

PART TWO: READING

Alphabet Soup

Begin by dividing the large group into two teams; give each team a set of alphabet cards. Explain that each team will be given a word to spell using the cards. Say that team members must hold up the letters, in the proper order, so the word reads from left to right. Explain that teams earn points for each word spelled correctly. Tell youth that if a word has two of the same letter in it, they can turn over another card and use it as a blank to represent the duplicated letter. Allow teams a few minutes to decide how they will work together. Choose words appropriate to the group's age level and vary the points according to difficulty. For each word/round, award points to the team that gets the correct spelling most quickly.

Activity Type

Small-group

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

30 minutes

Materials

- Two sets of alphabet cards
- List of spelling words

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development

Scrambled Eggs

Youth learn to recognize words and think critically with anagram puzzles. Explain that the letters in each phrase can be rearranged to spell a word or name. Challenge youth to figure out the four words in each set *and* what the words in each set have in common.

- SAD MA
- A NIGHT SNOW
- JEFF SNORE
- RESOLVE TO

Answers: Adams, Washington, Jefferson and Roosevelt were all U.S. presidents.

- A MALL
- A GROAN OK
- PATIO PUSH MOP
- RICHER SOON

Answers: llama, kangaroo, hippopotamus and rhinoceros are all mammals.

- A CAT RAT INC
- MARTIAN CHORE
- ASIA ULTRA
- OMAHA CURES IT

Answers: Antarctica, North America, Australia and South America are all continents.

- FORTS
- STEEL
- A TRUE TEMPER
- MRS NOT SOW

Answers: frost, sleet, temperature and snowstorm are all words related to weather.

- TEMP RUT
- ROBOT MEN
- SO A SNOB
- CAT LINER

Answers: trumpet, trombone, bassoon and clarinet are all musical instruments.

Activity Type

Individual, pair or small-group

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

30 minutes

Materials

- Pencils/pens
- Paper

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development

Around-the-Club Trivia

Ask youth to form two teams. Explain that teams will compete in rounds of trivia, answering questions related to common items found around the Club. Give an example: "What is the brand and model number of the printer in the Learning Center?" Ask one question of one team; if they answer correctly, award a point. If they do not answer correctly, the other team gets a chance at the same question. At the end of all rounds, the team with the most points wins.

Activity Type

Small-group

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

30 minutes

Materials

- Trivia questions related to items and objects in the room and Club

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development

Balderdash

Teams compete against each other to guess the meaning of words they do not know. Begin by choosing a word from the dictionary youth are unfamiliar with. Ask each team to write a made-up definition of the word and write it on a slip of paper. Encourage youth to make their definitions sound as much like a dictionary definition as possible. Write the correct definition on a slip of paper. Instruct all teams to give their slips of paper to you. Read the definitions aloud one at a time, including the correct one. As you read them through a second time, ask each team to vote on the definition they believe is correct. Teams score points when someone votes for their made-up definition and when they vote for the correct definition. The team with the most points wins.

Activity Type

Pair or small-group

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

45 minutes

Materials

- Slips of paper (cut to the same size)
- Dictionary

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development

Spy Vs. Spy

Assign each letter of the alphabet a different value, a number from 1 to 26. Write several sample words in number form on a white board or flip chart. For example, C=17, A=22 and T=4, so *cat* would appear as 17, 22, 4. Ask members to write a "coded" message to a friend using the coding system you have listed. Instruct them to switch with each other and de-code each other's messages.

Activity Type

Individual

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

20 minutes

Materials

- Pencils/pens
- Paper

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development

Most Valuable Player

Tell members they will create original "sports" cards based on their achievements. Review the components of a traditional sports card:

- a photo of the athlete on front
- a team logo
- statistical/biographical information about the athlete
- name of the team the athlete plays for

Explain to youth that they will use the computer to create the cards, print out the information and cut and paste it onto poster board. Give the following guidelines for creating the cards:

- Create a two-sided Word document approximately $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide and $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches tall.
- Create a self-portrait using Paint. (If the Club has a digital camera, youth can take photos of themselves.)
- Design the front of the card, placing the self-portrait and using text boxes to insert the name and team logo.
- Using Excel, create a spreadsheet, chart or graph with autobiographical or statistical information.
- Print out all pieces, cut and glue onto poster board.

