron message into each user's file so the message "Swim Pass!" pops up as a prompt for staff. When the prompt appears, give the customer the pass, remove the message from the patron record, and save the changes. In Kitchener, swim schedules and a Lifesaving Society poster are distributed as well. The back of the swim pass outlines the three skills required to survive in deep water: rolling into deep water, treading water for one minute, and being able to swim 50 meters.

To encourage continued regular use of the library, provide *Book Smart Water Smart* participants with ballots to enter for prize draws every time they use their card during the contest time frame. At the pools, instruct staff to record the submission of the complimentary passes and ask participants if this is their first time to the pool.

At the end of the campaign, run another global update to remove the "Swim Pass!" message from all other customer records in the library's circulation system. Gather all ballots entered during the course of the campaign and conduct prize draws.

Prizes can include books, T-shirts, book bags, beach umbrellas, plush toys, and swim goggles. If possible, incorporate the library logo or mascot on prize materials. Ask the pool to donate one child swim lesson package per library location and a grand prize of one family summer swim pass.



## Supplies & Materials

- Complimentary swim passes
- Prize draw ballots and ballot boxes
- Water safety posters
- Swim schedules
- Posters to advertise the initiative
- Campaign buttons for staff to wear
- Draw prizes

## Budget

At the Kitchener Public Library, swim tickets and swim prize packages are generously donated by the City of Kitchener. Buttons for staff to wear to promote the campaign are made with existing supplies. Other expenses include \$300 for beach umbrellas with the library logo; \$100 for book bags; \$60 for plush toys of the library mascot; \$40 for books as prizes; \$50 for promotional buttons; and \$50 for printing costs, for a total of \$600.

## Marketing & Promotion

Print posters promote the program at all libraries, pools, and community centres (see Program Resources). Feature the postings on both the library's and the city's websites; send electronic alerts to each registered user with information about the initiative; and print an announcement on the back of swim lesson report cards. Buttons worn by library and pool staff also make the campaign highly visible.

## For More Information

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Susan Bloos  
Manager, Forest Heights Community Library  
Kitchener Public Library  
Kitchener, ON  
519-743-0271  
<http://www.kpl.org>

## Program Resources



**Kitchener Public Library and  
Kitchener Aquatics present the**



# BOOK SMART, WATER SMART CAMPAIGN

*Promoting two important life skills - reading and swimming*

Sign up for a  
Kitchener Public Library  
card, or use your card,  
between April 3 and May 19  
and receive one **FREE** \*  
Swim Admission to any  
participating Kitchener pool.

\* While quantities last

Use the library  
and win!

- Family Summer Swim Pass •
- Child Summer Swim Lesson Packages •
- KPL Golf/Sun Umbrellas •
- KPL Book Bags •
- KPL Mascot Doll •

**And more!**

Complete details about the Book Smart, Water Smart campaign  
are available at all Kitchener Public Library locations,  
participating Kitchener Pools, or by visiting the library's website  
**[www.kpl.org](http://www.kpl.org)**







**LIFESAVING SOCIETY™  
SOCIÉTÉ DE SAUVETAGE**  
The Lifeguarding Experts  
Les experts en surveillance aquatique

**Forest Heights Pool**  
255 Fischer-Hallman Rd., ...741-2493

**Breithaupt Pool**  
350 Margaret Ave., ...741-2502

**Cameron Heights Pool**  
301 Charles St., ...741-2482

**Lyle Hallman Pool**  
600 Heritage Dr., ...741-2670

**Main Library**  
85 Queen Street North  
743-0271

**Grand River  
Stanley Park Library**  
175 Indian Road  
896-1736

**Forest Heights Library**  
251 Fischer-Hallman Road  
743-0644

**Pioneer Park Library**  
150 Pioneer Drive  
748-2740

**Country Hills Library**  
1500 Block Line Rd.  
743-3558

Publicity displayed at library branches, community pools, and other key community organizations.

# Reading Babysitters

Vancouver Island Regional Library  
Nanaimo, British Columbia  
Canada



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## Target Audience

This program is designed for pre-teens and teens interested in learning babysitting and child literacy skills.

## Community Connections

- Middle grade and secondary schools
- Organizations offering certification and training in babysitting
- Parenting groups
- Local preschools

## Program Description

This program is available to pre-teens and teens interested in earning extra money through babysitting. It teaches skills necessary for first aid, safety, and basic child care; and demonstrates how to enhance child care time with reading, rhyming, talking, singing, and playing as prescribed by the Every Child Ready to Read (ECRR) initiative (see Chapter 9 for details).

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Empowers youth babysitters to become literacy mentors for the young children in their care
- Increases community literacy through a strategic partnership
- Models early literacy skills for busy parents
- Provides an opportunity for a partnership between institutions with complementary, but divergent mandates
- Teaches babysitters to incorporate and model literacy skills
- Encourages library use by babysitters as they prepare for upcoming jobs

## How It Works

Partner with a local community organization that offers training and certification for pre-teens and teens interested in becoming babysitters. Child care certification programs are offered by international organizations, such as the Red Cross and St. John Ambulance, and also by local and national non-profit groups, such as Kidproof and Safe Sitter. Once a partnership is established, the course design is flexible and can take place over a weekend or on several evenings.

A standard babysitting course includes sessions on indoor and outdoor safety, first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and handling special circumstances with preschoolers. The enhanced course includes early literacy activity modelling and explicit instruction on:

- Reading with children
- Sharing rhymes and songs
- Play-based learning
- Writing activities, and
- Talking or conversation strategies

Design age-appropriate activities to demonstrate to potential babysitters, such as:

- Storytelling kits with puppets and props to bring a story to life
- Writing activities with sturdy crayons for toddlers and washable markers for older preschoolers
- Puzzles, mazes, and other print literacy games
- Reading games, such as matching with card pairs, dramatic role play, arts and crafts, or drawing alternate endings for stories
- Conversation starter cards with authentic prompts to inspire active conversation

Since the program is an enhanced version of a standard babysitting course, participants will receive certificates that reflect the value-added training.

## Supplies & Materials

- Arts and crafts materials
- Paper bags, popsicle stick, and sock puppets
- Crayons, markers, and paper
- Puzzle and visual literacy game reproducibles and printables
- Books to share
- One copy of the ECRR kit
- Certificates of completion



## Budget

Approximately \$500 is needed for the purchase of supplies that can be used for multiple course offerings, such as puppets, props, and the ECRR kit. Consumable supplies are replenished for each offering and include activity sheets and craft materials. Paper and art supplies are \$10 per trainee babysitter.

## Marketing & Promotion

Before offering this program, assess the local demand for babysitting programs. If course offerings from the partner organization are full with waiting lists, the only required marketing is promotion of the value-added version of the course to potential participants. If needed, recruit participants from local high schools and junior highs. In addition, local parenting groups and popular preschool haunts may be contacted to display posters announcing the new course offering.

## For More Information

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Kristen Rumohr  
Customer Services Librarian—Children & Youth Services  
Duncan Branch  
Vancouver Island Regional Library  
Nanaimo, BC  
1-877-415-8475  
<http://virl.bc.ca>

# Teen Pampering

High Prairie Municipal Library  
High Prairie, Alberta  
Canada



## Target Audience

Teens, ages 13–16 who are interested in learning self-care skills, attend interactive workshops given by local experts or business owners.

## Community Connections

- High schools
- Groups serving teens
- Local businesses and organizations
- Local artisans
- Experts in the community

## Program Description

Volunteers from community organizations and businesses present demonstrations and interactive sessions for 13–16-year-olds at the library, emphasizing self-care skills or introducing a new hobby. Two-hour *Teen Pampering* sessions are held after school for five weeks. Topics include yoga; makeup and skin care; manicure and pedicure techniques; nutrition and healthy body image; and jewellery making.

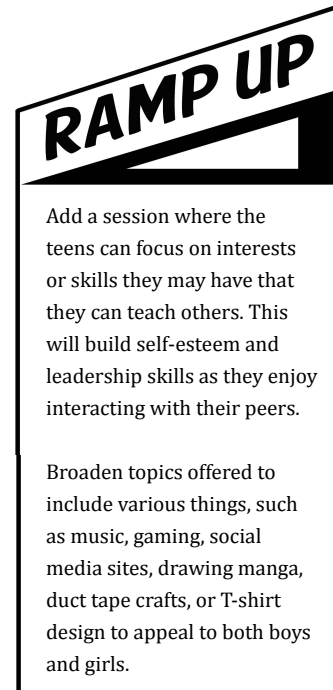
## Outcomes & Benefits

- Teaches teens valuable self-care and life skills
- Promotes feelings of self-esteem and self-worth
- Highlights the services or products available at local businesses and organizations
- Provides an opportunity for adults in the community to share their knowledge and skills
- Promotes library collections related to weekly themes

## How It Works

Solicit within the community for volunteers interested in offering an instructional session for teens. Consider businesses and organizations that would be of particular interest to young adults, such as hairdressers, cosmetology teachers, yoga instructors, artists, and jewellery designers.

When possible, ask the volunteer teachers to bring all the supplies required. On occasion, the library may have to purchase some materials, such as beads and cording for jewellery making. Community instructors use their expertise to plan the program's content and consult with library staff for advice. Consider awarding each volunteer teacher an honorarium in appreciation of their time and effort. Purchase theme-related door prizes for each session and hold the draw at the end of each workshop.



## Supplies & Materials

- Session supplies such as craft materials, beads, etc.
- Honorarium for volunteer teachers
- Ballots for door prize draw
- Prizes
- Posters to advertise the program

## Budget

At High Prairie Municipal Library, most supplies are donated by instructors; however, approximately \$100 is spent on jewellery making materials. Each of the five teachers is given a \$25 honorarium and the five door prizes cost \$25 each, for a total of \$250. Printing costs are minimal, at approximately \$10.

## Marketing & Promotion

Display posters in the library, at area schools, around town, and in local businesses. Advertise the workshops on the radio and in the community calendar of the local newspaper.

## **For More Information**

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Kayla Killoran  
Assistant Librarian / Program Coordinator  
High Prairie Municipal Library  
High Prairie, AB  
780-523-3838  
<http://www.highprairielibrary.ab.ca>

# Engaging Huron's Youth in Art and Culture

Huron County Library  
Clinton, Ontario  
Canada



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## Target Audience

Teens interested in various aspects of the arts, such as music, filmmaking, and visual arts, are encouraged to participate in this project.

## Community Connections

- High schools
- Youth groups
- Local artists, musicians, and filmmakers
- Local theatres, concert venues, and galleries
- Funding agencies
- Arts community
- Government cultural bodies

## Program Description

Community-based arts programming is offered through a series of workshops led by local artists and hosted at various library locations throughout Huron County. Teens explore music, visual arts, or film during the three-hour sessions held once a week for eight consecutive weeks. The programs culminate in displays, performances, and screenings at the Epic Shift Youth Festival, held over two days in February.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Encourages cultural exchange between young people
- Develops confidence and critical thinking in teens as they learn skills, gain experience, and plan for a major event

- Promotes local arts talent
- Increases traffic in the library by an underserved population
- Transforms the library with local artwork
- Improves the visibility of the library's collection of materials to support the arts
- Fosters partnerships between the library, the arts community, and local funding agencies

## How It Works

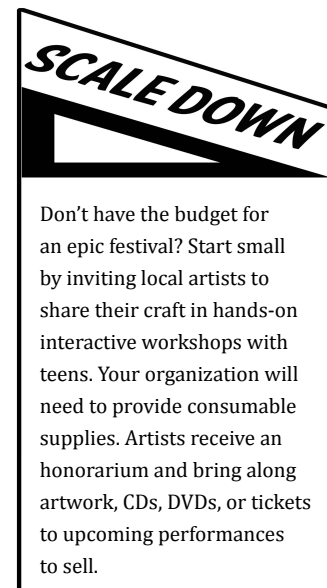
Select local artists to host the workshops, and encourage pre-teens and teens to register for the weekly sessions held at the library or a designated venue. Artists instruct youth on various aspects of the craft; then, youth plan and design their own project. They work together to design musical performances, create artwork, or to complete a 30 minute film.

