

Kids Are Customers, Too! October, 2005

## Storytime Spectacular

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**Below are some factors to keep in mind when creating programs for children:**

- ❑ Environment – a relaxed and visually appealing atmosphere
- ❑ Ritual – Good to have some type of opening and/or closing ritual
- ❑ Repetition (with variety within the repetition), related to past programs or events
- ❑ Personal connections – with the librarian
- ❑ Personal relevance – the topic has personal meaning for the child
- ❑ Links to real life –
- ❑ Invoking the arts (music, art, drama)
- ❑ Incorporates movement
- ❑ Social elements in a positive way
- ❑ Addressing different learning styles
  - ❖ Auditory / linguistic
  - ❖ Musical
  - ❖ Logical/ Mathematical
  - ❖ Visual
  - ❖ Tactile
  - ❖ Bodily-Kinesthetic
  - ❖ Interpersonal
  - ❖ Intrapersonal
  - ❖ Naturalist

# Program on Stagecoach Mary Fields

With help from Patricia Hendricks, Children's Librarians, Enoch Pratt Free Library and Felecia Diggs, Baltimore County Librarian

Set up a room ahead of time with some logs in campfire formation. Put two flashlights inside the log pile facing up, so when they are turned on it will look like there is a fire. Play lively music on a CD, such as "She'll be coming 'round the mountain" when the children walk into the programming room.

- Introduce yourself and welcome everyone to the library program.
- *Read aloud the book:* The Story of Stagecoach Mary Fields by Robert Miller.
- *Accompany the book reading with a dramatic presentation:* As you are reading, have a colleague enter the room dressed in cowboy boots, a cowboy hat, a fringed jacket, and a fake pistol, while holding a cigar. As you read the book, your colleague can act out the dramatic parts such as getting into a gunfight, trying out for a driver's job with the Pony Express, and keeping wolves at bay while sitting by a campfire at night.
- Sing a song (with movements) that might have been sung about Mary as people waited for her to deliver the mail "She'll be coming round the mountain when she comes."
- Give a brief booktalk on the history of mail – including the Pony Express, the US post office, email, and instant messenger. Point to some books on display about mail.
- Ask the children to go back to the time of Stagecoach Mary and to imagine what it must have been like for her to travel long distances and camp out in deserted areas. Turn off the lights in the room, turn on the flashlights under the logs, and sit by the campfire. Ask the children to make the sounds of wolves.
- Listen to Stagecoach Mary (your colleague) sing a song and tell a story to keep herself awake (and keep the children attentive at the same time).
- In the middle of the night it starts to rain – have the children use their hands and feet to make rain sounds.
- After sunrise (turn on the lights) Mary gets on her pony to continue her trip because "The mail must go through."
- Tell an audience participation story about a stagecoach ride with a hold-up by robbers with strong female characters. Divide the children into sections and give

each section a motion connected with something to say. Below is an example of something that might be used:

- **Horses** can say “Neigh” and lift up both hands as if a horse is rearing
- **Robbers** can say “Stick ‘em up!” and hold out both index fingers as if they are guns
- **Stagecoach drivers** can say “giddyap” and move both fists up and down as if driving a stagecoach
- **Women** inside the stagecoach can say “Drop your guns!” with both hands on their hips
- **Little children** can scream “Help! Help!” while flicking both wrists
- The **male passengers** can say “What STRONG women!” with both hands over their hearts

Let each section practice their words with the motions. Then tell a story about a hold-up on the stagecoach where the women scared the robbers and saved the day, asking each section to call out their words and perform their motions when their characters are mentioned.

- Hand a postcard and pencil to each child. Ask them to write a postcard to themselves with some information about Stagecoach Mary and the program they just attended. (In the background, play songs such as “The Mail Must Go Through” which can be found on Disney’s Children’s Favorite Songs, Vol. 1, 1991).
- When the children have finished, ask them to drop their postcards into a makeshift mailbox or into Mary’s mail pouch.
- After the program, write on each postcard “Thanks for attending my program,” sign it “Stagecoach Mary” and mail all of the postcards.

Now write a few of the different ways that this program enhances brain-based learning:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

# BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

1. Introduce yourself and welcome everyone to the birthday party for Hans Christian Andersen. Tell them a little bit about him.

Hans Christian Anderson was born two hundred years ago, on April 2, 1805. His father was a shoemaker and his mother was a washerwoman. His family was very poor, but his parents believed in importance of books and stories. One of the few times his father seemed happy was when he was reading stories aloud to Hans.

He was very tall and the kids at school would often make fun of him. He loved to write and make up his own fairytales. His father encouraged his creativity, but his father died when Hans was 11 years old. At age 14, Hans ran away to Copenhagen.

Anderson became a famous author. He wrote more than 100 stories. His books are read all over the world. Some of the stories you might know are: The Ugly Duckling, Thumbelina, The Emperor's New Clothes, The Little Mermaid, The Princess and the Pea, the Steadfast Tin Soldier, The Nightingale, and The Red Shoes

Because Andersen's childhood was sad, he often wrote stories about children who had difficulties. Some of his stories are funny and some of them are sad. Hans Anderson died on August 4, 1875. Because the people of Denmark love his stories so much, they still celebrate his birthday every year with a party called "Odin Story Day". To mark his 200<sup>th</sup> birthday, we are also going to have celebrations for him right here in Baltimore. And now, I am going to read one of his stories: [say the name of the title].

