

Create a Personalized Summer Reading Program Website for Free

Setting up this website will require knowledge of using WordPress and Google Forms. For more information on Wordpress please visit <http://en.support.wordpress.com/get-started/>. For more information about creating Google Forms visit: <http://support.google.com/drive/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=87809>.

The Dream Big, Read website created by Sarah Lawton, Ilsley Public Library, Middlebury, can be viewed here for inspiration: <http://ilsleydreambig.wordpress.com/>.

Step 1: Create a free WordPress Blog

- If you create a blog for the children's program and a separate blog for the YA program you can brand each with the specific clipart and slogan for that program.
- Disable comments and timestamps - this will help the site look more like a website and less like a blog.
- Suggested links to have: Summer Reading home (if your blog has more than one page), Library Catalog, Teen Reading Program (if you have a separate site), Library Homepage

Step 2: Create a Google Form

- You can have separate forms for the children's and YA programs, but having just one form allows you to keep all of the registration information together, as well as making it easier to spot duplicates if they enter registration information on both sites.
- Suggested form fields: First Name, Last Name, Email Address, School, Grade, Reading Goal
- Add the registration form to the Summer Reading Program blog in one of the following ways:
 - Copy the embed code from Google Drive to a new page in the blog. This will display the form on your website.
 - Add an image to the blog home page (such as a 'Register here!' picture) that links to the form
 - Copy the embed code from Google Drive to a widget placed in the sidebar.
 - Use the image widget to add a linked image in the sidebar. This will display the form in the sidebar.
- You can also use the same Google form to keep track of how many books each participant reads. Create a new column in the spreadsheet generated by the form and update it whenever a new punchcard is handed in or a new total is given to you.

Make sure to keep an up-to-date copy saved to your computer as backup!

Tips:

Another way to use Google Forms is to gather book reviews. Sarah Lawton from the Ilsley Public Library in Middlebury gathers "Book Blurbs" from her readers. This form asks for the participants name, the book title and author, a short review of the book, as well as asking permission to use their name and/or review on the website. You can create another page in the WordPress blog to post these blurbs.

You can download the information from the Google form at any time, or view it in Google Drive. The email addresses can be copied and used when sending out SRP newsletters or information about events and programs. By asking users for their grade it is easy to sort the list and gather information specific to the children or YA programs. Having all of this information in one place will make submitting SRP statistics at the end of the summer a breeze!

Customize your WordPress site by adding sidebar widgets from sites like Goodreads and TeachingBooks.net as well as adding any specific information about your library's Summer Reading Program.

Once you have finished, simply put a link to the WordPress site on your library's website.

If you have any questions please contact April Kelley at april.kelley@state.vt.us or (802) 828-2721.