Have artists mentor youth as they move through the creative process in their chosen field. A sampling of what can be covered includes:

- Music: Song writing and performing
- Visual Arts: Colour, style, and composition techniques through a variety of mediums
- Film: Screenwriting, filmmaking, camera, sound and lighting techniques, and acting

At Huron County Library, artists spend more than 100 hours working with the young people as they develop their projects. Themes and subject matter are developed by the participants with advice and assistance from the artists. In the last offering of this program, many of the teens chose the subject of their art or performance to centre on their feelings about growing up in a rural community.

Organize a showcase where youth can display, screen, or perform their creations. In Huron County, the program culminates with the Epic Shift Youth Festival at the Blyth Festival Theatre for two days in February, where community members enjoy free admission to the coffee house-style entertainment showcase. Screenings of short student films and visual artwork take place in the gallery. At the last offering, 150 young people performed and 300 other community members were in attendance.



## Supplies & Materials

Resources are required for each artistic pursuit and may include a variety of consumable materials, such as:

- Art supplies (paint, canvases, art paper)
- Film, stage, and set materials
- Office supplies (paper, pens, pencils, erasers)

Have each artist engage in discussions with the participants in their program to determine the materials needed to bring the projects to fruition.

## Budget

Approach funding organizations, potential business partners, and arts supporters to raise income for this initiative. Alternatively, partner with studios, schools, and galleries who may wish to donate time, space, and equipment. At Huron County Library, funding is supplied by the Ministry of Culture, Huron Business Development Corporation, Huron County Library, and the Ontario Arts Council. The total budget for the last iteration of this project was \$64,202. The expenses incurred included artists fees, studio fees, equipment rentals, and production costs.

## Marketing & Promotion

Hold information sessions to promote the program at local schools and display posters at library branches. Send press releases relating to the project to local papers and use social media extensively to promote the workshops.

## For More Information

Need more information about the program? Please contact:

Meighan Wark  
Huron County Librarian  
Huron County Library  
77722B London Road  
Clinton, ON  
519-482-5457  
<http://www.huroncounty.ca>

## Program Resources

Impactful testimonials from participants in the last Epic Shift Youth Festival:

“My mural is about the struggle many youth face of trying to figure out who I am as a person and what my place in the world is, as a youth I am at the stage in my life where I am somewhere between childhood and adulthood. Gaining more responsibilities, yet not fully taken seriously. Childhood, innocence and imagination is represented by the primary colour scheme portrayed in the eye, while the black swirls and lines represent adulthood and responsibility. The chaos of the swirls and lines represents all the different paths, decisions and options I have available for me, yet I am unsure what I want.” (*Youth Participant, Visual Arts*)

“My experience with the film workshop was amazing. I learned something new that I enjoy other than acting, which was directing the film. It is great to have a program offered like this in Huron County because it gives teenagers more opportunities and something to just have fun with. I hope you do this next year so maybe hopefully I can do it again, I had so much fun and I would absolutely love to do this for another year.” (*Youth Participant, Film*)

“My involvement in the Engaging Huron’s Youth project was so inspiring. It was exciting to see youth, who had this interest in film, dig in and embrace all of the aspects of creating a short film. They wrote the script, acted, directed and edited what I think is a masterpiece. I was inspired every time we got together; just watching their excitement. The reward was worth all of the effort when I saw their faces at the screening.” (*Film Mentor*)

“As a visual artist living and working in Huron County I am grateful for the opportunity to engage with the youth of this community in a setting that celebrates the many facets of the arts. It is vital to the culture of this community that youth are recognized for their creative work as they walk that bridge towards the possibility of creative and sustainable adult lives. I hope that by engaging youth in arts and culture they will see clearly their own unique potential in a life as artist.” (*Visual Arts Mentor*)



# Choose Civility

Howard County Library System  
Columbia, Maryland  
United States



## Target Audience

Leaders, young and old, take part as individuals or as representatives of their workplaces.

## Community Connections

- Educational institutions
- Non-profit organizations
- Businesses
- Government agencies
- Hospitals

## Program Description

With its invitation to “choose respect, consideration, empathy, and tolerance” as fundamental values, *Choose Civility* connects and unites. Howard County Library System leads this community-wide initiative, which is quickly growing into a national movement focusing on courtesy, graciousness, and inclusiveness in the form of civility. Fulfilling the library’s mission of delivering high quality public education, *Choose Civility* also allows members of the community to participate in the ultimate forum for free speech and the open exchange of ideas. Individuals and organizations participate as Alliance Partners, ambassadors, and advocates, and also by serving on the Board of Advisors and various committees. While visible throughout the year with materials in the library and ongoing classes and events, *Choose Civility* is highlighted each October during Choose Civility Week, which includes a Symposium.

Civility is crucial to the very fabric of any community’s quality of life—especially for youth who represent the next generation of leaders. *Choose Civility* started following Howard County Library System’s Professional Development Day in 2006, where Johns Hopkins professor and author Dr. P. M. Forni discussed his book, *Choosing Civility: The Twenty-Five Rules of Considerate Conduct*, in his keynote address. Exuberant responses prompted the development and launch of *Choose Civility*, which is now more than 100 Alliance Partners

strong. Other library systems in the United States have joined as *Choose Civility* chapters, including Miami, Florida; Portland, Maine; Freeborn County, Minnesota; and Washington County, Maryland. And this grassroots initiative has international potential. *Choose Civility* is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License so that other jurisdictions may readily implement the initiative.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Provides an opportunity for cultural exchange as participants document stories in print, podcasts, and video
- Offers the lead agency the opportunity to become a catalyst and epicentre for civility in the community
- Presents a prime opportunity for community organizations to be viewed as key leaders in the civility arena
- Strengthens existing partnerships and builds new ones
- Improves the visibility of the library and *Choose Civility* initiative with car magnets and window clings, banners in schools, and media exposure
- Affords community members, especially young people, opportunities for personal development, growth, and leadership
- Celebrates the positive aspects, influences, and ideas of the community

## How It Works

Visit the website at <http://choosecivility.org> and select “Become a *Choose Civility* Chapter” from the main menu to download the how-to file with background information, the principles of civility, and details on how to get started. The Howard County Library System, as the founder and leader in the field, is available to guide your organization through the beginning stages. Regular conference calls among *Choose Civility* chapters provide ways to share ideas and develop new ones.

Current initiatives happening under the *Choose Civility* umbrella include:

- Collections of civility-related materials in libraries for all ages in a wide variety of genres and formats
- Classes for all ages, such as preschool classes that teach children how to be kind to others or conflict resolution classes for young adults
- Annual Symposiums, such as “The Role of Civility in Democracy”, “Building a Responsible, Bully-Free Community”, and “Would it Kill You to be More Civil?”
- Local websites to showcase stories, videos, podcasts, and background information
- Boards of Advisor meetings and networks of Alliance Partners
- Activities, contests, and classes for children, teens, and adults
- Choose Civility Week, happening every October, with special events for all ages

## Supplies & Materials

- Civility-themed library resources in all genres and formats
- Car magnets
- Window clings
- Banners (for schools and community centres)

## Budget

*Choose Civility* can function well on a wide range of budgets. Staff time is the most significant factor, as the lead organization is responsible for coordination. Other costs depend on whether car magnets are sold or given away, how many banners are purchased, and how much a speaker costs for the symposium (some authors donate their time and expenses, others charge for one or both).

## Marketing & Promotion

Promotion is at the heart of this initiative. Howard County Library System has concluded that *Choose Civility* flourishes for three reasons:

1. People aspire to live the *Choose Civility* vision.
2. They appreciate the reminder to be civil, as human nature tends to intervene.
3. Cities and counties recognize the benefits of celebrating their community's positive aspects.

Car magnets are proving to be the most effective means of promotion. Other marketing tools include *Choose Civility* press releases, banners, Public Service Announcements, Faces of Civility posters, and items sold online at the Civility Store (visit [http://www.cafepress.com/choose\\_civility](http://www.cafepress.com/choose_civility)).

## For More Information

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Christie P. Lassen  
Director of Public Relations  
Howard County Library System  
Columbia, MD  
410-313-7786  
<http://hclibrary.org>  
<http://choosecivility.org>

## Bibliography of Research & Resource Materials

Forni, Pier Massimo. 2002. *Choosing Civility: The Twenty-Five Rules of Considerate Conduct*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Gross, Valerie J. 2011. "Choose Civility: Public Libraries Take Center Stage." *Public Libraries* 50 (4): 32.

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## Chapter 8

# Programs That Spark Creativity

Encouraging young people and families to engage in creative outlets is not a difficult task. Children and teens, regardless of their age, are developing in every way and creative pursuits, including craft and drama programs like the ones shared in this chapter, can be very popular. But, how do they benefit the institution and the community? In a very broad sense, creativity and critical thinking go hand in hand. By providing creative outlets, our institutions play a small role in developing citizenship. “Creativity develops through proper organization of educational experience and developing the skill to form proper judgements” (Rawat, Qazi, and Hamid 2012, 265). By giving children and teens a community context for originality, we are giving them an outlet they can use to thrive creatively. But the more immediate benefits of this type of program for our institutions are that they can attract a large number of participants giving libraries, schools, and community centres positive exposure in the community (Benway 2010, 28). In addition to direct participation, creative programming often culminates in a performance, event, or online presence that may attract many community members not participating in the program—family, friends and curious observers—thereby increasing your institution’s client base and community prominence.

The programs in this chapter include two that culminate in a dramatic performance, giving young people a chance to develop a variety of creative skills—script and set design, costume, puppet and prop development, live performance—they may not have a chance to foster in other aspects of their lives. Research shows this type of programming has tangible benefits for the participants. Licia Slimon presents a case study from her work at the Whitehall Public Library in Pittsburgh where teens developed a script and performed a version of *Alice in Wonderland* for a family community audience. The performance was designed by the library’s teen group and gave the young people opportunities for dramatic expression, stage production, set design, and script writing. Homeschoolers and young people from different school settings came together and developed a program for a family audience in a setting that was considered friendlier and less intimidating than a major school production (Smallwood 2010, 57). In this chapter, we offer two programs with the potential to generate similar outcomes:

- *Teen Advisory Group (TAG) Creative Stream* is a program offered by the Milton Public Library in Ontario. Community teens come together to develop and present a puppet show for an audience of school children.
- *Bunch-a-Munsch Drama Club* involves a younger audience—students in Grades 2–6—performing plays based on the popular Robert Munsch picture books for a community audience in Cambridge, Ontario.

Young people need outlets outside of school where they are motivated to think, create, and express their individualism. Three of the programs included in this chapter take advantage of seasonal opportunities or common interests to offer innovative creative pursuits:

- *Elf Workshop* is a craft program that adds an extra element of fun by having children make a present for a special adult in their lives.
- *We Dare You! Teen Summer Challenge* is an evolution of the traditional teen summer reading club. Teens complete challenges, collect points, and enter to win prizes. The challenges include a variety of creative exercises—photography, fan fiction, and costume design—in addition to factual and research questions that engage teens with the library's collection. The program is presented in both the library's online environment and in-house. It is open-ended allowing teens to engage at their own pace, on their own time.
- *Music Rocks Literacy* is a casual club for teens to share music, discuss lyrics, and engage online with their favourite musical artists.

Young people explore many avenues before they choose the path that will take them into adulthood. Neighbourhoods need cost-effective extra-curricular pursuits as outlets for these young people. Libraries and community literacy organizations are the perfect places to offer this type of programming—it matches with the mandate of these organizations and will create lasting memories and perhaps even spark an idea for a future career.

In the library we are all children. By stimulating curiosity—parent to the twin forces of creativity and imagination—even the most focused and specialized library serves the purpose of lifting the mind beyond its horizons. Of course, it is not only artists who need imagination. Politicians, scientists, teachers, people in business, and librarians themselves need to discover new ways of looking at the problems and questions that confront them. Innovation is both the cause of and a response to our ever-evolving world. Libraries store ideas that may no longer work but can serve as the raw material that, cross-fertilized in the innovative mind, may produce answers to questions not yet asked.

