

Tween Programs

Below are ideas for fun projects with tweens. For more great ideas, check out:

<http://acplyouthsvcs.wikispaces.com/Teens+and+Tweens>

<http://teenprograms.pbworks.com/>

About Face

Create your own avatar! Tweens will have fun making a realistic, funny, or creative representation of themselves. The most important things to do for this program are: try some of the Web sites (below) beforehand and make a few avatars to show tweens as examples; and keep track of the time for your participants in case they want to switch sites and try more than one avatar.

Helpful Web sites

Avatars

www.doppelme.com

www.tektek.org/dream

www.reasonablyclever.com/blockhead

www.moeruavatar.com/index_en.shtml

<http://avatars.yahoo.com>

http://illustmaker.abi-station.com/index_en.shtml

<http://laptoplab.blogspot.com/2009/01/all-types-of-avatars.html> (nice compilation)

Doll makers

www.dollzmania.com

www.picnik.com

(The above Web sites appeared in *Young Adult Library Services*, Winter 2008 issue)



Build-A-Bot



Photo used by permission of Michael Cox, Pueblo City-County District Library, <http://teenprograms.pbworks.com/>

Tweens build their very own robot! These mini menacing machines are completely under their control - all they have to do is wind them up. They design the crazy clay 'skin' along with eyes, mouth, hair, and everything else.

Materials Needed

Claytoon modeling clay (never hardens)
Wind-up walkers
Clay tools for shaping and cutting clay

Additional Resources

If you're feeling ambitious, try making your own play dough. Many recipes are available online. I chose one that requires no cooking.

Play Dough Recipe

4 cups flour
1/4 cup powdered tempera paint
1/4 cup salt
1 1/2 cups water
1 T oil

Mix together flour, powdered paint and salt. Mix water, oil, and food coloring if desired. Gradually stir the water and oil mix into the flour mix. Knead the mix as you add the liquid. Add more water if too stiff, more flour if sticky.



Sidewalk Chalk Art

Tweens create colorful art all over the sidewalks around your library. For added fun, hand out information on Julian Beever. Beever, known as the “Pavement Picasso,” is a British artist who specializes in pavement drawings among other art forms. He has traveled around the world creating amazing 3D sidewalk chalk drawings. Share samples of his work with Tweens:

<http://users.skynet.be/J.Beever/pave.htm>

Material needed - sidewalk chalk



Brain Challenge



Give each tween (or team of tweens) a set number of toothpicks and marshmallows. The tween (or team) who constructs the tallest tower in the allotted period of time wins.

Materials Needed

Toothpicks

Marshmallows.



Duct Tape Roses

Making items from duct tape is a favorite of tweens. Wallets, purses, vests, hats, and roses are among the most often made. Here are the directions for a rose.



Photo used by permission of Michael Cox, Pueblo City-County District Library, <http://teenprograms.pbworks.com/>

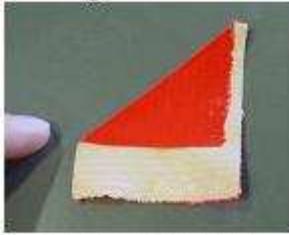
Materials Needed

Red Duct Tape
Green Duct Tape
Scissors

Set-Up

1. When purchasing the red and green duct tape for this program, be concerned less with the amount of tape needed and more with the number of separate rolls. It can be difficult to share rolls of tape easily. One alternative is to wrap the tape around a short library pencil, creating as many small individual rolls as you think you may need. I chose to ask participants to cut/rip the needed rectangles of tape and stick it to the edge of the table in front of them. This made sharing the rolls of tape much easier.
2. Practice making duct tape roses before this program. Once you get the hang of it, it will be very easy to offer advice to make these roses look quite realistic.

Description



1) Fold one corner of the rectangle down, leaving a portion of the sticky edge exposed.



2) Fold down other corner, creating what looks like a little house.



3) Roll tightly



4) Place this center petal on another petal piece, keeping the peaks at the same level.



5) Notice there is plenty of space. **Do not wrap tightly!**



6) Use similarly sized green rectangles and begin creating the stem. Use the same method as creating petals to make a leaf.



Paper Crafts - Boxpunx

Like origami, but with tongues! These colorful, sassy creatures are easy to print from www.harlancore.com/boxpunx/ and fun to put together. You can also Google "easy paper crafts" to find other sites with ready-made pages. Ask tweens to pick the design they'd like to create, print the ready-made pages, and follow instructions for cutting and folding.

Materials Needed

A decent color printer

1 good, sharp scissors for each participant

1 piece of cardboard, approximately 8.5" x 1" for each participant. Use this for blade-cutting small areas, like the mouth.

1 bottle of glue for each participant. Please note that not all creatures require glue.

Tape. 1 dispenser per 5 participants. Only the craftiest of participants are able to make these creatures without the help of a little tape.



Cooking Programs

Food programs are also a hit with tweens. Here are some ideas that do not require ovens or stoves, but do require some counter top appliances.

