

NO-SEW BLANKETS

AGES

Tweens 9–12

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Work together to make no-sew blankets to donate to a local charity or organization. You can use this as a way to address the problem of homelessness, and talk about different organizations dedicated to helping homeless youth and teens. Pair up participants, especially if you are running this program with younger children. This easy program can also help tweens earn volunteer hours for their National Junior Honor Society. Make it more fun by supplying pizza and/or snacks to keep them motivated. Buy the fleece or purchase kits from places like Joann Fabrics and Crafts. Suggested runtime: 45–60 minutes.



Image source: Stephanie Burr of Los Lunas Public Library, Los Lunas, NM

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Materials:

- Fleece (60 x 60 inches—two pieces per blanket)
- Scissors



Image source: Anna Foote of Northeast Kansas Library System, Lawrence, KS

Assembly:

- If you are buying the fleece yourself, make sure it is cut to 60 x 60 inches.
- Line up the fabric pieces with the right (fuzzy) sides out, and trim as needed to ensure they are the same size.
- Cut a 5-inch square in each corner
- Cut the fringe along all four sides. Fringe pieces should be a little wider than the width of your finger; cut them 5 inches from the edge. Make sure you are cutting through both fleece fabrics at the same time.
- With fringe pieces lined up, begin tying the knots.
- Continue all around the edges until the blanket until finished.

TIP:

You can also make this a multigenerational program by pairing tweens with senior citizens, or holding a family event.

TIP:

If you make this a family program, you will not need as many volunteers.

TIP:

To distribute blankets, pair up with local nonprofits that serve homeless populations. They could also be distributed to youth mental health groups or facilities.

ADAPTATION:

For younger children, precut everything so all they have to do is tie the fleece together.

TIP:

Buy fleece in at least two different colors. Pair a light color with a dark color, or a print with a solid, for maximum contrast.

TIP:

For accessibility, project slides of visuals that change with every step.

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

Solo-librarian friendly for tweens and above; you will need volunteers to assist younger children. Make sure you have enough table space for multiple blankets to be made at once. If space is an issue, limit the number of participants and pair them up two to a blanket.

RESOURCES

Web

“No Sew Fleece Blanket” by bunycraft on *Instructables*: <https://bit.ly/3zzG0wJ>

Donate blankets to children in need with *Project Linus*: <https://www.projectlinus.org/>



Image source: Anna Foote of Northeast Kansas Library System, Lawrence, KS

INSTRUMENTS ACROSS BORDERS

AGES

Children 8+

Multigenerational

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Hold a presentation about musical instruments from around the world (or around the United States). Emphasize drums, strings/guitars, or uncommon instruments! Invite a local symphony, high school band, or music group. If inviting a local music group, start off the program by having them play a few songs. Set up the room so that after the instrument presentations, families can take a passport and have it stamped when they visit each player one-on-one. For a visual component, include a station with a map and pins that show where the instruments originated. You could also color-coordinate the pins for instruments in the same family (i.e., strings or drums). Suggested runtime: 60–90 minutes.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Materials for presentations:

- Audience chairs for the presentation
- World map and pins
- Passport booklets with names and photo of each instrument
- Stamps and ink pads (one set for each station)

Preparation: Create the instrument passports by folding cardstock into the desired size and stapling instrument sheets inside. Set up instrument stations along the perimeter of the room with a chair and table at each one (musicians may need to bring their own displays if more is required).

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

A large meeting room is required. For large groups or more than six musicians, two or more staff members or volunteers would be helpful.

RESOURCES

Web

[Orchestra Instruments](#)

“Learning Resources” from the *Cleveland Orchestra*: <https://bit.ly/3OdHDnF>

“Meet the Instruments” from *Boston Symphony Orchestra*: <https://bit.ly/3HIDPyH>

“CSO for Kids” from the *Chicago Symphony Orchestra*:

TIP:

See *DIY Music Makers* on page 137 for more simple instrument crafts.

TIP:

In the U.S., June is African American Music Appreciation Month (and Juneteenth celebrations on June 19 include music!), July 31 is Uncommon Musical Instrument Day, and August is Hip-Hop Recognition Month (with Hip-Hop Celebration Day on August 11).

