

SRP School Promotion Helps

General hints:

- Develop your connection with the school throughout the year.
- Call 2-3 months in advance about scheduling visits.
- Make it a very memorable visit, and also worth the teachers' time away from teaching. The entertainment value is one of the things the teachers like, along with the encouragement to read all summer long!
- Focus on the kids. Enjoy what you are doing and the students will enjoy it too – and remember!
- If visits aren't possible, negotiate alternatives.

Optimal: School Visits.

Human contact is best!

Individual classes

Pro: Large impact, most tailored presentation

Con: Large time commitment, requires most coordination from school

Ideas:

- K-2: a participatory story + hand stamps. Go in costume. (If you really feel uncomfortable wearing a costume find a huge box and fill the box with props. Create a presentation that has you pulling different things out of the box as you talk about your program, the library and getting a library card.)
- Gr. 3-5: a skit involving at least one kid. One pro shares a never-fail success: "Make sure there is farting involved!"
- Gr. 6-8: booktalks, mention programs, RIF
- Gr. 9-12: booktalks, programs, RIF

Groups of classes

Pro: Fairly tailored presentation

Con: Moderate time commitment, requires some coordination from school

Ideas:

- K-2: a participatory story. Go in costume.
- Gr. 3-5: a skit, involving at least one kid if possible. Finish off with selected reading from something guaranteed to get a big laugh, tailored to the age group.
- Gr. 6-8: booktalks, mention programs, RIF
- Gr. 9-12: booktalks, programs, RIF

Visiting only selected classes or selected grades

Pro: Smallish time commitment, tailored presentation

Con: So many students don't get to see you

Ideas: see above.

Lunchtime appearance

Pro: Short amount of time; ability to have a table and let kids self-select or grab them as they go by; might also be able to do announcement. May work best for Middle School.

Con: Only a small percentage of kids will hear your message.

Ideas: Table with eye-catching visual display, giveaways, candy, RIF books – anything to help start a conversation.

Assemblies

Pro: Smallest time commitment, least coordination from school

Con: Most intimidating, large audiences are easily distracted, hard to create a presentation that will really appeal to a large age range

Ideas for K-2

- An opener: joke, magic trick, puppet
- A participatory story
- Hand stamps if you're visiting one class at a time. Tell kids that when they wash their hands that night and see the stamp, they should tell their parents they want to go to the library this summer.
- Go in costume. (If you really feel uncomfortable wearing a costume find a huge box and fill the box with props. Create a presentation that has you pulling different things out of the box as you talk about your program, the library and getting a library card.)
- Do you play an instrument? Bring it a sing a song as an opener.

Ideas for Gr. 3-5

- An opener: a series of jokes or a magic trick
- A skit involving at least one kid. One pro shares a never-fail success: "Make sure there is farting involved!"

Ideas for Gr. 6-8

- Booktalks
- Preview programs
- Promote Read It Forward and hand out some copies

Ideas for Gr. 9-12

- Booktalks
- Preview programs
- Promote Read It Forward and hand out some copies

Multi-age assemblies:

- An opener. One choice: a catchy song like "Baby Shark."
- A skit involving at least one kid, preferably teachers also. Research school visit skit, library skit, etc. on YouTube
- A couple of jokes or riddles
- Audience participation in a chant that you divide by grades, fostering competition – for example, Garrison Keillor's library chant

- Tie in the idea of digging. Maybe you're digging for an Earworm to try to get rid of it. Have a big tub filled with shredded paper. Hide items in it to represent talking points about my summer reading. For example: our sign up packet, a movie for our movie days, a book by the author we will have visit, a medal for our award ceremony, and a box with a big ? to talk about the prizes. Have kids volunteer to come up and dig for an item to hold up for everyone. Prepare some transition talking points to fill space when the kids are walking up/ digging.
- Another option, perhaps better for the Earworm idea: hide SRP items in a toilet paper-wrapped "mummy heads, and have teams race to unwrap them.
- One large-scale, quick, high-impact activity: use the song "Boom Chicka Boom" as a call-and-response with different "styles" that suit the SRP theme. It gets the kids up on their feet and you can practice with some styles like Shout and Whisper first to get them in the rhythm.
- Do a takeoff on "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire." After presenting all the basic facts, test their knowledge with the game. For example: for SRP, you need to read: a) no books b) a million books c) five books (or whatever the appropriate number is). This summer, you should read a) the dictionary b) your sister's diary c) books you like at your reading level. The kids really liked the humor and it helped them to remember the details like dates, etc. from our presentation.

After the school visit:

- Send the school an article for their newsletter or web page (get permission first)
- Send school posters to display with dates of public library SRP

Non-paper promotion

Film your skit and send the DVD to schools you can't get to

Record an announcement for the school morning announcements

Addition or Alternative: Flyers

Make them as colorful as you can to be enticing. Leave the fine details for your website.

With thanks to the many PUBYAC listserv members and UHLS and MVLS member libraries!