

Blind Date With a Book: A Reading Program With a Twist

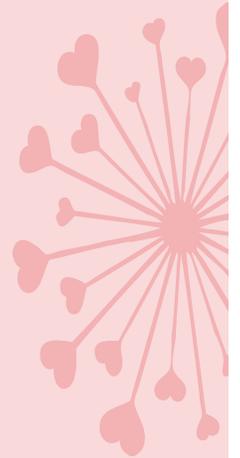
Christina Thurairatnam

Holmes County District Public Library



Why Try Blind Date With a Book?

- It is something different from the typical reading program
- No sign ups involved
- Participation is low key
- It challenges patrons to read outside their norm
- It incorporates readers' advisory
- Increases interaction with patrons about books
- You can promote the hidden gems in your collection



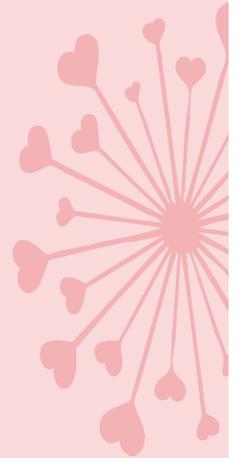
How it works

- Books are wrapped up so patrons can't see the cover or title but barcodes are taped to the outside for check out
- A "personal ad" for each blind date book is taped to the front to help patrons make their selection
- Each book contains a "Rate Your Date" form that patrons fill out and turn in for entry in grand prize drawing
- We do not require patrons to finish a book if it is a "bad date" but we do ask that they fill out the form anyway and tell us why it didn't work for them



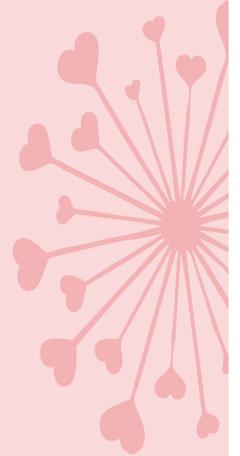
Choosing Books

- Choose books from a variety of genres
- Look at "Best of" lists for ideas
- Ask library staff for suggestions
- Book discussion books
- Scan your shelves for inspiration
- Try to avoid major bestsellers
- Don't be afraid to include teen fiction/nonfiction unless it goes against your SRP rules
- Don't forget to include large print!



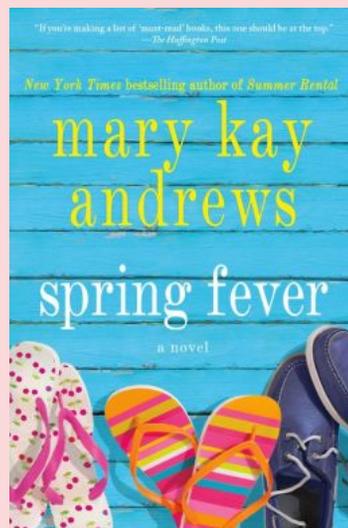
Writing the Personal Ad

- Write a brief ad in the style of personal ads
- Use appeal factors in your ad
- Use the book description for inspiration
- Quote author blurbs
- Use book reviews for inspiration and appeal clues
- Make connections with other similar books or authors
- Just give enough information to hint at what the book is about or to make it appealing to patrons



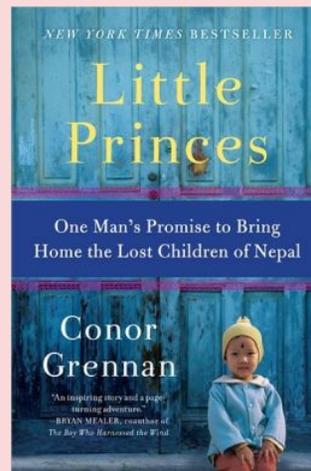
Examples of Book Personal Ads

I'm a second chance love story with Southern charm. I'm also all about great friendships and the importance of family. Pick me up when you are in the mood for a light romance that sparkles with humor and warmth. If you are a fan of *Sweet Home Alabama*, we'd be a great match!

