

STEPS WITH PETS

AGES

Children 5–8

Tweens 9–12

Multigenerational

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Team up with a local animal shelter adoption center to run a donation drive! First, ask your local animal shelter what kinds of items they need. Tweens could help promote the drive and tally the items, and maybe even take a field trip to deliver them at the end of the summer. Remember to put out informational materials from the shelter for those who might be interested in volunteering or adopting. Donation runs of any kind are great multigenerational programs to run throughout the summer. Suggested runtime: Passive.



Image source: Shutterstock

TIP:

If bringing animals into the library, provide water bowls. For children who do not want to interact with animals directly, provide some extra activity options, such as coloring sheets.

More program ideas:

- Invite therapy dogs to the library, and schedule children to read to them in 15-minute increments. For new readers, reading to animals increases reading confidence, lowers anxiety, and reduces stress!
- Hold a stuffed animal drive to collect used stuffed animals to donate.
- Make pet toys, and donate the toys.
- Make simple blankets to donate (see No-Sew Blankets on page 146.)
- For a STEM project, build cat/dog houses for animals without shelter. You can purchase kits or let children design houses out of recycled materials.
- Create animal toy take-and-make kits, such as for an easy dog rope toy. (Be sure to ask the shelter beforehand what kinds of toys they accept.)
- For another reading idea, patrons could sit quietly and read in front of the shelter pets' cages to help animals adapt to living in a home space when they are adopted. For every five animals they sit with, patrons earn a treat or a toy that they can donate towards a shelter pet of their choice.

RESOURCES

Web

"Reading Education Assistance Dogs (R.E.A.D.)" from Intermountain Therapy Animals: <https://therapyanimals.org/read/>

Printable activities from The College of Animal Welfare: <https://bit.ly/3aVcibc>

Therapy dog organizations recognized by The American Kennel Club: <https://bit.ly/3He26q7>

Blog post about therapy dogs in the library from ALSC: <https://bit.ly/3NJKSDI>

Free reading buddy kit from Mrs. Winters Bliss: <https://bit.ly/3HeurNI>

OUTREACH | PASSIVE | LOW COST

Middle Grade Fiction

Allergic (2021) by Megan Wagner Lloyd

Animal Rescue Friends (Epic! #6) (2021) by Gina Loveless and Meika Hashimoto, and illustrated by Genevieve Kote

Besties: Work It Out (2021) by Kayla Miller and Jeffrey Canino, and illustrated by Kristina Luu

Elvis and the World as It Stands (2021) by Lisa Frenkel Riddiough and Olivia Chin Mueller

My Father's Words (2018) by Patricia MacLachlan

Raising Lumie (2020) by Joan Bauer

Middle Grade Nonfiction

Daring Dogs: 30 True Tales of Heroic Hounds (2020) by Kimberlie Hamilton

Fearless Felines: 30 True Tales of Courageous Cats (2019) by Kimberlie Hamilton

Playful Pet Projects series (2021) by Ruth Owen

SENIOR STORYTELLING OUTREACH

AGES

Children 5–8

Tweens 9–12

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Outreach is not just for adults; children can participate too! Children read their favorite stories to older people in their lives, whether grandparents, relatives, staff members, or community members in a nursing home. Hold a library-wide read-in, or let this be a passive program throughout the summer. Alternatively, make it into a swap: The child reads a story, and then the older person reads or tells a story in return. If a child is unable to meet the chosen adult in person, set up a Zoom station for them to do a virtual reading. Suggested runtime: 45–60 minutes.



Image source: Shutterstock

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Materials:

- Computer/laptop with a camera
- Books (from your collection or from participants)

Preparation: Ask families to choose a senior for their child to read to, or develop a sign-up system for partnerships with a local nursing home (which might be willing to take a field trip to the library for a read-in). If the youth section is small, coordinate with other library departments so they understand that families might need to spread out. If running virtually and you plan to record, be sure to obtain the appropriate permissions to record audio/video.

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

This can take place throughout the library; have a staff member monitor each area.

RESOURCES

Intergenerational Picture Books

Grandad's Camper (2021) by Harry Woodgate

Grandpa's Top Threes (2019) by Wendy Meddour and Daniel Egneus

ADAPTATION:

With tweens, make manicure kits to be delivered to nursing homes, or partner with a licensed manicurist to provide manicures to residents. In the kits, tweens could include special notes or share nail art design ideas. Consider running this as a two-part program: On the first day, tweens compile kits and design some nail art. The second day is an optional field trip for manicures at the nursing home.

TIP:

You might find it helpful to have a lesson on kindness to elders before this outreach activity.

ADAPTATION:

For a community-wide program, use Omeka to create a local history digital archive. Patrons record interviews with elders and upload them to the archive. Omeka is inexpensive, easy to use, and searchable (it uses Dublin Core metadata). See an example from Tenafly Public Library in Tenafly, NJ at tpl.omeka.net

OUTREACH | GAME/ACTIVITY | LOW COST

Granny's Kitchen (2022) by Sadé Smith and illustrated by Ken Daly
I Love My Glam-ma (2019) by Samantha Berger and illustrated by Sujean Rim
Madame Babobedah (2020) by Sophie Dahl and illustrated by Lauren O'Hara
The Most Beautiful Thing (2020) by Kao Kalia Lang and illustrated by Khoa Lee
When Grandma Gives You a Lemon Tree (2019) by Jamie L.B. Deenihan and Lorrain Rocha

Intergenerational Middle Grade

Caterpillar Summer (2018) by Gillian McDunn
Soul Lanterns (2021) by Shaw Kuzki
When You Trap a Tiger (2020) by Tae Keller

ADAPTATION:

If partnering with a nursing home, puzzles or collaborative art projects are great activities to consider.

COMMUNITY PUZZLES SCAVENGER HUNT

AGES

Children 5–8

Tweens 9–12

Multigenerational

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Looking for the fun of an escape room without the claustrophobic feel? Want to engage with your community? A timed community scavenger hunt might be just what you need! Knowing your community is a big part of this project. Consider public parks, playgrounds, historical markers, non-profit organizations, or local businesses. Prepare a small challenge for each stop, such as rearranging tiles to make a word, or finding a word or letter to complete a phrase. Families or small groups collaborate to solve the puzzles. Bragging rights are definitely at play here, so be sure to showcase the winners on your library's social media platforms. Suggested runtime: 2–3 hours.

Alternatively, run a similar scavenger hunt that lasts all summer. Businesses or service providers offer small prizes or stickers to those who stop by, and participants are entered for a prize at the end of the summer. Source larger gift donations from local businesses. You can keep the scavenger hunt the same all summer or put out a new version every month that features different community organizations.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

For the community-wide scavenger hunt:

- Bright laminated signs at each location (for the one-day version)
- Zip ties and/or tape (for the one-day version)
- Sidewalk chalk to mark path or obstacle course (for the one-day version)
- Printed maps of the entire area (draw your own or superimpose over Google maps)
- Pencils and printed instructions
- Prizes

For the library-specific scavenger hunt:

- Signs to mark each scavenger hunt location
- Printed library maps, with locations marked
- Pencils and printed instructions
- Prizes

Preparation:

Plan the stops and write the instructions. You can either outline the direct



Image source: Shutterstock

ADAPTATION:

You could also make a library-specific hunt to familiarize patrons with library resources, or link community resources to specific areas in the library (e.g., link the local history museum to nonfiction books on local history).