—("12 Ways Libraries are Good for the Country" 1995, 1116)

Creative programming for young people can build community in ways that will pay off in both the short and long term: organizations provide positive experiences improving their profile in the community; and young people expand their minds, build friendships, and potentially see the library or literacy centre in a new light.

# We Dare You! Teen Summer Challenge

Saskatoon Public Library  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan  
Canada



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## Target Audience

Teens aged 13–18 who are up for creative challenges are the target for this exciting summer incentive.

## Community Connections

- Schools
- Area attractions and historic sites (for challenges)
- Food bank, senior's centres, and other local social services (for challenges)
- Local businesses (for prize donations)

## Program Description

As a twist on the traditional public library summer reading game, young adults, 13–18 years old, are encouraged to complete 75 challenges, each one valued between 5–100 points. Challenges encourage creativity and encompass areas, such as trivia, crafts, reading, and civility. Some tasks require introspection while others are silly and fun; many are literacy based or encourage participants to go out into the community and do something for others. The program has wide appeal as there are a lot of challenges to choose from, it is self-directed, and the activities can be done on the participant's own schedule.

For every five points earned, teens get one entry form for a weekly prize draw as well as an end-of-summer grand prize draw. The more challenges participants complete, the more chances they have to win. Teens can go into any library branch to demonstrate to staff which tasks they have completed and receive their ballots or they can upload pictures as proof of completion. This results in a fun web presence, with a gallery of creative activities showcased on the library website and social media sites.

By completing the challenges, teens have fun while building confidence in themselves and their abilities. They try new things, improve their skills, make decisions, plan priorities, and learn about their community which develops and instils feelings of pride and self-worth.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Provides a self-directed, teen focused activity
- Demonstrates that literacy activities can happen in a variety of ways
- Encourages creativity and participation throughout the summer
- Challenges teens to learn about their community and inspires generous acts
- Develops problem solving and project planning skills in young adults
- Utilizes technology and social media to make it fun and easy for teens to participate

## How It Works

In the early months of the year, form a subcommittee of two or three staff members, particularly those with young adult experience, to begin gathering questions and creating challenges. Have staff visit local classrooms and ask students for ideas and input. Also, approach library staff and the teen advisory council for suggestions.

Create a draft of the challenge book and assign point values to the tasks. Enlist the community relations department or a contracted graphic artist to create and print the booklets, posters, and ballots. Design a specific website where teens can go to submit their answers and make a PDF version of the booklet available for downloading (see some example questions included in booklets from previous offerings under Program Resources).

Develop a cheat sheet for staff that contains instructions, answers, tips for tricky questions, and information on submitting answers via Facebook, Tumblr, Twitter, and e-mail.

In April and May, send posters to all branch libraries and to each high school and elementary school. Distribute booklets when visiting schools to promote the challenge and summer programs at the library. The program runs from mid-June to the end of August.

Because teens can submit completed challenges electronically, schedule a checking shift where staff go to the website and social media pages and fill out prize draw ballots on behalf of the participants. Teens can also visit any library branch to report completed challenges. At this point, provide them with a ballot and record their participation in a shared electronic file, noting the name and age or grade of the participant, the number of points earned, and the location they visited. Statistics are also kept to record the number of challenges that are submitted in person or via the website, e-mail, Facebook, Tumblr, or Twitter.

Purchase 10 weekly prizes and one grand prize, preferably gift cards to a local bookstore or a centrally located mall.

At the end of the summer, gather statistics and create a report. Request feedback to learn what works well and what could be improved for the next year.



## Supplies & Materials

- Challenge booklets
- Ballots
- Posters
- Means to post on website or social media sites
- Prizes

## Budget

Printing costs are absorbed by the regular library budget. In Saskatoon, approximately \$1000, generously donated by the Friends of the Library, is spent on prizes. If sufficient funds are not available for prizes, contact local businesses for donations.

## Marketing & Promotion

Distribute posters and challenge booklets to schools and e-mail a PDF version of the poster and booklet to school boards, teachers, and community groups. Display posters at all library locations and around the community. Advertise the challenge on the front page of the library website with a link to the *We Dare You!* web page and promote it on social media networks. Media alerts can also be sent out and staff appearances can be scheduled on local television to discuss the program.

## For More Information

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Jenny Ryan, Youth Services Coordinator  
Donna Wells, Manager of Youth and Circulation Services  
Saskatoon Public Library  
Saskatoon, SK  
306-975-7558  
<http://www.saskatoonlibrary.ca>

## Program Resources

In 2012, Kitchener Public Library successfully replicated Saskatoon Public Library's *We Dare You! Teen Summer Reading Challenge* and called it *If You Dare!* Below is an amalgamation of questions taken from both libraries' versions of this program. For tracking ease, another option would be to make all challenges equal in point value.

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## Teen Summer Reading Challenges

### ***Five Point Tasks***

- Post a comment on our Facebook or Tumblr, or send a tweet with #WDY2012. (Five bonus points if you do two; 10 bonus points if you do all three!)
- Check the website Yelp.com to find the rating for your favourite restaurant in Saskatoon. How many stars does it have?
- Which book series do you wish had kept going rather than ending with a final book? Why?
- If your favourite book had a theme song, what would it be and why?
- Name two television shows based on books.
- Write the word “library” in five different languages.
- Who would you cheer for to win *The Hunger Games* if Katniss, Peeta, and Rue were not competing?
- What Saskatoon-born actor has appeared on the TV show 90210?
- If you were going to audition for *So You Think You Can Dance*, what song would you dance to? What style of dance would you do?
- Read a short story. Write a short review (10 words or less, not including the title of the story and author’s name).
- Visit your local library branch. How many different languages of books do they have?
- Invent a new summer drink—non-alcoholic, of course! Share the recipe with library staff or post it.
- Get the signature of three library workers.
- Do you prefer reading a physical book or an eBook on an eReader or tablet? Why?
- Which contestant from the first season of *Top Chef Canada* was from Saskatoon? How did he place?
- What are the Twitter handles for Canadian authors Kelly Armstrong, Susan Juby, Alice Kuipers, Kenneth Oppel, and Arthur Slade?
- Which library database allows you to download music for free?
- Create an *If You Dare!* challenge. How many points should it be worth?
- How many followers does Saskatoon Public Library have on Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr altogether? (Five bonus points if you follow us on Twitter or Tumblr or like us on Facebook!)
- Perform a random act of kindness. Tell us about it.
- Find an official website for an author you like. Send us the link and write a paragraph about why you like their site.
- If you could create a playlist for your favourite book, which 10 songs would you include?
- What book has the call number 027.626 M495?
- What is the real name of Dr. Seuss?
- Which branch of Saskatoon Public Library is your favourite? Why?
- Read an article in a magazine you’ve never read before in the library. Which magazine was it and what was the name of the article? What did you think of it?
- Find out which song was #1 in Canada the day you were born. What album was it on, and does the library own a copy?

**Ten Point Tasks**

- Take a picture of your favourite piece of public art. Why do you like it?
- If you were sent to represent your district in *The Hunger Games*, what would you bring as a token to remind yourself of home and why? Take a picture of this item.
- Read a book written by a First Nations author. What book was it? Did you like it?
- Pay all or part of the fines on your Library card. If you don't have fines, pay it forward by leaving some money for the person behind you in line.
- If you lived in the world of *Divergent* (by Veronica Roth), which faction would you choose to join? Why?
- Send us a postcard when you're on a trip (or from Saskatoon)! Send it to:

Young Adult Services

We Dare You Teen Summer Challenge

Saskatoon Public Library

311—23rd Street East, Saskatoon, SK, S7K 0J6

Remember to put your FULL NAME on it!

- Build an Inuksuk out of anything but rocks.
- Write a rap about the library.
- Ask your parents what book you used to like when you were a little kid. Read it again. Why do you think you used to like it so much? Do you still like it?
- Read a copy of *Windscrip*t magazine (paper copy or online). Which was your favourite piece of writing? Why?
- Create something using instructions from a craft or instruction book you found at the library. Show staff or take a picture and post it.
- Using the library's online catalogue, find out how many copies Saskatoon Public Library has of the fifth book in Cassandra Clare's *The Mortal Instruments* series.
- Make a pair of shoes out of whatever you can find in your recycling bin.
- What's your favourite place to read? Take a picture of yourself reading a book there.
- Make a movie poster for one of your favourite books that hasn't been made into a movie yet. Who would star in it?
- Write a haiku about the library.
- Make a castle out of cans.
- If you were going to write your autobiography, what would be its title? Is there already a book in the library catalogue with that title?
- How many books by Sarah Dessen does the library own in eBook format?
- Read a book that talks/deals with a culture different from your own. What book did you read? What's one thing you learned from this book you didn't know before?
- Create a poem using book spines. Not sure what a book spine poem is? Go to <http://www.kpl.org/teens/yourvoice/poetry.html> to see examples.

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*(continued)****Twenty Point Tasks***

- Read a book by a Canadian author. Which book did you read?
- Write a love letter to the library. Deliver it to a staff member at one of the locations of Saskatoon Public Library or post it on our Facebook or Tumblr or Tweet it to @saskateen!
- Build a piece of medieval battle armour out of recycled materials.
- If you were going to start a band, what would be your band's name? Design your album cover, including the names of 10 songs you would perform.
- Read a book and watch the movie based on the book. List five differences between the movie and the book. Which did you like better?
- Watch a Bollywood film. What movie did you watch? How would they have to change it to make a Hollywood version of the same film?
- Go to the local history department and get one of their free postcards. Get a staff member in each of the fine and performing arts department, the children's department, and the information services department to sign it. Drop it off at young adult services when it is completed.
- Read a book from one of the booklists on the young adult services page. Why did you choose this book? How many stars would you give it out of five?
- Go to one of the library branches and play a board game. You can bring your own to play or use one of the games available at the Alice Turner Library on 20th Street, Frances Morrison, Carlyle King, and Mayfair branches. Have a library staff member sign as a witness that you did it!
- Watch a movie that won an Academy Award (for any category) from the year you were born. What movie did you watch? Do you think it should have won?
- Take the quiz on the Choices Explorer database (available on our website). What is the first job that it suggests for you? Does that sound like something you'd like to do?
- Read a biography of one of your favourite celebrities. What's something you didn't know about that person until you read the book?
- Go to the Country Hills Library and find a book about cats and the stuffed Cat in the Hat. Take a picture of the book you choose beside the cat and send it to us.
- If you were a superhero, what would your power be? Create the cover of a comic book featuring your superhero self!
- Take your brother/sister/nephew/niece and so on to a story time at Pooh Corner. Get a picture of you, your buddy, and Pooh. If you don't have a younger buddy, take a picture of yourself with Pooh!
- If you could give the young adult services department of any of the libraries a makeover, what would you do? Make a picture of how you'd make it over and give the design to a library staff member.
- Count how many books you have in your house. Take a picture of your bookshelf to show us!

- Find a book you like on the shelf in one of the library locations. Write a note saying why you like it and paperclip it to the cover. Place it on a table in a public area and wait 10 minutes. Did anybody pick it up?
- Make a sock puppet that resembles one of your favourite book or movie characters.
- Name 20 public library branches that are not in Saskatoon.
- Take a picture of yourself posed like one of the pictures in *Miss Peregrine's Home For Peculiar Children* by Ransom Riggs.

### ***Fifty Point Tasks***

- Dress up like your favourite character from a book or graphic novel. Go to any library branch and ask a staff person to guess who you are. Five extra points if they answer correctly on the first guess. Take a picture of yourself in costume and send it to us.
- Create a book trailer for your favourite book.
- Write an alternate ending for a book that you like or write a short story telling what happens after the book ends (if you like the ending already!) This must be at least 1,000 words long.
- What was the headline on the front page of *The Star-Phoenix* on the day you were born?

