



Rainy Day Programming for Teens

By Leah Pohlman

It is hard to predict when the next rainy day will hit, but one thing is certain: when it does, the teens are going to come teeming in to your library. Below is a list of programming suggestions that require minimal planning and supplies and that can be easily coordinated on those rainy days. It is important to note that the following rainy day programs and activities meet a number of developmental assets, as noted by the Search Institute (www.search-institute.org). These include, but are not limited to, self-esteem, creative activities, adult role models, youth programs, and positive peer influence. As well, because it is impossible to predict how long a rainstorm will last, each program can be conducted for as long or as short an amount of time as you wish.

Wii Games:

If your library has access to a Nintendo Wii gaming system, this can be the source of many rainy day activities. From competition style games like MarioKart and Super Smash Brothers to an impromptu Battle of the Bands using Guitar Hero or Rock Band, there is no shortage of Wii tournament games. For a laidback, easy to learn, multi-player game, try Wario Ware or Just Dance. In order to ensure the popularity of the games that you play, speak with your teens to learn what kinds of games they are currently playing. It is also important to note that many of these games are available on the new Wii U, and they, alongside other Wii U specific games (such as Nintendo Land), could also be incorporated into a Wii Game event.

Should you choose to incorporate a tournament aspect, a round robin style is very easy to set up, but if you choose a single or double elimination style, there are many printable tournament sheets found at: <http://www.printyourbrackets.com>.

Supplies needed:

- Nintendo Wii gaming system and games
- Screen on which to play the games

Book Spine Poems

Ask teens to help you create book displays that are also poems. The teens will be excited to search for books to create sentences, and will feel as though they are contributing to the library in a positive way. Choosing books and placing them on their sides, one can create a beautiful poem when the titles on the spines are read top to bottom.

Supplies needed:

- Books

YouTube Marathon

A YouTube movie marathon is a fun and different way to use a source that teens are exposed to every day. Have the teens brainstorm a theme, which could be as broad as “animals” to something far more specific like “One Direction.” Each teen then suggests at least one clip that fits this requirement. This can be done anonymously by writing suggestions on a piece of paper and putting them in a hat, by writing suggestions and giving them to the supervising librarian, or by actively shouting out ideas. Although you should explain that no violent or explicit content will be tolerated, it is difficult to enforce this if all suggestions are made anonymously in a hat, and yet some may not participate if the suggestions are made aloud. As such, it is best to have the teens give the supervising librarian his or her suggestions. The librarian can then choose to create a playlist so that they load one after the other, or he or she can load them one at a time. If your library has access to a large screen or a video projector, it would be excellent to hook your marathon up to one of these devices in order to provide the teens with better visibility and a more movie-like setting.

Supplies needed:

- Computer
- Pencils
- Paper
- TV or projector (if available)

Minute to Win it

This game can be played with as many teens as are available and it can be played in groups or as individuals. Using items found around the library or in craft supplies, play a series of hilarious games that must each be completed within a minute. Games



suggestions include:

- Marshmallow Canon – Cut the bottom off of a plastic cup and cut the top of a tied (but not blown up) balloon. Stretch the balloon over the bottom of the cup so that the tied up part is on the bottom. You may need to tape the balloons to the cups. Participants have 60 seconds to shoot ten marshmallows into a bowl placed 10 feet away. To shoot the marshmallows, place a mini marshmallow in the cup and pull back on the balloon.
- Stack Attack – Players must stack cups into a perfect triangle and then get them back into one stack, all in under 60 seconds. The more cups that are used, the more challenging this game is. We recommend starting with 36 cups and then altering it as needed.
- Face the Cookie – Each player receives one cookie or cracker and, looking up at the ceiling, places it on their forehead. They must then get the cookie from their forehead into their mouth using only their facial muscles.
- Defying Gravity – Players must keep three balloons in the air for one minute
- A Bit Dicey – Players must balance six dice on a popsicle stick held in their mouths.

Many more entertaining, and hilarious, games can be found at

<http://www.nbc.com/minute-to-win-it/how-to/>.