TIP:

The community-wide scavenger hunt is a great multigenerational program for families; the library-only adaptation is better for children who will be unaccompanied.

TIP:

To improve accessibility, be sure to include a variety of scavenger hunt items that patrons can smell, hear, and touch.

GAME/ACTIVITY | PASSIVE | OUTDOORS | LOW COST

route or provide clues that participants need to figure out. If you want your event to seem more like a treasure hunt, clues are better than directions. Keep things as simple as possible. Make one sign for each stop. Create your map after you have decided on the stops.

Next, design activities and puzzles. For easy hunts, simply place one letter or word at each stop; participants gather them to complete a word, phrase, or sentence. You could also have them collect individual supplies for a craft project or science experiment (e.g., all the materials needed to make a beaded friendship bracelet).

Distribute signs for the community-wide option in advance, and be sure to touch base with all volunteers and partners the day before (and day of) the event.

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

For a day-long, community-wide event, you will need at least one volunteer at each station.

RESOURCES

Web

Scavenger hunt ideas from *Good Housekeeping*: <https://bit.ly/3HdqEQc>

Scavenger hunt ideas from *Scavenger Hunt*: <https://bit.ly/3mA51QL>

Middle Grade Nonfiction

Code Cracking for Kids: Secret Communications Throughout History, with 21 Codes and Ciphers (2019) by Jean Daigneau

Karina Garcia's Next-Level DIY Slime (2018) by Karina Garcia

Spies, Code Breakers, and Secret Agents: A World War II Book for Kids (2020) by Carole P. Roman

The Ultimate Book of Scavenger Hunts: 42 Outdoor Adventures to Conquer with Your Family (2020) by Stacy Tornio

TIP:

Use Canva, Publisher, or your favorite design program to make the signs and/or maps. Vague maps can make the scavenger hunt more fun and challenging.

TIP:

Partner with Spanish-language agencies! This fun activity is perfect for outreach and community-building.

TIP:

Before the event, be sure to run it through with someone who did not write the instructions with you.

TIP:

Decide beforehand if you will collaborate with local businesses/organizations or assign your own volunteers to each station. Teens and older tweens make perfect volunteers for activities like this.

TIP:

Be mindful of any dangers in your potential outdoor space. For example, if participants will need to cross a busy road, place a volunteer crossing guard.

STAR NET & CSLP: TEAM MACHINE

AGES

Tweens 9–12

Teens 13–18

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This idea is brought to you by STAR Net. The classic activity challenges 6–20 participants to create a simple human machine that passes a beanbag in a set pattern as quickly as possible. Participants rearrange themselves to achieve faster speeds. The social nature of this program allows participants to experience how engineers work in teams—with different people contributing in different ways—to take on a challenge. Some groups may address the challenge by creating an inclined plane with their hands, or, for even faster speeds, a screw-shaped slide. These solutions provide the opportunity for discussion about simple machines found in community parks (such as playground slides). Suggested runtime: 30 minutes.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Materials:

- One beanbag (or other small, soft object)
- One stopwatch or timer
- Optional: Computer, speakers, projector/screen, internet access

Before you begin the activity, use the supporting media to show examples of engineers working in teams (optional). See Resources.

Rules:

- Keep the same order in each round.
- Each person must catch the beanbag.
- Each time you pass the beanbag, say the name of the person who will catch it.
- You may move around.
- You may stand or sit (some people may need to use a chair).
- Repeat, making adjustments to improve the design.

Step 1. Establish the pattern:

- Form a circle.
- Say your name and toss the beanbag to someone across from you (not next to you).
- Remember the name of the person who catches the beanbag.
- For an added challenge, recite names in order of those who have already passed the beanbag.

The original Team Machine activity was created by the National Center for Interactive Learning (NCIL) at the Space Science Institute (SSI) and is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation under Grant No. DRL-1421427.

Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation. With permission, this activity was adapted by CSLP for use in this manual.

TIP:

This activity makes a great icebreaker!

ADAPTATION:

Be sure to provide chairs for those who will need to sit to participate.

TIP:

See all facilitation notes from STAR Net here: <https://bit.ly/3xrdzyc>

PASSIVE | DECORATION/DISPLAY | STEM

- After each person in the circle has caught the beanbag, the pattern is set.

Step 2. Adjust for speed:

- Choose a timekeeper.
- Use an iterative engineering design process to decrease the time required to follow the pattern: Create a new method, test it out, and make adjustments.
- Time each round, and record times nearby (such as on a whiteboard).

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

You will need an area big enough for 6–20 people to stand or sit.

RESOURCES

Web

“Team Machine” from STAR Net: <https://bit.ly/3mObeZk>

“Hands on Engineering Activities” from STAR Net: <https://bit.ly/3NRWgNX>

“14 Grand Challenges for Engineering in the 21st Century” from the National Academy of Engineering: <https://bit.ly/3MScBRt>

“Simple Machines” [29 min] from PBS: <https://to.pbs.org/39tBbua>

Books

Engineering for Teens: A Beginner's Book for Aspiring Engineers (2021) by Dr. Pamela McCauley (YA NF)

Folding Tech: Using Origami and Nature to Revolutionize Technology (2020) by Karen Latchana Kenney (YA NF)

LEGO Technic Non-Electric Models: Simple Machines (2021) by Yoshihito Isogawa (middle grade NF)

TIP:

Encourage persistence! Successful engineering involves a process of thinking, building, testing, and repeating.

TIP:

See STAR Net on YouTube for an example video: <https://bit.ly/3xpXRn3>

TRANSLATION: BOOKMARKS FOR ALL

AGES

Children 5+

Multigenerational

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This program is about brightening others' days in multiple languages! What languages are spoken in your community? Translate some common words and phrases related to friendship and kindness into each of those languages. Print them onto bookmarks, and let patrons decorate them. Bookmarks can be part of a take one/give one project, or you can place them in books at checkout. Suggested runtime: 45 minutes for an in-person program.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Materials:

- Bookmark templates with quotes about friendship or reading (consider making black and white designs in Canva)
- Plain cardstock in light colors
- Scissors or paper cutter
- Crayons, markers, colored pencils, etc.
- Hole punch and ribbon/string (optional)
- Laminator (optional)

Preparation: Be sure to make a few examples so children can visualize the project before putting their own spin on it. If using Canva, choose a letter-sized template and divide the page into four equal sections with the outline tool. Type out some short friendship quotes (with their attributions), and print out your designs. Be sure to also provide blank bookmarks for those who want creative freedom.

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

Solo-librarian friendly.

RESOURCES

Printables

Friendship Quotes

TIP:

Set out both blank bookmarks and preprinted designs so patrons of all ages can decorate according to their ability.

TIP:

Accompany this passive program with a book and movie display that features positive friend relationships (or friends from different cultural backgrounds).

ADAPTATION:

For maximum simplicity, provide bookmarks in English and Spanish.

ADAPTATION:

For teens, provide a list of phrases in different languages and let them choose which ones to use into their designs. They hide finished bookmarks in their favorite books. This is also a great program for directing teens to your library's language-learning resources.