2. Read or tell a story by Hans Christian Andersen: **The Ugly Duckling**

(You might want to mention that as a child, HCA had been an ugly duckling, but had grown up into a famous author with many friends. If you have preschoolers, use a different story that is more age appropriate.)

2. Time for a birthday game.

Ask everyone to stand up and tell them that you are going to play music. When the music is on, they should all move. But when the music stops, they must freeze.

- Play some lively music.
- Stop the music and ask the children to FREEZE!

- ❑ Play some lively music.
  - ❑ Stop the music and ask the children to FREEZE!
  - ❑ Play music again.
  - ❑ When you stop the music, ask all of the children to become a birthday cake and FREEZE. Walk around the room and tap each child on the head. As you tap them, ask them to tell everyone what type of cake they are (i.e. chocolate cake, ice cream cake, Barbie cake, etc.) Once they have told you, have them move to the side of the room.
  - ❑ Play music and invite all of the children to dance again.
  - ❑ When you stop the music, ask the children to become birthday candles by putting their hands over their heads to be the wicks. Walk around the room and tap each child on the top of their hands as if you are lighting the wicks. Tell the children that now that the candles have been lit, they need to start flickering, and melting. Wait until all of the children melt, and then turn on the music again.
  - ❑ Tell the children that when the music stops again, they must become a present for Hans Christian Andersen.
  - ❑ Stop the music.
  - ❑ Tap each child, one at a time. Tell them that you have just unwrapped their present and ask them what the present is. You may get some very imaginative answers.
  - ❑ Put on the music one last time for a big birthday dance.
  - ❑ When the music stops, invite them to come to the table with the birthday cake.
3. Time for birthday cake. Sing “Happy Birthday” to dear Hans Christian Andersen, and give each child a slice of cake and a cup of juice.
  4. As the children are eating their cake, read one more story by Hans Christian Andersen: **The Princess and the Pea** (illustrated by Paul Galdone).
  5. Before the children leave, have them all sign their names (or draw themselves) on a big birthday card for Hans Christian Andersen.

Supplies needed:

A table with plastic tablecloth  
 Napkins  
 Paper plates  
 Forks  
 A cake cutting implement  
 Paper or plastic cups  
 Birthday cake  
 Apple juice  
 (birthday candles and matches – optional)  
 CD player or audiocassette player  
 Lively music tape.  
 Display of books by Hans Christian Andersen.  
 Large birthday card for Hans Christian Andersen.

## A Few More Programming Ideas

- ❖ The Story of Ferdinand.
  - Based on the book by Munro Leaf, this is the story of Ferdinand the bull who loves smelling flowers but ends up in a bull-fighting area in Spain. This story can lend itself to a craft project of creating paper flowers with scents, to bi-lingual or Spanish in the program, to Spanish music, and to a fingerplay about bees.
    - Here is the beehive, where are the bees?
    - Hidden inside where nobody sees.
    - Watch as they slowly come out of the hive.
    - Let's count all the bees: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5...
    - BUZZZZZZ.....
  
- ❖ "In the style of"
  - Show books by Eric Carle, Dr. Seuss, Tomie DePaola, and Lois Ehlert. Encourage children to draw in the style of... by using collages for Carle, magic marker for Dr. Seuss, Chalk for Tomie DePaola, and shapes of bright colors for Ehlert.
  - Do a variety of things with this!
  
- ❖ Corduroy –
  - Read the story by Don Freeman.
  - Ask everyone to stand up, and recite "Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear, Turn Around" with movements.
  - Tell the group that this story was turned into a live action movie, but the movie is different from the book. Tell them you will be screening the movie/video and ask them to watch carefully to see what is different and what is the same.
  - Screen the movie.
  - Have a discussion. Ask questions like, "Did Lisa in the movie look like Lisa in the book?" "What happened in the movie that did not happen in the book?" "Did the escalator move in the same direction in both movie and book?"
  - Pass out crayons and teddy bears templates. These can be cut out of paper (using an Ellison machine) or outlines of teddy bears on A4 paper.
  - Ask children to decorate the teddy bears.
  - Other ideas include:
    - Asking children to bring in teddy bears
    - Have a teddy bear tea party and play a recording of "Teddy Bear's Picnic"
    - Read other books about teddy bears

- ❖ Censorship (for older children)
  - For a more sophisticated audience
  - Imagine you are a librarian... trying to decide which books to put in your library.
  - Choose books that might be somewhat controversial (i.e. *The old lady who swallowed a fly* by Simms Taback because she dies at the end, Robert Munsch's *Purple, Green, and Yellow* because it mentions "cow plops", or *What a Truly Cool World* by Julius Lester which refers to G-d in a very lighthearted way.
  - Ask the children if they were librarians, would they have these books in their library and recommend them to families to take home and read. Why or why not?
  - Hand out index cards and ask the children to write a few sentences explaining their decision. Tell them that you would like to know what each child thinks and that before choosing to add a controversial book into a library collection, the librarian may ask the opinions of his or her colleagues. Collect the index cards.
  - If time allows, have a display of banned books. Give a brief booktalk on a selected few, and give children the opportunity to check them out at the end of the program.
  - Ask children if you have permission to display their cards.
  - If possible, create a bulletin board display with the cover of the book and the children's comments surrounding it.