



A Creative Toolkit for Libraries

Imaginative Spaces



Word Wednesday

A creative writing adventure developed as a summer holiday drop-in activity which can also be delivered in term time with school groups.

Very simply, Word Wednesday presents the library as a resource for words which children/young people are invited to hunt down, to inspire and feature in their own story.

Things you need

- Sticking with the 'child friendly' sections of the library, type out slips of paper with words hunts on such as 'Go to the Children's Section. Find the third shelf down. Choose the book which is in the middle of the shelf. Open the book and find the middle page. Write down the middle word of that page.' Or 'Go to the History section. Second shelf. Count ten books from the left. Choose the tenth book and the tenth word on the tenth page.'
- Pop the above into a envelopes with a post-it notes for the children/young people to write their found word on
- Some A4 paper or card (one for each participant)
- Pencils, crayons or felt tips
- Music – instrumental film soundtracks are best

Sitting in a circle, introduce Word Wednesday to the class/group. Explain how they will each select an envelope with a word hunt and a post-it note, for them to follow and search for their word, then return with it written on their pot-it.

Once everyone has an envelope, play some music and say that they have until the end of that music to complete their word hunt and return to sit in the circle.

Invite them to place their post-its of words on a roll of paper or in the middle of the circle, or a place where they can be seen by everybody. When everyone has returned, share the words along with any images they may conjure, and invite them as individuals to write a book based on, featuring, or simply inspired by one or more, or all of those words. A folded A4 paper or thin card becomes their book, which they can create a front cover for, with a title and their name as author. Illustrate a picture that will be a window into their story. Maybe write a bit of 'blurb' on the back cover that entices their reader into the book. Then set them off to write their short story on the two pages in the middle. There's no wrong possible as it is their story, they don't have to worry too much about spellings etc, it is juts best to suggest a free flow of ideas from head to hand.

This can take 20 minutes or longer and can be completed back in class if it is a short visit. Music playing throughout will aid creativity and inspire ideas. A good song to gather everyone's attention to return back into the circle is 'Happy' by Pharrell Williams. It begins with a distinctive beat and if you say that the song is to indicate 'time to complete what they are doing and return to the group by the end of the song', it is a great way to gather everyone singing along, 'happy'...what could go wrong?!

Once gathered back together they can share their stories in a relaxed way or it is great fun to become a Living Library. Line them up as extra shelves holding their books for the adults to peruse. They may be talking books too, which give a description of their story when the book is chosen. These books can also be displayed for the children/yp's friends and family to come and have a look at - encouraging a return visit.

Word Wednesday was developed by Jayne Williams, Artist in Residence at The BRITE Centre, Braunstone's Library. An animation was created by Sophie Johnson-Hill of SoJo animation, to illustrate Word Wednesday's powerful potential for inspiring children and young people to create stories.

www.vimeo.com/115454357

See more fun, free and simple toolkit sessions that anyone can deliver within their library at www.thesparkarts.co.uk