Portraits by Primary Schoolers

Kingston Library

Intergenerational

Portraits by Primary Schoolers

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$51-100

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Byline

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This intergenerational event invites students (ages 6-8) to draw portraits of seniors from the community.

Advanced Planning

Our goal was to engage different sectors of the community in an intergenerational event. Young children sat and drew portraits and engaged with older community members.

The planning began with securing the school's permission to bring a class of students to the event, which was done about three or four months beforehand. We also confirmed how many students would attend.

Once the school was confirmed, about a month before the event, we started contacting the aged care facilities in the surrounding area. This was done by phoning each facility and speaking with the activities coordinator. They all thought it was brilliant, and we had no problem getting a number to attend.

About six weeks before the event, we purchased the art materials. The tea, coffee and milk were purchased the day before.

The main challenge we had was actually on the day. A senior group that initially said they weren't coming ended up coming with a group of nine. This meant that we had more seniors than children to draw them. Because we supplied tea, coffee and biscuits (cookies), we were able to give them a drink and something to eat whilst they waited for a young artist to draw them.

Marketing

For the first year that we ran the event, it was marketed through a statewide Seniors Week event magazine that was widely distributed. The last two have just been marketed through Eventbrite, Facebook and our monthly What's On newsletter. In all years, direct marketing was done to all aged care facilities in surrounding areas. We found that most of these facilities are often looking for events/activities for their residents to attend.

The direct marketing approach was the most successful by far. The vast majority of seniors came from direct marketing. After the success of the first year, marketing was easy as the aged care facilities were so eager to come back.

Budgeting

The main expense was purchasing the art materials:

- Pads of cartridge paper (110gsm) - allowing for three to four sheets per child

- Crayons - a box per child who was attending (in our case it was 22)
- Pencils (HB or 2B) - one per child
- Erasers - one per child
- Pencil sharpeners - just a few

We also provided a morning tea of biscuits, tea, coffee, milk and sugar. The library already had cups, teaspoons, plates, etc.

We ran the event quite cheaply and the same materials have been used for the three annual sessions.

Day-of-event Activity

The event is held in the main open space in the library. The physical setup required getting tables from other rooms, clearing seating from the area, moving the daily newspapers to another area in the library and setting up the tea/coffee station. Signage was also required to keep the area clear for the event.

We had four staff members available on the day. Three of those staff were available to help move furniture and set up the space.

During the event, one staff member was in charge of photos and photo consent forms. We had one staff making tea and handing out biscuits and two staff were roving around making sure everything was running along okay. The only real challenge we faced was when extra seniors arrived, and they had to sit and wait for a student to be free to draw them.

Program Execution

Each year, the event has grown. More and more seniors are interested in participating. This year, we had 22 students and around 35 seniors. We also had around five school staff and about 10 carers from the aged care facilities.

The feedback we receive is incredible. Seeing the seniors hug the students after having their portraits drawn is totally heartwarming! The Seniors LOVE coming to the library and chatting with the young ones. They take their portraits home with

them and a few have been to all three that we have run and they have their portraits up on the wall in their room. The kids love it! The feedback from the school is the kids talk about their new friends for weeks and weeks afterward. The school wants to come back every year as do the aged care facilities which is the perfect feedback!

Last year, one of the gentlemen (a senior) arranged to go to the school and chat with the students about the 'olden' days and the students got to ask a heap of questions. It is truly a heartwarming intergenerational event that we will be running every year.

Advice

Ensure that you have more children/students than seniors. You can have two children drawing one senior at the same time. If you have more seniors, they have to wait which isn't ideal.

Get the school class organized first, including a time that suits the school. Mornings are best, especially for the seniors.

If you make the effort to personally contact the aged care facilities, it means that relationships can be built which makes it easier in the future and is much more personal than just sending an email.

Offer a morning tea. It seems to be a real crowd-pleaser! I enlisted the help of the carers from the aged care facilities and also the school staff to hand out tea and coffee. We placed the tea and coffee station a little distance away from where the kids and seniors were for ease of movement around the desks and safety.

Make sure no photo is taken without consent and have photo consent forms ready.

It is worth the effort! It is a wonderful event that brings together the community in the library.

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

Supporting Materials

Download this Program as a PDF

- Programming Librarian Facebook Group

Slideshow Images







Image







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Adults (21 and up)+ | □□
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Musical Bingo for Aging Adults

Audiences:

Adults (21 and up)
Mar 13, 2024
Tweens (10-12)+ | □□
Image



Intergenerational Book Club

Audiences:

Tweens (10-12)
Adults (21 and up)
Intergenerational
May 7, 2024
Adults (21 and up)+ | $$
Image



Community-Made Granny Square Afghan

Audiences:

Adults (21 and up)