FRIENDSHIP QUOTES

“The only way to have a friend is to be one.” -**Ralph Waldo Emerson**

“I would rather walk with a friend in the dark than alone in the light.” -**Helen Keller**

“No person is your friend who demands your silence or denies your right to grow.” -**Alice Walker**

“I don’t need a friend who changes when I change and who nods when I nod; my shadow does that much better.” -**Plutarch**

“There is nothing I would not do for those who are really my friends. I have no notion of loving people by halves, it is not my nature.” -**Jane Austen**

“Each friend represents a world in us, a world possibly not born until they arrive, and it is only by this meeting that a new world is born.” -**Anaïs Nin**

“The best mirror is an old friend.” -**George Herbert**

“Friendship is born at that moment when one person says to another: “What! You too? I thought I was the only one.” -**C.S. Lewis**

“Don’t walk behind me; I may not lead. Don’t walk in front of me; I may not follow. Just walk beside me and be my friend.” -**Albert Camus**

“You can’t stay in your corner of the forest waiting for others to come to you. You have to go to them sometimes.” -**A.A. Milne**

“A friend is someone who knows all about you and still loves you.” -**Elbert Hubbard**

LIBRARY FIELD DAY

AGES

Children 5–8

Tweens 9–12

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Get your sneakers and celebrate summer with an old-fashioned field day! Full of cooperative relay races, obstacle courses, and other games, a day of play encourages imagination, confidence, coordination, and social-emotional intelligence. These 8 physical activities require players to work together towards a common goal; they are fun ways to illustrate kindness, fairness, and critical thinking. When planning a field day, be sure to select a mix of activities that use different muscles and skills. For an art activity idea, see *The More We Paint Together* on page 148, which could be adapted to a field day station. Suggested runtime: 60 minutes.



Image source: Shutterstock

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

For hula hoop hustle

- You will need one hula hoop per group.
- Divide children into groups of five or six.
- Have each group stand in a line or circle holding hands.
- Loop a hula hoop over the first player's arm. The players must pass the hula hoop down the line without letting go of each other's hands, such as maneuvering the hula hoop over their heads or under their feet.
- Whichever group can pass the hula hoop first without breaking their chain is the winner.

For human knots

- Divide children into groups of 10.
- Have each group form a circle.
- Tell the players to raise their right hand and grab the hand of someone across the circle from them. Repeat with the left hand. Make sure that no one is holding hands with someone directly beside them, and that everyone is holding two different hands.
- The players attempt to untangle themselves to form a circle again without letting go of each other's hands.
- You can allocate a specific time players have to complete the challenge or simply see how long it takes them to finish.

For egg toss

- You will need one egg per pair

GAME/ACTIVITY | OUTDOORS | LOW COST

- Divide children into pairs and have them face each other.
- Give each pair an egg.
- The player holding the egg must lightly toss it to the other team member. Once caught, they both take one step backward and toss the egg again.
- The pair that tosses their egg the farthest apart without breaking it win.
- If the egg drops but does not break, the pair is still in the game.

For water relay

- Place two buckets full of water and two sponges at the starting line.
- Place two smaller empty buckets at the finish line.
- Divide children into two groups of five.
- When the relay begins, the first player from each team dunks the sponge into the water bucket and runs to the empty bucket to squeeze the sponge into the empty bucket.
- The first player then runs back to the starting line, and the relay repeats with the next player.
- Whoever fills the empty buckets with water first wins.

For mummy relay

- You will need one roll of toilet paper per group.
- Divide children into groups of five; designate one as the “mummy”
- The mummy stands with arms outstretched and legs apart.
- Team members take timed turns wrapping the mummy.
- First mummy to be fully wrapped is the winner.

For drop and pop

- You will need five balloons and one chair per group
- Set up a chair for each team at a destination point.
- Divide children into groups of five. Provide each player with an inflated balloon or water balloon.
- When the relay begins, the first team members run their balloon to the chair, drop the balloon, and then sit on the it until it pops.
- After it pops, the players runs back to their team and tags the next player.
- The relay continues until the last player in each team has made it back to their group line.
- The first group to finish wins.

For balloon volleyball

- You will need one balloon, and crepe paper or yarn to serve as the “net.” One pool noodle per child is optional.
- Attach streamers between two chairs, pillars, or trees to create your volleyball net.
- Divide children into two teams of six.
- Arrange each team in two lines of three on either side of the net.
- Choose a team to serve. The server takes their shot from the second line behind the net and may serve underhand or overhand.

TIP:

The eggs can also be replaced with water balloons.

TIP:

For a refreshing water relay on a hot day, require players to carry their wet sponges over their heads.

TIP:

To save time, inflate (or fill) balloons before the program. Consider an air (not helium) balloon pump if you will run this activity with several groups.

TIP:

Be mindful of latex allergies. Have a latex warning for parents, or buy latex-free balloons.

GAME/ACTIVITY | OUTDOORS | LOW COST

- Teams pass the balloon back and forth with their hands (or pool noodles).
- If the balloon touches the ground, the opposing team wins a point and the next serve.
- The first team to 10 points wins.

For crab walk soccer

- You will need one foam sports ball or beach ball and masking tape or string for the goal line.
- Divide children into two teams of five to eight players.
- Assign players numbers (each number should be assigned to two players)
- Place the ball in the middle of the play space and call out a number.
- The two players with that number go to the center and attempt to get the ball over the opposing team's goal line.
- Players walk like a crab during the duration of the game; hands and feet must be touching the ground, with stomachs aimed toward the ceiling.
- Players may only touch the ball with their feet or head (no hands!) Team members may assist in scoring or defending, but the player with the called number must be the one to score.
- When a goal is scored, return the ball to the center of the play space and call out another number.
- The first team to 10 points wins.

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

If your library does not have outdoor space, consider other green spaces in your community, such as parks and schools. To run these games concurrently, you will need a large group of volunteers. Older tweens and teens make great helpers in planning and executing this program.

RESOURCES**Web**

Action for Healthy Kids blog: <https://bit.ly/3Oifb4j>

More cooperative games from *Playworks*: <https://bit.ly/3HryTZc>

40 games from *ABCDee Learning*: <https://bit.ly/3aUnpRv>

BooksField Day Nonfiction

101 Things for Kids to Do Screen-Free (2020) by Dawn Isaac (middle grade)

Backyard Adventure (2019) by Amanda Thomsen (middle grade)

Come Out and Play: A Global Journey (2020) by Maya Ajmera and John D. Ivanko (picture book)

Everyone Wins! Cooperative Games and Activities for All Ages, 3rd ed. (2019) by Ba Luvmore and Josette Luvmour (middle grade)

Field Day Fiction

A Feel Better Book for Little Sports (2021) by Leah Bowen and Holly Brochmann, and illustrated by Shirley Ng-Benitez (picture book)

TIP:

For additional fun, have children vs. librarians, vs. siblings, or vs. their parents.

TIP:

If using pool noodles, cut them in half before the program.

TIP:

Have extra balloons on hand in case your "volleyball" pops.

TIP:

If any families include a person in a wheelchair, ensure that there are suitable wheelchair spots near every activity.