TIP:

Have noise canceling headphones or ear plugs available for sensory-sensitive patrons who may need a break from the noise.

ADAPTATION:

Run a similar program as a musical petting zoo for younger children. Instead of petting animals, budding musicians investigate a variety of instruments.

GAME/ACTIVITY | OUTREACH | OUTSIDE PRESENTER

<https://www.cso.tv/cso-for-kids>

“Digital Resources” from New York Philharmonic: <https://bit.ly/3Oe1nHP>

Uncommon Instruments

“20 of the Weirdest Musical Instruments You Need to See to Believe” from The Capitol Theatre: <https://bit.ly/3aYIDOr>

“Uncommon Instrument Awareness Day” from National Today: <https://bit.ly/39pUnci>

“From Trash to Triumph: The Recycled Orchestra” [5 min] from NPR: <https://n.pr/3HIE64H>

Drums around the world from Super Prof: <https://bit.ly/3HkNx4I>

Black Music and Hip Hop

“Celebrating Black Music Month” from National Museum of African American History and Culture: <https://s.si.edu/3xOSMpz>

“Hip-Hop” from Britannica: <https://www.britannica.com/art/hip-hop>

“Hip-Hop Music Guide” from MasterClass: <https://bit.ly/3Ogw3Za>

Books

Middle Grade Music Nonfiction

Ada’s Violin: The Story of the Orchestra of Paraguay (2016) by Susan Hood and illustrated by Sally Wern Comport

Around the World in 80 Musical Instruments (2022) by Nancy Dickmann and illustrated by Sue Downing

Before Music: Where Instruments Come From (2022) by Annette Pimentel and illustrated by Madison Safer

Make Music! (2019) by Norma Jean Haynes, Ann Sayre Wiseman, and John Langstaff

Music and How It Works: The Complete Guide for Kids (2020) by Charlie Morland and illustrated by David Humphries

Music: The Sound of Science (2019) by Margaret E. Albertson and Paula Emick

Turn It Up! A Pitch-Perfect History of Music that Rocked the World (2019) by Joel Levy

Adult American Music Nonfiction

Contact High: A Visual History of Hip-Hop (2018) by Vikki Tobak

The Meaning of Soul: Black Music and Resilience Since the 1960s (2020) by Emily J. Lordi

