

# Teen Instagram Engagement:

## Using the Platform as a Tool and Teen Library Service

A Case Study of #IEXchallenge at the Cambridge  
Idea Exchange



Brooke Windsor – Richmond Hill Public Library

# CAVEAT!

This level of Instagram engagement is not for every library.



If your system's social media policies are very rigid in what can be posted (E.G. – JUST library offerings) or require multiple levels of clearance before posting (meaning you cannot be immediate or responsive), this project will most not likely work for you.

# Well...what do you need?



- Flexible social media policy
- Separate teen Instagram account
- Teens in your community who use Instagram (Snapchat still king but Instagram in second)
- Someone willing to keep their phone or tablet on them at ALL times (RESPONSIVE)
- A good eye for pictures and Instagram-able moments

# #IEXchallenge: A Case Study

RATIONALE: Teens who read are going to read any way, and many teens are required to read for school Summer Reading Lists. What about everyone else?



The move of libraries into community centres means that we need to be opening summer reading for teens who do not see the library as “the book place”. We need to shift our services to embrace the new philosophy and the new physical spaces.

# #IEXchallenge: A Case Study

Using a summer reading framework (participate with the library throughout the session for prizes), #IEXchallenge included the popularity of Instagram challenges for **ENGAGEMENT**.



**PROBLEM:** Don't have teens just review books they read in 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

**SOLUTION:** Talk to us on Instagram, comment on our posts, tag us in your Instagram pictures, take Instagram pictures that fit with challenges

# #IEXchallenge: A Case Study



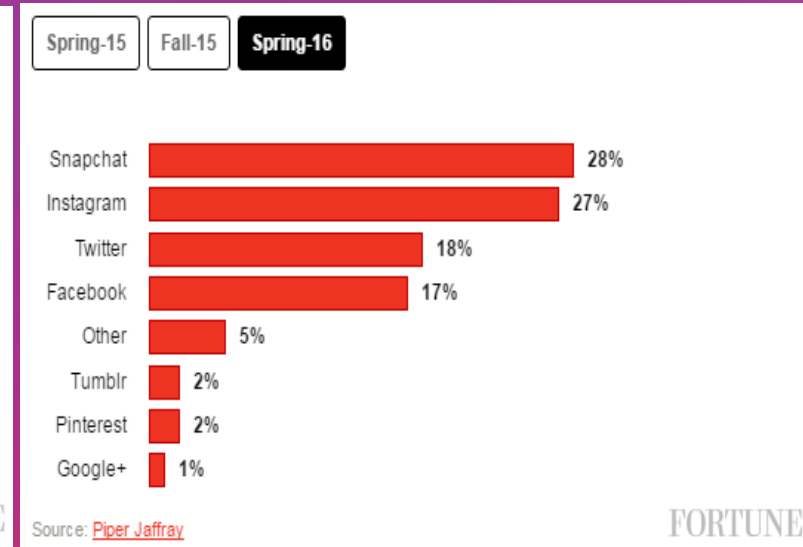
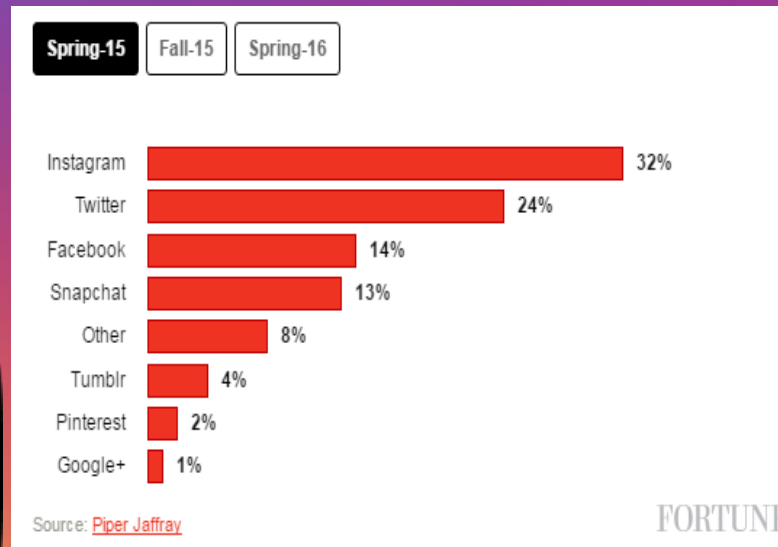
The basis of this project relies on a strong social media strategy with engagement of teens for a more holistic teen summer service.

**PROBLEM:** Teens don't normally interact with institutions on social media.

**SOLUTION:** Use all information available for increasing social media interaction to create a new library social media pathway.

# #IEXchallenge: Creating a New Pathway

## PICKING A PLATFORM: Twitter, Facebook? Instagram



SETTING UP THE NEW PLATFORM: Joining the library social media platform as a hashtag?  
Friendly with library's social media but separate

HANDLE NAME: Teen version of library handle or something more directed?

@ideaXchallenge

# #IEXchallenge: Early Days

PROBLEM: In order for social media to be successful, you need a solid base of followers.



