TIG Meeting, at MLA Conference, May 11, 2012

Chair: Krista McKenzie

Krista opened the meeting by inviting everyone to introduce themselves.

Next Krista asked for a note-taker, either for just this meeting a permanent secretary. Beth Chandler volunteered (and later agreed to be the secretary).

**Tips, Tricks and Do-Able Fixes**  
Attendees were invited to ask questions (and answer them) as well as offering tips.

*How do you get actual teens into the library for programs?*
- Start a teen advisory board as your core group. Have them each share an original song, poetry, or something else they created. Then have everyone play a board game and just chat. Teens will get more comfortable and share more as time goes on. You can spin a book club off the advisory group too if interest develops.
- Host a “Teen Café” where teens share original songs, poetry and so on.
- Hunger Games-related events.
- “Book Hook” book club: provide attendees with a free copy funded by a trust or Friends of the Library group.
- Capture the few teens who “fall” into a program. They will often bring friends and spread the word.
- Host “Random Teen Madness” or “Teen Lounge.” Start with an idea (a game, craft, etc.) and let things morph depending on what the teens are interested in doing.

*Scheduling:* Make sure you talk with teens and schools about events before setting a time to meet—be sure you’re not conflicting with a major school event.

*Programming on a tight budget*
- Scholastic has very cheap books that can be bought for giveaways and book clubs. You get points for what you buy and can use points for extra books. Try partnering with a local school that has a Scholastic club.
- Check with your Collection Management department about buying books at a discount through them.
- Some businesses will donate pizza, fruit, whatever. Wal-Mart is often helpful. Also check with Friends groups for funding snacks, materials and so on.

*How do you get volunteers to help with teens?* Find parents who volunteer for sports and other school programs, find student teachers to volunteer, ask art teachers or other teachers if they will do a one-time program for free, ask young adults just past “teen age” (18 and older), contact local volunteer programs, and post on your library’s website to ask for volunteers who want to work with teens.

There is a drop-off in many ‘teen’ groups once teens get involved with sports and other school/work activities.
More program ideas:

- A medieval ball was very successful with preteens and young teens—an excuse to dress up.
- “Teens teaching tweens” programs such as an archery workshop (tie-in with The Hunger Games).
- Send letters directly to preteens and teens, saying “we would like to have you” at our activities.
- Recreation departments and other after-school programs have lost funding—they may be willing to team up with you to provide programs.
- Contact local schools to team up for programs.

Tasks for teen volunteers:

- Putting DVDs in security cases
- Pulling items for displays, outdated or tattered items, items on “missing” or other lists
- Shelf reading, cart sorting, cleaning
- Tutoring, having kids read to teens for practice
- Teens as “greeter” who gives people tours of the library

Summer Reading Club Ideas

- Create a “booth” from tri-fold posterboard: add graphics on the outside, instructions for teens doing sign-up on the inside. Cut a hole for the teen to look through and handle signups, giving prizes, and so on. The “booth” is a large and clear sign of “where to go to sign up/get prizes/etc.”
- Make up bins with program materials and instructions, and pass them around the library system.
- An affordable activity: owl pellet dissection (go to “pellet.com”)
- Geocaching around the county. Have teens use their smartphones—and end up at the library.
- Make black-light t-shirts (recipes for glowing paint are online).
- Make items out of cereal boxes: jet-packs, magazine holders, flip-flops (use duct tape for the upper/thong part).
- Host a relaxation evening with yoga, hand massage, etc.
- Monster party: zombie and monster paint on faces, zombie marshmallows and glowing jello for treats. Teach and have the teens perform the dance to ‘Thriller.’
- Werewolf vs. Vampire debate (or Zombie vs. Vampire, etc.).
- Host a mystery-solving night.

MLA conference highlights

Krista’s “Advocating from Within”—she will put her PowerPoint presentation and handouts on the TIG listserv. She’ll also send information from the Tween workshop she presented.

Book Recommendations:

*The Fault in Our Stars* by John Green
*Grave Mercy* by R.L. LaFevers
*Enclave* by Kit Reed (mixed reviews from meeting attendees)