Encourage members to be as creative as possible with the information they include and their presentation.

Activity Type

Individual

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

45 minutes

Materials

- Index cards or poster board
- Glue sticks
- Paper
- Computers

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development
- The Arts

Detective Spellcheck

Write 10 words on a white board or flip chart; if possible, use spelling words members are currently studying. Give youth a few minutes to look at the words. Ask them to close their eyes, erase one of the words and rewrite it with a spelling error in it. Instruct members to open their eyes and try to figure out which word is misspelled. Have youth write the correct spelling of the word on a piece of paper.

Activity Type

Large-group

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

15 minutes

Materials

- Pencils/pens
- Paper

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development

Dream Jobs

Distribute classified ad sections from the newspaper to members. Ask them to read the ads and choose a job they would like to do. Explain that they are to write a "commercial" about themselves telling the potential employer why they should be hired. Encourage members to think of all their positive qualities, strengths and talents and how they might use them in the job they chose. Invite volunteers to present their commercials to the large group.

Activity Type

Individual

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

30 minutes

Materials

- Pencils/pens
- Paper
- Newspapers

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development
- The Arts

Five-Hundred Dollar Windfall

Begin by asking members to imagine that they have been given \$500 that they can spend any way they want. Distribute newspapers to all members and ask them to review the ads and decide what they will buy and how they will spend their money. The one who is able to get the most items for \$500 is the winner.

Activity Type

Individual

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

15 minutes

Materials

- Pencils/pens
- Paper
- Newspapers

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development
- Health and Life Skills

Fraggle Rock Fragments

Divide the large group into pairs. Distribute magazines to the pairs and instruct them to find ads that use sentence fragments. Give a couple of examples of the types of fragments that are used as ad slogans:

- Lots of shine
- The top ranked car in the world
- A world of possibilities

Give youth time to find the ads and identify the sentence fragments. Instruct them to find a way to correct the fragment and make it a complete sentence. Ask each pair to explain to the large group what the ad is for, read the fragment and then read the corrected sentence.

Activity Type

Pair

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

30 minutes

Materials

- Magazines

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development

Headline Match-Up

Youth build reading and summarizing skills in this simple activity. Organize members into five teams and distribute copies of the same news articles to each group. Give each group copies also of the headlines that have been separated from the articles. Give teams three minutes to match as many stories as possible with their headlines. The team that correctly matches the most headlines and stories is the winner.

Activity Type

Small-group

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

15 minutes

Materials

- At least 10 news articles (five copies of each, headlines separated)

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development

Rippin' Rhymes

Distribute one cut-up poem to each team. Challenge teams to put the poem in order so that it makes sense. Ask youth to glue the strips together on construction paper when they decide on the correct order. Explain that the winning team is the one that puts their poem in order fastest. Suggested poems include:

Alone (excerpt), Maya Angelou

*Lying, Thinking
Last night
How to find my soul a home
Where water is not thirsty
And bread loaf is not stone
I came up with one thing
And I don't believe I'm wrong
That nobody,
But nobody
Can make it out there alone.*

We Real Cool, Gwendolyn Brooks

*We real cool. We
Left school. We

Lurk late. We
Strike straight. We

Sing sin. We
Thin gin. We

Jazz June. We
Die soon.*

We Wear the Mask, Paul Laurence Dunbar

*We wear the mask that grins and lies,
It hides our cheeks and shades our eyes,--
This debt we pay to human guile;
With torn and bleeding hearts we smile,
And mouth with myriad subtleties.

Why should the world be overwise,
In counting all our tears and sighs?
Nay, let them only see us, while
 We wear the mask.