SOLUTION:

Step 1.) Strong first post

Step 2.) Grow follower base with in-person outreach (also helps target participants in the local area – no “Aaron”)

Step 3.) Warm-up postings (countdown)

# #IEXchallenge: First Post!

To make a statement about this new endeavour and let followers get a peek at the fun to come, the first post was very important.



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Idea Exchange, Cambridg..

Follow

emily.is.chill, maggiengkentt, \_benjamindrobigsmind., baconater3, streetracer0414, jdkamula and bethgreat97 like this

ideaxchallenge #iexchallenge is on the way! Get ready to express yourself this summer and celebrate in style!

Log in to like or comment.



# #IEXchallenge: Outreach Events



Just like with any other summer program, school outreach BEFORE the event is crucial.

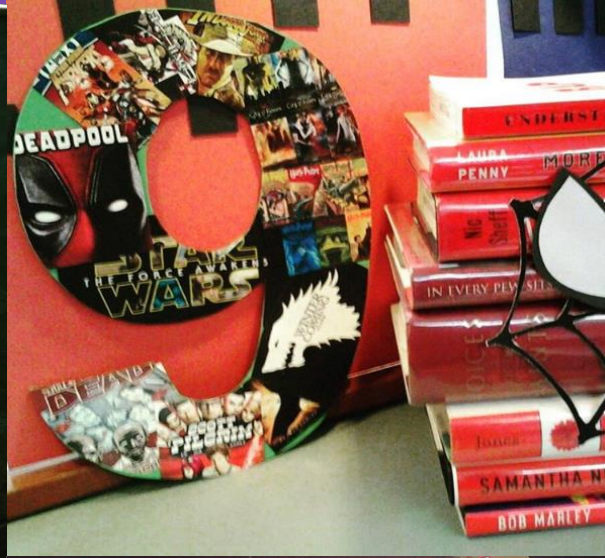
I visited 3 high schools in person with special lunch-time fun and games (like a book stacking contest) and sent promotional packets to the other 4 high schools in the area.

Not only did I speak on IEXchallenge but I also promoted all the summer teen program offerings and all the teens who visited my in-person booths at school filled out an extra grand prize ballot on the spot.

If they followed us on Instagram before the IEXchallenge contest started, they received an additional ballot.

\*67 followers were gained in the two week outreach period before the contest began.

# #IEXchallenge: Countdown



- Show off possible challenge options.
- Embrace visually-stimulating fun around the library.
- Post photos **WHILE** gaining followers.
- Of course...present your prizes!

# #IEXchallenge: A Word About Prizes

Grand prizes for a big summer contest can be relatively easy. This program had one \$100 grand prize gift certificate from the Cambridge Centre Mall and two \$30 runner up gift certificates to the mall.

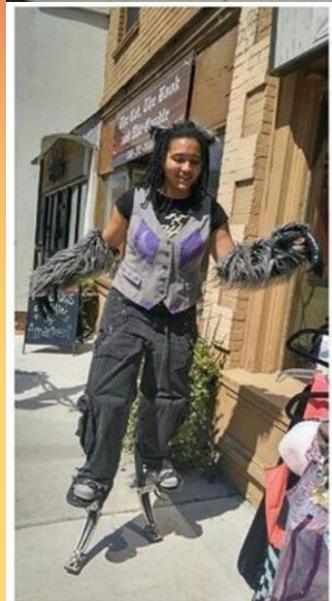
\$50 of the \$160 total were donated by the mall.

Smaller weekly prizes can be a problem. How do you make it worth their while to compete?

**\*BOOKS SHOULD BE AN ELEMENT OF THE PRIZE PACK...NOT THE BE-ALL-END-ALL!**

Look into smaller independent stores (mom and pop shops) who are offering unique items.

See if any of these independent local sellers are on Instagram.



ideaxchallenge  
Black Orchid Designs

Follow

12 likes 42w

ideaxchallenge Monsters have taken over @blackorchiddesignsdotca on Queen Street in Hespeler! Join them for cupcakes and 30-50% off the whole store while scoring a #IEXchallenge grand prize ballot! blackorchiddesignssarykerri Thank u for coming!!

ideaxchallenge Thank YOU for making such cool stuff!

Log in to like or comment.

...

# #IEXchallenge: Challenge List

Try to plan your challenge list **FIRST!**

- Responsive switch outs can still be allowed though (Pokemon GO)

Look at your teen library programs for summer and use them as a base.

- Outdoor showing of Back to the Future (Movie Madness Challenge)
- “Come to these events for your weekly pic submission” – Promotion **WITHOUT** spam!

Don't forget Instagram staples (scenery, food, etc.)

- Summer Scenery yielded 126 photos from 42 participants

Balance your challenge list (Shelfie then Outdoor Fun).

**BUT → Keep the list a secret!**

- Tease at the end of the week



# #IEXchallenge: Nitty Gritty of the Early Days

Making sure those teens who only found out about the program on Instagram knew the details with a post of “How to Play” -- not rules!