### ***One Hundred Point Tasks***

- Volunteer to help out with one of the Book Camp or The Imaginary Quest programs at one of the Saskatoon Public Library locations, under the supervision of a staff member. Call your local library and ask for the children's librarian to arrange this.
- Visit every branch and location of Saskatoon Public Library (there are eight). Borrow a book, DVD, or CD from each location. Once you get to the eighth location, show them all eight items you've borrowed (or get each location to stamp a piece of paper with their location's stamp).

### ***BONUS***

One hundred and seventy-five bonus points for completing all 75 challenges!

YOUR SCORE: \_\_\_\_/1,365

## **Acknowledgements**

Kitchener Public Library's *If You Dare! Teen Summer Challenge 2012* questions were submitted by Christy Gielser, Teen Services Librarian.

# Elf Workshop

Roswell P. Flower Memorial Library  
Watertown, New York  
United States



## Target Audience

Children aged 6–12 are invited to create gifts for their parent or a special adult in their lives.

## Community Connections

- Schools
- Art supply stores
- Agencies working with at risk families

## Program Description

Six- to twelve-year-olds are invited to the library's version of Santa's Workshop to become an elf and create two surprise holiday gifts for parents or any special adults in their lives.

Elves get to choose from a small assortment of craft projects. Library staff and volunteers are on hand to assist in the selection, creation, and wrapping of the project as it is transformed into a holiday present. Windows to the children's room are covered so that adults are not tempted to peek into the workshop.

As the elves are busy creating their gifts, parents and caregivers are invited to visit a coffee and bake goods sale hosted by the Friends of the Library. They are also encouraged to explore the library and sign out materials.

This program is advertised to local elementary schools and volunteers are recruited from the community and at area high schools.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Bolsters holiday spirit and assists budget-conscious families with free handmade treasures
- Fosters creativity, problem solving, following directions, and social skills in children

- Encourages use of the library by adults and increases circulation of materials
- Offers an occasion for adults to socialize
- Provides a rewarding volunteer opportunity
- Promotes the library as a fun-filled destination and gathering place
- Raises funds for library initiatives with the sale of coffee and baked goods

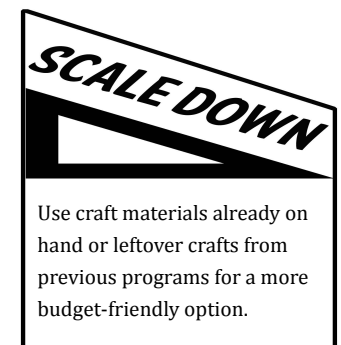
## How It Works

Hold the program in early December. In order to reduce preparation time, order complete craft kits one month before the program. Popular craft kits include a Santa ornament, a snowman stocking ornament, a holiday photo frame ornament, and a cardstock photo frame with self-adhesive snowflakes. In planning for 100 children, order 200 craft kits. Provide holiday gift bags and curling ribbon for gift wrapping.

Also recruit volunteers one month prior to the program. For a group of 100 children, at least six volunteers plus a library staff member are needed for smooth facilitation.

The following is recommended:

- One volunteer for crowd control manages the line. This person stands at the front of the waiting line and directs children to seats at the crafting tables as they become available.
- Four craft table helpers who ask the children which projects they want to make; retrieve all supplies; assist with completing the craft; direct children to the wrapping station; and maintain a clean workspace for new participants.
- One gift wrapper who helps children choose a bag; assists in writing appropriate messages on the tag; attaches ribbons to the gift tags; places the delicate crafts into the bag; and tapes them closed. This person can cut out additional tags if there is a lull in the line-up.
- One library staff member who greets and directs families to the waiting line; answers any children's reference questions; takes photos of the day; and makes sure children do not leave without their parents.



Since this program relies heavily on volunteer assistance, it is good practice to call them the day before to remind them of their commitment and let them know what they will be doing, including arriving early for set-up and staying late for clean-up.

Library staff and Friends of the Library volunteers bake and package goodies at home and bring them in to sell on the day of the program.

The program runs for two hours. Ask volunteers to arrive half an hour early to assist with setting up tables and chairs, outlining a waiting line area, covering windows to the workshop with craft paper, and setting out supplies. Hang signs directing parents and caregivers to return to the room within 20 minutes and set up the bake sale and coffee area.

## Supplies & Materials

Craft kits are ordered from Oriental Trading.

### **CRAFT 1: ORNAMENTS**

- Santa ornament craft kit
- Holiday ornament photo frame craft kit
- Snowman stocking ornament craft kit

Note: If ornaments are not peel-and-stick, glue sticks are required

### **CRAFT 2: SNOW PHOTO FRAME**

- Cardstock photo frame cut out
- Self-adhesive, foam snowflakes
- Markers
- Glitter
- Glue
- Magnets

### **WRAPPING**

- Holiday bag assortment
- Curling ribbon
- Gift tags
- Stapler and staples
- Tape
- Markers

### **COFFEE AND BAKE SALE**

- Three pans of brownies (mixes)
- Six dozen cookies (mixes)
- Napkins



- Four large containers of fruit punch
- Coffee, tea, cream, sugar, sweetener
- Cups

### **MISCELLANEOUS SUPPLIES**

- CD player and holiday music CDs
- Craft or construction paper to block off windows
- Tape, scissors, markers, glue, and other crafting materials
- White board placed at front of line with pictures of the craft choices, so those waiting in line can select their crafts
- Masking tape to mark off waiting line area
- Signs posted directing participants

## **Budget**

Approximately \$104 is spent on all the supplies for this program in preparation for 100 children. At Roswell P. Flower Memorial Library, craft kits, snowflakes, ribbon, and holiday bags were purchased from Oriental Trading for \$73 and the cost of baking supplies totalled \$31.

## **Marketing & Promotion**

Hang posters advertising the program strategically in highly visible areas around the library, such as at public service desks, in the children's department, in the elevator, and on bulletin boards. Include details of the program in the library's online calendar of events, monthly children's newsletter and mail to local schools, organizations, and to patrons on a mailing list. In addition, have copies of the newsletter at all public service desks.

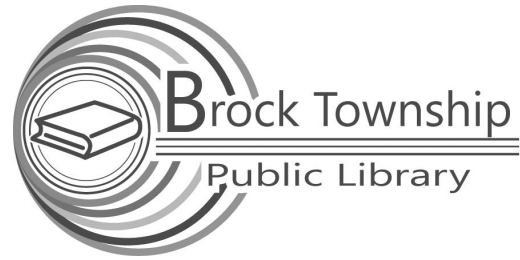
## **For More information**

Need more details about this program? Please contact:

Ashley Pickett  
Roswell P. Flower Memorial Library  
Watertown, NY  
315-785-7705  
<http://www.flowermemoriallibrary.org>

# Music Rocks Literacy

Brock Township Public Library  
Sunderland Branch  
Beaverton, Ontario  
Canada



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## Target Audience

Pre-teens and teens with a keen interest in music will be drawn to participate in this program.

## Community Connections

- Schools
- After-school clubs
- Musicians
- Local music stores
- Record companies
- Musical artist management

## Program Description

Pre-teens and teens identify and promote the links between literacy and music in this participant-driven music club. Bi-weekly meetings are held at the library and the young people listen to music; discuss various musical compositions; critique chosen music; and research and contact local, national, and international bands and musicians to request signed promotional materials. In the correspondence to favourite musicians, participants share information about Music Rocks Literacy and solicit responses, opinions, and ideas for discussion. Nurturing music as a commonality, the emphasis of this program is fun-filled community literacy.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Explores the interconnectedness between music, speech, language, and literacy
- Focuses on oral and written language skills in an enjoyable way

- Develops strong social bonds through a common love of music
- Engages pre-teens and teens in discourse about music in the library
- Encourages self-expression and creativity

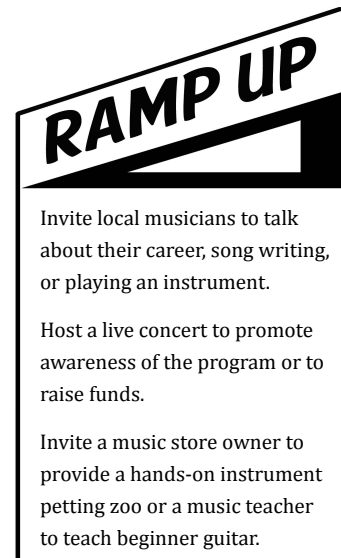
## How It Works

Arrange for young adults to meet every other week at the library to share music and engage in lively debates about the musicality and merits of one group over another. Since this program is intended to be casual, participant directed, and based on the interests of the members, staff play a more organizational role and provide guidance and resources.

Participants listen to CDs or digital music on laptops, iPods, or other personal devices. Sometimes, specific discussion topics or questions arise that require the teens to do some research before the next meeting. If interest in a particular song or artist is expressed, the group can analyze the lyrics and discuss the link between poetry and music lyrics. Incorporate writing exercises into the program to develop music appreciation or song writing skills.

As a visual arts component, the participants can design *Music Rocks Literacy* T-shirts to wear to school, concerts, and community events.

Suggest that participants use social media, such as Facebook and Twitter, to follow and communicate with musicians. They can request signed promotional materials or a post or tweet to acknowledge and support the *Music Rocks Literacy* program. Teens feel empowered when they get a response from their music icons.



## Supplies & Materials

- Snacks
- Laptops and PCs
- Wireless Internet connection
- Music CDs
- Books and magazines highlighting bands and genres of music
- Paper, pencils, pencil crayons, and markers
- Fabric paint

## Budget

Food items cost approximately \$5–10 per meeting. Laptops and PCs are provided by the library or the teens bring their personal devices. Teens bring in music from their own collections or access the library's resources. Art supplies and fabric paint cost approximately \$50 for a group of 10 participants. Each participant supplies his or her own T-shirt.

## Marketing & Promotion

Use posters, Facebook, school newsletters, and the library website to promote the program. In Beaverton, a video was used to create awareness and publicize the program.

## For More Information

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Vicki Bruce  
Outreach and Marketing Coordinator  
Brock Township Public Library  
Beaverton, ON  
705-426-9283  
<http://www.brocklibraries.ca>

# Bunch-a-Munsch Drama Club

Clemens Mill Library  
Cambridge Libraries  
Cambridge, ON  
Canada

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## Target Audience

Robert Munsch fans in Grades 2–6 will enjoy being a part of the production of a play.

## Community Connections

- Schools
- Local theatres
- Costume shops
- Craft stores

## Program Description

Children in Grades 2–6 attend an eight-week program series designed to involve them in every level of a dramatic performance production from start to finish. From selecting and adapting material, to casting, set production, and costume and prop design, children have the opportunity to work with others, be creative, and express themselves. The series culminates in the presentation of selected Robert Munsch stories offered in a variety of formats, first for family and friends as a dress rehearsal, and then for the community at large as part of a March Break school holiday program.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Provides an opportunity for children to explore and develop their creative skills through drama and art
- Teaches the various elements and levels of dramatic performance production and inspires children to take on different roles
- Showcases children's achievements to friends and family
- Features the library as a pivotal cultural institution in the community

## How It Works

Children register at the library to participate in the entire eight-week series. Arrange to have them meet on the same day each week for one hour, either after school or in the early evening.

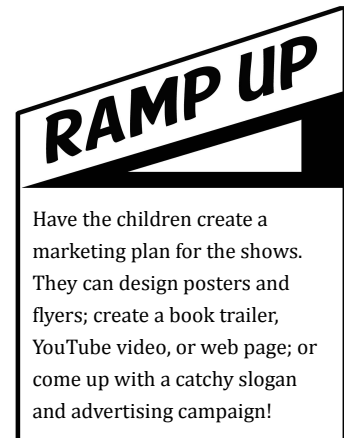
In the first week, play ice breaker and drama games so the children get to know one another. Instruct each child to take home two Robert Munsch stories, read them, and choose their personal favourite. Ask them to be prepared to make a case for their favourite to be selected for the performance.

In the second week, read all the shortlisted stories to the group and conduct a vote to determine which books to present. Popular winners are *Mortimer*, *Give Me Back My Dad*, and *Mud Puddle*.