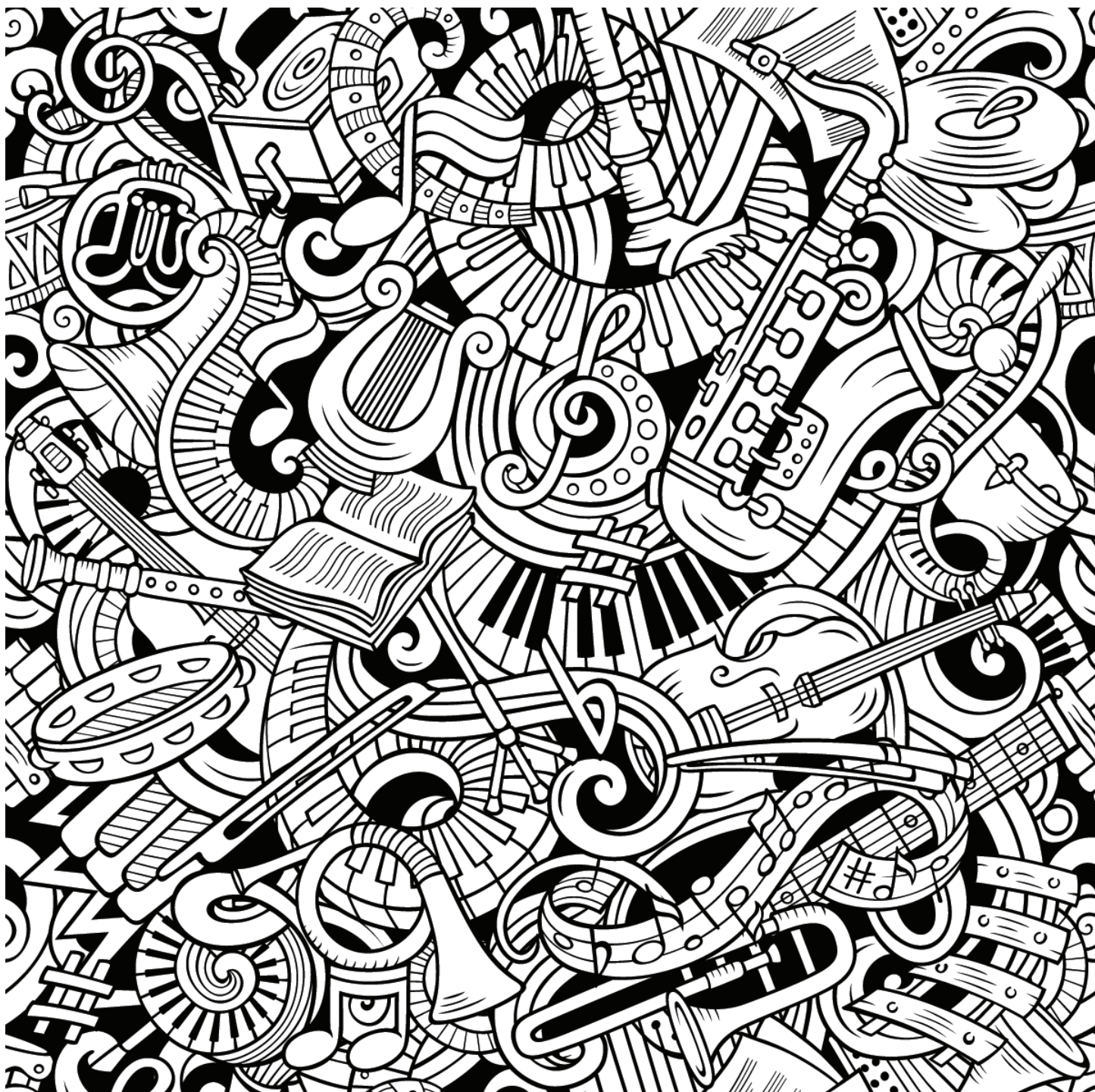
When Sunday Comes: Gospel Music in the Soul and Hip-Hop Eras (2020) by Claudrena N. Harold

Printables

Classical Instruments Coloring Sheet

TIP:

For more music picture books, see DIY Music Makers on page 137 and the Chapter 06 early literacy book suggestions on page 130.



READ & DEEDS BOOK CLUB

AGES

Adults

Multigenerational

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Books can inspire us to action! Participants read and discuss books about current topics, then take part in group service projects to make friends, benefit their community, and spread kindness. You can also be a guest host for existing book clubs and put them in touch with community organizations. Suggested runtime: 60–90 minutes.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Preparation:

- Identify or gather your book club, whether virtual or in person
- Choose and order books at least three months in advance
- Arrange service opportunities with community partners

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

Solo-librarian friendly as an adult program. Add volunteers to chaperone activities for children/teens.

RESOURCES

Web

“Introducing the Action Book Club” from *Little Free Library*: <https://bit.ly/3O6TMuz>

“Book to Action Toolkit” from *California Center for the Book*: <https://bit.ly/3Ocy5cN>

Organ donation info from *Donate Life*: <https://www.donatelife.net/>

Books

The Bright Hour: A Memoir of Living and Dying (2017) by Nina Riggs (Activity: Volunteer at or donate art to a local hospice)

Mutual Rescue: How Adopting a Homeless Animal Can Save You, Too (2019) by Carol Novello and Jenny Graves

(Activity: Volunteer at a local animal shelter, or adopt a pet)

Remember: The Science of Memory and the Art of Forgetting (2021) by Lisa Genova

(Activity: Join an Alzheimer’s Walk)

Tragedy to Triumph: The Story of Tom’s Heart (2021) by Janet Mauk and Pete Radigan

(Activity: Sign up to be an organ donor)

Printables

Reads and Deeds Book Club (in English and Spanish)

TIP:

Search social media to identify existing book clubs. Partnering with the library means they can access multiple copies of the chosen titles in all formats!

ADAPTATION:

Book clubs are very well suited to virtual adaptations.