**How to Play  
#IEXchallenge**

- Be between 13-18 years old
- Live in Cambridge, Ontario or reciprocal community (Kitchener-Waterloo Region)

**Earn Grand Prize Ballots**

- PARTY WITH US!**  
Earn a ballot whenever you come to a teen summer program or event. For a full list of eligible events go to <http://ideaexchange.org/teens/IEXchallenge>
- COMPETE IN WEEKLY INSTAGRAM CHALLENGES!**
  - Each week (except the first which will be **TWO** weeks long) will feature a new Instagram photo challenge - like Book Face or Summer LOLz.
  - Our judge (who cannot be bribed but would accept gifts if offered) will pick the best photo for the weekly prize pack.
  - You get a grand prize ballot for every Instagram challenge photo uploaded!
  - Make sure to tag us and/or use #IEXchallenge for your photo to be counted.
- INSTAGRAM YOUR SUMMER!**
  - Use #IEXchallenge to show us what you are doing this summer for **EXTRA** grand prize ballots.
  - You can get up to **FOUR** additional ballots each week this way!

Work on building a reputation and spreading to other teens – aggressive follow for follow for several weeks

# #IEXchallenge: Nitty Gritty of the Early Days

## INSTAGRAM POSTING FRAMEWORK

At least ONE post daily related to the weekly challenge with a reminder to send in their pictures or post their pictures with our hashtag.



Try for second “cool/just-for-fun” or program post every other day (TWO posts on every other day cycle)

SHARE awesome pics that are directly send to you (ask first)

Instagram OF teens rather than just catered to them.

NEVER POST MORE THAN THREE TIMES A DAY  
UNLESS IT'S A HUGE/SPECIAL EVENT

# #IEXchallenge: Hootsuite

Why having one person truly invested in this program is so important is due to the issues of Hootsuite and Instagram.



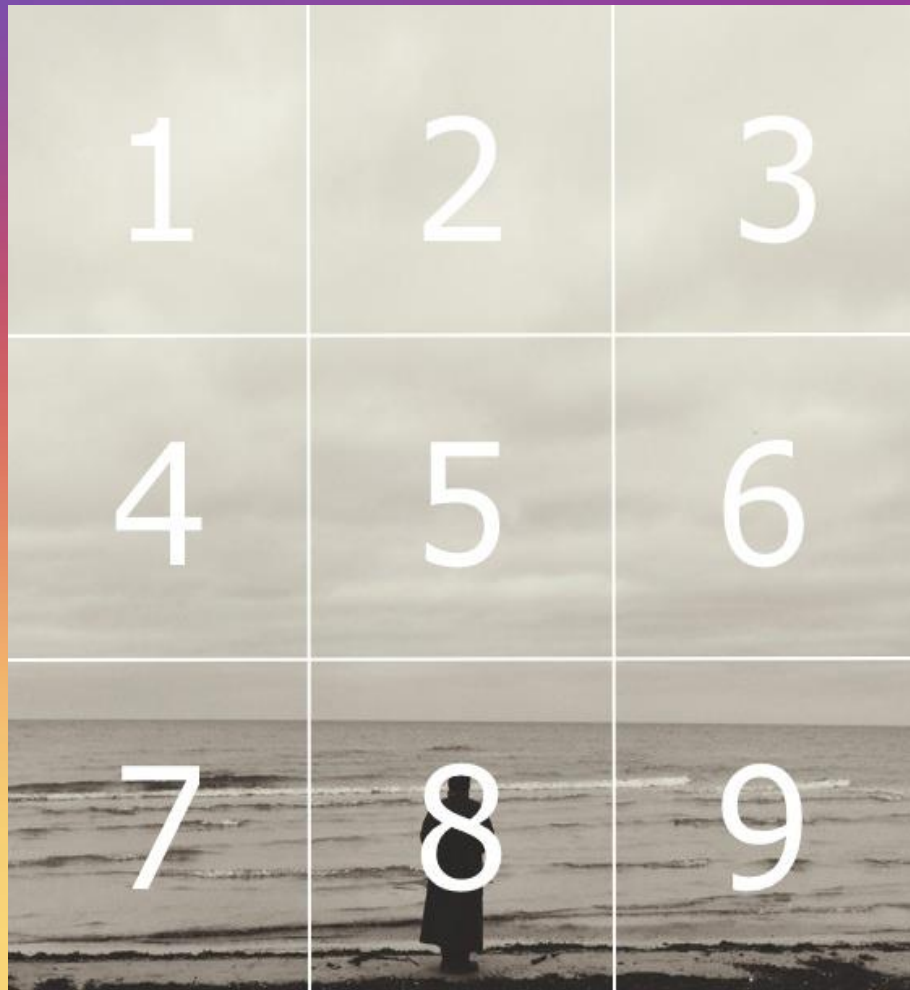
Hootsuite </3 Instagram!

You can pre-load Instagram photos and posts into Hootsuite.

BUT...when the “post time” comes around, Hootsuite sends off an alarm from the posting device which requires you to manually post from the “saved” post in Hootsuite.