In the third week, present the format in which each title will be performed. For *Mortimer*, the script from *Munsch at Play: Eight Stage Adaptations for Young Performers* is used. The dialogue and narration in *Give Me Back My Dad* are used directly from the original book and adapted for live performance. For *Mud Puddle*, create a reader's theatre adaptation with a library staff member acting as narrator; students performing and providing actions; and sound effects and select repeated refrains engaging the audience. The group reads through *Mortimer* and *Give Me Back My Dad* with different children reading various character parts to get a feel for which they would like to play. Together, the group can decide who is cast in each role. Every child should have a role in at least one play, with some having minor roles in both.

In weeks four through eight, focus on rehearsal and set production. Create sets with items already on hand or easily borrowed. Each participant provides the costume for their own character(s). For most of the props, oversized painted images are created. The children are directly responsible for set design.

The program culminates in two live audience performances. The first show is for family and friends and serves as a final dress rehearsal. Hold this in the ninth week in the same timeslot as the program series. In Cambridge, the final presentation was open to the public as part of the library's March Break program line up. The shows were performed in the auditorium of the school attached to the library. It can hold 127 people, and was filled to capacity with library patrons and community members on the day of the performance.



## Supplies & Materials

- Books—Robert Munsch books, play adaptations, and icebreakers (see Bibliography of Resource Materials)
- Art supplies, such as craft paper, Tempera paint, paint brushes, pencils, transparencies, projector, cardboard, packing tape, paint sticks, string, beads, Bristol board, and printer paper

## Budget

Craft supplies are part of the library's regular stock at Cambridge Libraries. Should you need to purchase supplies, it could be done for under \$50.

## Marketing & Promotion

List the program in the city's Activity Guide, promote it on the library website, and run it on library TV screens, if available. Have your graphics department produce a large poster for display in-house and smaller versions of the posters to distribute to area schools and organizations.

## For More Information

Sarah Frisse, formerly the children's program team leader for the Clemens Mill Library location of the Cambridge Libraries, originally submitted this program, but has since started a publishing business in Waterloo, Ontario.

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Sarah Renner  
Children's Program Team Leader  
Clemens Mill Library  
Cambridge Libraries  
Cambridge, ON  
709-740-6294  
<http://www.cambridgelibraries.ca>

## Bibliography of Resource Materials

- Munsch, Robert N. and Michael Martchenko. 1985. *Mortimer*. Toronto: Annick Press.
- Munsch, Robert N. and Michael Martchenko. 2011. *Give Me Back My Dad!*. Toronto: North Winds Press.
- Munsch, Robert N. and Sami Suomalainen. 1995. *Mud Puddle*. Toronto: Annick Press.
- Watts, Irene N. 2010. *Munsch at Play: Eight Stage Adaptations for Young Performers: Plays*. Toronto: Annick Press.

# TAG Creative Stream

Milton Public Library  
Milton, Ontario  
Canada



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## Target Audience

Teens aged 13–18 work together to prepare a puppet show to perform for preschool and elementary school age children.

## Community Connections

- High schools, elementary schools, and preschools
- Daycares
- Local theatre groups
- Toy stores
- Craft stores

## Program Description

Young adults in the TAG Creative Stream work together to develop and perform a puppet show, which is presented to preschool and school aged children as a special event. Teens use their creative and artistic skills to script puppet shows based on popular children's books.

Life skills beneficial for positive development are acquired through this program. The 13–18-year-old puppeteers provide meaningful community volunteer service through the library. Teens also provide positive role models for audience children. Transferrable job skills are acquired as teens interact with library staff; learn time management; and gain appropriate workplace behaviours, boundaries, and responsibilities.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Provides an opportunity for creative expression and meaningful participation in the development and execution of a library program
- Builds positive relationships with adults and peers



- Promotes an appreciation for aspects of child development, such as fine motor skills needed for crafting
- Develops writing and puppetry skills

## How It Works

Participants meet at the library once a week for nine weeks. Each meeting runs approximately one and a half hours. At the introductory meeting, welcome everyone and establish expectations about attendance and behaviour. Briefly introduce children's programming and give the group some basic training in puppetry skills, focusing on the importance of realistic movements, sightlines, and ensuring that the puppets mouths move with the words that are spoken.

For the second week, select approximately 20 picture books and ask teens to review them speed dating style. Choose books with few characters, simple settings, limited props, and plot lines easily adaptable for a puppet script. Have the group choose two stories and find a theme to connect them. Divide the large group into two smaller groups.

During week three, ask some group members to work on the script while others look for a theme-related song to perform. The entire group can help choose a simple, theme-related craft idea.

In weeks four to six, focus on completing the scripts and practicing the puppet plays. Present craft ideas for the audience members to complete after the play. After choosing one craft, complete your preparations.

Hold a dress rehearsal, performed for library staff, in week seven and make any necessary tweaks and modifications.

The official performance can take place on a Saturday afternoon and is open to community children and families. Have teens assist young children with the craft after the show.

The final week of the program is a celebratory pizza party for the Creative Stream participants. This is a good time to solicit feedback about the process and the program.

## Supplies & Materials

- Picture books for adaptation
- Puppets
- Puppet theatre
- Craft supplies as required for the chosen craft
- Refreshments for the party

## Budget

This program uses resources the library may already have, including puppets, and a puppet theatre. If the library does not own a commercially made puppet theatre, create one out of boxes or borrow one from a local toy store or theatre organization. If this is not possible, use appropriate existing furniture, such as overturned tables or lecterns. The main costs for the program are for refreshments served each week and at the final pizza party, which totals approximately \$100.

## Marketing & Promotion

One month before the first planned group meeting, visit schools to recruit applicants. Post the program and application form on the library website and announce it through social media. The Milton Public Library newsletter also runs a piece to promote the program.

## For More Information

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Alex MacCutchan, Children's Services Librarian or  
Jenica Veenstra, Adult & Youth Services Librarian  
Milton Public Library  
Milton, ON  
905-875-2665  
<http://www.mpl.on.ca>

## Acknowledgements

Program inspired by:

Wallace, Nancy K. 2010. "No Lack of Direction: Summer Puppet Workshop." *Voice of Youth Advocates* 33: 3 (August 2010): 220-222. OmniFile Full Text Mega (H. W. Wilson), EBSCOhost (accessed February 19, 2013).

# Programs That Develop Family Literacy

Traditionally, literacy development has not been emphasized for children until the onset of formal schooling at age five or six. In Canada, one in four children come to school without adequate pre-reading skills, leaving them disadvantaged from the start (McCain, Mustard, and McCuaig 2011, 16). In the United States, programs, such as Head Start, have been studied across multiple states, and longitudinal data shows that supports put in place before Kindergarten correlate with improved cognitive development and an ability to focus and maintain attention (Zhai, Brooks-Gunn, and Waldfogel 2011, 134). Many factors can contribute to a child not having the opportunities they need to achieve reading readiness. But, communities worldwide now recognize the value and importance of learning from birth, and today a sustained focus on early literacy is on the rise.

For the purposes of this chapter, we again refer to Virginia Walter, this time for her vision of early literacy, which she defines as “the right foundation for the complex set of skills that are involved in reading” (Walter 2010, 26). This complex set of skills is learned in many ways and can be obtained from a variety of sources. Global approaches to early childhood education vary in set-up, delivery, and success. In this chapter, we highlight several community early literacy initiatives that focus on the family and integrating family involvement in early literacy practice. Communities developing innovative, specific practices to support families with very young children are making it possible for all resident families, including those disadvantaged financially, to achieve the pre-reading skills necessary for success in school (McCain, Mustard, and McCuaig 2011, 57).

In 2004, the American Library Association launched its Every Child Ready to Read (ECRR) initiative. In 2011, they released the 2nd edition of the ECRR toolkit for libraries, which included updated research and a program more accessible for parents of young children.

Defined in the toolkit, “Every Child Ready to Read® is a parent education initiative that provides skills and strategies parents and caregivers can use to help children get ready to read” (Association for Library Service to Children 2011, Section 1–4). Now established as a North American standard for reading readiness programming in public libraries, the initiative seeks to change the way libraries provide programming by switching the focus from preschooler interaction to parent education. By showing parents and caregivers how to incorporate personal and community daily practices that foster and develop pre-reading skills, libraries cement themselves as an institution at the core of the community’s family literacy network.

ECRR emphasizes “five simple, but powerful practices that parents and caregivers can use to help young children get ready to read—talking, singing (which also includes rhyming), reading, writing, and playing” (Association for Library Service to Children 2011, Section 1–5). The new toolkit also places an emphasis on Dr. Scott Paris’s research on unconstrained skills—vocabulary and comprehension—which continue to develop through a person’s life (Association for Library Service to Children 2011, Section 1–6). The programs featured in this chapter were chosen specifically because they marry the ECRR initiative with community family literacy programming:

- *Countdown to Kindergarten* from the Gail Borden Public Library District is one of a dozen or more preschooler reading readiness programs submitted by public libraries and schools for this treasury. Chosen for its well-developed timeline, mature and responsive partnership, and easily replicated *Countdown to Kindergarten* booklet, this is an exemplary, community-based program. A more elaborate version of a kindergarten readiness program happens in Boston, Massachusetts. A collaboration between the Boston Children’s Museum, Head Start, Boston Public Schools, municipal government, and local public libraries, this initiative coordinates early learning opportunities for families in Boston (Diamant-Cohen 2010, 85). Every community is different and the scale of your approach should match the needs of your residents and opportunities available in your community.
- *Family Activity Card* and *Grand Pair of Readers* are two initiatives that give families concrete ideas for exploring the resources in their local public library. Both programs emphasize self-paced activities that families can complete when they visit the children’s section of the library. *Grand Pair of Readers* emphasizes a grandparent’s role in early literacy development. Grandparents are often the caregivers that bring preschoolers to the library. By establishing activities for the pair to complete when they visit, the library cements its place in the family’s routine.
- *Let’s Read* is an intergenerational community reading program. One book is chosen and the entire community is encouraged to include the title in family reading. Partnership institutions host events and the program culminates in visits from the author and opportunities for families to interact and engage with the book’s creator. This program is a large-scale community partnership initiative that emphasizes a key element of ECRR—talking about the books that families are reading. By encouraging conversations between and among family members reading comprehension and vocabulary development are encouraged for the entire

family. Unconstrained reading skills are vital to the positive evolution of life-long literacy, and this is a core objective of this family literacy initiative.

- *Where in the library is...* is a self-paced program at the accessible end of the community early literacy scale. This visual initiative encourages families to explore the public library and find characters that are hiding in and around lesser-used areas and collections of the library. These explorations help families become familiar with all the resources the public library has to offer very young children and their families. It encourages dialogue between families that simply happen to be in the children's area of the library at the same time, completing the same activity.
- *Storytime Anytime* videos feature the staff of the Calgary Public Library in online presentations of rhymes, songs, stories, and fingerplays on the library's website. Aligned with ECRR, Calgary Public Library brings the story time experience to families' home computers. Rich, interactive experiences in the online environment provide opportunities to interact with the library or school in a virtual venue, a major source of discovery for community organizations in today's connected world.

Adults who take a child to visit the children's section of the public library, to socialize, play, read, attend story time, and choose books to borrow, expose them to rich learning opportunities during their visits. These interactions establish roots for early literacy and community engagement. Libraries, schools and other community organizations interested in developing community literacy are coming together to expand on these experiences and opportunities for local families, establishing the community as a literacy-rich environment for family growth and development.

# Grand Pair of Readers

Fundy Library Region, New Brunswick Public  
Library Service  
Saint John, New Brunswick  
Canada



New Brunswick  
Public Library  
Service

Service des  
bibliothèques publiques  
du Nouveau-Brunswick

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## Target Audience

Grandparents and their preschool and young school-age grandchildren are the primary audience for this self-paced program. Other caregivers with preschoolers are also invited to complete the activities.