We smile, but, O great Christ, our cries
To thee from tortured souls arise.*

Activity Type

Pair or small-group

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

20 minutes

Materials

- Construction paper
- Glue sticks
- Simple poems, cut into strips so each line is its own strip

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development
- The Arts

*We sing, but oh the clay is vile
Beneath our feet, and long the mile;
But let the world dream otherwise,
We wear the mask!*

Dream Variations, Langston Hughes

*To fling my arms wide
In some place of the sun,
To whirl and to dance
Till the white day is done.
Then rest at cool evening
Beneath a tall tree
While night comes on gently,
Dark like me--
That is my dream!*

*To fling my arms wide
In the face of the sun,
Dance! Whirl! Whirl!
Till the quick day is done.
Rest at pale evening . . .
A tall, slim tree . . .
Night coming tenderly
Black like me.*

The Tropics of New York, Claude McKay

*Bananas ripe and green, and ginger root
Cocoa in pods and alligator pears,
And tangerines and mangoes and grape fruit,
Fit for the highest prize at parish fairs,*

*Sat in the window, bringing memories
of fruit-trees laden by low-singing rills,
And dewy dawns, and mystical skies
In benediction over nun-like hills.*

*My eyes grow dim, and I could no more gaze;
A wave of longing through my body swept,
And, hungry for the old, familiar ways
I turned aside and bowed my head and wept.*

Runners and Writers

Ask members to form into pairs. Explain that one of them will be the "runner" and one will be the "writer." Place as many copies of the short paragraph as there are pairs outside the room. Make sure the writers on the teams have paper and pencil. Make sure youth have enough room to run without getting hurt. Tell members that the runner goes out of the room, reads a bit of the short paragraph and comes back into the room to relay it to his or her partner (the writer) as fast as possible. Remind them to relay the words quietly so other teams cannot hear. Runners should continue until the entire paragraph is written down. The first team to finish is the winner.

Activity Type

Pair

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

30 minutes

Materials

- Pencils/pens
- Paper
- Short paragraph (that all youth are able to read)

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development
- Sports, Fitness & Recreation

The Road Not Taken

Instruct members to form four groups. Ask one volunteer from each group to read aloud a stanza from the poem by Robert Frost. Give group members a few prompts to help them think about their own experiences:

- One time, I decided to . . .
- When I did that, what happened was . . .

Tell them to talk together about situations in which they took a direction different from what was expected. Ask a spokesperson from each of the four teams to tell the group's story to the large group.

*Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;*

*Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,*

*And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.*

*I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I -
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.*

Activity Type

Small-group

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

30 minutes

Materials

- Pencils/pens
- Paper

Core Areas

- Character & Leadership Development
- Education & Career Development
- The Arts

Scrabble Scramble

Begin by dividing the large group into two teams; give each team a set of alphabet cards. Have teams line up facing each other with their cards on the floor in front of them. Call out a category - such as food, colors, sports, etc. - and challenge players on each team to find letters to spell a word in that category. Award points to each team that spells a word correctly in each round.

Activity Type

Small-group

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

30 minutes

Materials

- Two sets of alphabet cards

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development

Read All About It!

Youth work in pairs or small groups to select the most interesting news story they can. Ask members to read the news story together, find the main idea of the story and write it down. Instruct them to find four details in the story and record those as well. Tell them to prepare to share the story with the large group in the most interesting way possible, using visuals they prepare or acting out portions of the story.

Optional: Members can search for news stories online.

Activity Type

Pair or small-group

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

30 minutes

Materials

- Pencils/pens
- Paper
- Newspapers
- Flip chart
- Markers

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development

Bases Loaded

Divide the large group into two teams. Explain that they will play a baseball game in which they score bases and runs by correctly spelling words. When a player steps up to "bat," he or she is given a word to spell. During the first two innings, teammates are allowed to help the "batter" with the correct response, but the batter must provide the correct response. If correct, he or she proceeds to the base. As players round the bases and return home, runs are scored. If the player at bat spells a word incorrectly, it is considered an out. After three outs, the team must forfeit their turn at bat to the other team. The team with the most runs at the end of the designated time is declared the winner.

Optional: If a batter misses a question, a player already on based can attempt to answer. If the base runner is correct, he or she advances; if incorrect, it counts as another out.

Activity Type

Small-group

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

45 minutes

Materials

- Bases arranged in a baseball diamond
- List of spelling words

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development
- Sports, Fitness & Recreation

Spelling Hot Seat

Begin by placing three chairs near a white board or flip chart, but facing in the opposite direction. Select three players to sit in the chairs. Write a word behind them on the board and do not let the three members in the "hot seats" see the word. Allow other members in the room to give clues to the youth in the chairs. When one of the three knows the word, he or she rings a bell (or shouts out) and is given a chance to say the word and spell it correctly. If correct, that player picks someone else to be in the hot seat.