ADAPTATION:

For children and teens, consider partnering with schools that require community service credits.

READS & DEEDS BOOK CLUB

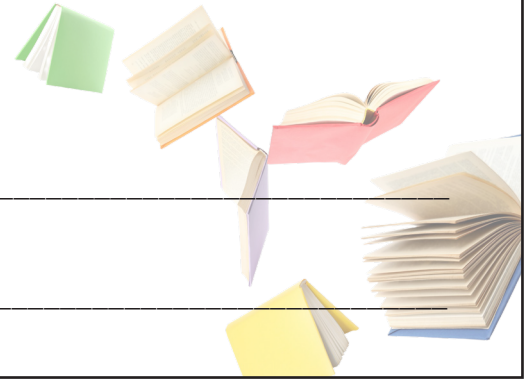
Books can inspire us to action! Read and discuss these books, then take part in a group service project that benefits your community and spreads kindness.

**READS
& DEEDS**
BOOK CLUB

Date: _____

Book: _____

Service Project: _____



**READS
& DEEDS**
BOOK CLUB

Date: _____

Book: _____

Service Project: _____



**READS
& DEEDS**
BOOK CLUB

Date: _____

Book: _____

Service Project: _____



CLUB DE LECTURA DE READS & DEEDS

Los libros nos pueden inspirar a tomar medidas. Lea y discuta estos libros y luego forme parte de un proyecto de servicio en grupo. ¡Haga amigos, ayude a su comunidad y difunda la bondad!

CLUB DE LECTURA DE

READS & DEEDS

Fecha: _____

Libro: _____

Proyecto de servicio: _____



CLUB DE LECTURA DE

READS & DEEDS

Fecha: _____

Libro: _____

Proyecto de servicio: _____



CLUB DE LECTURA DE

READS & DEEDS

Fecha: _____

Libro: _____

Proyecto de servicio: _____



COMMUNITY CARE KITS

AGES

Teens 13–18

Adults

Multigenerational

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Bring patrons together to make care kits for community members in need! The first step in this program is outreach. Reach out to relevant organizations—such as those that serve people without homes or domestic violence survivors—and ask them what they need and how you can help. Once you have a list of the most useful care kit items for individuals in these populations, ask patrons to sponsor kits financially, or you can have sign-ups for individuals to bring multiples of pre-selected items (on a given day or before the event). Then make care kit assembly a fun community event! Play music and run ice-breakers. If appropriate, you could even take a field trip or ask for volunteers to pick up supplies or distribute the kits to your target population. Suggested runtime: 60–90 minutes.

Image source: Azita Frattarelli of Riverview Veterans Memorial Library, Riverview, MI



Image source: Azita Frattarelli of Riverview Veterans Memorial Library, Riverview, MI

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Example care kit ideas for people without homes:

- Clothes such as socks, gloves, and hats;
- Hygiene items such as soap, shampoo, lotion, menstrual products, razors and shaving cream, tissue packs, bandages, wet wipes, toothbrushes and toothpaste, and sunscreen;
- Food and drink, such as water bottles, hydration tablets, snack packs, granola bars, dried fruit, crackers, peanut butter, and cans of food with pull tabs.
- Miscellany such as plastic bags, utensils, etc.

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

You will need space to collect and store donations.

RESOURCES

Web

Farm-2-Library from Southern Adirondack Library System: <https://bit.ly/3aVuHog>

Article on Operational Bed Roll from City of Greensboro: <https://bit.ly/3NUuK20>

TIP:

Consider enlisting teens to help organize and sustain recurring events.

TIP:

Consider the following:
Nursing homes,
hospitals, food pantries,
soup kitchens, animal
shelters, recovery
centers, immigrant
welcome centers, etc..

ADAPTATION:

Build a mini food pantry. Ask a local carpenter or craftsman to teach teens building basics; they can build the pantry together during the program. Teens can then decorate/paint the pantry, organize a food drive to fill it up, and spread the word over social media.

ADAPTATION:

Patrons make bed rolls using plastic bags and 10-mm crochet hooks. Works for children as young as 5 (who can prepare the plastic yarn).

TIP:

This is not a comprehensive list. Be sure to check in with your community organization of choice before you gather supplies.