## Community Connections

- Seniors centres and apartment complexes
- Community recreational facilities that offer senior programming
- Family childcare service agencies
- Churches, synagogues, multi-faith centres

## Program Description

An adult and a young child team up to complete a number of library and literacy-related activities. This program was designed to focus on the grandparent/grandchild relationship, but is open to any intergenerational pair who visit the library together. The emphasis is on interaction between adult and child, but pairs completing activities at the same time as other pairs will interact, encourage, and guide one another. Sixteen options are given on an activity wheel. When a task is complete, grand pairs colour in the corresponding wheel wedge. Activities are designed to allow for interaction between the pair, such as “play a board game or try a Wii game,” “find a joke book and tell each other jokes,” or “attend a library program.” Some activities are completed in the library and others are designed to extend the fun at home. Once participants have coloured in their wheel, they receive a *Grand Pair of Readers* certificate.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Utilizes flexible library and literacy based activities to encourage interaction between generations

- Promotes library collections and programs
- Requires minimal staff time to execute
- Extends literacy activities to the home
- Provides an opportunity for elders to share their passion for reading and the library with children

## How It Works

Design the program to run as a self-paced activity for the pairs, or pick a time in your program line-up and invite potential participants to drop-in and complete the activities as teams. Other adaptations might include a month-long program where the pairs return once a week to complete activities. With a finite end-time, the program could conclude with a prize draw from all the pairs that complete a wheel. Or, offer the program to run during a school holiday break and invite pairs to visit multiple times and complete activities. If a one-day program is preferred, set-up stations and have pairs visit each activity centre until their card is complete.

Register pairs and give them a folder containing an activity wheel (see sample wheel under Program Resources) and a suggested reading list in the form of a bookmark. The wheel is divided into 16 wedges; on each wedge an activity option is printed. Activities can promote library programs and collections or simply be fun, literacy-based tasks. Have supplies available for the pairs to borrow (i.e., crayons and paper for writing activities or copies of rhymes and songs for language acquisition) or set up a table with all the supplies necessary for completion and replenish as needed.

## Supplies & Materials

- Activity wheel printouts
- Booklist bookmarks
- Folders
- *Grand Pair of Readers* certificates
- Craft materials, board games (matching activities on wheel)
- Promotional posters

## Budget

The budget for this program will depend on the activities included on your wheel, and whether or not you provide opportunities to complete those activities on-site. Wheels, bookmarks, paper, and folders cost less than \$50.00 for a group of 25 pairs.

## Marketing & Promotion

Promote this program throughout the library with slogans like “The library is a *grand* place” and “It’s *grand* to read.” Saint John Free Public Library also advertised in the library’s monthly flyer; on community and library posters; through radio announcements; and in the community newspaper. Deliver small flyers to seniors’ apartments, churches, and synagogues in the library’s neighbourhood. Post a notice about the program on the library and community websites.

## For More Information

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Heather McKend  
Children’s Librarian  
Saint John Free Public Library  
Saint John, NB  
506-643-7229  
<http://www.gnb.ca/publiclibraries>

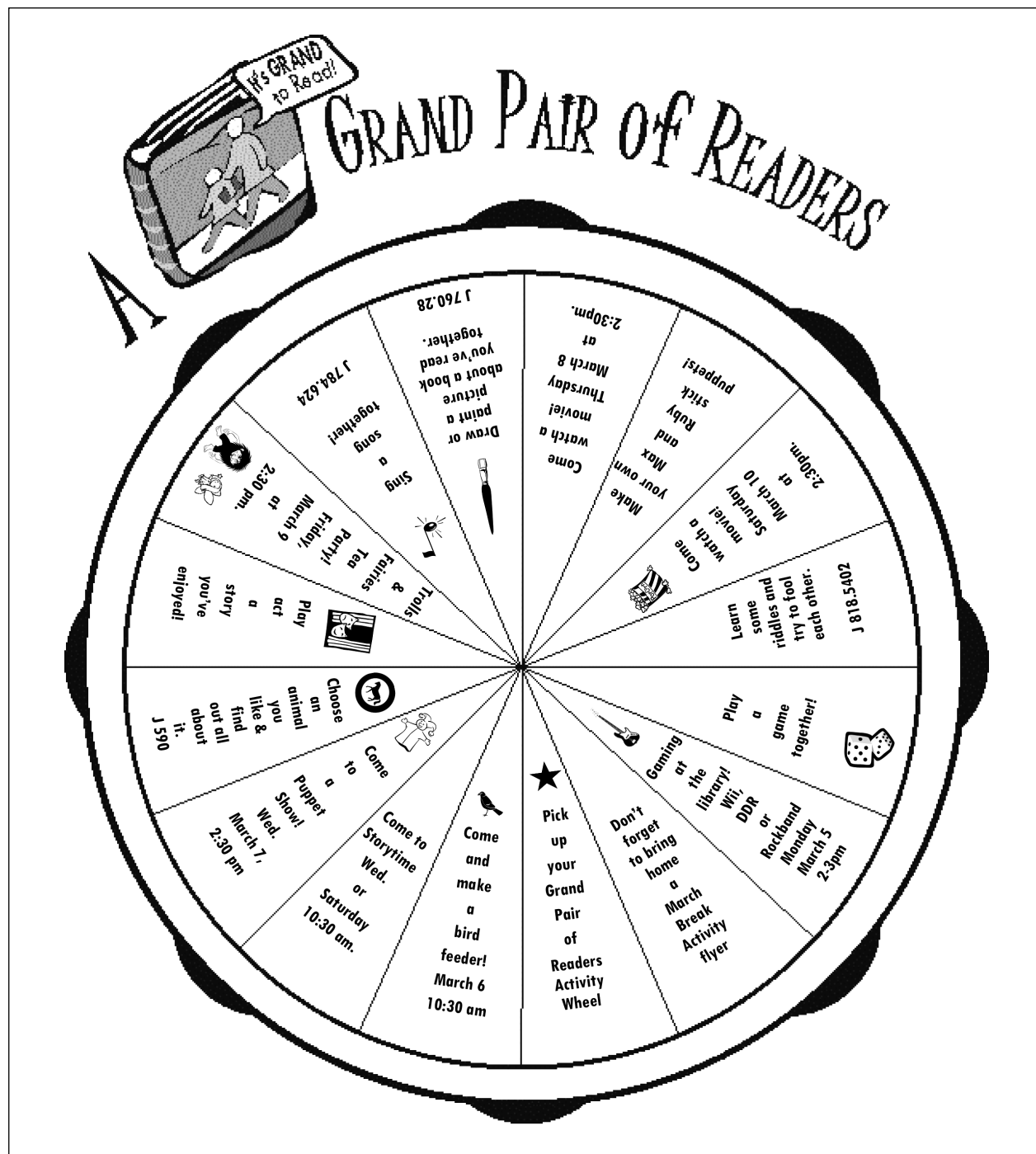
## Acknowledgements

Adapted with permission from the *Grand Pair of Readers* program at Roselle Public Library, Roselle Illinois.

Illinois Board of Higher Education. 1993. “A Grand Pair of Readers.” *Continuance* 8 (1).  
<http://iii.siu.edu/Continuance/1993-1995/fall93.html>



# Program Resources



Guide to self-paced activities to be completed by participants in the library or at home.

# Family Activity Card

Greater Victoria Public Library  
Victoria, British Columbia  
Canada



GREATER VICTORIA  
PUBLIC LIBRARY

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## Target Audience

Families with young children complete tasks on the activity card.

## Community Connections

- Social service agencies that serve families
- Recreational centres
- Early literacy groups
- Preschools and daycares

## Program Description

A bingo-style card with literacy activities encourages adults to engage with their young children in fun tasks that promote reading, creative play, singing, and using the library. Cards can be picked up at any library location or can be downloaded from the library website. Families do the activities suggested in the squares at their own pace and check off completed tasks. Once full, families return the completed card to the library and exchange it for a small prize and ballot for a grand prize draw.

The Family Activity Card is available as part of Greater Victoria Public Library's (GVPLs) Family Literacy Week, which is celebrated in tandem with Canada's annual national Family Literacy Day on January 27. The contest runs for approximately two months.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Provides a fun, self-directed way for parents to foster their children's early literacy skills
- Complements the library's early literacy programs
- Supports national family literacy initiatives

- Provides an incentive for parents to complete the card and make a return visit to the library
- Encourages families to interact with library staff enhancing the feeling of connection and belonging

## How It Works

Choose sixteen activities for the squares on the bingo-style card (see sample card under Program Resources). Print copies of the card on cardstock. GVPL printed 1,000 copies based on the demographics of their community. Make activity cards available at all library branches, and have digital versions that can be downloaded from the library's website.

Offer the cards to visiting families and promote the program throughout Family Literacy week and during in-house programs. Contact local community agencies and arrange to have cards distributed to their clientele, or ask them to avail of the downloadable card option.

When the activity cards are completed, families bring them to the library and fill out a ballot for a prize draw to win a bookstore gift certificate. All children who complete the card receive a small grab box prize, such as stickers, mini books, or pencils.

## Supplies & Materials

- Family activity cards
- Entry form
- Pencils
- Ballot boxes
- Grab box with small prizes
- Grand prize

## Budget

At GVPL, the total cost of this program was approximately \$660, with \$400 going to printing costs, \$60 for the grand prize, and \$20 for small grab box prizes for each of the 10 library locations.

## Marketing & Promotion

Post an announcement and link to the downloadable card on the library's website, Facebook page, and Twitter account. Tweet and post to remind parents to return to the library with


their completed cards. Promote the initiative by word of mouth and during early literacy programs. Include information about the card in your library's online program calendar.

## **For More Information**

Need more information about this program? Please contact:




Tracy Kendrick  
Coordinator of Children's and Teen Services  
Greater Victoria Public Library  
Victoria, BC  
250-382-7241  
<http://www.gvpl.ca>


## Program Resources




# Family Activity Card

Celebrate family literacy by working together with your child on these learning and reading activities. Check off as you go and enter to win!

 Attend a storytime at the library.	Visit the library and encourage your child to choose some books.	Read nursery rhymes together. 	Let your child see you reading.
Read books together.	Help your child recognize the first letter of their name wherever you go!	Sing songs with your child.	Help your child make letters out of clay or playdough.
Read aloud when you're out with your child – labels, signs, menus!	Have your child draw a picture and ask them to tell you about it.	Attend a storytime at the library.	Ask your child to tell you about their day.
Act out a story together.	Point out shapes to your child.	Read a book and let your child turn the pages.	 Get your child a library card of their own. If they already have one, let them use it to borrow books.



Completed activity cards can be returned to any GVPL branch library and will be entered into a draw for a \$60 gift certificate to a bookstore of your choice. Contest runs from January 23-March 10, 2012.



Bingo-style game card with literacy-based activities for families to complete at their own pace.

# Storytime Anytime

Calgary Public Library  
Calgary, Alberta  
Canada



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## Target Audience

Preschool children and their families enjoy this virtual story time experience.

## Community Connections

- Local authors and illustrators
- Storytellers or amateur actors
- Area high schools or college that offers film production classes
- Television studio or teen film club
- Early literacy centres
- Preschools and daycares

## Program Description

Streamed videos featuring library staff conducting a five minute preschool story time are available for viewing 24/7 on the library's website: <http://calgarypubliclibrary.com/kids/storytime>

Clips feature a story read aloud from a book, or told orally, sandwiched between two rhymes. Five videos appear on the library's website at any given time and each video appears for a two-month period annually. Thematically linked booklists accompany each video.

Between April 2009 and March 2012, the site had an average of 28 page loads per day.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Offers convenient, on-demand story time vignettes for children ages 2–5 and their parents, who are unable to attend live programs

- Assists in the development of early literacy skills by demonstrating for parents, caregivers, and early childhood educators some of the key early literacy skills outlined in Every Child Ready to Read®
- Provides an additional training tool for library staff
- Links story time book suggestions directly to the library catalogue

## How It Works

This initiative might be utilized or replicated. Take advantage of the materials available on the *Storytime Anytime* website for staff training; to share with individual parents or caregivers; or broadcast them from the website in any early literacy program. Alternately, you may choose to develop your own version of the *Storytime Anytime* videos if the proper equipment is available at the library or through a local partner.