Activity Type

Large-group

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

45 minutes

Materials

- Chairs
- Bell

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development

Spelling Ping Pong

Divide the large group into two teams and have them line up in relay race fashion. Try to have members of similar grade level or ability opposite each other so they can compete fairly. Explain that the first two players on a team will spell a word together, alternating letters. If the word is *scratch*, for example, player A says "s," player B says "c" and so on until the word is spelled correctly or until one team makes a mistake. If the word is spelled correctly, no team gets a point and the first two players go to the end of the line. If one team makes a mistake, the other team gets one point. Play resumes with each new word and the two next players in line. Continue playing until one team gets 10 points.

Activity Type

Small-group

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

30 minutes

Materials

- List of spelling words

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development

Spelling Tic Tac Toe

Draw a tic-tac-toe grid on a white board or flip chart. Divide the large group into two teams, the "X" team and the "O" team. Explain that teams will take turns spelling words correctly, either out loud or by writing them on the board. If team members spell a word correctly, they put an X or an O in the tic-tac-toe grid; if a team misspells a word, their opponents get to put an X or an O on the board. The first team to get a line wins the game.

Activity Type

Small-group

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

30 minutes

Materials

- List of spelling words

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development

Story Pyramid

Ask youth to think of a story they are familiar with - from a favorite book, short story or movie. Ask them to use the "Story Pyramid" format to write down some details about the story.

Story Pyramid

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

Instruct them to write the following information on each line of the story pyramid:

1. name of the main character
2. two words describing the main character
3. three words describing the setting
4. four words stating the story problem
5. five words describing one event in the story
6. six words describing a second event
7. seven words describing a third event
8. eight words describing the solution to the problem

Activity Type

Individual

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

20 minutes

Materials

- Pencils/pens
- Paper

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development
- The Arts

Word Jumble

Ask members to form into teams. Explain to members that you will write a word and teams will compete against each other to see how many words they can make from the original word given. For each round, write the word on a white board or flip chart where all teams can see it. Give them three minutes to create their list of new words. Award a point for each new word; two points for complex words. Give an example to get teams started:

- original word - prefabricate
- new words - ate, eat, craft, create

Activity Type

Small-group

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

20 minutes

Materials

- Pencils/pens
- Paper

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development

Word Safari

Distribute newspaper sections to pairs or small groups. Ask youth to choose a page and circle as many new vocabulary words as they can find on the page in five minutes. Call time and give members another five minutes to look up the meanings of the words in the dictionary. Award points to the team with the most new vocabulary words and definitions.

Activity Type

Pair or small-group

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

15 minutes

Materials

- Flip chart paper
- Markers
- Newspapers
- Dictionary

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development

This Land Is Your Land

Ask members to think about what they know about where they come from: their family members, their place of birth or origin, where they currently live. Tell them that each of them will make a collage to represent "Where I Come From." Encourage youth to use the Internet to find information about their birthplaces or countries of origin, or to research information about the community in which they're currently living. Members can compile their collages by hand, using art supplies on hand, or by using the drawing function in Word.

Activity Type

Individual

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

45 minutes

Materials

- Pencils/pens
- Colored markers
- Construction paper
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Computers

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development
- The Arts

Gimme an A!

Divide large group into two smaller teams and give each team a set of alphabet cards. Explain that teams will compete to come up with as many words as they can in five minutes (or the time you specify). Tell youth that if a word has two of the same letter in it, they can turn over another card and use it as a blank to represent the duplicated letter. The team with the most words - spelled correctly - wins.

Activity Type

Small-group

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

15 minutes

Materials

- Two sets of alphabet cards

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development

Hot Potato

Review the reading material quickly before the activity to identify the "poison" word, a word that appears often in the text (at least once every few paragraphs). Ask youth to sit in a circle and explain that they will be reading aloud from a story you selected. Ask a member to begin reading the story and, when he or she reaches the "poison" word, to pass the story to the next reader to take over. After the reading has gone around the circle, select another "poison" word and continue reading.

Activity Type

Large-group

Age Group

Ages x to x

Time

20 minutes

Materials

- Age-appropriate book or story

Core Areas

- Education & Career Development