# #IEXchallenge: Snapping Your Pics!

## BASICS OF INSTAGRAM PHOTOGRAPHY:



- Rule of Thirds (align subject with literal guidelines and intersection points) UPGRADED – just turn on the “grid” setting for iPhone
- Small subjects that fit into one square should be placed in the center of any of the eight squares on the outside, while square 5 should be reserved for very strong subjects only.
- If your subjects are taller (such as a standing person), you can combine the different squares into *zones*, where the subjects can once again be placed centrally.

# #IEXchallenge: Snapping Your Pics!

## BASICS OF INSTAGRAM PHOTOGRAPHY:

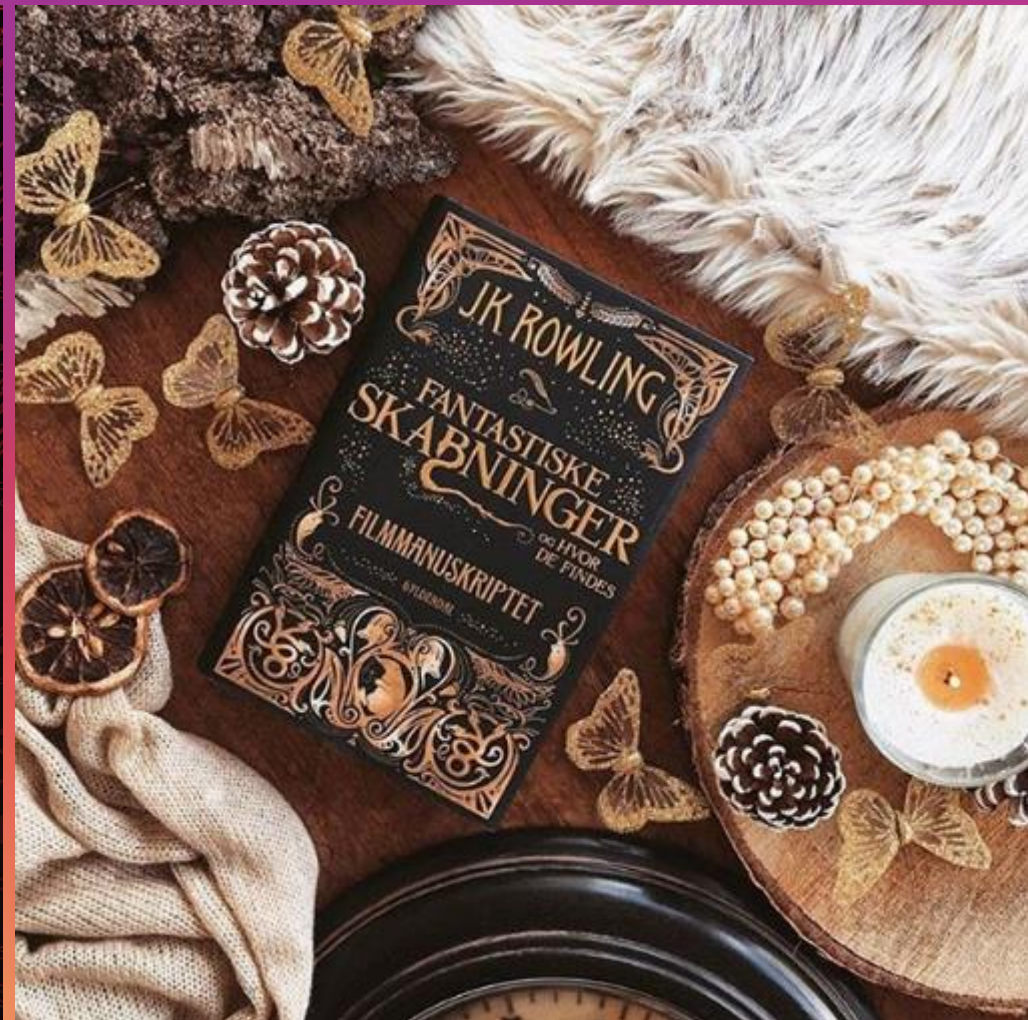
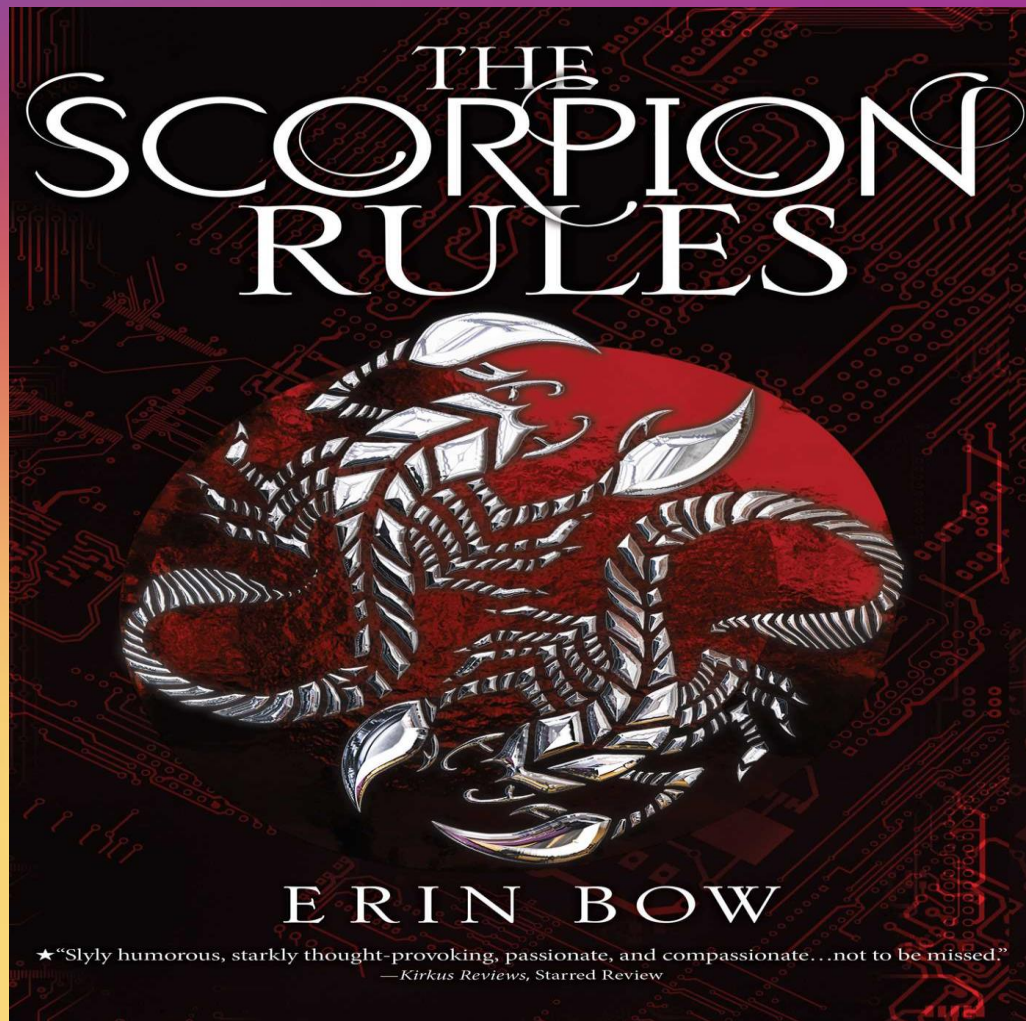


