24-Hour Comics Day

Scholastic Library & Archive

Teens

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Young Adult

24-Hour Comics Day

Mar 25, 2025

$51-100

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Byline

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From the website: "24-Hour Comics Day is an annual international celebration of comics creation. On this day, creative folks take on the 24-Hour Comic Challenge to create a 24 page comic book story, normally months worth of work, in 24 straight hours."

Along with the 24-hour version for teens, I have also done this program as a 6-hour onsite "trip" (complete with permission slips) where kids spent the day in the school library with me, from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., with a lunch break, drawing, inking and coloring a complete 6-page comic book.

This is a great program to celebrate National Library Week 2025's theme of "Drawn to the Library."

Advanced Planning

The goal was to create a comic with a beginning, middle and end. Planning has to be weeks and months in advance, particularly if you want to be one of the official sites and keep a space in the library open 24 hours straight for this program.

I was a teacher at the Native American Community Academy in Albuquerque, New Mexico when I did 24-Hour Comics Day with my high school comic book club in '10 and '11. We participated as a group in an event run by a local comics artists group, and I was their chaperone along with another teacher. We got permission slips from the parents, and the two of us brought enough snacks and supplies for the 8-9 kids who went with us. The only challenge was finding sleeping nooks for the inevitable naps.

I was a library school student at Pratt School of Information when I modified this program to a daytime event at P.S. 328 Phyllis Wheatley, a public elementary school in Brooklyn where I once taught 4th grade and ran a library club. About a month in advance, I got the permission slips and everything squared away with the admin, their teachers and their parents so that they could spend the day in the library. I had snacks and supplies, but we did go to the cafeteria for lunch.

Marketing

Since I did this with established groups (school comic book club and school library club), I brought it up mostly in person during the club meeting several weeks prior to the event. I explained it and showed examples of comics I tried and sometimes successfully made in 24 hours.

Marketing worked out fine because this is a quality-over-quantity event. It also touches on the creative side, as in the library, we are usually consuming texts, but for a day, the patrons are making them together. It is bonding.

Budgeting

Most of the money is spent on snacks and supplies. I bought loose, smooth bristol 8.5x11 paper and researched the best kinds of markers, though, at the end of the day, I bought a lot of Sharpies, black, and the 24 pack with all the colors.

For the elementary school students, I had colored pencils and Crayola markers. For cost-cutting, you could do a potluck for food and require folks to bring their own supplies. Maybe stick to providing copy paper and black markers at a minimum.

Day-of-event Activity

The set up is several tables, rulers, stencils, paper, markers, pencils, erasers, and all of the other supplies organized in the center of each table. There should be a backup table with a pencil sharpener and more supplies to refill the tables. Food should be set up buffet-style on a side table. Several power strips are set up so no one trips, and each table can charge their phones, tablets and laptops over the course of the day. A designated break room or patio would be good so folks aren't locked into a room overnight without anywhere to go. Security may be needed if it is a public or academic library situation, and multiple teachers if it is a school setting.

The main challenge is helping folks deal with writer's block, but that is where they can turn to their peers. You can also get creative writing prompt cards/games/dice. Folks can experiment with AI in this new normal. At the end of everything, whether you are an official site or not, there should be a station where the library can scan each participant's comic. If they finish, you can submit it to the official organizers of the event.

Program Execution

Attending an event with my high school comic book club was a great bonding experience that I still reflect on. I'm sure the kids do, too. There were 8-9 of us, and I remember almost all of the comics they made, some of which I have copies of. The

kids and I did it twice, and while none of us are famous comic artists now, it was an exercise that forced you to get a story out of your system quickly without wallowing in doubt. Like running a marathon, having done this once or twice in life - more if you want to - will have an impact. That being said, doing it as a single-day program with younger elementary-age kids did not have the same impact.

Advice

I recommend this program for teens (with chaperones) and adult library patrons. Participate in the larger event so that people find you and your library as the nearest participating location. Do a signup. Set behavior guidelines. Involve many of your colleagues to participate in the whole event or take shifts over 24 hours and/or security in the event planning since it will involve having the library open into the night and early morning.

Focus on quality over quantity, and limit participation to 25 or less until you have done the program a few times and have the logistics down. Promote afterward by creating a zine with materials made during the event.

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

Supporting Materials

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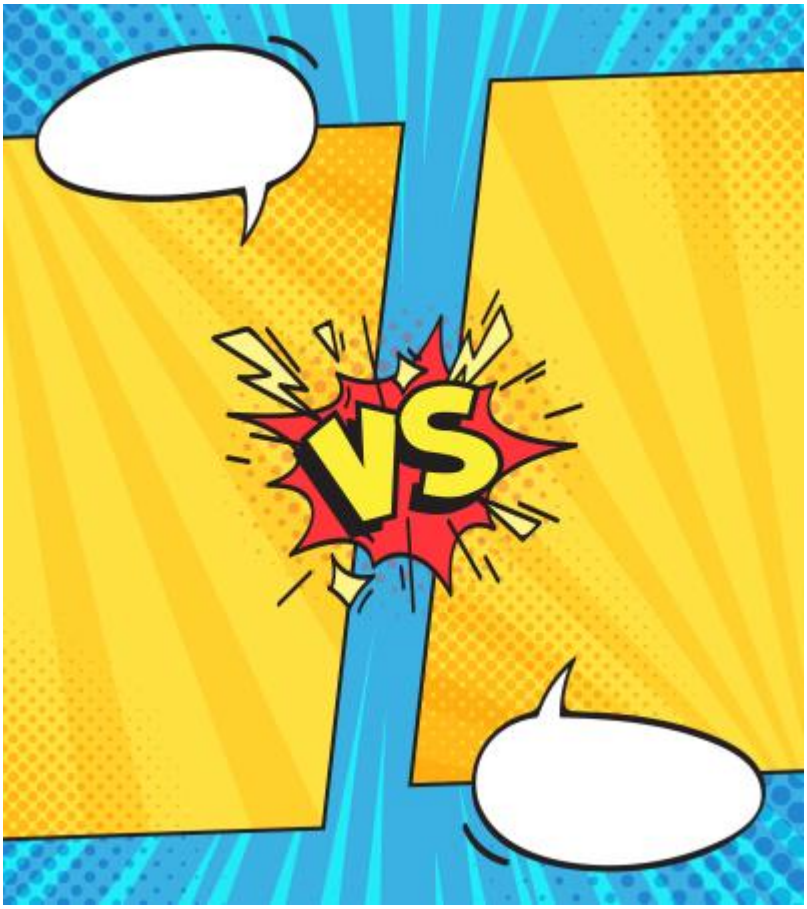

Comics Drawing Battle

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Dramatic Comics Reading

Audiences:

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