

Four County Library System – Youth Services  
**Summer Reading Program Session – Tween/Teen Idea Sharing**  
3 March 2021 – Via GoToMeeting

Libraries represented: EN, RS, SH, SID, VE, WP

### **Recording/incentivizing reading**

- Sometimes libraries opt to approach teens' reading a little bit differently from how they approach younger children's reading.
- One way to do this is to have participants read and review individual books and be entered into a prize drawing for each review they do. This allows for short-term participation for young people whose attention is pulled in many different directions at once.
- Another approach that might work well for tweens is "Read and Bead." You can find out more about this sort of program here: <http://readinthecorner.blogspot.com/p/read-bead.html>

### **Making a safe space**

- Some of what teens and tweens need is a safe space to relax and socialize, so sometimes a craft/activity is just an excuse to get together and keep their hands busy while they chat.
- Pandemic protocols obviously make this trickier, but getting together in person might be possible with proper precautions in place.
- Getting together online can provide a way for young people to connect with each other:
  - o Book clubs
  - o Games
    - Scattergories (or the online version: <https://swellgarfo.com/scattergories/>)
    - Scribblio – like online Pictionary – can create a private room - <https://skribbl.io/>
    - Jeopardy (downloadable PowerPoint template here: <https://www.youthdownloads.com/games/jeopardy-powerpoint-template>)
    - Bring Your Own Book - <https://www.bringyourownbook.com/>
    - Codenames - <https://codenames.game/>
    - This is just a sampling—there are many others that you can find and/or adapt for Zoom-type use.
  - o Trivia – A few libraries have tried this with their teens and families. Cassandra (SID) said that she's had great success with it and would be willing to offer tips for anyone who might be interested.
  - o Michael and Colleen shared that the Sherburne Public Library has had success doing the following programs via Zoom:
    - Dungeons and Dragons
    - Poetry slam

- Readers' Theater (or a table read) with short plays

### **Tools/activities for self-expression**

- Teens and tweens can benefit from being encouraged to share their thoughts and points of view in a creative way.
- These are activities that could be adapted to work in-person or remotely:
  - Art activities like drawing, painting, photography, etc.
  - Writing/poetry
  - Zines - <https://www.slj.com/?detailStory=Tweens-teens-Zines-at-the-Library>
  - Collective book/magazine – If your teens enjoy working on art, writing, and/or poetry, you could collect their work into a collective publication put out by the library, either in print or as a digital book/display.

### **Self-led activities**

- Here are some ideas for activities that teens and tweens could work on by themselves, with the library providing instructions and/or materials:
  - Grab-and-go crafts
  - Photo scavenger hunt
  - Virtual escape room – At least a couple of our libraries (EN and BCPL) have created these activities for their teens and adults over the course of the shutdown.
  - Social media challenges
  - Crates/boxes – Kenneth (EN) shared that he's been working on Teen Book Boxes that include a surprise library book and some goodies/crafts—the response has been very positive!

### **Building skills**

- The library is a great place for young people to learn skills that they might not get instruction on in school.
- Libraries that have access to technology equipment and/or staff know-how can help young people build skills with things like photo and video editing, coding, etc.
- Hands-on skills like cooking, sewing, building, etc., could also come in handy.
- Depending on your audience, "adulting" skills (budgeting, grocery shopping, applying for jobs/college, etc.) could also be useful.
- Talking with adults – One way to have young people practice this is by conducting oral history interviews. StoryCorps has a phone/tablet app for this, but they also have a platform for recording interviews of people who are not in the same location: <https://storycorps.org/participate/storycorps-connect/>

### **Providing volunteer opportunities**

- Many teens are in need of volunteer opportunities for school requirements, resume building, etc.
- If you're not able to host them in person for volunteer tasks, you might be able to get them to do some things from home:

- Story readings for the little ones
- Book lists and/or book reviews
- Social media content
- Community project (e.g. collecting items for the animal shelter)
- Multiple libraries shared that they have a good amount of involvement in programs with tweens, but with teens, it's often easier to get them to help with things, rather than being participants in programs.
  - Colleen (SH) shared that their teen staff members run programs for young people, including book clubs for preteens.

### **Connecting with community organizations**

- Schools
- Parks
- Summer recreation programs
- Cornell Cooperative Extension
- More ideas for partnering can be found in this document created by the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA): <https://tinyurl.com/pnpvphn>

### **Additional library ideas and plans**

- Kenneth (EN) is planning to implement READsquared with his teens again this summer and focus more on the bingo board feature. He also has several other possibilities on his radar: digital escape rooms, digital murder mystery, book club, virtual trivia, and a virtual movie screening.
- Sarah (SID) is planning to partner with the local SPCA for their kickoff event, with a poster contest for young people to raise awareness about the SPCA's activities and needs. Cassandra (SID) shared that they are planning some take-and-make activities, which could easily be pivoted to in-person activities, if pandemic conditions allow.
- Mindy (RS) is thinking about doing a geocaching program and a treasure hunt, and she's hoping to get funding for equipment to get her young people started on a YouTube news channel where they could share local news pieces.
- Anna (VE) is hoping to do an in-person paint-and-sip-type program for teens, since they have a large community room with space to spread out. She also liked the pet BFF necklace activity for tweens that's in the CSLP manual (page 168).
- Michael (SH) shared that they're hoping to do a reprise of a reader's theater activity, whether in person (outdoors in the park) or virtually.
- Coming up sooner than summer, Cassandra (SID) shared that Out of the Woodworks Production (theater group in Bainbridge) has partnered with them to offer poetry readings that will be featured each day of the month of April to celebrate National Poetry Month, as a fun outlet for the Tweens and Teens. They can read their own poetry or something from the public domain.

### **Other places to look for ideas**

- Programming Librarian - <https://programminglibrarian.org/>
- Ontarian Librarian - <https://ontarianlibrarian.com/library-program-ideas/>

- “Tails and Tales” manual – In the “Programming Manual” folder, choose the “Programming Manual by Age Group” folder, which includes a file that collects all of the ideas for Teens. (It might be worth a look at the Adult file, too.)
- Facebook groups where you can find ideas and ask questions:
  - Teen Services Underground - [www.facebook.com/groups/407834692712782](https://www.facebook.com/groups/407834692712782)
  - CSLP's Official Summer Library Programming Group! - 2021 Tails & Tales - [www.facebook.com/groups/cslp.planning](https://www.facebook.com/groups/cslp.planning)