GAME/ACTIVITY | OUTDOORS | LOW COST

Go, Team, Go! (Step into Reading 2) (2021) by Tennant Redbank (early reader)

My Weird School: Teamwork Trouble (I Can Read Level 2) (2020) by Dan Guteman and illustrated by Jim Paillot (early reader)

Racing the Waves (Ready to Read Level 1) (2019) by Jane Yolen and illustrated by Mike Moran (early reader)

Rocking Field Day (Pete the Cat Level 1) (2021) by Kimberly Dean and James Dean (early reader)

Splat the Cat and the Obstacle Course (I Can Read Level 2) (2021) by Rob Scotton (early reader)

Team Up: El Toro and Friends series (2021–22) by Raúl the Third and illustrated by Elaine Bay (early reader; English with Spanish words)

LARP AT THE LIBRARY

AGES

Teens 13–18

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Teens collaborate through live action role play (LARP)! Announce a theme beforehand and encourage teens to attend dressed for role play. Work on character development, combat practice, and prop creation before the role-playing begins. This program may need volunteers for non-player characters (NPCs) to provide obstacles during gameplay. It can be run as a day-long event or broken into a series. Suggested runtime for a day-long event: 4–7 hours (1–2 for character design, 1–2 for prop construction, 1 hour for stage combat practice, 1–2 hours for gameplay).

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Preparation:

- Gather craft supplies such as pool noodles, recyclables, paint, duct tape, scissors, etc.
- Design or choose the scenario for gameplay.
- Modify the scenario for age-appropriateness if necessary.
- Hold a mini meeting with volunteer NPCs before gameplay.

First, help them design their characters. You could use a basic D&D character sheet, create a simpler character design page for your themed activity, or premake gender-neutral characters to select from). Share YouTube videos of how to perform basic stage combat and let them practice outside. Then provide art supplies or recycled materials for them to craft props of their choosing. Once their props are complete, read the scenario for teens to work through together.

UNIQUE SPACE AND PERSONNEL NEEDS

You will need a large program (or outdoor) space with tables and chairs. You may also need extra staff members or volunteer NPCs.

RESOURCES

Web

Free LARP scenarios wiki: <https://bit.ly/3zBnT9s>

Free character sheet from D&D 5e Character Sheet: <https://bit.ly/3mLIAJh>

Books

The Adventure Zone series (2018–21) by Clint McElroy et al. (YA F)

Don't Read the Comments (2020) by Eric Smith (YA F)

TIP:

If someone in your community knows basic stage combat, ask them to present and/or assist.

ADAPTATION:

Character design, stage combat practice, and prop creation are easily be adapted to virtual programs. Gameplay would a little less interactive, but teens can still work together to problem solve.

TIP:

If you adapt this program for tweens or families, teens make great volunteer NPCs.

GAME/ACTIVITY | ARTS & CRAFTS | OUTDOORS | LOW COST

Even If We Break (2020) by Marieke Nijkamp (YA F)
Glitch Kingdom (2020) by Sheena Boekweg (YA F)
In the Hall with the Knife series (2019–21) by Diana Peterfreund (YA F)
The Inheritance Games series (2020–22) by Jennifer Lynn Barnes (YA F)
The Life and Medieval Times of Kit Sweetly (2020) by Jamie Pacton (YA F)
The Perfect Escape (2020) by Suzanne Park (YA F)
Power Play: How Video Games Can Save the World (2017) by Asi Burak and Laura Parker (adult NF)
Slay (2019) by Brittney Morris (YA F)
Truly Devious series (2018–21) by Maureen Johnson (YA F)

GROW, EVOLVE, TRANSFORM: COLLABORATIVE ORIGAMI DISPLAY

AGES

Adults

Multigenerational

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This is an ideal passive program for adults! Folding origami is relaxing and a great conversation starter for those waiting for children participating in other library programs. The butterfly pattern is easy to master; once learned, butterflies can be made in under three minutes. Patrons attach their finished butterflies to a wall or bulletin board to make a beautiful collaborative display. The butterflies can be the focus of the display or an embellishment. Use the inspirational phrase “Grow. Evolve. Transform.” or select another phrase with meaning in your community. Suggested runtime for an in-person program: Passive.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Materials:

- 6 x 6-inch origami paper in rainbow colors (on both sides)
- Glue dots, tape, or staples to hang butterflies
- Printed instructions that links to a YouTube video
- Bulletin board or wall space, decorated as desired

Preparation: Prepare your bulletin board or wall space. Consider covering your bulletin board with a color that complements the color of the origami paper. Add an inspirational slogan and whatever images will enhance the display (such as an open book from which paper butterflies can emerge). Alternatively, reach out to a community organization to which you can donate the completed butterflies. Stock a station with origami paper, instructions, and a bin for participants to leave their completed butterflies (or tape or glue dots for them to hang their own).

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

Solo-librarian friendly. If running an in-person program for all ages, additional staff members or volunteers could help teach

ADAPTATION:

Include origami paper and instructions in take-and-make kits, with a link to a YouTube video for those who need visual instructions. Remember the due date if you want patrons to return their butterflies for a collaborative display!

ADAPTATION:

Also consider outreach to a community organization or facility to which you can donate the butterflies.

ADAPTATION:

Enlist tween/teen volunteers to cut pages out of old books for use as origami paper.

TIP:

For more ideas, see the Community Art Projects Brainstorm on page 76.

TIP:

Provide different sizes of origami paper. The smaller the paper, the more difficult it will be to fold.

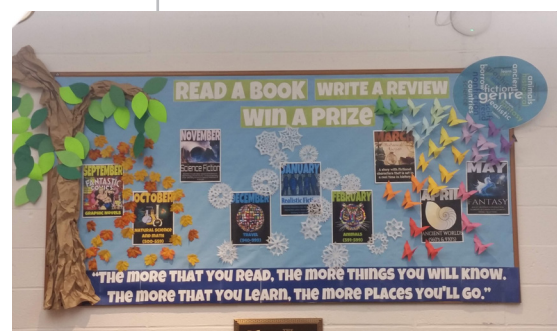


Image source: Marcia Literati, Tenafly Public Library, Tenafly, NJ.

ARTS & CRAFTS | PASSIVE | DECORATION/DISPLAY | LOW COST

the origami pattern (or show a video using a laptop/projector).

RESOURCES

Web

“How to Make an Easy Origami Butterfly” [3 min] from PPO on YouTube:

<https://bit.ly/3mSD5r6>

“History of Origami” from Georgia Tech: <https://b.gatech.edu/3xRRpq8>

“Step by Step Origami Instructions and Diagrams” from Origami.me: <https://bit.ly/3zCHoOV>

“Origami Master Robert J. Lang” [5 min] from ChristopherHelkey on YouTube: <https://langorigami.com/>

The Peace Crane Project: <https://peacecraneproject.org/>

Origami Books

The Complete Story of Sadako Sasaki and the Thousand Paper Cranes (2020) by Masahiro Sasaki and Sue DiCicco (middle grade NF)

First Art Kit (2021) by Boo Paterson (adult NF)

Origami Classic Paper Folding (2019) by Rachel Thomas (middle grade NF)

Paper Joy for Every Room (2020) by Laure Farion (adult NF)

Realistic Origami Animals (2021) by Fumiaki Kawahata (adult NF)

Tomoko Fuse’s Origami Art (2020) by David Brill (adult NF)

Printables

Easy Origami Butterfly (in English and Spanish)

TIP:

Encourage participants to make another butterfly every time they visit the library, or to make a butterfly for every book they read.