- Use diagonals! You should place the important subjects in your photo diagonally so that it stays balanced both horizontally and vertically.
- When taking a picture for Instagram on a phone or Android tablet underexposing is better (easier to brighten with editing)
- Embrace natural light (and don't ignore "Magic Hour")
- Filters are not always needed but are a good option roughly 75% of the time – avoid Kelvin if you can though
- Photogenic spots (eye-popping walls, nice tables, simple yet pretty textures)

# #IEXchallenge: Snapping Your Pics!

BOOKS OR BOOK COVERS:

Create a window into the real world...not just an image!



# #IEXchallenge: Snapping Your Pics!

Carry over the concept to program posters:



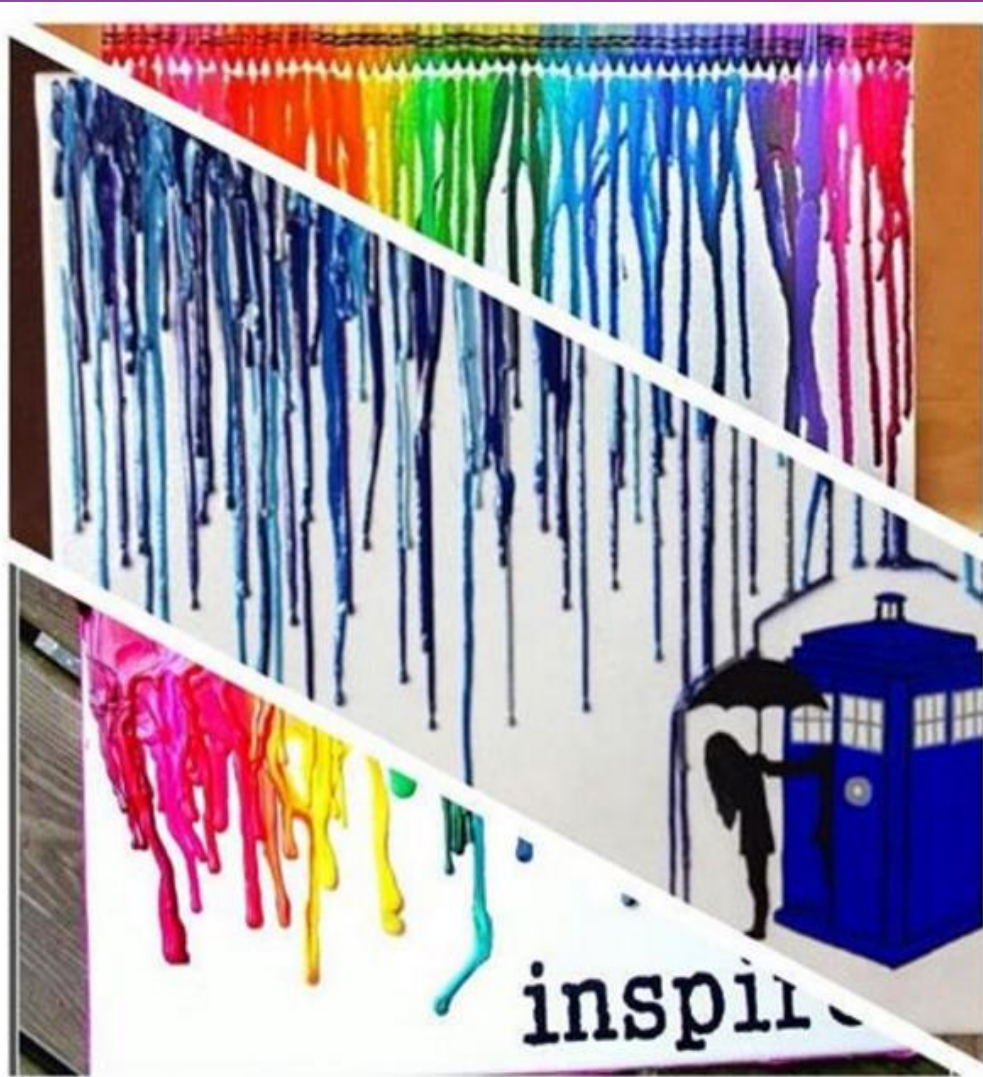
Cambridge artist Michele Jones invites teens to participate in **THE PIXEL PROJECT**. Look for our pop-up art tent at festivals and events throughout the summer and help make a giant pixel painting.