If replicating the program, begin by choosing books that will appeal to toddlers and preschoolers. Select books that have large, bright illustrations; that can be easily seen from a distance; and that require a reading time of less than three minutes. Or, perform short traditional folktales with simple plots and repetitive refrains using oral storytelling techniques, felt or flannel boards, or puppets and props. All stories must be short in order to fit the rhymes, the story itself, and the credits into a five minute video clip. Five minutes is the maximum time recommended for smooth streaming in the current online environment.

Copyright permissions must be acquired for picture books to be read aloud on video. Once a list of prospective titles is identified, contact the publishers of the works. Choose many more titles than you require and send three or four times as many permission requests than are actually needed, as publishers sometimes deny or do not acknowledge requests. Allow plenty of lead time for this part of the process, as it can take anywhere from a month to a year to receive a response. Many publishers grant permission free of charge; however, others may require a nominal fee. For *Storytime Anytime*, permissions were given for a three-year period, after which they need to be renewed. Send renewal requests four to five months in advance of the agreements expiring. For a bibliography of titles used by the Calgary Public Library, see Program Resources.

For video production, contact a local television studio or film group in your community, or consider partnering with a high school that offers media production facilities for students. At the Calgary Public Library, a grant provided by the province of Alberta allowed the library to contract the production of the videos to a local television studio.

To present the story time vignettes on camera, select people with a dynamic style and familiarity with engaging groups of young children. Performers might be staff from your facility that are experienced story time presenters, as they were at the Calgary Public Library. If staff are not comfortable in front of the camera, contact a local theatre production company, storytelling group, or the drama club of a local high school. If possible, include at least one male storyteller to reinforce the message that boys and men read too. Rehearsals ensure that each presentation runs smoothly and that the timing is approximately four minutes and fifteen seconds to allow time for the credits to be added.

Video production takes a significant amount of time. When creating the initial set of story time vignettes at the Calgary Public Library, three days (one day per storyteller) were spent taping 25 videos: 14 based on books and 11 folktales told orally or using flannel board props. The studio delivered Calgary's rough edits, which were reviewed (including the credits) and sent back for revision as necessary. The library's marketing department provided producers with the library's Growing Readers logo, which was animated and set to music. The library's information and technology department consulted on all the technical aspects with producers.

Completed videos can be uploaded directly to the website or through YouTube, Vimeo, or another third party hosting service, provided that stipulation was included in the copyright permission obtained.



## Supplies & Materials

- Books with copyright clearance
- Props or felts for stories
- Booklists with story time suggestions linked to library catalogue
- Recording equipment and/or use of a local television studio

## Budget

The total cost of this initiative is approximately \$30,920. Video production is the biggest expense at \$30,000 and staffing costs are approximately \$500. Calgary Public Library also provides payment to Scholastic Canada for rights to use two titles at \$420.

## Marketing & Promotion

Advertise *Storytime Anytime* regularly in the library's program guide for children and teens, and make it available from the kid's section of the website.



## For More Information

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Barbara McMillan  
 Librarian, Services to Children, Teens  
 and Families  
 Calgary Public Library  
 Calgary, AB  
 403-260-2600  
<http://calgarypubliclibrary.com>



Used in local library and community publicity to guide readers to the featured videos.

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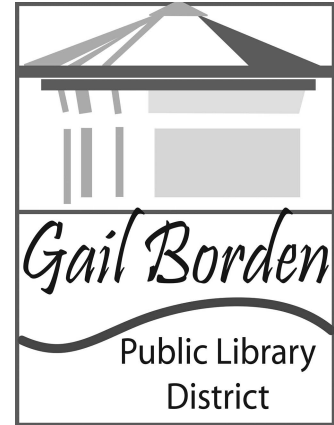
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***Traditional Stories & Folktales***

The Small, Noisy House  
Three Little Pigs  
Nail Soup  
Princess and the Pea  
Gingerbread Boy  
Little Red Hen  
The Great Big Enormous Turnip  
Chicken Little  
The Mitten  
Mr. Wiggle and Mr. Waggle

# Countdown to Kindergarten

Gail Borden Public Library District  
Elgin, Illinois  
United States



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## Target Audience

Families with a preschooler getting ready to start formal schooling in the following year benefit from this initiative.

## Community Connections

- Area primary or elementary schools
- Early literacy organizations
- Local parent/preschooler groups

## Program Description

Through a partnership with the local school district, public library staff members attend Kindergarten orientation sessions at 25 elementary schools in the spring to meet with parents and their children who will be starting school the following fall. The Elgin Partnership for Early Learning, a local collaborative with representatives from a number of community organizations, initially recognized the need to address Kindergarten readiness for community children and saw an opportunity for a partnership between the local public library and school district. Countdown to Kindergarten began out of a mutual desire to increase readiness for Kindergarten; to get more children reading over the summer months; and to raise standardized reading test scores.

Library staff members promote the library and distribute a *Countdown to Kindergarten* activity booklet containing literacy activities that are loosely based on the *Every Child Ready*

*to Read*® program, described at the beginning of this chapter. The activities are designed for skill development from vocabulary enrichment to enhancing fine motor skills. The booklet contains tips for parents to increase school readiness (see sample booklet under Program Resources) and is available in English and Spanish.

After meeting the public library staff member, families are invited to a celebratory event at the library the following month where they sign up for the summer reading club and enjoy activities, including interacting with costumed book characters.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Increases the library's impact on improving local children's kindergarten readiness
- Establishes a close working relationship between the library and the school district
- Emphasizes a uniform message to parents about school readiness and the importance of early literacy
- Encourages parents to work together with their children to prepare for school
- Supports Every Child Ready to Read® early literacy initiatives
- Promotes participation in the library's summer reading club
- Impacts reading test scores positively

## How It Works

Contact your local school district office to initiate the partnership and learn how to integrate the program and its associated activities into the school year. The Gail Borden Public Library staff contact their school district each February to verify dates and times of the Kindergarten orientation sessions happening at local schools. Every locality is different, so plan to make contact approximately a year in advance of delivering your new initiative.

Design a *Countdown to Kindergarten* booklet to include literacy-based activities parents and children can do together. Translate the booklet into the first languages spoken in your community. If possible, print the booklets in-house or work with the school district to share costs. The Gail Borden Public Library contracted a company for the printing of the booklets.

Recruit staff and volunteers to run informational tables at school Kindergarten orientation sessions. Volunteers may be trained and scheduled when multiple orientation sessions happen simultaneously, or to provide back-up for lead staff. In Elgin County, Kindergarten orientation sessions typically take place in April. At some schools, there is an opportunity for library staff to address parents and teachers in a large group, while at others a booth or table is set up where staff can interact with parents and children one-on-one. Library staff emphasize what the library can do to help parents prepare their children for school. They distribute the *Countdown to Kindergarten* activity booklet and explain ways to use it.

They also take the opportunity to invite families to attend a special event at the library in May. At the last event, hosted by the Gail Borden Public Library, costumed book characters circulated among the families, and parents registered their preschoolers for the library's summer reading club and other appropriate early literacy programs. Staff collect e-mail addresses from willing parents so that reminders for summer activities can be delivered electronically.

## Supplies & Materials

- *Countdown to Kindergarten* booklet in English and Spanish
- Posters or signs for informational tables/booths
- Library brochures
- Costumes for book-based characters

## Budget

Professional printing costs for the activity booklets were approximately \$800. Estimated internal printing costs were \$300. Cost of character costumes rentals was \$235.

## Marketing & Promotion

Since this program is for a targeted population, there is no advance publicity. All families with a child starting Kindergarten the following year are invited.

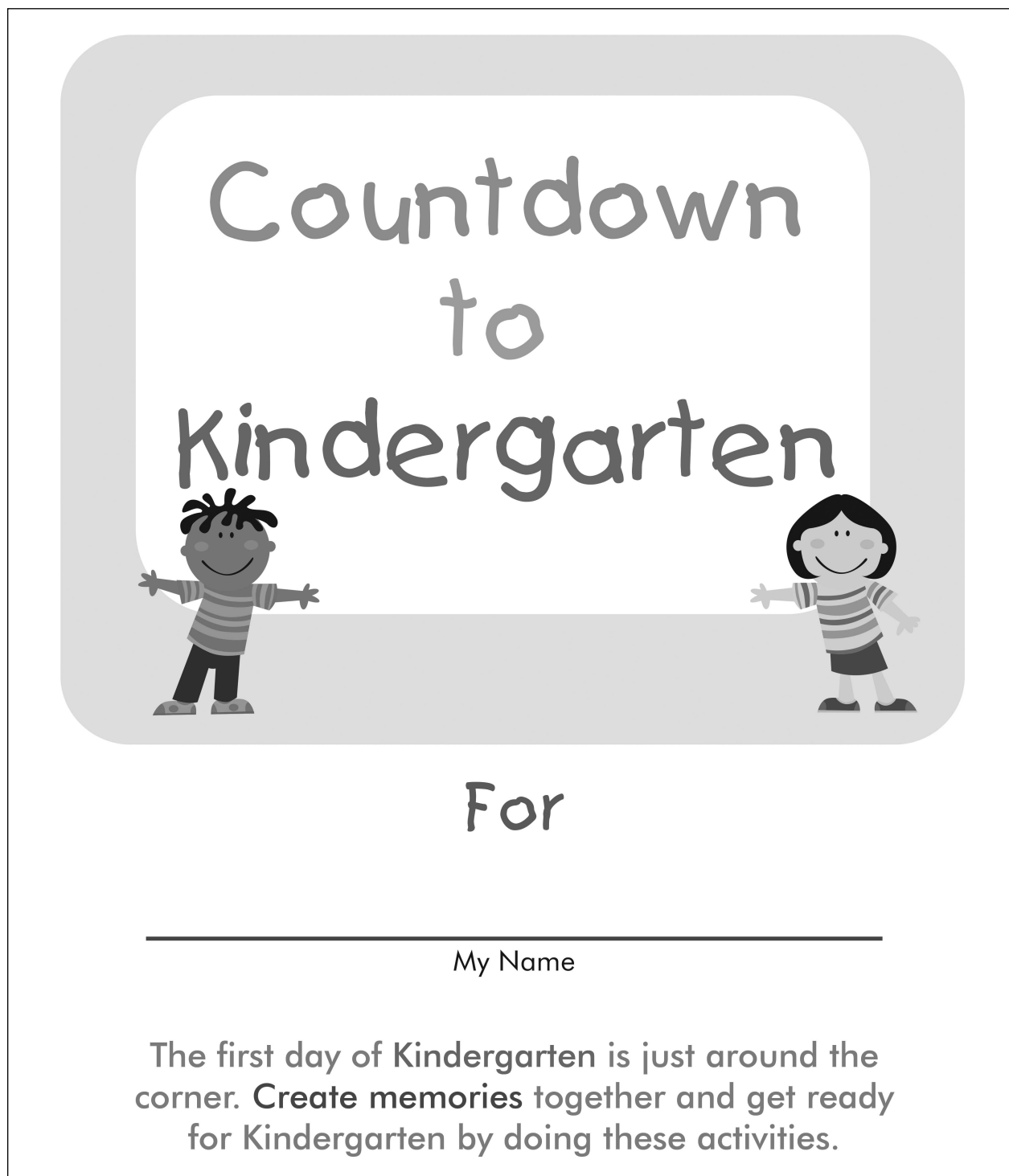
## For More Information

Program submitted by Faith Brautigam, then Director of Early Literacy and Learning Initiatives for the Gail Borden Public Library District. Ms. Brautigam has since become Library Director at Kokomo County Library in Indiana.