GAME/ACTIVITY | OUTREACH

Books on Homelessness

Abundance (2021) by Jakob Guanzon (adult F)

The Bridge Home (2019) by Padma Venkatraman (middle grade F)

Dear Librarian (2021) by Lydia M. Sigwarth (picture book F)

Just Under the Clouds (2018) by Melissa Sarno (middle grade F)

Learning to Breathe (2018) by Janice Lynn Mather (YA F)

Little Family (2020) by Ishmael Beah (adult F)

No Fixed Address (2018) by Susin Nielsen (middle grade F)

On the Come Up (2019) by Angie Thomas (YA F)

Parked (2020) by Danielle Svetcov (middle grade/YA F)

Searching for Sam (2020) by Sophie Bienvenu (YA F)

Shelter (2021) by Christie Matheson (middle grade F)

Shelter: Homelessness in Our Community (2021) by Lois Peterson and
illustrated by Taryn Gee (middle grade NF)

Still a Family: A Story about Homelessness (2017) by Brenda Reeves Sturgis
and Jo-Shin Lee (picture book F)

TIP:

Stand Up for Kids has 10 outreach centers across the U.S. See if one exists in your area! <https://www.standupforkids.org/>

ADVOCACY ACTIVATED: TEEN ADVOCACY GROUPS

AGES

Teens 13–18

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

If your library already has a teen advisory board, consider turning it into a teen advocacy group! In an advocacy group, teens meet to identify and discuss issues faced by their communities (or themselves, their families, or their specific neighborhoods), then work together to raise awareness and/or make positive change. Your teen advocacy group could pair with an organization or assist with a library program, such as running a summer food drive, or coordinating and assembling homeless care kits. Be sure to hold a celebration for teen advocates at the end of the summer! Suggested runtime: 60–90 minutes per meeting.



Image source: Shutterstock

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Snacks are highly recommended.

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

Solo-librarian friendly. You will need a meeting room with chairs for in-person meetings.

RESOURCES

Web

“Teen-Led Community Dialogues” from STAR Net: <https://bit.ly/3mAgIXu>

YA Nonfiction

How to Change Everything: The Young Human's Guide to Protecting the Planet and Each Other (2021) by Naomi Klein

An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States for Young People (2019) by Roxane Dunbar-Ortiz and adapted by Jean Mendoza and Debbie Reese

The Other F Word: A Celebration of Fat and Fierce (2021) by Angie Manfredi

Stamped: El racismo, el antirracismo y tú / Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You (2021) by Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi (separate Spanish and English editions)

Teen Guide to Volunteering (2020) by Stuart A. Kallen

TIP:

Collaborate with teachers and teacher-librarians to recruit local high schoolers.

TIP:

Consider inviting spokespeople from community organizations to speak to your teen advocates.

TIP:

STAR Net has a wonderful resource entitled “Teen-Led Community Dialogues” (see Resources).

ADAPTATION:

For a virtual advocacy group, great a Discord server for your library. Discord allows you to create your own server and rules, and it is super popular with teens. It is also great for hosting virtual or passive teen programs, and promoting discussion.

TIP:

Connect with local homeless shelters and local chapters of groups such as Kiwanis, Lions Clubs, and Rotary.

COMMUNITY CARE KITS

AGES

Teens 13–18

Adults

Multigenerational

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Image source: Azita Frattarelli of Riverview Veterans Memorial Library, Riverview, MI



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Example care kit ideas for people without homes:

- Clothes such as socks, gloves, and hats;
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- Miscellany such as plastic bags, utensils, etc.

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

You will need space to collect and store donations.

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TIP:

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TIP:

Consider the following:
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soup kitchens, animal
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welcome centers, etc..

ADAPTATION:

Build a mini food pantry. Ask a local carpenter or craftsman to teach teens building basics; they can build the pantry together during the program. Teens can then decorate/paint the pantry, organize a food drive to fill it up, and spread the word over social media.