Friday, June 17 Mayor's Celebration of the Arts Cambridge City Hall	Tuesday, July 12 IMPACT Movie Night Forbes Park	Thursday, July 14 Thursday Night LIVE Mill Race Park
Saturday, August 20 Rock the Mill Cambridge City Hall	Saturday, August 20 Artrageous! Idea Exchange, Queen's Square	Saturday, August 27 Cambridge Comic Arts Festival Idea Exchange, Queen's Square

# #IEXchallenge: Snapping Your Pics!

COLLAGES:

Good posts but the images need to work together!





# #IEXchallenge: Snapping Your Pics!

DON'T FORGET OUTREACH EVENTS

Programs obviously are great for photos but outreach events can be good too!



# #IEXchallenge: Results

#IEXchallenge in Summer 2016 lasted for 10 weeks (end of June until end of August)

- From start to finish we gathered 182 teen followers from the Cambridge area (11 from Kitchener-Waterloo region)



- Out of the 182 followers, we had 106 active participants (liking photos, sending messages, commenting, tagging photos)
- The participants ranged in ages from 13-14 (21%), 15 (19%), 16 (16%), 17 (11%), and 18 (4%)
- These numbers are approximately 365% greater than the teen reading program from 2015 which garnered 50 participants (most of them between the ages of 11 and 13)

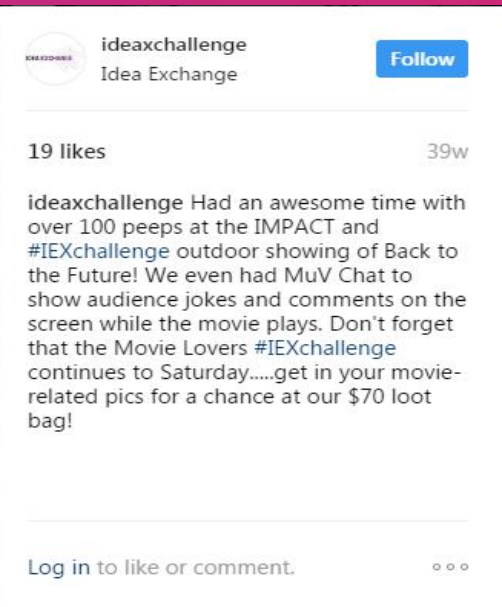
# #IEXchallenge: Peek into Teen Responses

## TEEN SUMMER PROGRAM PARTICIPATION:

While Cambridge did not offer teen programs in summers prior to 2016, several events were held alongside the IEXchallenge.

All programs were promoted through Instagram posts and allowed participants to gain an extra grand prize ballot for attendance.

One of the bigger programs aimed at teens (but family friendly) was an outdoor showing of Back to the Future which garnered over 100 participants. Since this event was held just three weeks after the start of IEXchallenge the event helped to gain new followers. Several IEXchallenge players used the event as their photo for the Movie Madness weekly theme.



