

Book Activities using Few Supplies

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Penguin Post by Debi Gliori

Pair this book with others about postal service. Create a pen pal service between daycare groups of similar sizes. Have children create individual or group picture letters to send to their pen pals. By reading one postal service themed book at each story program, this activity could be used at the beginning or end of the program for several weeks.

Horace and Morris Join the Chorus (but what about Dolores?) by James Howe, Amy Walrod, il.

While reading this story have the children participate by singing. When "Horace sang the high notes," sing La La La in a high tone. As "Morris sang the low notes," sing La La La in a low tone. Then as "Dolores sang notes no one had ever heard before," sing La La La on any tone. Make sure you have a cutoff movement that will direct children to stop singing. After reading have a songfest. Sing several children's songs with or without accompaniment. As they do in the book, sing the high notes, the low notes, and sing loud and true. If possible, have some rhythm band instruments to play.

Oma's Quilt by Paulette Bourgeois & Stéphanie Jorisch

A Far-Fetched Story by Karin Cates, Nancy Carpenter, il.

These titles use quilts as a comfort piece. In *Oma's Quilt*, a quilt is made of memories for a grandmother who has moved to a retirement home. *A Far-Fetched Story* is a tongue-in-cheek tale where a quilt is created for warmth in the winter. After reading, help children create their own paper quilt. Give each child a construction paper square to draw their favorite thing. Then tape the pieces together on a wall or inside the bookmobile to form a quilt. You will want to have several extra pieces to ensure the completed quilt is rectangular.

A Story for Bear by Dennis Haseley & Jim LaMarche

The power of words is shown in this picture book. Use this book with older children to discuss language. Have several words on index cards - words that may be known or unknown to the group but have a definite feeling attached to them. Have dictionaries and thesauri available. Read the words and have children try to determine their meaning. For example, read the word delightful making sure to add a lilt to your voice. Discuss what the word sounds like - is it a happy word? sad? angry? joyous? Have children look up the definition of the word to see if it matches their thoughts. If chart paper is available, you may wish to list responses.

The Birdwatchers by Simon James

Featuring a grandfather and grandson, this story relates the idea of a "fish story" with birdwatching. Before the program, create several statements about animals, both true and false. Make sure to include some that might be wildly fantastical like "cows stand on their hind legs every day at dusk." Read these with the group and have the children determine whether they are true or false. Then let children create some statements of their own. You may wish to have some reference materials available for verification and ideas.

The Magic Hat by Mem Fox, Tricia Tusa, il.

Ideal for participation, this book contains a rhyming, repetitive phrase. Teach the children the phrase and have them join in during the reading. After reading, play a magic hat game. Have children sit in a circle and repeat the phrase together, "Oh, the magic hat, the magic hat, it moved like this and it moved like that." Then toss a hat to one child who will pantomime an animal. As children guess the animal correctly, begin again.

Treasure Hunt by Allan Ahlberg, Gillian Tyler, il.

After reading this title, play several seek-and-find games such as I-Spy or Riddle-Me-Ree. You may also want to hide several paper books throughout the room or the bookmobile for children to locate by pointing them out or retrieving them.

Big Al and Shrimpy by Andrew Clements, Yoshi, il.

Create tissue paper water pictures. Give each child a sheet of butcher paper or manila drawing paper for a background along with several colors of tissue paper. Have children create an undersea picture by tearing the tissue paper and placing it on the background. Use a moist sponge to press the tissue paper down on the background. After setting a moment, remove and dispose of the tissue paper. The resulting picture will be a watery scene.

The Year I Didn't Go To School by Giselle Potter

A picture book autobiography, this title features actors. Give older primary or elementary school children paper plates and crayons/markers to create animal masks. Allow time for acting - call out phrases for children to pantomime. For example, "The animals laughed." Talk about the book as an autobiography of a children's book illustrator during the program.

Henry Hikes to Fitchburg by D. B. Johnson

While reading the story, stop and pass out play money equivalent to what has been earned by the friend. Have children pass the money around the group and back to the front where it can be displayed on a flannel or poster board. Give children time to predict the winner. You may want to create a chart with Henry and the friend to mark their progress as the story is read. As before, allow time for children to predict a winner.

Across a Dark and Wild Sea by Don Brown

After reading to older elementary schoolers, discuss Uncial hand lettering (chart included in book). Write a phrase like "Reading is Fun" on large paper using Uncial lettering. Have children decode the phrase, then copy it on one side of an 3"x5" index card with the translation on the other side of the card. Give children time to hide the card in a book on the bookmobile for a future reader to find.

Ugh! A Bug by Mary Bono

After reading, work as a group to write a poem about bugs. Then give each child an empty bathroom tissue roll and packing peanut. Use markers to decorate the roll as a log and the packing peanut as a worm. Children can place their "worm" in or on the "log".

Waiting for Wings by Lois Ehlert

Give each child a coffee filter to decorate with either colored chalk or a few drops of food coloring. Bunch the filter up in the center and wrap a chenille stem around. Leave the two ends of the chenille stem pointing upward to create antennae and spread out the sides of the filter to form a butterfly's wings.

One Grain of Rice by Demi

After reading the book, bring out a shallow pan filled with white and brown rice. Have on hand several paper cups, a timer and two pairs of tweezers. Divide the children into two groups, give each team a color (white or brown) and have them race to see which team can pick up the most rice (of their color) with tweezers. Use the timer to give each child 30 seconds to pick up rice.

Laura Numeroff's 10 Step Guide to Living with Your Monster by Laura Numeroff

After reading create a guide to living with a bookmobile (or dinosaur or whatever else you wish). Have each child create and illustrate a rule to include, then decorate the bookmobile with the drawings.

Squiggle by Carole Schaefer

Before reading, ask the children for examples of imagination. Introduce the book as a story of a girl with an imagination. After reading, show a long string of red yarn - hold it up high and let it go to fall to the floor. Give children time to look at the yarn to see what shapes they can see in it. Take turns dropping the string and finding shapes.

To promote graphic novels with teens...

With a Star Wars graphic novel display, include instructions to create your own star wars name.

Last Name:

1. Take the first 3 letters of your surname.
2. Add the first 2 letters of your first name

First Name:

1. Take the first 2 letters of your mother's maiden name.
2. Add the first 3 letters of your place of birth.

Example: If your name is John Doe, your mother was Susie Brown, and you were born in Toronto, you would be... Doejo Brtor