Supplies needed (for the games listed above):

- Plastic cups
- Balloons
- Mini Marshmallows
- Cookies or crackers
- Dice
- Popsicle sticks

Board Games

An excellent form of passive programming, simply put out some board games and playing cards and let your teens entertain themselves. Any board games will work, but do ensure that they have all the pieces. Below are some suggestions for good board games:

- Apples to Apples

- Taboo
- Mad Gab
- Carcassonne
- Settlers of Catan

Lego

Another form of passive programming, the energy and creativity that teens exude when presented with Lego is staggering. You can choose to leave the creativity up to the teens, or you can suggest things for the teens to build. These suggestions can be specific (cars, castles, pirate ships) or more vague (something humans will use for shelter in the future). Watch their creativity come to life!

Supplies needed:

- Lego

Book Posters

A twist on the popular book trailers, have teens create posters for their favorite books using magazines, poster board or construction paper, and craft supplies. This will provide you with a good opportunity to discuss how to entice readers with book talking hooks. If your library has the space, hopefully you will be able to hang the posters to show off their work.

Supplies needed:

- Poster board or construction paper
- Magazines
- Glue
- Scissors
- Crayons, markers, or pencil crayons
- Other general craft supplies

Old Photo, New Place

Using old photographs or images from books, give teens the opportunity to [imagin](#)e where these photographs came from. Who is in the photograph? What else was happening in this scene? Teens can choose to write a story or poem about the characters or objects in the photo, or they can create a background image and glue the

photograph on top, essentially expanding the image and giving it new life. These photos and stories can be displayed in the library, or they can be sent home with the teens.

Supplies needed:

- Old photographs from books, magazines, or calendars
- Glue
- Paper
- Writing implements
- Markers, pencil crayons, or crayons

Party Games

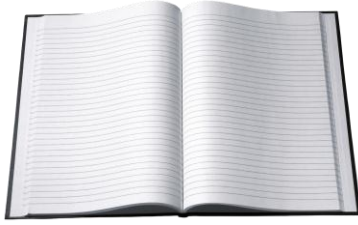
Excellent for groups of any size, the following games require very few supplies or pre-planning.

- Name Droppers – This game is very similar to charades. Each participant writes the name of a person, real or fictional, on a piece of paper and puts it in a hat. This can be repeated multiple times depending on available time and number of participants. Then, broken into teams, you must get your teammates to guess the names in the hat. The game takes place in three rounds: 1. Say anything, 2. Say one word, 3. Actions only. In each round, a team has 60 seconds to guess as many names as they can, they must then pass the hat, and remaining names, to the next team. This continues until the hat is empty. The names then all go back into the hat, and the next round is played. At the end of three rounds, whichever team has the most points wins. This game gets easier as it progresses because the same names are used over and over.
- Dictionary – The reader opens a dictionary and finds a word. He or she tells the other players what the word is and how to spell it, but not the definition. All other players must write down a definition of the word in hopes of fooling the others. The reader writes down the correct definition, and reads it and all of the other definitions aloud. Each player who is not the reader then votes on which definition he or she thinks is correct. Each person who gets the correct answer gets a point and each person whose definition gets a vote also gets a point (one point for each vote). The round is now over, role of reader is then passed to the next player, and the game begins again. This is a game that can end at any point, though it is recommended that each participant get the opportunity to act as reader.

Supplies needed:

- Paper
- Pencils
- Hat/bowl
- Dictionary

Book Poetry Slam



Raid the books from the “for sale” bin and encourage teens to cut out words and sentences in order to create their own unique poetry. Using construction paper and art supplies, teens can create beautiful works of art to take home or to display in the library. If participants feel comfortable, they should be supported in reading their poetry aloud to the other teens.

Introduce the teens to different kinds of poems and encourage them to experiment with alternate forms. Some forms of poetry that they could try include haiku, ABC (Anna Believes Cats Don't Eat...), rhymes, or limericks.

Supplies needed:

- Old books
- Scissors
- Glue or tape
- Construction paper
- Markers, pencil crayons, or crayons

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