# #IEXchallenge: Peek into Teen Responses

## TEEN SUMMER PROGRAM PARTICIPATION:

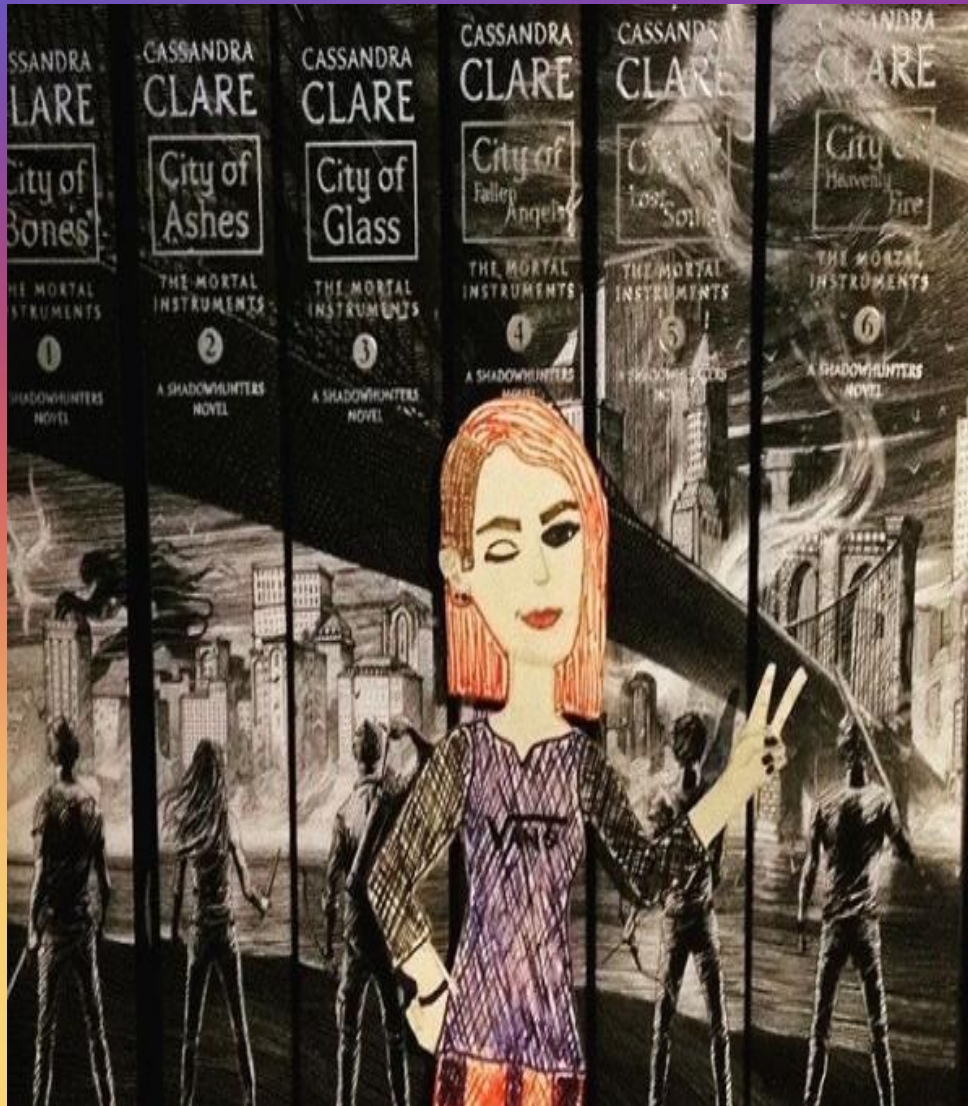
The biggest teen-only program in Idea Exchange history (gaining 48 participants between the ages of 13 and 18, not including a few younger and a few older participants) was the Henna Party Night.

Of the 48 participants, 32 heard about the event via IEXchallenge Instagram posts.



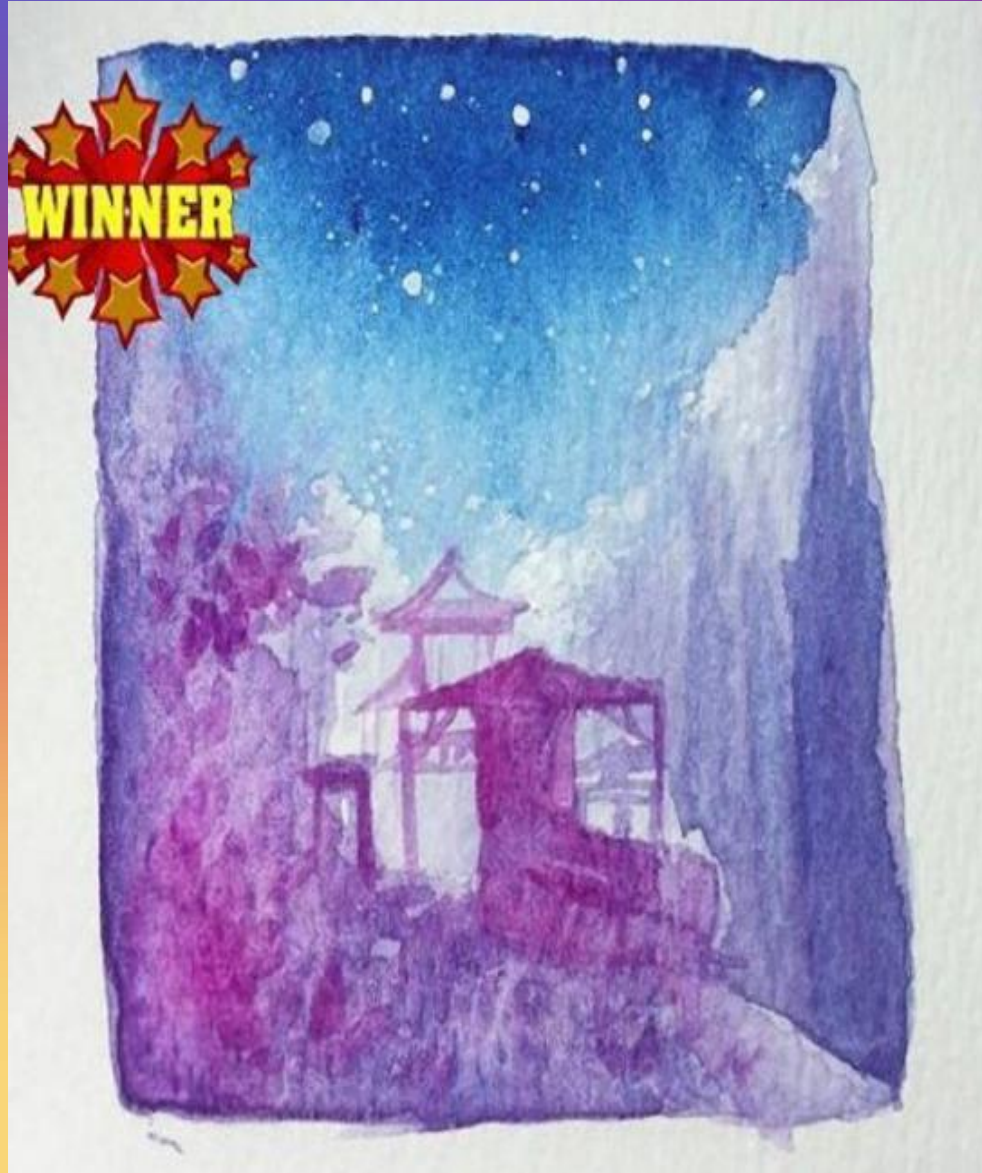
# #IEXchallenge: Peek into Teen Responses

