

## Teen Mashup Night: Poetry, Pizza, and Phun!

(Remix program by Megan Clark, Danielle Hubbard, and Emily LeGrand)

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### What?

Mashup Night offers an idea for a hands-on teen program about remixing. Designed to take place in the program room of a public library, or whatever other space you have available, the program will last two hours, and ideally be held on a Friday night. The event will only be very loosely structured, meant to provide teens ample opportunity for social interaction and creative freedom. For the first half of the evening, teens will use books, magazines, scrap paper and other found supplies to create poetry, collages, maps, stories, or whatever creative output (mashup) they desire.

After an intermission of building and consuming pizza and drinking juice from a teen-manned “juice smash-up bar,” the second half of the evening will be an open mic, where teens have the opportunity to perform or otherwise showcase their work.

In the days following the program itself, interested teens will have the opportunity to read their poems on the local community radio, as well as have their work displayed in the library. Because of budgeting for food and materials, the event will require pre-registration.

### Why?

Teen Mashup Night: Poetry, Pizza, and Phun! is designed to create a friendly, social space where teens can experiment with remix culture in a low-stakes, supportive environment, while learning a little about the legal complications of the culture. This program can foster a sense of ownership of the library space for teens, as well as offering teens a safe Friday night social alternative. By including juice and homemade pizza, teens will be provided with the opportunity to create – and eat! – healthy food.



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Other benefits of the program are manifold: building community relationships between teens and adults (in the form of library staff); providing a venue for teens to showcase their art; providing a safe, socially interactive setting; and exposing teens to a variety of artistic possibilities – to name only a few!

### How? The logistics...

**Length:** 2 hours. 8pm – 10pm on a Friday night

**Target Audience:** All genders of teens ages 15-19, preferably interested in creative endeavors and/or remix culture. Ideally between ten and thirty teens will attend.

### Proposed Budget:

Item	Cost	Source
Pizza Supplies & Juice	\$100.00	Local Grocery Store/Farmers Market
Other Snacks	\$0.00 - In Kind/ Donation	Local Business Partnership
Poster Printing	\$40.00	Staples/ In House
Craft Supplies	\$15.00	Art Supply Store
Magazines, Books, etc.	\$0.00	Library Discards, Extra Donations
Toaster Ovens	\$0.00	In House/ Lent by Staff
Budget total:	\$155.00	

**Staffing Requirements:** 2 staff (youth librarian, and another interested staff member), and security, if your library branch / venue requires it.

**Including Teens:** Ask members of your Teen Advisory Board (or equivalent) to help set up for the evening and select materials for crafts and activities. After creating their mashups, give teens the option to perform their creations at the end of the evening. Teens will also be involved by constructing their own pizzas. Ask one or two teens to be in charge of “tending” the juice smash bar.

Teen volunteers will also be needed to help select materials for crafts and activities, and to advertise the event. Teens should be instructed to sign up in advance to volunteer, through the Teen Advisory Board. At the end of the evening, if there should be interest, encourage teens to take the organizing lead on holding another similar event.

### Materials Needed:

- Pitas, cheese, tomato sauce and assorted healthy toppings for pizzas
- Variety of juices for the juice bar
- Knives, cutting boards, plates (from the staff room, and encourage kids to bring their own from home), cutlery, napkins, cups
- Assorted craft supplies: markers, tape, glue, pens, pencils, scissors, tape, magazines, discard books, basic watercolor paints

- Hats, which teens can bring to share (for teens to swap identities when they read!)
- Books selected from the collection to provide resources (eg. books about writing, art and cooking)

### Equipment Needed:

- Toaster ovens (scavenged from staff room if possible, or loaned by staff)
- Microphone and sound system for the open mic (if your program room is large enough to necessitate this)

### Outline of Activities:

**Pre-Program:** Music will be playing in the program room as teens arrive. Once some teens have arrived, invite them to select what music they would like played. Early arrivers can also be encouraged to sort through magazines and other materials for likely images and passages of text.

**Warm-up:** Shortly after 8pm, gather teens into a circle on the floor with the pile of hats in the middle. Introduce the evening's activities, including a quick intro to remix culture. Go around the circle. Instruct each teen to say their name, pick a hat from the pile, and say why they chose that hat and what it says about them. Teens who speak later can either take a hat from the central pile, or take a hat from one of the previous introducers!

**Creative Activities:** For the next 50 minutes (until around 9:00 pm), the following activities will be offered concurrently, at different tables around the room, so teens can move freely between stations, spending as much or as little time on each activity as they wish:

- **Found poems / stories:** Creating poems from scraps of text taken from magazines, newspapers, or discarded books. Freestyle writing also acceptable
- **Maps:** Floor plans of the library will be provided on large sheets of cardstock. Teens can either use these plans, or work freestyle, to create their own maps of the library. Rather than simply labeling areas "fiction," "board books," etc, regions might appear as "Brandon's table," or "The Corner of Dimness."



This activity is loosely intended to help teens reflect on and express their own experiences of the library

- **Collages:** Employing assorted craft supplies to make any type of image. Again, freestyle drawing is also perfectly acceptable

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**Food break:** Around 8:30 pm, instruct your adult helper to bring in juices and food stuffs to make pizzas.

- **Pizzas:** Teens will each be able to “mashup” the ingredients for their own pita pizza, to be cooked in a toaster oven. If some teens wish to continue writing/collaging, another teen (or an adult) can make their pizza for them.
- **“Juice smash-up bar”:** A “bar” of different juice types will be set up, to be “tended” by one or two interested teens. Here teens can order “mixed drinks” from the bar tender. Each teen can create his or her own unique drink.

**Performing:** After food has been prepared, consumed, and roughly tidied up, a space will be cleared at the end of the room for an open mic (probably around 8:20). Here teens will have the opportunity to stand up and “perform” their creations – whether it be reading / speaking their poems, or explaining their maps. Performers will be encouraged to don an interesting hat for the performance.

**Markers of Success:** Towards the end of the program, informally ask each teen what they liked about the program, what they would change about it, if they would like to do it again, and whether or not they would be interested in spearheading or planning a similar program in the future. Results of these informal conversations will later be written down and saved. In the next few days, record the gist of these conversations, and write a brief report about how the program went. This record may be useful for future program planning, or grant applications. Some other markers of success include:

- At least 10 teens attend
- A supportive atmosphere prevails for performing teens (facilitate this by emphasizing the importance of close listening, and imagining yourself in the performer’s shoes)
- Books on display are checked out afterwards
- A group of teens become excited about organizing another mashup program.

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## References

Barniskis, S. C. (2013). Graffiti, poetry, dance: How public art programs affect teens part two: The research and its practical implications. *Journal of Research on Libraries and Young Adults*, 2(3). Accessed on <http://www.yalsa.ala.org/jrly/2012/09/graffiti-poetry-dance-how-public-library-art-programs-affect-teens-part-2-the-research-study-and-its-practical-implications/#more-170>