TIP:

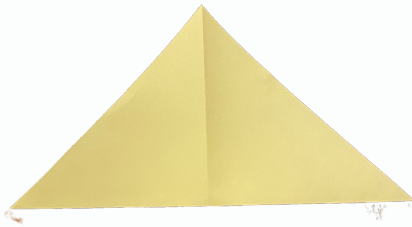
Search “butterfly bulletin boards” on Pinterest for design inspiration.

Easy Origami Butterfly instructions courtesy of Marcia Literati of Tenafly Public Library in Tenafly, NJ.

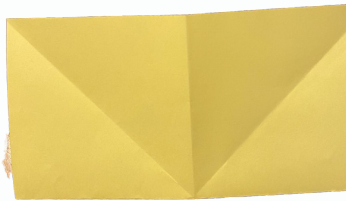


EASY ORIGAMI BUTTERFLY

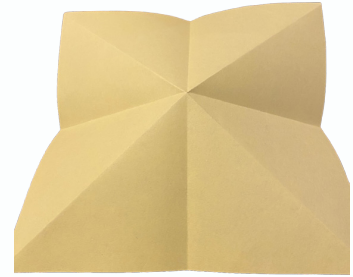
Start with a 6 x 6" piece of origami paper, or cut any paper to size.



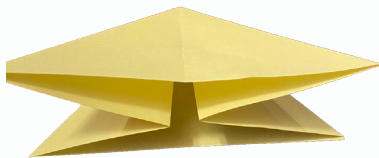
1 Fold diagonally. Open. Fold diagonally in the opposite direction. Open.



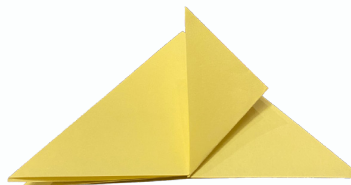
2 Flip paper over. Fold it in half. Open. Fold in half the other way. Open.



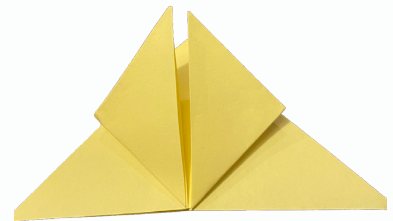
3 You will have diagonal "mountain" folds in the corners and "valley" folds in the center of each side.



4 Push against the valley folds until you have a flat triangle



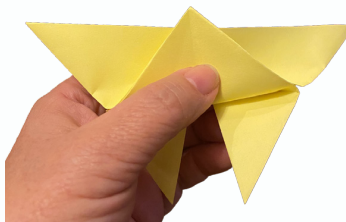
5 Fold one side point of the triangle to the center point.



6 Fold the second side point to the center point.



7 Flip paper over.



8 Curl the center point over the long edge.

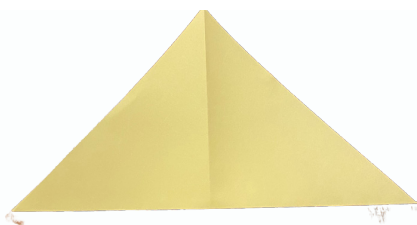


9 Fold the tip over the long edge. Pinch the wings together.



MARIPOSA DE ORIGAMI FÁCIL

Comience con un pedazo de papel de origami de 6 x 6" o corte cualquier papel a esa medida.



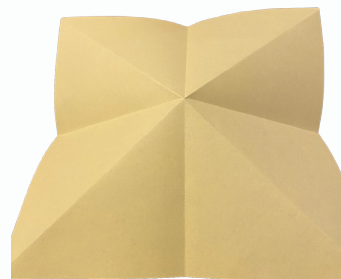
1

Doble en diagonal. Doble en diagonal en la dirección opuesta.



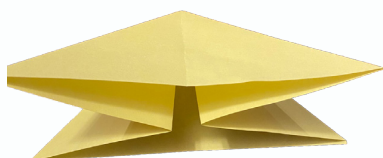
2

Voltee el papel. Doble por la mitad. Ábralo. Doble por la mitad en la dirección contraria.



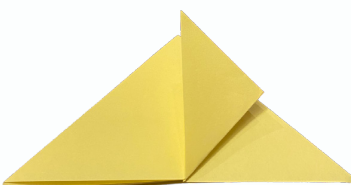
3

Usted va a tener pliegues de "montañas" diagonales en las esquinas y pliegues de "valles" en el centro de cada lado.



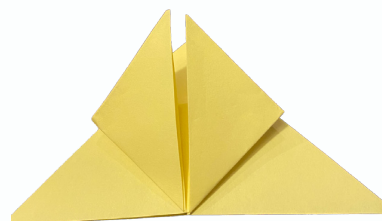
4

Empuje en contra de los pliegues de valles hasta que tenga un triángulo plano.



5

Doble un lado de punta del triángulo al punto del centro.



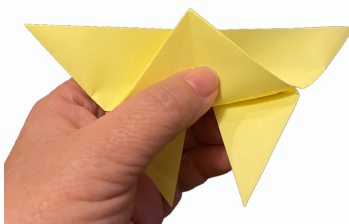
6

Doble el segundo lado de punta al punto del centro.



7

Voltee el papel.



8

Enrosque el punto del centro sobre el borde largo.



9

Doble la punta por encima del borde largo. Pellizque las alas para juntarlas.

LOVE BUG CLIPS CRAFT

AGES

Children 5–8

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Who can we show more kindness to? These love bug clips are a simple craft that children personalize and modify however they wish. Encourage them to clip their love bugs on a person of their choosing after they leave the library. You can begin this program with an age-appropriate picture book about kindness and a discussion about ways to be kind to each other, or use this craft as a filler. For a passive program, print instructions and set materials on a craft table (or create take-and-make bags with enough materials for one–two clips). Suggested runtime: 20–30 minutes.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Materials:

- Paper and a 2-inch heart punch or
- a heart template and scissors (see Printables)
- Pompoms, pipe cleaners cut into thirds, and googly eyes
- Clothespins
- White glue
- Markers, colored pencils, or crayons

Assembly:

- Cut out a paper heart (using a punch or template).
- Write a kind note on the heart.
- Wrap a pipe cleaner through the hole in the front of a clothespin, twisting it on top. This will be the bug's antennae.
- Glue two eyes on a large pompom for the bug's head.
- Glue the large pompom to the front end of the clothespin.
- Glue the small pompom behind the antennae to form the body.
- Glue the heart to the back of the clothespin to form the wings
- When the glue is dry, clip your love bug to someone you care about!

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

Solo-librarian friendly.

RESOURCES

ADAPTATION:

For younger children, use only one pompom for the head, no pipe cleaners, and provide glue dots. You could also prewrite the messages on the hearts for them, or allow them to draw on or color the hearts instead of a writing a message.