1. Smoothie Challenge

Groups of tweens are arranged and assigned to a table and a recipe. Each table is numbered and equipped with all the needed hardware for measuring and mixing ingredients.

Tweens are instructed to follow their recipe in order to make the best smoothie possible. The only questions the librarian answers should pertain to working the blenders. When the smoothie is made to the team's satisfaction, they pour 1 or 2 tablespoons of their smoothie into Dixie cups, (already marked with appropriate table numbers) and take them to the testing table.

Once all the smoothies are at the testing table and arranged by team numbers, the judging begins. Anyone who wishes to vote must taste each smoothie. Each person picks the smoothie they like best and writes the number of that smoothie on a piece of paper. Tally the votes; the winning team gets out of clean-up duty.

Materials Needed

Ingredients for smoothies
1 blender for each team
Measuring cups for each team
Measuring spoons for each team
Rubber scrapers for each team
Dixie cups
Crayon (mark team numbers on cups)
Paper towels (take the amount you think you'll need and double it)
Plastic table covering or tablecloths

2. Chocolate Art

This program has quite a bit of start up costs, but the items can be used time and time again. Tweens never tire of making chocolate art.

Materials Needed

Chocolate – purchase from a candy making supplier
Chocolate molds
Squeeze bottles for pouring chocolate into molds
Crock pot (or electric skillet or microwave) (microwave is easiest)
Optional : Wrappers & boxes for the finished candy

Melt chocolate in microwave in a bowl (or use crock pot or skillet), and then fill the squeeze bottles. Put the bottles in the warm crock pot wrapped in a towel until poured into molds. Putting molds in the freezer will speed up the process.

Hints

Tweens should wash their hands before the program begins.

At clean-up time, to remove the chocolate from the squeeze bottles, put them in the freezer long enough for the chocolate to harden.

3. Chex Mix

Tweens love to make and eat Chex Mix. It a great after school snack and fun to make. Tweens learn how to follow the directions of a recipe and multiply the measurements for double/triple batches. And because it is done using a microwave, there is plenty of time to make more.

Recipe

3 cups Corn Chex cereal
3 cups Rice Chex cereal
3 cups Wheat Chex cereal
1 cup mixed nuts
1 cup bite-size pretzels
1 cup garlic-flavor bite-size bagel chips

6 Tablespoons butter or margarine
2 Tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
1 1/2 teaspoons seasoned salt
3/4 teaspoon garlic powder
1/2 teaspoon onion powder

The original recipe includes corn, rice, and wheat cereal, but you can mix and match to suit your taste -- just total 9 cups of cereal.

Instructions

In a large microwave bowl, mix cereals, nuts, pretzels, and bagel chips: set aside. In a small microwavable bowl, microwave butter uncovered on High about 40 seconds or until melted. Stir in seasonings. Pour over cereal mixture; stir until evenly coated. Microwave uncovered on High 5 to 6 minutes, thoroughly stirring every 2 minutes. Spread on paper towels to cool. Enjoy!

4. Royal Cupcakes (a take off of the Food Network's *Ace of Cakes*)

Easy "peasy" program for tweens.

Materials Needed

Cupcakes
Frosting
Cake decorating utensils

Dig out the cupcake decoration books for ideas or go to the Web for ideas. You may want to choose a theme, for example choose a book they all have read and generate ideas from it.



Beyond the Talking Head – Movie Making 101

Time needed: 2 to 3 hours.

Equipment Needed

Digital camera with ability to shoot video (or digital camcorder)
Cable for transferring video from camera to computer
Computer with video editing software (e.g. Windows Movie Maker that comes with Windows XP) OR
access the Web for a free online video editing service.

What you do

Get a bunch of tweens together.

Brainstorm some ideas for a video.

Pick an idea and start scripting/storyboarding.

When the script is complete, cast it and start shooting.

When the shooting is complete, upload from camera to computer.

Edit video.

Save video to your computer.

Upload video to your YouTube account, Vimeo account, or similar.

Post video to your blog and encourage participants to post it or link to it from their Facebook, MySpace, blog, etc.

If you're not sure how to do any of this, your first resource is your group of tweens. Ask them if they know how to do it, or if they can figure it out. Next is the person you rely on for this kind of tech stuff, perhaps someone from your IT department if you have one. The step that will benefit the most from actual experience or formal training is #6, editing the video. If you don't have either of those, there are good tutorials on YouTube and elsewhere on the Internet, and very likely you can find one specifically tailored to the software you're using.

The main problem you will have is keeping tweens focused on the task at hand. They will need some guidance. They will want to go off half-cocked. (Sometimes, though, that works, so you have to experiment.) The younger the group, the more guidance they will need.

Be willing to admit failure. Sometimes, it just doesn't work out. You might want to set a time limit for clearing the initial hurdle of coming up with a doable idea, and if you don't achieve that, make it clear at the outset what you'll do in that case. Perhaps you'll start working on an idea for the next time.

This link may offer some inspiration:

<http://acplteens.wordpress.com/?s=talking+head&searchbutton=Go!>