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

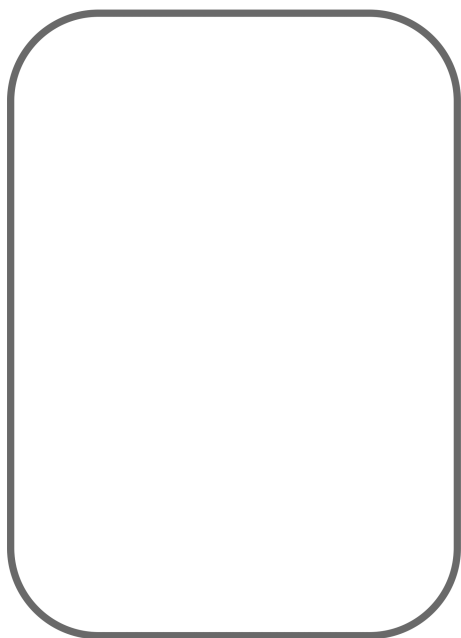
Jennifer Bueche  
Director of Youth Services  
Gail Borden Public Library District  
Elgin, IL  
847-742-2411  
<http://www.gailborden.info>

## Program Resources



Reproducible handout for pre-literacy skill development.

This is me.



I'm a big kid now.  
I can almost read!

These are the words  
I recognize already:



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Reproducible handout for pre-literacy skill development.

# Ready to Write

Drawing helps your child get ready to write.  
Take along a few crayons when you go places. Let  
your child make a picture on any paper, even a paper bag.

Draw a picture of a place you visited  
together: a park, the grocery store,  
or any favorite spot.

My trip to \_\_\_\_\_ :



Reproducible handout for pre-literacy skill development.



# I Like to Play!

My favorite toy is \_\_\_\_\_

I like it because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



It looks like this:

Draw your toy here

I like to pretend \_\_\_\_\_

Sit and play with your child. Imagine that a box is a boat or a ruler is a wand.  
Help your child pretend to be a daddy, a doctor, or a monkey.

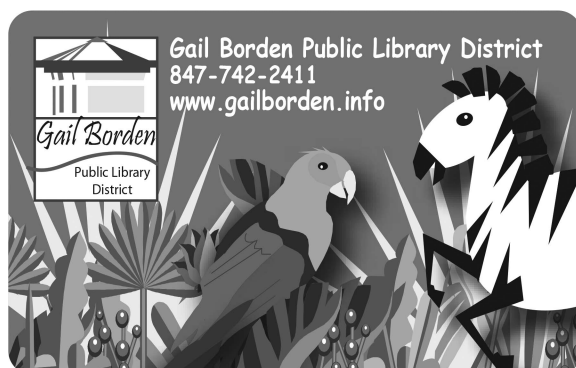
Reproducible handout for pre-literacy skill development.

# My First Library Card

I got my first library card on

\_\_\_\_\_

Date



Did you know that a library card from  
Gail Borden Library is a required  
school supply?

## Kindergarten Countdown Challenge

Read at least two stories to your child every day  
to reach 250 books by the first day of school.

Write down the titles of the first five books you read together:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Reproducible handout for pre-literacy skill development.

# Countdown to Kindergarten

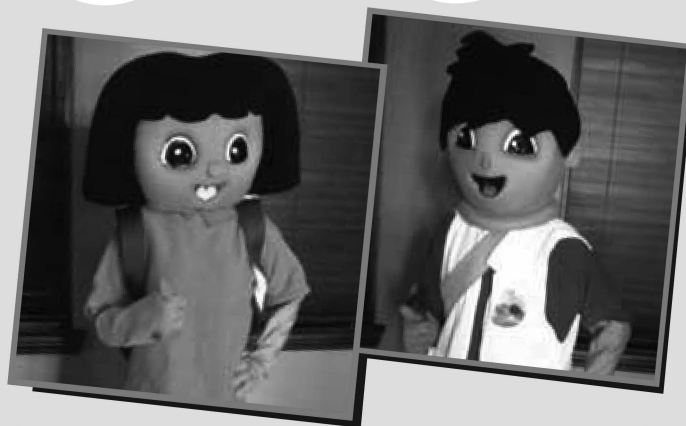
## Invitation



Don't forget  
your camera!

Meet  
**Dora  
and Diego**

costumed  
characters



**Get ready for kindergarten by  
joining the Read-To-Me  
Summer Reading Program.**

**Thursday, May 17, 2012**

***Main Library:***

12:30–3:30 pm and 5–7:30 pm

***Rakow Branch:***

9:45–10:45 am



270 North Grove Avenue  
Elgin, Illinois 60120  
847-742-2411  
[www.gailborden.info](http://www.gailborden.info)

Reproducible handout for pre-literacy skill development.

# Where in the Library Is . . . ?

A. C. Hunter Children's Library  
St. John's, Newfoundland  
Canada



Newfoundland & Labrador  
**Public Libraries**

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## Target Audience

Preschoolers, emerging readers, and caregivers can participate.

## Community Connections

- Parent groups
- Local schools and daycares
- New residents with young children
- Neighbourhood businesses

## Program Description

A picture of a children's book character is hidden in the library and patrons are challenged to locate it. This is a self-running, seek-and-find style activity that encourages children and the adults who care for them to explore the library. A different character is chosen each week and hidden in a random place. Once found, caregivers fill out a ballot indicating where their child spotted the character and submit it for a chance to win a small prize.

This program can be offered on an ongoing basis with a new character every week or month or for brief periods, such as during school holiday breaks.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Encourages children and families to investigate all areas of the library
- Provides a fun-filled opportunity for children to engage with caregivers or members of their family
- Introduces children to various book characters encouraging interest in new materials
- Offers an in-house activity patrons complete with little staff involvement
- Promotes regular visits to the library

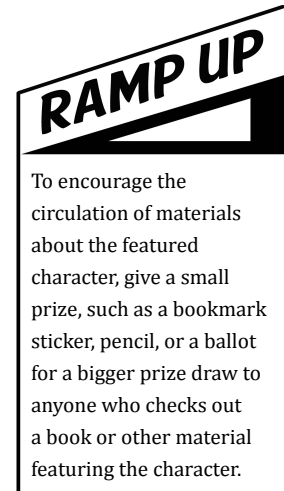
## How It Works

Choose popular book characters and obtain copyright permission from publishers to replicate the character's likeness for a scavenger hunt. Some publisher's websites provide teacher and library supplemental resources, including character cut-outs that can be printed and used without permission. Review the publisher's website for your chosen characters to verify if you need to obtain express permission. You may also choose to use traditional characters (i.e., Peter Rabbit) that are available in the public domain.

Once you have some characters lined up, choose a schedule for display that matches upcoming themes, seasons, or celebrations. Popular characters can be used anytime, and children enjoy hunting for those familiar faces, so intersperse them between the theme-related figures.

Print the image of the character in colour, mount it on cardstock, and laminate it for durability. Hide the laminated character picture somewhere in the library, avoiding spaces between or inside books. Choose different areas of the library to encourage children and their families to discover new spaces and collections. Through exploration, participants gain familiarity with and become more comfortable in all parts of the library.

Purchase small prizes or consider soliciting coupons or donations from businesses in your neighbourhood. Place signs around the library alerting patrons to the character that is hiding and challenge them to find it within the outlined time period (week or season). Set-up a station with a ballot box, pencils, and ballots. Design ballots to include the child's name and age, caregiver's name/phone number/e-mail address, and a space for the caregiver to indicate where their child spotted the hidden character. Restrict participants to one entry per child. Draw for a small prize after the posted deadline.



## Supplies & Materials

- Laminated colour images of children's book characters
- Ballot box
- Golf pencils
- Signs throughout library
- Small prizes, such as notepads, fancy pencils, paperbacks, bubbles, crayons, stickers, or publisher freebies

## Budget

Approximately \$50 is spent on this program for the purchase of small prizes and golf pencils. Soft costs include colour printing and paper to create the image of the character, ballots, and promotional signs. Other supplies on hand include sign holders and laminating paper.

## Marketing & Promotion

Advertise this program on the library's Facebook page and send a tweet every time a new character is displayed. Contact local parent groups and family organizations, and invite them to come in and explore the library and take part in the contest.

## For More Information

Need more details about this program? Please contact:

Susan Rubin  
Library Assistant  
A. C. Hunter Children's Library  
St. John's, NL  
(709) 737-3953  
<http://www.nlpl.ca>

# Let's Read: A Family Literacy Initiative of Waterloo Region

Waterloo Public Library  
Waterloo, Ontario  
Canada

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## Target Audience

Families with young children are the primary audience for this program.

## Community Connections

- Schools
- Local bookstores
- Literacy organizations
- Art galleries
- Local newspaper and media organizations

## Program Description

The mission of *Let's Read* is to build a community of readers by encouraging the families of Waterloo Region to experience the joy of reading the same book. The term families is intended to be completely inclusive regardless of age, relationship, or literacy level. *Let's Read* is a collaborative project involving several community partners, including four public library systems, an adult literacy organization, an art gallery, an Early Years Centre, and an independent bookstore.

A book written by a Canadian author at a Grade 3 or 4 reading level is selected for the program every year. The author and illustrator of the chosen title are invited to the region to visit classes and offer programs. Libraries, schools, and partner organizations also offer programs based on the theme of the chosen book or programs designed specifically to promote the book and initiative.

## Outcomes & Benefits

- Encourages families to read together
- Inspires a love of reading and generates conversation about books
- Promotes the use of public libraries
- Supports Canadian children's literature
- Introduces new Canadian titles to the community
- Builds a sense of community amongst readers
- Strengthens the relationship of the public libraries in the region and like-minded partners who value family literacy
- Offers a diverse range of programs to support and promote the annual book selection
- Advertises library programs and services
- Increases library circulation and bookstore sales of the featured title

## How It Works

Begin at least six months in advance of your community launch to choose the title and secure the author's participation. Form a committee made up of representatives from each partner organization and collectively choose the title your region will be reading for the upcoming session.

In the Waterloo Region, the following criteria are considered for book selection:

- Appropriate for a Grade 3/4 reading level
- Picture books are considered and welcomed
- Canadian author
- In print and available in soft cover
- Not a past major award winner
- Mutually appealing to both boys and girls
- Appeal for both children and adults

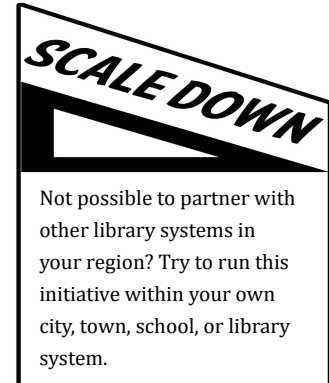
Encourage committee members to bring book choices and advocate for their pick(s) at the first meeting. Narrow choices down to a short list of three or four titles. Investigate the availability of the titles and authors/illustrators for speaking engagements. Once the list has been vetted, have the entire committee read the short-listed titles and vote for their preferred title at the next meeting.

Waterloo launches the program each September. The selected title is revealed at a local literacy festival, Word on the Street. Library and community partner programming takes place from October to January. In November, the author and illustrator visit local schools and community organizations. The initiative culminates and is officially wrapped up at



a Family Literacy Celebration held at a local mall on or near Canada's Family Literacy Day (January 27).

Encourage partner organizations for your initiative to find creative ways to get local families to read the book. For example, in the Waterloo Region, the local paper is a partner and, in addition to supplementing the cost of advertising, runs themed contests, such as word searches, crossword puzzles, and drawing contests.



## Supplies & Materials

- Copies of the selected book (Waterloo Region purchases 300–400 copies of the chosen title with the assistance of all eight community partner organizations and circulates them through public libraries in the region)
- Flyers, signs, and posters announcing the initiative
- Variety of materials for programming and celebratory events

## Budget

Three hundred to four hundred soft cover books cost approximately \$1,500–\$2,250. Author/illustrator fees vary, but be prepared to pay speaking fees, travel, and accommodations. Printing and advertising for the program in the Waterloo Region were supplemented and cost approximately \$2000.

## Marketing & Promotion

Produce a poster advertising the selected title and send posters to all local elementary schools, community centres, libraries, recreation centres, parent groups, and social service organizations. Community partners promote the featured title and associated programs on their websites and through all their regular marketing channels. A website dedicated to this initiative has been developed to bring all promotional materials and upcoming events together in one place (<http://www.letsread.ca>).

## **For More Information**

Need more information about this program? Please contact:

Laura Dick  
Manager, Harper Branch  
Waterloo Public Library  
Waterloo, ON  
519-886-1310  
<http://www.wpl.ca>  
<http://www.letsread.ca/>

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