TIP:

Encourage children to have fun with the materials and come up with different looks for their love bug! As long as the bug expresses kind words to share with someone, the craft is a success.

TIP:

For kindness books, see the Kindness Book List on page 186.



Image source: Debbie Barr of Lebanon Public Library, Lebanon, IN

ARTS & CRAFTS | PASSIVE | LOW COST

Web

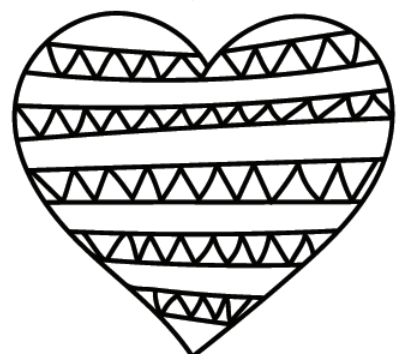
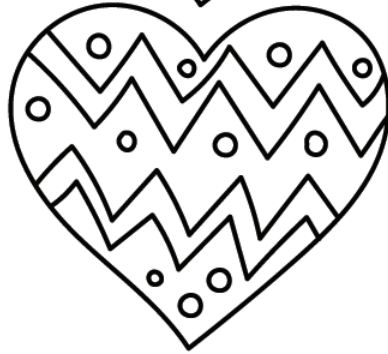
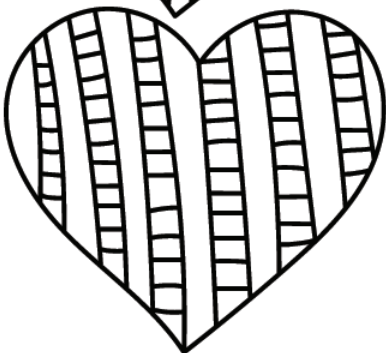
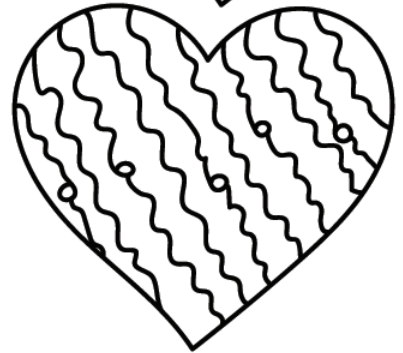
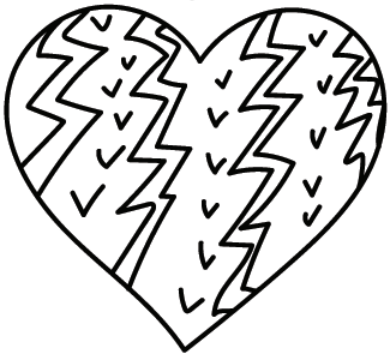
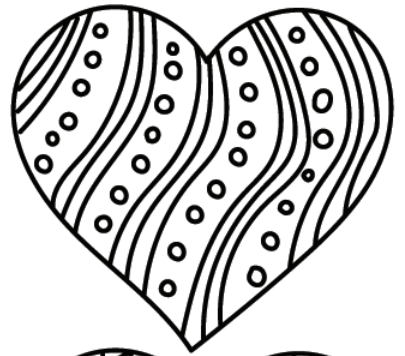
“The Power of Words” [3 min] from Common Sense Education on YouTube:

<https://bit.ly/3HCWN45>

“Dragon Fly Clothespins” from Crafty Morning: <https://bit.ly/3b4anBi>

Printables

Heart Template



KINDNESS TREES AND PAPER CHAINS

AGES

Children 5–8

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This program describes two different crafts—paper chains and kindness trees—that remind children to do acts of kindness. Either craft can be run in-person, as a passive program, or as a take-and-make kit. As library decorations, paper chains and kindness trees can keep growing all summer long! For a take-home kit, the acts of kindness could be chores that children do at home, such as washing the car, or they could be compliments for family members, such as “I love that you help you with my homework.” Suggested runtime: 45 minutes for in-person programs.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Materials for paper chains (passive):

- Colored paper cut into strips
- Markers or crayons
- A sign with instructions
- A basket for completed strips

Preparation: Cut 1.5 x 8.5-inch strips of colored paper before starting the program. Leave out strips with markers or crayons, and create a sign with instructions. Provide a basket in which children can leave their completed strips. To get the chain started, create a few examples.

Materials for kindness trees (in person)

- Brown kraft paper (for an in-person program)
- Construction paper cut into leaf shapes
- Markers and tape

Materials for kindness trees (take-and-make)

- Printed tree silhouette (see Printables)
- Printed leaf silhouettes (see Printables)
- Pencils and glue sticks

For a passive program, affix a large tree silhouette to the wall (or simply a long rectangle for the trunk and smaller rectangles for a few branches). Provide pens, tape, and leaf-shaped pieces of construction paper. Children write kindness messages—or choose from a preprinted selection—and tape



Image source: Debbie Barr of Lebanon Public Library, Lebanon, IN

ADAPTATION:

Pair children up and ask them to write nice things about each other. Display the paper chains in the library!

ADAPTATION:

Run kindness challenges for older patrons using ideas from Random Acts of Kindness Foundation: <https://bit.ly/3HnjR6q>

ADAPTATION:

For take-and-make kits, provide 5–10 slips of paper for children to make their own kindness chain at home. You could also add a virtual component by reading a book about kindness and demonstrating how to make the paper chain.

TIP:

Remember books about kindness for a book display!

TIP:

Check the table daily to refill supplies and add new paper strips to the library's chain.

ARTS & CRAFTS | PASSIVE | DECORATION/DISPLAY | LOW COST

their leaves to the tree. Be sure to make a few kindness leaves for examples.

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

Solo-librarian friendly.

RESOURCES

Web

“Create a Kindness Tree” from PBS: <https://to.pbs.org/3xQOYE5>

Picture of a finished tree from *First Palette*: <https://bit.ly/3zDyr80>

“Printable 100 Acts of Kindness” from *Coffee Cups and Crayons*: <https://bit.ly/3NUeu10>

