Mysterious Benedict Society Adventure

Genesee District Library

Teens

Mysterious Benedict Society Adventure

Mar 2, 2023

$1-50

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Byline

Heather Harrison, Youth Services Librarian, Genesee District Library, Flint, Mich.

Fans of "The Mysterious Benedict Society" (MBS) book series participate in an adventure featuring secret codes, puzzles and riddles. Participants learn Morse Code and how to make decoder rings and hand-made marshmallow shooters.

This one-hour program is aimed at children ages 8-12 and is recommended for kids who are comfortable reading. Kids who haven’t read the MBS books or have seen the television show are just as welcome as devout fans. The goal is to introduce kids to the series, learn Morse Code (which leads them to library call numbers) and solve

puzzles from "Mr. Benedict’s Book of Perplexing Puzzles, Elusive Enigmas, and Curious Conundrums."

Advanced Planning

I began planning for this program approximately 3 months in advance by researching kid/tween-friendly puzzles/riddles and looking for other Mysterious Benedict Society library programs (there were very few) and MBS birthday party ideas. What I like most about the MBS books is that they focus on friendship, collaboration and cooperation. Characters each contribute something important to solving the problem and no one character is the star.

I narrowed my program focus to a scavenger hunt that would teach Morse code to translate library call numbers. I budgeted for 30 kids but expected less due to post-pandemic attendance numbers.

Marketing

Our library promotes programs using posters, flyers and web banners for social media, etc. Next time, I will include an email blast to patrons of the library branch hosting the program.

Budgeting

Under $50 dollars. This can be reduced by not including so many "goodies" in the goodie bags. Our programs are always free to attendees.

To see the full list of materials we purchased, see the full program guide.

Day-of-event Activity

Set up includes setting up the tables and chairs and distributing materials. Materials for participants include folders, goodie bags and craft supplies for marshmallow shooters.

Before the program starts, staff hide "clues" in chosen library books. The number of staff members working the program depends on the number of attendees. One person can typically handle up to 10-12 kids.

Program Execution

We had 10 attendees. I started by introducing them to the scenario: Mr. Curtain has stolen Moocho Brazo's fruit turnovers. purchased from a local bakery. They must help Number Two solve the clues and find the turnovers.

We began by teaching participants how the secret decoder rings work and let them practice writing short messages. If you choose to use invisible ink pens, make sure they are working.

Next, we translated the Morse Code into library call numbers for the scavenger hunt. At that point, participants found the relevant books and discovered puzzles inside. These puzzles are photocopies from "Mr. Benedict's Mysterious Book of Perplexing Puzzles." Once they solve the puzzles, they can proceed to the next book. The final book held a simple riddle leading them back to our starting point and the fruit turnovers.

Advice

Plan for extra staff members or volunteers if your attendance is over 15.

Consider creating multiple short scavenger hunts and place the students into small groups of 4 or 5 each. This ensures they don't bump into each other in the library.

Allow enough time to make marshmallow shooters because it's a popular part of the program. Use small marshmallows as large ones don't work and make sure to emphasize to watch out and don't step on the marshmallows — cleaning up

marshmallow goo from the carpet is no fun.

Plan for allergies if you provide a treat like fruit turnovers, pie, etc.

Market to local elementary and middle school teachers.

Did you try this program at your library? Share your experience using this form.

Supporting Materials

Document
mbs_program_guide.pdf
Document
mbs_rebus.pdf
Document
morse_code_chart.pdf
Document
secret-decoder.pdf
Document
mbs_scavenger_hunt.pdf
Download this Program as a PDF

- Programming Librarian Facebook Group

Slideshow Images



Image





More Programs

Mar 6, 2020
Children (9 and under)+ | □□
Image



Harry Potter Escape Room (on a $0 Budget)

Audiences:

Children (9 and under)
Tweens (10-12)
Teens (13-16)
Young Adult (17 - 20)
Adults (21 and up)
Intergenerational
Sep 9, 2020
Young Adult (17 - 20)+ | $$
Image



Fantasy RPG Escape Room

Audiences:

Young Adult (17 - 20)
Adults (21 and up)
Aug 24, 2021
Teens (13-16)+ | $$$
Image



Money Madness Teen Lock-in

Audiences:

Teens (13-16)