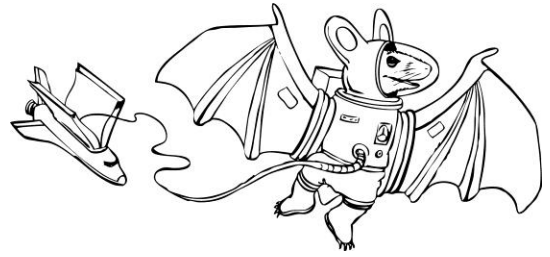


# Dream Big – Read!!

## Putting the Fun Back in Summer



### Begin (or continue) to ask questions:

- Are you reaching the age groups you want?
- Running registrations for storytimes or events that add to workload?
- Constant programming or could you add more breaks?
- Are programs generating increased use/circ by kids?
- Is your registration or reading record process cumbersome?
- Is what you are doing fitting in with library goals or school goals?
- Are the kids focusing on reading or prizes?
- How competitive do you want your program to be?

### Think about what you are doing and why you are doing it:



- \* you've always done it that way
- \* it satisfies kids
- \* it satisfies you
- \* it satisfies parents
- \* it works
- \* it doesn't work but staff or administration REALLY like it

### Think about your goals and how they can be accomplished; for instance, if you want to:

#### 1) Reach out to as many kids as possible?

In person contact to spread the word on SLP is vital (School promo visits/spring school visits or class visits)

Cooperate with PTOs to spread word

Get info to schools (bookmarks) prior to parent teacher conferences

Involve families (parents, preschoolers & readers in program to spread the word)



#### 2) Give the kids a fun experience

Simplify paperwork so focus is on kids who come in, not busywork

Take time for events you and kids enjoy (booktalking; programs); cut down on other unnecessary programs or requirements

Experiment with the theme and delivery of prizes or rewards



### 3) Get the kids reading:

Do lots of reader's advisory special displays

Let kids review books

Do lots of "seat-to-feet" service

### 4) Make the program low-stress for kids

De-emphasize or eliminate competitive aspects (most books read, etc)

Let kids read at own pace and in own interest areas

Allow a break from school-year type demands

Let kids read at various levels and formats

Recognize the importance of being read to for preschooler & poor readers

### 5) Make the program low-stress for staff

Keep sign ups simple

Keep record keeping simple

Think about whether elements like oral reports; genre reading; prizes are necessary to the successful accomplishment of encouraging kids to read in the summer

Look for ways to encourage cooperation with the community or schools to support kids & reading (mutual booklists; beginning of school rewards; prizes; programs; Park & Rec)

### 6) Be creative, inventive and have fun

Recognize that libraries are more than books

Picture yourself as a promoter and less as a record keeper

Imagine yourself as marketing guru and your product as reading

Give yourself permission to innovate

Finally, **learn when to say when!**

It's important to recognize when elements of your program are **no longer effective** and to **begin planning to change**

Evaluate **your program:**

**Bring staff & volunteers** together in a party/meeting

Establish **parent/child focus** group to talk about summer

Talk to **school colleagues** for scuttlebutt on SLP

**Don't be afraid** to end elements that no longer work or seek innovative solutions

**Marge Loch-Wouters**

La Crosse Public Library

[marge@lacrosselibrary.org](mailto:marge@lacrosselibrary.org)

Tiny Tips for Library Fun Blog: <http://tinytipsforlibraryfun.blogspot.com/>