101 more acts of kindness ideas from *Care.com*: <https://bit.ly/3xl6vTO>

Printables

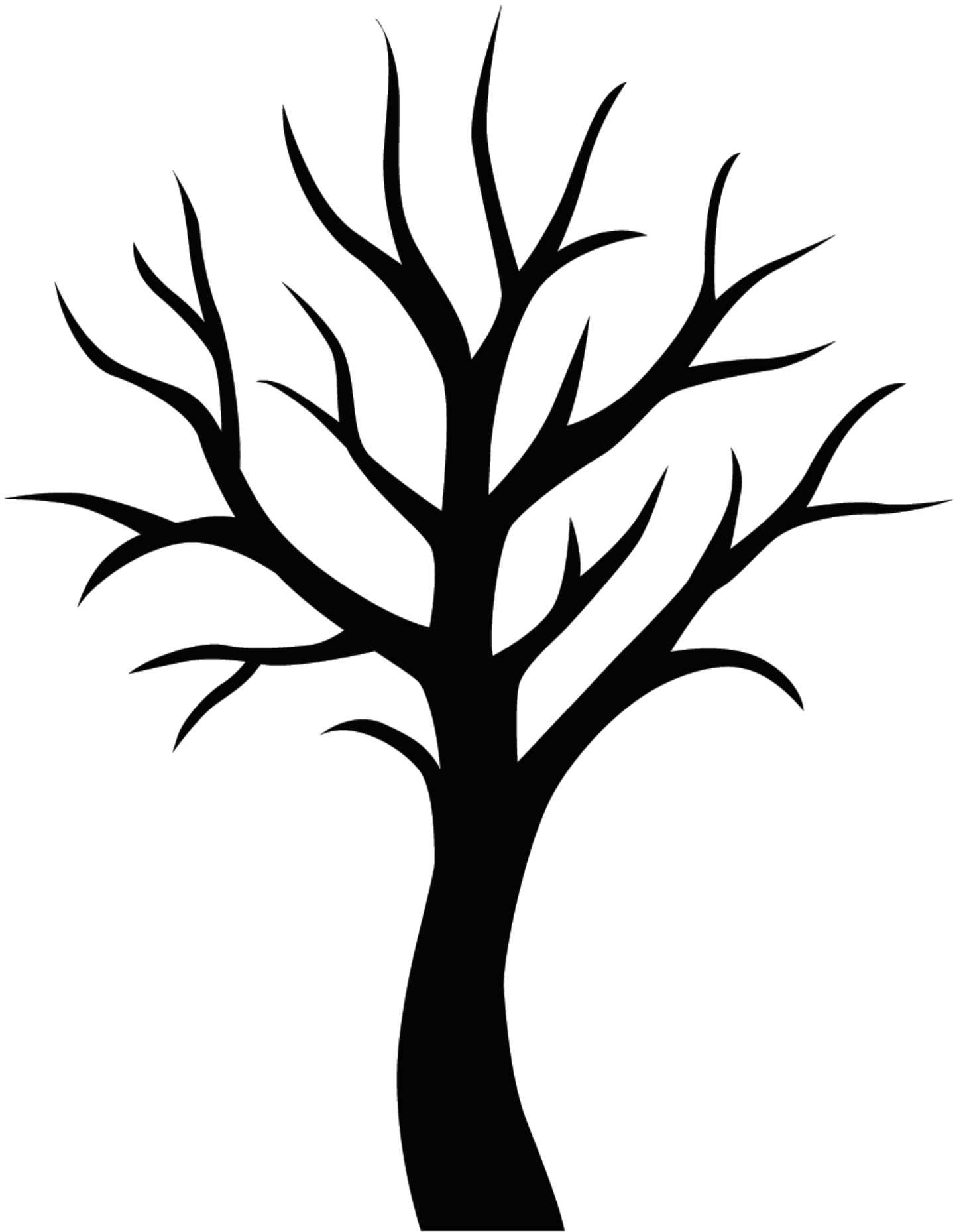
Kindness Tree Silhouette

Leaf Silhouettes

TIP:

For kindness books, see the Kindness Book List on page 186.





TWEEN SELF-AFFIRMATIONS JARS

AGES

Tweens 9–12

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Discuss why it is important to love and be kind to ourselves, even though it can be difficult. Explain what affirmations are: Phrases we repeat to ourselves to help our brains think more positively about who we are. They are exercise for our minds and for our self-esteem. Choose a few affirmations to repeat as a group (be sure to include some silly ones to break the ice!). Optionally, pass out small hand mirrors so tweens can look at themselves as they say the phrases. Provide a list of affirmations to get them started, and encourage them to create their own! Tweens cut their affirmations into strips and put them in their mason jars to be pulled out whenever they need a self-esteem boost. Suggested runtime: 30–45 minutes.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Materials:

- Mason jars or small boxes (one per tween)
- Paper strips with printed affirmations
- Blank paper strips and pens
- Art supplies of your choosing: Washi tape, paint markers, puff paint, stickers, etc.
- Hand mirrors (optional)

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

Solo-librarian friendly.

RESOURCES

Web

“Cute DIY Mason Jar Crafts” from *DIY Projects for Teens*: <https://bit.ly/3zK-TI58>

67 positive affirmations for teens from *Happier Human*: <https://bit.ly/3tDktiN>

“Positive Post-it Day” from *Cyberbullying Research Center*: <https://bit.ly/3H-qoH2N>

Printable calendars from the *Random Acts of Kindness Foundation*: <https://bit.ly/3Hmg9Kt>

Mental health resources from *Mental Health Literacy*: <https://mentalhealthliteracy.org/>

TIP:

If tweens are uncomfortable saying affirmations out loud, amp up the silliness factor, but avoid pressuring them to join in.

ADAPTATION:

For a virtual program, make jars into take-and-make kits, or email participants a PDF of affirmations to print or copy at home. Lead the discussion over Zoom while tweens decorate their jars.

TIP:

To lower costs, ask tweens to bring their own jars, boxes, and/or favorite art supplies from home.



Image source: Debbie Barr of Lebanon Public Library, Lebanon, IN

Printables

List of Affirmations for Tweens (in English and Spanish)



Image source: Melissa Causey of Bartow
Public Library, Bartow, FL

TIP:

For kindness books,
see the Kindness
Book List on page
186.

LIST OF AFFIRMATIONS FOR TWEENS

“You look great today. Is that a new haircut?”
“I am strong for listening to my heart.”
“I am wearing the most amazing t-shirt I’ve ever seen.”
“I am lovable exactly the way I am.”
“I am perfectly imperfect.”
“More people love me than I can even think of.”
“There is only one me in the entire world.”
“I look very huggable today.”
“I deserve to do something extra fun today.”
“There’s no such thing as a mistake if I learn from it.”
“Is it time to reread my favorite book?”
“Today is a good day to give myself a break.”
“I deserve to spend time with people I have fun with.”
“I can change the world.”
“Asking for help when I need it makes me strong.”

LISTA DE AFIRMACIONES PARA PRE- ADOLESCENTES

“Te ves increíble hoy. ¿Te hiciste un nuevo corte de pelo?”
“Soy fuerte porque escucho a mi corazón”.
“¡Estás usando la camiseta más increíble que he visto!”
“Yo soy digno de amor exactamente de la manera que soy”.
“Yo soy perfectamente imperfecto”.
“Me aman más personas de lo que puedo pensar”.
“Sólo hay un yo en el mundo entero”.
“Me veo muy abrazable el día de hoy”.
“Me merezco hacer algo extra divertido el día de hoy”.
“No existe tal cosa como un error si aprendo de él”.
“Creo que es tiempo de volver a leer mi libro favorito”. “Hoy es un buen día para darme un descanso”.
“Me merezco pasar tiempo con las personas con las que me divierto”. “Yo puedo cambiar el mundo”.
“Pedir ayuda cuando la necesito me hace fuerte”.

SPREAD THE LOVE

AGES

Tweens 9–12

Teens 13–18

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

There are few things better than a nice surprise. In this program, tweens or teens write positive, uplifting messages to place in their favorite books (either YA books or books they liked when they were younger).

You can go simple by providing Post-its and markers, or you can use whatever paper and art supplies you have on hand. Be sure to make examples beforehand to kick things off. While crafting their messages, teens discuss their favorite books, watch videos, or listen to music. For a passive program, create a supply table with signage and examples. Be sure to require teens to submit their messages for approval before hiding them in books. Suggested runtime: 60 minutes.