PHOTO ENTRIES (MY FAVOURITES):



# #IEXchallenge: Peek into Teen Responses

PHOTO ENTRIES (MY FAVOURITES):



# #IEXchallenge: Peek into Teen Responses

ENGAGEMENT: TALK TO US!



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IDEA EXCHANGE Cambr... [Follow](#)

22 likes 38w

ideaxchallenge Just a heads up to the #IEXchallenge players out there who are Pokemon Go-ing (I made a new verb!).....all FOUR library branches are official PokeStops!

jacob.lilly Sixx

streetracer0414 See I could come visit my sister at work and still get to play

ideaxchallenge And your sister would enjoy that since she hasn't seen you in 7 months 😊

mmaddiegrace Saw this today haha

ideaxchallenge Awww you were at Clemens Mill today @mmaddiegrace ? 😊 I just put this up there last night...we missed nerd-out time!

mmaddiegrace Yeah I went to 3 of the library's today scouting Harry Potter books

Log in to like or comment. ⋮



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Idea Exchange [Follow](#)

27 likes 34w

dramaticheather That stuff looks awesome! No wonder you posted it early.

ideaxchallenge Right?!?  
@dramaticheather my excitement couldn't be contained!

mmaddiegrace THIS IS THE COOLEST

muskanator @chipsnsprinkles YOU BETTER COMPETE IN THIS ONE THERE IS NO WAY YOU CAN LOSE I BELIEVE IN U

ideaxchallenge @muskanator I was already eagerly awaiting

Log in to like or comment. ⋮

# #IEXchallenge: Peek into Teen Responses

ENGAGEMENT: TALK TO US!

What library Instagram engagement can mean to the teens in your community...



ideaxchallenge Need access to coloring stuff for #IEXchallenge Artiste Extraordinaire or just because coloring rocks? ALL four library branches have FREE COLORING STATIONS with complex coloring sheets, books, pencil crayons, and markers! 🎨

sarahhcli are you allowed to like take a few pages home?

ideaxchallenge Of course you can!

ideaxchallenge @sarahh.clifford

sarahhcli yay! okay thank you 😊❤️

sarahhcli ahh im at the hespler one and i cant find the station 😞😞

ideaxchallenge @sarahh.clifford I'm trying to track theirs down for ya girlie. Hold tight. I'm in Hamilton right now so it is taking some coordinating.

ideaxchallenge @sarahh.clifford gotcha covered! They hadn't set it out yet. The adult coloring is on the second floor on one of the study tables. If you have any problem finding it the second floor librarian can point it out. Right now the librarian is a nice lady named Linda

sarahhcli Thank you so much!!!

ideaxchallenge @sarahh.clifford I told you that I had you covered! 😊

# #IEXchallenge: Next Steps

The popularity of this program and requests for its continuation has led to IEXchallenge acting as a vital foundation for teen services at the Cambridge Idea Exchange.



In an ideal world, it would carry on as a standard offering every programming session with different challenges, prizes, and engagement games to work alongside teen events at the library.

# YOUR TURN!

*Any questions or concerns?*

*Ask away!*



# For future reference

Brooke Windsor

Associate Branch Librarian



Richmond Green Library  
Richmond Hill Public Library System

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