

Programming Ideas

Ready to capitalize on the current interest in fairy tales amongst teens?

Here are some ideas how.

by Keriann Dowling

Engage your teens in cross-generational programming.

Have teens read, act out, or perform puppet shows of classic fairy tales for younger children or preschoolers. The beauty of fairy tales is that everyone is so familiar with them you will be able to keep practice time to a minimum. Creating the puppets can become a program itself. You can use a package of socks and pre-existing craft supplies to make puppets. Or if you go the live-action route, get some dollar store or thrift store props (a wig for Rapunzel, boots and cat ears for Puss, etc.) and your more rambunctious teens are good to go.

Capitalize on the nostalgia of older teens for younger days (Especially right after stressful exams).

Have a trusted group of teens, such as your youth advisory board, vote for their favourite Disney princess/fairy tale movie. Then hold a Rocky Horror Picture Show-esque screening where teens are encouraged to dress up, sing-along, and shout at the screen to blow off steam. Just remember to make lots of popcorn and a rule that all seashell bras are to be worn *over* other clothing!

Hold a fairy tale themed games night.

There are many fairy tale themed tabletop and role-playing games. Great for smaller groups of teens (8 people max) game nights can be a great way for less extroverted teens to make connections. Tabletop, role-playing, and board games



may seem initially a little pricy (ranging from \$25-\$80), but offer a lot of replay value if popular. Fabula, Grimm, Deliria, and Dixit are all 5-8 player games inspired by fairy tales. Grimm and Deliria are both pen and paper based dice games, while Dixit and Fabula are more card-based party games. You can choose which type works best for your teens, or try all four.

Create Something to Share.

Because the original fairy tales are public domain they offer special opportunities. Have your teens write and illustrate their own “fractured” or modern retellings and then help them put together their own print or online zine. This is a fun creative activity that offers opportunities for hands on learning in worthwhile skills such as literacy, Adobe Illustrator/Photoshop, and coding. Plus it can look great on your teen’s applications and resumes!

Host a Mad Tea Party.

While not strictly-speaking a fairy tale, *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* certainly has a very fairy tale like charm. Invite

your library's teens to tea (or lemonade, as the case may be). Make your own ridiculous hats, eat treats, and play musical topics. Have a book/fairy tale related question stuck to the back of each chair that teens can ask each other each time you cry "Clean Cup, Clean Cup! Everybody move down!" or just when you change the music!