[Harry Potter Escape Room](#)

[Laramie County Library System](#)

Teens

|

Young Adult

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Adults

Harry Potter Escape Room

Nov 3, 2017

[$51-100](#)

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Your name

Robin Papaleka, Adult Programming Specialist, Laramie County Library System, Cheyenne, Wyo.

We created an escape room with a Harry Potter theme for teens and adults. Participants signed up for a half-hour slot, with four people to a time slot. We read

them a short introduction, and then they had 30 minutes to solve all the puzzles we created in the room. This included finding keys, figuring out codes, translating runes and searching for clues with a black light wand.

A knowledge of the Harry Potter books was essential as many of the clues were specific to the book. For instance, one clue led you to look under the mandrake, which required knowing what a mandrake is. About half our participants solved the room.

Advanced Planning

I was given plans for the escape room by Sarah Colombo and Stephen Bell of Livingston (La.) Parish Library. However, their plans would not have worked in our space or staffing situation, so my colleague Anna Mclure and I re-wrote them to fit our needs.

The main thing you need for an escape room are the puzzles. As participants entered the room, they found a [map of Hogwarts](). We had written letters on several of the locations on the map. The letters corresponded to a story on a scroll. If the letters were written out in the order mentioned in the story, they spelled "1, 4, 6." This was the code to a locked box.

In the box was a locked journal and a key that did not go to that journal. The key had a symbol written on it, which was the same as a symbol on the spine of a book on the bookshelf. That was a locked book safe. When they opened this, there were eight rune rocks and a wand with a black light on the tip.

The runes were numbered on the back with the numbers 1 through 8. There was also a rune translation book on the shelf. If they found the translation book they could translate the runes, which spelled "mandrake." This led them to the mandrake, which had a key tied to its roots. The key went to the locked diary.

The diary hinted that they should look at the [Viktor Krum]() poster, and if they inspected the poster with the black light wand, they would find the spell word needed to get out of the room. **(See more detailed plans under Attachments at right.)**

Marketing

We marketed on Facebook. We then discovered that we would not have to do any other marketing, because our slots filled up within one hour.

We had so many calls from people who wanted to do it that we extended the program to a week, and the slots once again filled up within two hours.

Budgeting

We borrowed the locking box and a whole lot of decorations. We printed our own Viktor Krum poster. We bought old-fashioned [keys](#) to go in the box to throw people off course.

Other things we bought were the [locking book](#) and [locking diary](#), black light [key chains](#) and black light [pens](#), and the [marauders map](#). We had a friend make the mandrake out of a plastic doll, moss, a flower pot and clay.

All in all, our program cost under $100.

Day-of-event Activity

You must schedule the 30-minute slots at least 10 to 15 minutes apart so you have time to reset the room. We had the room open during all open hours, but the last time slot was about 40 minutes before closing, because that gave the group a half hour to do the progra, and ten minutes for us to clean up the room and leave.

Staff must be nearby to receive the magic word (written down) from participants as they finish the room and come out. If they SAY it, and other people are waiting to get into the room, that ruins it for them.

The room must be reset between slots exactly as it was. A staff person also needs to read the introduction to the participants. It's more fun if that person, or those people, dress like witches and wizards and play along a little!

It was scheduled with time slots...so it was during all open hours...but the last time slot was about 40 minutes before closing, because that gave the group a ½ to do the program and 10 minutes for us to clean up the room and leave.

Program Execution

The program was a big hit. We had over 400 people in and out of that room.

We learned that you must have a back-up prop for every prop in the room. People will take things apart and break them. Someone took the screws out of the hinges of our locked box; someone else broke the lock to get into the diary. The cover started coming unglued from our lock box book.

Also, make your sign-ups very clear. We wanted each person of the four-person teams to sign up in a time slot. However, some people just signed themselves up and figured they had signed up for the whole team. Then three other people would sign up for the remaining slots, and we would have seven people show up at one time.

Advice

Please see the attachments (at the right) for more detailed plans, along with links to websites where we got book covers, potion labels, etc. Please email me for further information! In addition, we have all of our materials in a box and would be glad to give them away to a nearby library, if that library would then pass them on as well!

Everyone who came out of the room left excited and happy. If they did not solve it they were desperate to know how. Due to high demand we are now planning a Star Treck escape room for January 2018!

Supporting Materials

Document
harry_potter_escape_room.pdf
Document

harry_potter_introduction.doc

Document

mauraders_story.doc

Document

reset-instructions_pt_1.pdf

Document

reset-instructions_pt_2.pdf

Download this Program as a PDF

- Feedback (Coming Soon!)
- Programming Librarian Facebook Group
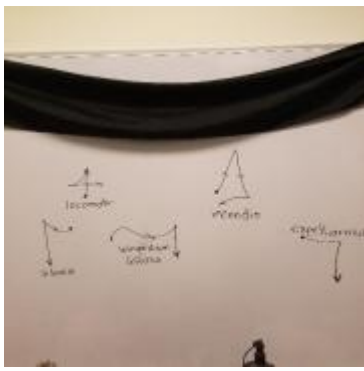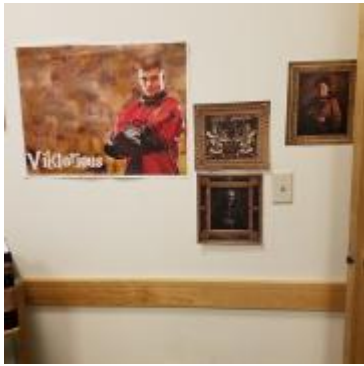
Slideshow Images

Image

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More Programs

Sep 15, 2016
Children (9 and under)+ | $$$
[Image](#)

[Harry Potter: Event Extravaganzas](#)

Audiences:

Audience
Children (9 and under)
Young Adult (17 - 20)
May 17, 2017
Children (9 and under)+ | $
[Image](#)

Breakout Programs in Libraries

Audiences:

Audience
Children (9 and under)
Young Adult (17 - 20)
Sep 9, 2016
Children (9 and under)+ | $$$
Image

[Giant Harry Potter Cardboard Maze](#)

Audiences:

Children (9 and under)
Jul 20, 2017
Young Adult (17 - 20)+ | $$
[Image](#)

[Sherlock Night](#)

Audiences:

Young Adult (17 - 20)
Adults (21 and up)
Intergenerational