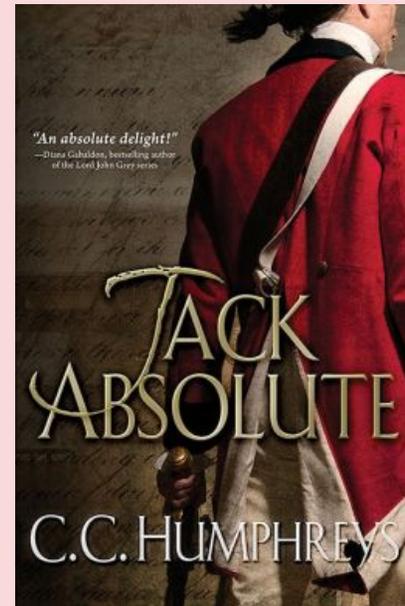
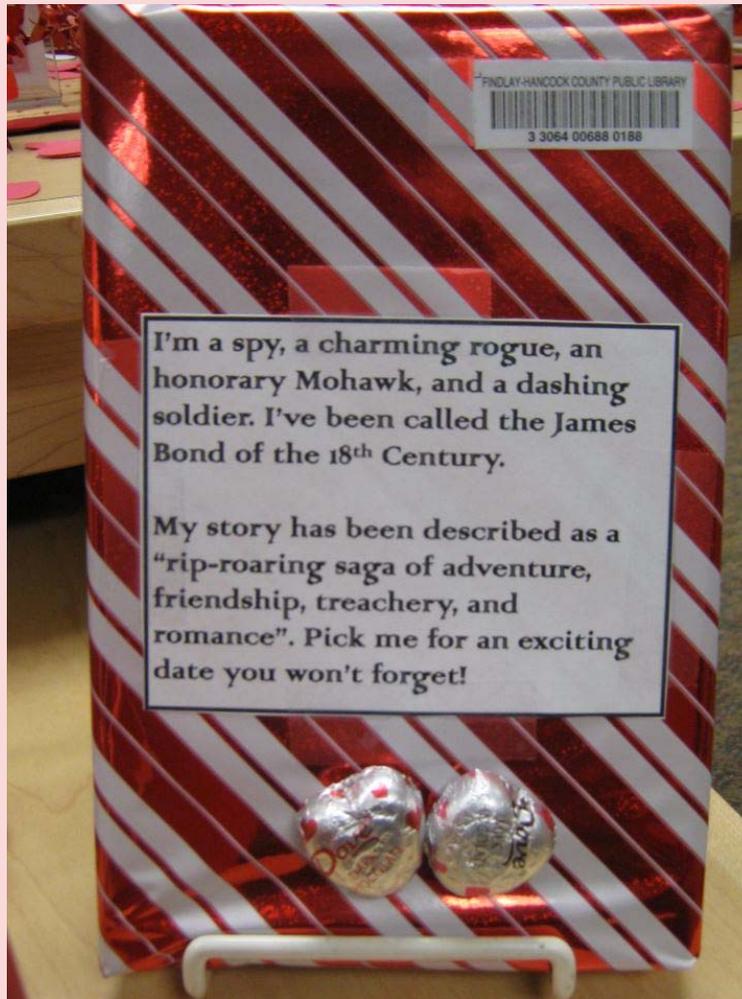


Examples of Book Personal Ads

Are you looking for adventure? Do you long to travel? Interested in learning about other countries? If so, I'm a true story who might be a perfect match for you! I can promise you laugh out loud moments and unforgettable experiences. Don't be surprised if your heart is touched by spending time with me.



Examples of Book Personal Ads



Rate Your Date Form

- Serves as entry ticket for prize drawing
- Allows you to keep track of number of participants
- Serves as a way to get feedback on selected books

Rate Your Blind Date

Your name:

Phone:

Name of book:

What was your first impression of the book?

Have you read this type of book before?

Would you try other books like this one?

Would you recommend this book to others?

How many hearts would you give this "date"?



Please return this form to the Help Desk by March 9th

Making the Program Work For You

Some ways to customize the program to work for your library:

- If you don't have a lot of time to write personal ads, ask coworkers to help you
- You could also skip writing personal ads and just cover the books and label them with genre stickers or leave them blank as a complete mystery
- Instead of making it a big reading program, just create a display of blind date books for fun
- Make it a one day event where patrons can come and check out a "date" and go home with it