ADAPTATION:

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TIP:

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ARTS FOR HEARTS

AGES

Tweens 9–12

Teens 13–18

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Team up with local artists or art teachers to explore different art styles! Children or teens create original pieces of art based on what they learn, and the art is placed in a show for community members to purchase. All proceeds from “Arts for Hearts” are then donated to a local hospital, senior center, assisted living community, or rehabilitation center. If you cannot partner with an organization in your area, hang the show in your library and donate proceeds to the American Heart Association (or other organization). You could also make this a two-part program with an art opening. Provide snacks and beverages, and encourage patrons to dress up for the unveiling of the artwork. Suggested runtime: 60–90 minutes.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Preparation:

- Contact local artists, teachers, organizations, or galleries in your community. Once you have confirmed a workshop teacher, ask them for a supply list.
- Mount the artwork on black backgrounds so all the pieces pop. Promote the gallery launch or virtual gallery, and specify where the proceeds will be donated.

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

You will need a large wall space—in the library or in the community—on which to hang the finished artwork.

RESOURCES

Web

“Top 19 Famous Artists to Teach Preschoolers” (can be aged up) from *Orange Easel Art*: <https://bit.ly/3xFHwvN>

“Kandinsky Inspired Heart Art” from *Arty Crafty Kids*: <https://bit.ly/3NJLoI8>

Printables

Anatomical Heart Coloring Sheet

Art Deco Heart Coloring Sheet

TIP:

You might also be able to partner with a local art gallery to display the show.

ADAPTATION:

Make a virtual art gallery online, and enable online purchases.

ADAPTATION:

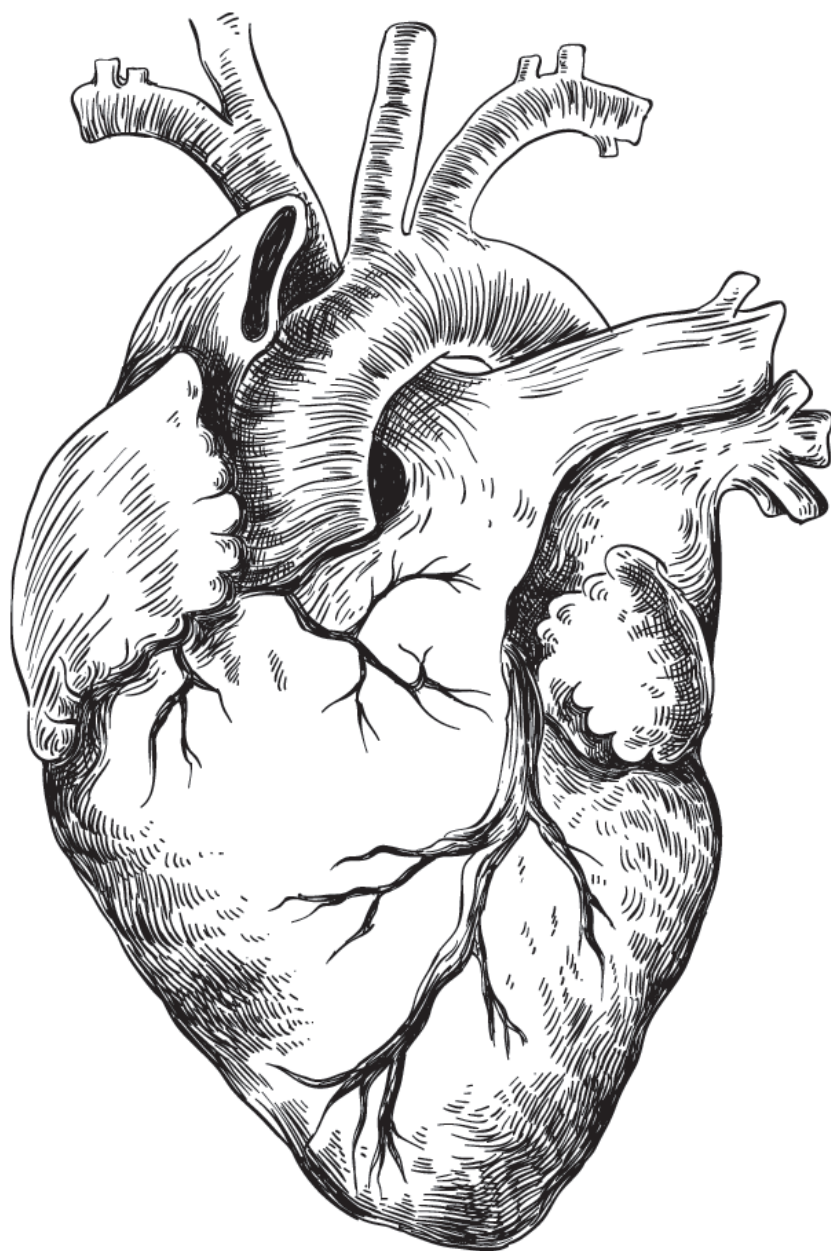
This program could also be a week-long arts camp. Participants learn a different art style every afternoon for a week.

