

# Passive Programming

Passive programs are self-directed activities, activity stations, or interactive displays: programs that people can engage with on their own, without staff direction. Some examples include setting out (for example, on a table) coloring books, origami papers, board games, crafts, or blackout poetry supplies with an inviting and explanatory sign; or self-directed scavenger hunt sheets or other activity outlines.

## “Holy Reading, Batman!”

Create a comic creation station in your library/program space with access to the following:

- A poster or handout that highlights common story elements (character, setting, etc.); elements specific to comics (balloons, panels, emanata); and an example of a 3-panel comic.
- Comic-making supplies like paper, pencils, art supplies, and a stapler.
- Plenty of comics and graphic novels for participants to browse and check out.
- A parent handout with examples of [open-ended questions](#) to ask children about their writing.  
Examples:
  - Tell me about...
  - I noticed you added...
  - What do you think you could add?
  - How would you draw that?
  - What words do you know that describe that?
  - Can you picture it in your head?
- Optional: A laptop or tablet with online comic creators bookmarked. See [variations and extended learning for resources](#).

## It's Raining, It's Pouring!

Set up a display of non-fiction books about weather and the water cycle. Include a sign, poster, or handout with guiding questions for families and caregivers to use while reading:

### Before Reading:

- Ask: *What do you know about rain?*
- Ask: *What do you wonder about rain?*

## While Reading:

- Show your young reader how to navigate the book by explaining how the table of contents, index, and/or glossary works.
- Encourage questions by modeling your thinking while reading. For example, *This picture of lightning is making me wonder how a lightning storm starts?* Point out if your question is answered in the text.

Provide materials and instructions to complete a [“Rain in a Bag Experiment”](#) at home.

Consider including an example of the experiment for families in the library to observe. All you need is a sealable plastic bag, water, tape, and a window! Note: The linked experiment includes food dye, which is a fun addition, but not necessary to completing the experiment. You might also include materials for families to take home:

- A handout with instructions (could be on the same handout as the guided reading questions)
- A sealable plastic bag

## Let's Create!

- Display books about positive mindset, grit, engineering and how-to (draw, craft, build, create). Display the [Puff Mobile handout](#) from PBS Kids and individual bags of supplies for children to take home and try on their own.
- Define **grit** and **inspiration** on a poster and ask children to write or draw sticky notes that show when they have been inspired or how they used grit.
- Encourage participants to return to the library or afterschool program with their puff mobile designs to share and/or display.

## Let's Tell a Story!

- Set out picture sequencing cards for families to put in sequence to tell the story. Encourage children to retell the story using linking or sequencing words.
- Create a display with a picture book for which you have corresponding flannel pieces. Set out the book, flannel board, and related flannel pieces you've created or purchased. Create a simple sign explaining how parents can support their child in sequencing the story.
- Invite children to draw a sequenced story of a summer (or other) adventure. They could also retell a book they have read, or draw an activity in sequence, such as making their favorite breakfast. (See Blank Book Templates in [Get Handouts and More](#) from *Let's Tell a Story*.)

- Set up short video clips on a laptop or tablet for children to peruse and then ask them to write or draw the sequence of events of what they observed. (See Variations and Extended Learning from Let's Tell a Story in [Plan Activities](#) for suggested sites.)
- Invite families to sit with their child and tell their story. Maybe they have a special birth story, or an immigration story, or how-they-came-to-Oregon story. Be sure to have available blank books or sheets for drawing and/or writing.

## Let's Write!

- Set up short video clips on a laptop or tablet for children to peruse and then ask them to write about what they observed or experienced. (See Variations and Extended Learning from Let's Write! in [Plan Activities](#) for suggested sites.)
- Put a collection of items with fine details (e.g. leaves, flowers, shells) and magnifying glasses, inviting people to take a closer look and write or draw what they observed. Consider creating a [magnifying discovery board](#).
- Make available pictures and photos of interesting animals, a detailed scene or a series of scenes that might lend themselves to become a writing prompt. Encourage children to write about what they observe in the photos. Links to some interesting images can be found in the Image Resources section of the Stories Without Words adventure.
- What fun adventures have you been on with your family? Create an interactive board using a map, pins and a small slip of paper to note the location/place/name and the participant's name. Write a sentence or two about the adventure and then display for all to read.
- Bring in photos or draw pictures from a summer adventure and...write about it!
- Select a theme (what I eat for breakfast; my family; where I sleep; my pet; etc.) and ask participants to bring in photos (or drawings) to share, compare and write about!

## Mmmm... It's a Text Tasting!

- Create a "book tasting" station in your library or afterschool program space with access to the following possibilities:
- A pile of books and two bins. One labeled, "I love this book" and one bin labeled, "I can't stand this book." Create a poster that invites the community to swing by and place books in either bin - creating a venue for conversation about book preferences.
- Create a poster describing how to "taste" a book to see if it's right for you. Include old and new titles and several genres that may entice a variety of audiences.
- Create bookmarks with check boxes that lead participants through a book tasting. Children and caregivers might walk by and review books using the bookmarks and place them inside the books. Questions such as:

- Did you like the cover? Yes or no?
- Does the title make you want to read this book? Yes or No?
- Read the first page, does it make sense? Yes or No
- Was reading the first page fun or interesting? Yes or No
- Flip through the pages of the book - does it seem like something you might like? Yes or No?

## A Recipe for Fun

On a table or at an activity station, set out cookbooks to browse; an example (or several) of a fun recipe; blank recipe templates; a 3-hole punch; and a 3-ring binder “cookbook” in which to collect contributions. Alternately, post recipes on a bulletin board. (Your recipe examples could include actual recipes for food, and/or Recipes for a Fun Day or similar.) Include a sign inviting participants to:

- Browse the cookbooks for inspiration
- Write and/or draw a recipe to take home and/or contribute to the group “cookbook.” Your sign might specify any combination of the following:
  - Could be a real recipe they know and love;
  - Could be a recipe they make up;
  - Could be a Recipe for a Fun Day or similar.
- (If the resources exist) Ask staff to make a copy of their recipe so they can take one copy home and leave the other for inclusion in the group “cookbook.”

## Stories Without Words

- On a bulletin board or wall, display the three Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) questions and an image of a page from a wordless book.
- Post a sign inviting people to “read” the image and imagine the rest of the story. On a table next to the display, invite people to draw their own page for a collaborative wordless book and add it to the display, perhaps gathered in page protectors into a binder.
- Include VTS handouts (in [Get Handouts and More](#)) for people to take home. You could also choose a few of the Caregiver Messages (in [Get Handouts and More](#)) to post in talk bubbles or posters above the display.

## Credits



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