Image source: Shutterstock

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Materials:

- A variety of art supplies
- Premade templates for those who do not want to draw
- A computer and printer for those who want to work digitally
- Spreadsheet to track which books have messages (optional)

Be sure to make a few example messages beforehand. They should be positive and cute, but not too young. Decide if you will track (anonymously) which books the teens select so they can see whether the messages/cards ever reach another reader.

RESOURCES

Web

Quotes from Random Acts of Kindness Foundation: <https://bit.ly/3tDFsBX>
 “What Is Kindness? Teens Respond” [4 min] from Random Acts of Kindness Foundation on YouTube: <https://bit.ly/3Hvc2Mb>
 Art and books from The Latest Kate: <https://www.thelatestkate.art/>
 Teen kindness ideas from Channel Kindness: <https://bit.ly/3Qz9pgH>

Printables

Pride Icons

ADAPTATION:

Rather than hiding messages in books, you can also create a designated bulletin board.

TIP:

See also Bookmarks for All for a similar program that uses bookmark templates.

TIP:

This would be perfect for any LGBTQIA+ teen groups/clubs you may have, or as a bonding activity for a teen advisory board or advocacy group.

TIP:

Promote mental health groups in your area by putting out a stack of flyers.

TIP:

For kindness books, see the Kindness Book List on page 44.

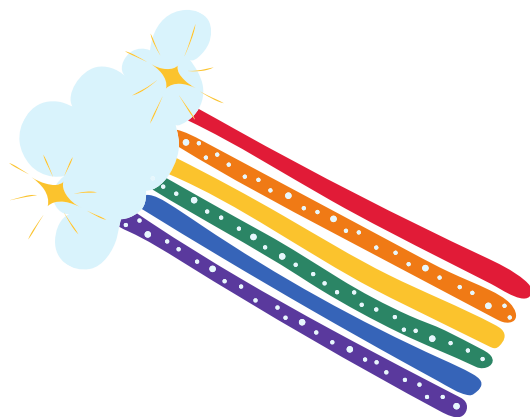
TIP:

For YA fiction that features mental health, see Self-Care Bath Bombs and Sugar Scrub on page 180.

Pride printable created by Laura Erwin of Chillicothe & Ross County Public Library.

YOU
ARE
LOVED

live
your
dream.



CHALK THE BLOCK WITH KINDNESS

AGES

Multigenerational

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Over the course of one day (or several days), invite families to create sidewalk chalk with messages encouraging kindness. Stick to a small area or expand throughout your town or neighborhood. When possible, aim for tie-ins with other community and/or school events and festivals. Distribute kits containing sidewalk chalk, ideas, and a map, and follow up by photographing the sidewalk chalk art and sharing it on social media or in library displays. This also works great with rainbow chalk for Pride in June! See below for a recipe to make chalk yourself (or turn this into a two-part program by making the chalk together). Suggested runtime: 90–120 minutes.



Image source: Shutterstock

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Materials for the day of the event:

- Sidewalk chalk
- Templates/stencils (optional)
- Maps of preapproved areas for chalk art
- Handouts with message ideas and tips

Preparation:

- Contact local businesses and organizations to get approval for chalk art in front of their buildings.
- Put approved sidewalk chalk locations on a map.
- Print maps and handouts for participants.
- Source lots of chalk (or let participants make it).

Materials for making sidewalk chalk:

- Warm water
- Plaster of Paris
- Tempura paint or food coloring
- Toilet paper or paper towel rolls, or silicon molds
- Disposable masks

TIP:

Be sure to monitor the weather and reschedule as necessary. Be sure to check in with local business owners before the program to approve messages that might appear in front of their place of business.

TIP:

Consider partnering with schools, local chamber of commerce, parks department, daycares, or Spanish-language organizations.

TIP:

For a virtual program, participants brainstorm messages to write on Post-it notes, then stick them all over town.

ADAPTATION:

Make this a two-part program: Before hitting the streets, participants make their own chalk using plaster of Paris and toilet paper rolls.

TIP:

Make the library the ending location, and gather everyone for treats!

TIP:

If your map has participants cross busy streets, enlist volunteer crossing guards to help families across.

GAME/ACTIVITY | DECORATION/DISPLAY | OUTDOORS | LOW COST

- Paper towels (for cleanup)
- Plastic bags for covering tables (optional)

Assembly:

- Mix 3 cups plaster of Paris with 1.5 cups warm water, and stir.
- Add tempura paint or food coloring, and stir.
- Spoon mixture into toilet paper rolls, wiping off any drips.
- Let chalk dry for 24 hours before peeling off paper rolls.

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

Solo-librarian friendly if the event is held in a contained area with little-to-no traffic. Volunteers would be helpful to photograph chalk art and to monitor safety during larger events.

RESOURCES

Web

Sidewalk chalk tutorial from Craft Warehouse: <https://bit.ly/3xQrY8v>

Tips for chalk art festival from Lasso the Moon: <https://bit.ly/3NQR1Od>

Chalk art (grid method) from Chalk Artists Guild: <https://bit.ly/3mO3g2w>

Tips for neighborhood chalk art from Learn with Mochi: <https://bit.ly/3MP-JYeb>

“Sidewalk Chalk Art Tutorial: Elephant” [2 min] from STL ZooTube on YouTube: <https://bit.ly/3aXGCBU>

“Chalk the Walk” from the ALSC Blog: <https://bit.ly/3OgYwy4>

Books

The Case of the Missing Chalk Drawings (2018) by Richard Byrne (picture book F)

The Chalk Art Handbook (2021) by David Zinn (middle grade NF)

The Chalk Giraffe (2020) by Kirsty Paxton and illustrated by Megan Lotter (picture book F)

Printables

Kind Message Ideas (in English and Spanish)

TIP:

During the program, be sure to have staff members or volunteers document the art, which you can then share on social media or in the library!

TIP:

Remember disposable masks! Plaster of Paris is non-toxic, but the dust can irritate lungs.

TIP:

Work quickly. Plaster starts to dry in 20–30 minutes.

TIP:

For kindness books, see the Kindness Book List on page 186.

KIND MESSAGE IDEAS / IDEAS DE MENSAJES AMABLES

ENGLISH	SPANISH
Dream big!	¡Sueña en grande!
Shine bright.	Brilla.
Believe in yourself.	Cree en ti.
Be the change	Sé tú el cambio.
You've got this.	Puedes hacerlo.
Never stop learning	Nunca dejes de aprender.
It gets better.	Se pone cada vez mejor.
Aspire to inspire.	Aspira a inspirar.
You rock!	¡Eres lo máximo!
Follow your dreams.	Sigue tus sueños.
Make today amazing	Haz de hoy un día especial.
Stay true to you.	Sé fiel a ti.
Never give up	Nunca te rindas.
Never stop learning	Nunca dejes de aprender.
It's cool to be kind.	Es genial ser amable.
You make the world a better place.	Haces del mundo un lugar mejor.
We're all in this together.	Estamos todos juntos en esto.
Be a rainbow to someone's cloud.	Sé el arcoíris de las nubes grises de
Every day is another chance.	Cada día es otra oportunidad.