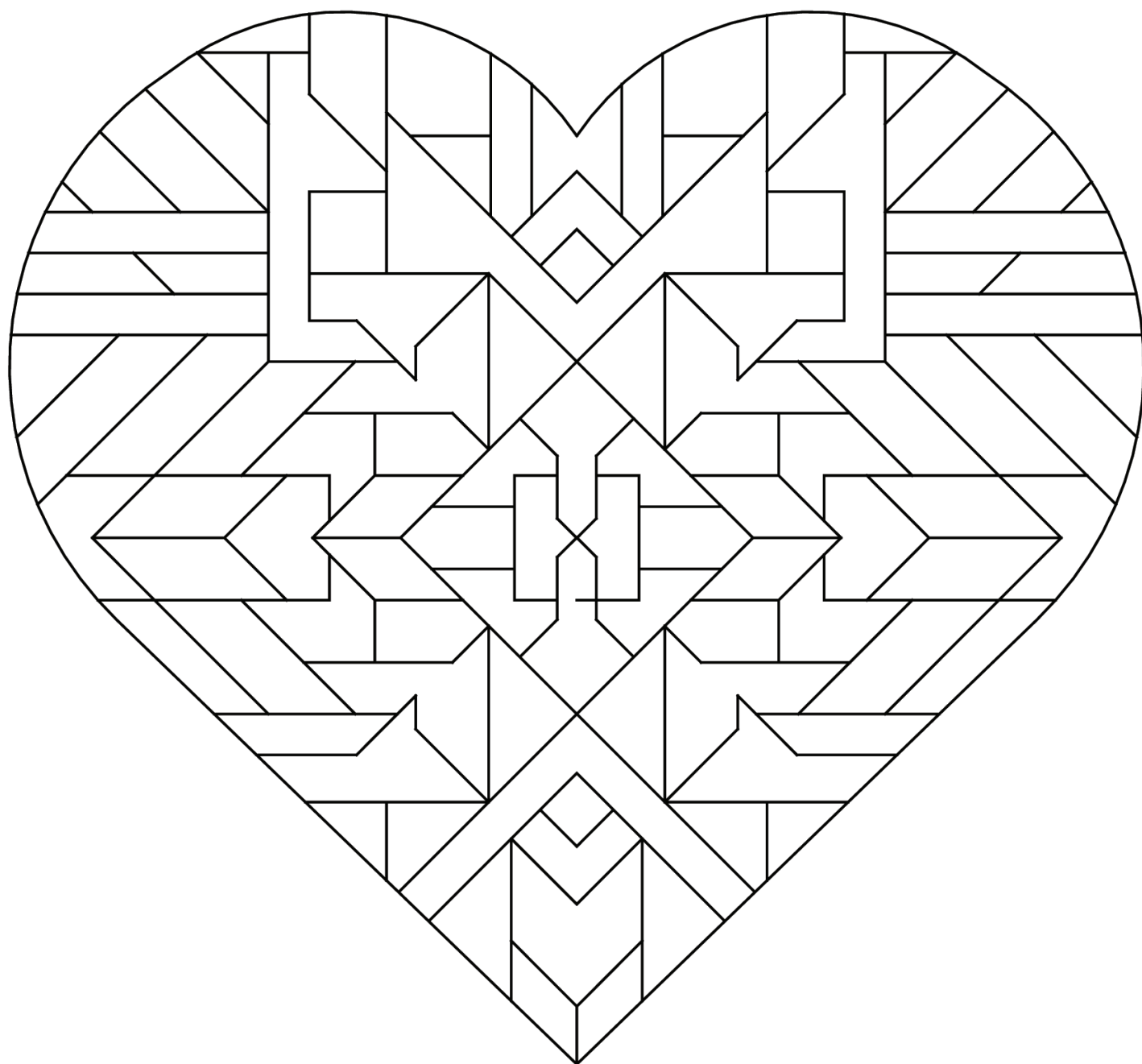
ADAPTATION:

For a passive program, provide instructions and let participants create their art at home rather than in the library.

