

GAMEBOARDS, ROOM DECORATIONS AND MOBILES

Decorating your room or department announces your summer reading club theme. Decorations can include bulletin-board displays, hanging mobiles and full-room decoration. These can highlight the theme and can show the progress of the children as they read or listen to books throughout the summer, either individually or as part of a team. What follows are some suggestions that can be modified in whatever way best suits your library.

GAME BOARDS AND ROOM DECORATIONS

? **Build a Growing Structure:** Set aside a table or section of your children's room that can be used to build a structure that can grow over the summer as the children read. Use Legos, Lincoln Logs, Tinker Toys, Skill Sticks or any craft material with which you easily can make an interlocking building. Create the base of the building before your summer reading club begins. Throughout the summer, as the children read the required number of books/days/minutes, give them a piece of the building material and let them add to the structure. As they read, they can see the building grow. If you use material that will allow it (i.e., Skill Sticks, construction paper), let the children color their pieces and/or put their names on before adding them to the structure. Alternately, you could give them paper bricks to build a building on a bulletin board. Children could add their bricks as they read, or you could add bricks in the team colors to show the progress of the teams (i.e., for every 10 hours the Red Team reads, a red brick is added to the building).

? **Create a Garden:** Decorate the room with silk or paper flowers. If you use paper flowers, you can start with buds and replace them with flowers in different stages of blooming over the summer, so that your garden grows as the children read. Or you can start with the room just decorated with grass (fringed green construction paper). Prepare paper or silk flowers ahead of time, and each time the children read the required number of books/days/minutes, give them a flower to add to the garden. If you use the team approach, the flowers can be in team colors. You can vary what you give them by letting them add bugs, worms, butterflies, anything you could find in a garden. This also translates to the bulletin board. The game board would then show their progress (either teams or individuals) by the proliferation of flowers on the board.

? **Grow a City:** Follow the same method described in the "Build a Growing Structure" section. But, instead of making a building grow, the children will make a city grow. When growing a city, you can give them anything you might find in a city—cars, trucks, traffic lights, etc.—to add during the summer. This also can be modified for a bulletin board and be used for individuals or teams.

? **Travel the World:** Decorate the room or bulletin board with the skylines of different world cities, or indigenous wildlife, and have the children, as individuals or teams, travel to different parts of the world throughout the summer.

? **Grow a Forest:** Decorate the room as a basic forest (any kind you choose). As the children read the required number of books/days/minutes, give them construction paper cutouts or models of forest trees, flowers and creatures. Start with saplings and give them bigger trees (flowers, creatures, etc.) each time, so the forest grows. This also can be done on the bulletin board to show individual or team progress, as long as the forest items have the children's names or team colors on them.

? **Construct a Railroad:** Decorate one part of the room or bulletin board as a train station. As the children read the required number of books/days/minutes, first give them sections of the track that they can color and put their names on and then place around the

room (or board) to construct a railroad track. When the track is complete, give them paper-cutout train cars that they can color and put their names on and build a train that stretches along the track they built. Team progress can be shown either by creating separate tracks or having color-specific track pieces and train cars.

? **Build a Castle:** Follow the same method in the “Build a Growing Structure” section, only make the structure a castle, on table or bulletin board. Use Legos or construction-paper bricks, as well as adding knights, princess, unicorns, dragons, etc.

? **Grow a Banyan Tree:** The roots of banyan trees grow down from the branches. Set up a basic banyan tree trunk and branches, made out of construction paper or a model, in the room or on a bulletin board. As the children read the required number of books/days/minutes, give them banyan roots to hang down from the branches. Teams can be given roots in team colors.

? **Hang a Growing Paper Chain:** Create a small, multicolor paper chain and hang it above the children’s reference desk or another location of your choice. Each time the children read the required number of books/days/minutes, let them select a precut paper strip (have as many colors cut as you can and keep a good supply on hand). They can color their own designs on the strips, or you can give them strips with flowers and vines preprinted on them. Have them put their names on the strips. Then either they can add them to the chain, or you can collect them and add the day’s strips all at one time. Eventually, your entire ceiling will be hung with a colorful chain (Note: This will not work if you have motion detectors in your room).

MOBILES

READ AND GROW MOBILE

Use one yardstick or two rulers crossed in the center. Tie a ribbon, string or heavy fishing line around the center to hang the mobile. Then balance each side by adding colorful book jackets (printed from the internet or cut from publishers' catalogs) hung on various lengths of string, ribbon, etc. Book jackets can be pasted on brightly colored paper for extra stiffness. Add details such as bookworms, flowers, butterflies, construction-equipment cutouts or birthday-party decorations to fit the Read and Grow @your library™ theme.

FLOWER MOBILE

Supplies: Paper plate or poster-board circle, tissue-paper or crepe-paper triangles in bright colors about 1 ½- to 2-inch size, construction or copy paper in various colors for flower centers and leaves, yarn or string, glue, hole punch and scissors

Use a lunch-size paper plate or cut a 6- to 7-inch circle from poster board. Working on the back side of the paper plate, glue a 3-inch circle in the center of the plate. Use brown for a sunflower or a color of your choice to create a different flower. Then put glue around the outside edge of the plate and add green triangle shapes. Next add a row of orange (or pink, red, blue, purple, etc.) triangles about ½ inch in from the green layer. Then continue around with yellow (or any color you like), about ½ inch from the last row. Finish with a final row that touches the edge of the center circle. Punch a hole near the top of the plate and add a loop of yarn or string for hanging the flower. Tape or punch a hole at the bottom of the plate to add a length of green yarn or ribbon for the flower's stem. Add two or more large green leaves to the yarn to complete your flower.

Add a book and bookworm to the bottom of the flower stem or decorate the flower with a butterfly, bee or ladybug as a variation.

To add a book to the bottom of the stem, fold a piece of colorful construction paper to make the book jacket. Then add a few pieces of white copy paper to represent pages. Staple or glue the pages inside the jacket, then attach the book to the bottom of the flower stem. Add a butterfly, bug or bookworm as a decoration, if you like.

BOOKWORM DISPLAY

Have reading club participants write the title of a book they have read and their initials on one segment of a bookworm. Then join each section together to form a bookworm that will grow around your library. Bookworm sections could be made more special by adding feet wearing sneakers, skates, ballet shoes, sandals, etc. Make the head section a

bit larger than the body segments. You also could put books around or in front of the bookworm.