Light Up the Holidays: Stories and Crafts

Arapahoe Library District

Children

|

Tweens (10-12)

Light Up the Holidays: Stories and Crafts

Jun 28, 2017

$251-500

$$
Byline
Victoria Brown, Programming Specialist, Arapahoe Library District, Englewood, Colo.

The holidays always bring a lot of traffic to our libraries, and December 2016 was no exception. We offered Light Up The Holidays: Stories and Crafts as a children's program in all of our eight branches and even one of our Bookmobile stops. The program covered four different holidays that fell during the same week last year.

We wanted to focus on crafts involving light, as it is a common theme in all four of the holidays we discussed (Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanzaa and Winter Solstice). While we helped the children finish a particular light-themed craft, we talked about the holiday the craft was related to. For example, as we worked on the Kwanzaa candle craft, we learned that Kwanzaa was the most recent of the holidays and originated in the United States in 1966. Our goal was for the children to learn how the holidays were each different, but can still be relatable.

Advanced Planning

We prepared the crafts and activities a couple months before the first scheduled program. The schedule was made in August, but the crafts were not finalized until October. This gave us plenty of time to order the supplies and prepare marketing advertisements. We also reserved books from across the district covering a wide range of holidays; the children could check them out after the program.

This was a staff-led program, and we were sure to have samples of all the crafts ready beforehand (see instructions under Attachments at right). We already had some of the supplies on hand, left over from previous programs — the rest of the needed supplies we purchased months in advance.

Marketing

We are fortunate to have a great marketing team who take care of all our fliers and brochures, as well as our Facebook updates and Arapahoe Libraries website promotions. Earlier in the month prior to our programs, our outreach team visited Rolling Hills Elementary School and left program brochures to promote all of our upcoming events. The school is a short distance from our Smoky Hill library, where one of the Light Up the Holidays programs was scheduled to take place. Other businesses in the area allow us to leave fliers to promote upcoming programs.

The Denver Post attended the Smoky Hill library program to write about programs libraries offer when students are on winter break. The article will help with advertising for our future programs by bringing traffic to our website.

Budgeting

The total cost of the program was around $300 for events at all nine scheduled locations. We planned for a maximum of 25 patrons at each branch. We used some supplies that we already had from previous programs (pipe cleaners, etc.), which helped keep the cost down.

Day-of-event Activity

The crafts were set up before we started reading the books; that way, when we were finished, we could move right over from the story corner to the tables. Each child had a spot set out for them (we checked how many kids were registered and set out the right amount of kits). We covered the tables with a plastic tablecloth for easy clean-up.

We had extra activities and crafts planned for the hour in case the children finished early.

Program Execution

When the families arrived, we asked them to make a nametag (they were in a shape of a dreidel and an ornament). In most of the branches we started by doing a story. We read different books at each program, and sometimes we read a couple before starting on the crafts. During the story we asked the kids questions about the upcoming holidays and got them engaged. Participation during the book reading helped them stay attentive throughout the program.

We read one book at the begining and one or two more at the end, depending on how much time was left. The titles we chose were "Latke the Lucky Dog" by Ellen Fischer, for Hanukkah; "Kevin’s Kwanzaa" by Lisa Bullard; "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" by Robert Louis May, for Christmas; and "The Shortest Day" by Wendy Pfeffer, for Solstice.

Parents and kids alike stayed and listened to the story, then participated in the craft portion of the program. After the story, we selected one craft that we set out on the table beforehand, so all the kids had to do was take a seat at the table. We then demonstrated how to put the craft together and walked around to help anyone who wanted assistance. Once everyone was finished, we set the finished project aside and set a new craft on the table. We repeated the process for all four crafts.

If the children were finished before their peers, we had coloring sheets and word puzzles they could work on while waiting for the next craft.

Each program was an hour long, held from 2 to 3 p.m. at two branches, 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. at two branches, and 4 to 5 p.m. at the bookmobile and four branches. The program was well attended throughout the district, with attendance increasing at the programs held later in the day.

Paper evaluations were available for patrons to fill out after the program. We got positive feedback from families regarding the program. On the evaluation form, we ask for suggestions for future programs, and the patrons who filled out the form indicated that they would like to see more holiday-themed programs.

Advice

Registration was important for this program as we only had a certain number of kits for each branch. Having the registration online also helped us decide whether we needed to do more advertising for a particular branch.

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

Supporting Materials

Document
christmas_light_window_hangers.doc
Document
kwanzaa_candle.doc
Document
light_the_lights_overview.doc
Document

menorah_instructions.doc
Document
solstice_sun_window_hanger.doc
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solstice_window_hanger.doc
Document
christmas_window_hanger.doc
Download this Program as a PDF

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Slideshow Images



More Programs

Dec 7, 2015
Young Adult (17 - 20)+ | $
Image



Holidaze Crafts for Teens

Audiences:

Audience
Young Adult (17 - 20)
Dec 15, 2015
Children (9 and under)+ |
Image



Rural Roots: Holiday Tradition

Audiences:

Audience
Children (9 and under)
Jun 30, 2016
Young Adult (17 - 20)+ | $
Image



Homemade Holiday

Audiences:

Young Adult (17 - 20)
Adults (21 and up)
Mar 9, 2017
Children (9 and under)+ | $$$
Image



Noon Year's Eve Party

Audiences:

Children (9 and under)
Tweens (10-12)