Free Comic Book Day

Scholastic Library & Archive

Intergenerational

Free Comic Book Day

Mar 19, 2025

$101-250

$$
Byline

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Free Comic Book Day is traditionally on the first Saturday of May, but why not celebrate a few weeks early during National Library Week? The theme this year is "Drawn to the Library."

Utilize the opportunity to do a reading survey or have patrons vote on imaginary 'who would win' scenarios to get a comic. Partner with a local comic book shop to order the comics needed for the program, all while promoting your library's comic and graphic novel collection.

Advanced Planning

I worked at the Rio Rancho Public Library in New Mexico when I did Free Comic Book Day as a Teen Librarian in 2007 and 2008. The program aimed to publicize the library's graphic novel collection. Planning was 3-4 months in advance, as I needed to coordinate with a local comic book shop. The shop owner added comics to his order for the library (which we compensated him for) and advised me on popular titles. In exchange for being able to order comics through them at a discount, the library allowed the local comic shop to stamp/sticker the comics with their store's contact information.

This program did not encounter unexpected challenges; it was simple to execute. One outcome was that several comics and graphic novels circulated as patrons stopped by the table with a 'FREE COMICS' sign and discovered they were part of the collection.

Marketing

We sent a press release to the local papers and advertised it on the library's online programming calendar. We gave away almost every comic we had, and by the end of the weekend, they were completely gone.

Budgeting

As I recall, the comics cost ten to twenty-five cents each, which is probably more now. This is definitely a 'while supplies last' situation. You would have to buy a larger quantity to cut costs, so a system-wide event at a main library might be better than one branch doing this. Another option is to have publishers and retailers donate comics or work with local independent comic artists to create unique zine content that the library manufactures for the event.

Day-of-event Activity

A table was set up in the teen reading room. My teen advisory group members took turns sitting at the table, and I was also there at the reference desk. There was clear

signage that you could have ONE free comic per person. The only real challenge was that whichever comic was the most popular ran out quickly.

Program Execution

On Sunday, we left the table up without coverage, and there were no issues. By the end of the weekend, all the comics were gone. We had around 200 comics, so that was a good number of interactions. Many families left with the parents and kids all taking a comic.

The feedback was great. There were lots of conversations about comics from the past and new content being published. Graphic novels circulated from all of the collections (adult, teen and children's).

Advice

Use the opportunity to do a fun reading survey or something where patrons vote with post-its on a wall. Make it interactive, so they give you useful info in exchange for a free comic.

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

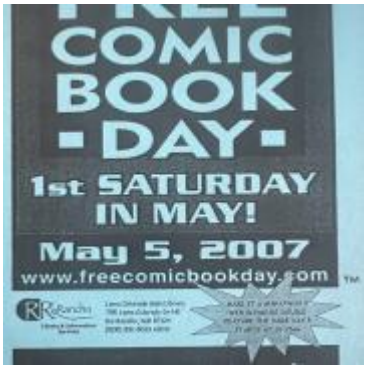
Supporting Materials

Download this Program as a PDF

- Programming Librarian Facebook Group

Slideshow Images

Image



More Programs

Jul 9, 2020
Children (9 and under)+ |
Image



Virtual Comic Mini-Con

Audiences:

Children (9 and under)

Tweens (10-12)
Teens (13-16)
Adults (21 and up)
Oct 10, 2024
Intergenerational+ | $
Image



Free Vegetable and Flower Share

Audiences:

Intergenerational
Mar 17, 2025
Teens (13-16)+ | $
Image



Make a National Library Week Zine

Audiences:

Teens (13-16)
Young Adult (17 - 20)
Adults (21 and up)