TIP:

See also the Basquiat program for teens on page 36.





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.

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

BEST PRACTICES: OUTREACH TO SPANISH-SPEAKING COMMUNITIES

STEP 1: RESEARCH LOCAL DEMOGRAPHICS

- The Latino community in the U.S. is young, large, and diverse. First-generation immigrants may come from any of 21 Spanish-speaking countries, not only Mexico or the Northern Triangle (Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador).
- Start with local schools, city and regional governments, and state data centers. American Fact Finder or the Pew Research Center are good national sources.

STEP 2: ESTABLISH A PRESENCE OUTSIDE THE LIBRARY

- Outreach is critical to building awareness of library programs.
- Consider local nonprofits, community centers, ESL classes at local churches, parks, businesses, grocery stores, restaurants owned by Spanish-speakers, daycares, health care providers, free lunch sites, etc.
- Connect with organizations already working with these communities, such as schools and health organizations. Relationship-building is key.
- Engage with city-sponsored events and parties.
- Invite partners to host events at your library for parents (and provide food).

STEP 3: IDENTIFY SERVICE GAPS

- Identify community leaders and reach out to them.
- Conduct interviews with community leaders.
- Consider setting up a Latino advisory committee that meets a few times per year.

STEP 4: ADVERTISE PROGRAMS

- Translate fliers into Spanish.
- Identify local Spanish-language media or radio stations.
- Send a Spanish-language email newsletter that features library events.
- Invite patrons to share their cultures!

STEP 5: KEEP IT GOING

- Outreach is circular, not linear. Be consistent to develop that critical element of trust.
- Word of mouth is important!
- Be patient. Relationship-building is marketing, but it is a long-term process.

Adapted from “Before Bilingual Storytime: Engaging Latino and Spanish-Speaking Families” (2016) Webinar presented by Katie Scherrer and Lauren Simon. OCLC WebJunction.

DISPELLING MYTHS ABOUT RAISING BILINGUAL CHILDREN

(CAREGIVER HANDOUT)

Myth: Speaking more than one language at home will cause my children's English to suffer.

Pre-language milestones are the same in all languages, and bilingual children hit these developmental milestones in both languages at the same time as monolingual children.

Myth: Code-switching (switching between two languages in the same sentence) means my child is confused or at risk of developing a speech disorder.

Mixing languages is an effective communication strategy while children are developing their vocabularies. Usually by age four, children are able to switch between languages with no problems. If a bilingual child develops a speech or language disorder, their bilingualism is almost never the cause.

Myth: My child will fall behind in school.

Children who speak a second language at home typically do better in school than monolingual speakers. Children who speak two languages fluently often have better vocabularies, stronger empathy, and increased creativity and cognitive flexibility. Young children do great in English immersion classrooms. Older children, such as high schoolers, often do better learning in their native language while still learning English.

Myth. I should speak to my child in English at home so they are ready for school.

You should speak to your children in the language in which you are most fluent. Otherwise, you are modeling a lack of fluency and limited vocabulary, which can hinder language and academic development. Children who grow up in the U.S. typically have no problem learning English because they have ample opportunities to practice outside the home.

Myth: My English is not good enough to raise a bilingual child.

Children become bilingual from repeated practice in a given language. Their language ability is not based on the fluency of their caregivers.

Myth: Being bilingual means having the exact same proficiencies in both languages.

Language proficiency changes based on how a language is used and how often. Shifting fluencies are okay. Children who speak a second language at home and attend school in English typically develop stronger writing skills in English. Even after starting school, encourage your child to practice reading and writing in the language you speak at home. Children typically learn to speak fluently before they develop academic proficiency.