

Obituary Writing Workshop

[Saint Peter Public Library](#)

Adults

|

Intergenerational

Obituary Writing Workshop

Oct 31, 2019

Free

☐

Byline

Gabriela Roemhildt, Program Supervisor, Saint Peter (Minn.) Public Library

Our obituary writing workshop was created to guide patrons through the process of writing an obituary for themselves or a loved one, choosing their words carefully and succinctly.

Led by the nearby Gustavus Adolphus College's Writing Center director and two writing tutors, the program helped patrons through what can be a difficult task.

Advanced Planning

After seeing a post on the [Programming Librarian Interest Group Facebook page](#) about a write-your-own obituary program, I reached out to our local college's writing center director. After introducing myself via email, I told him I was interested in offering a class about writing an obituary. He was intrigued with the idea, and we met to brainstorm ideas.

He proposed to run this as a two-part workshop. The first class would be a learning class, a general session on what is expected from an obituary and how to maintain accuracy, as well as providing participants with a few examples of good obituaries. The students were then to be given homework for the second session. For the second class, the writing director would come back with two student writing tutors to go over the actual writing of the obituaries and offer constructive criticism. Our goal was for participants to leave with a decent obituary.

Marketing

This program was marketed to older adults and seniors via email, Facebook, fliers and the community brochure.

We like to charge \$5 fees for our programs to give patrons a sense of investment in the program, making it more likely that they show up.

Budgeting

There was no cost associated with hosting the program. The writing center director did not charge us a fee, and he also used this as a learning session for his student tutors.

Day-of-event Activity

We used our regular lecture classroom, with no special set-up required. The instructor brought packets for each student from his office, and a whiteboard and pens were made available for his use.

Program Execution

Seven people registered to attend the class, which was held on two consecutive Tuesdays from 2 to 3 p.m. A few patrons grumbled about having to do homework.

For a first-time program on a topic that makes some people uneasy, we considered this a highly successful program with seven people attending. I believe we established a rapport with the writing center, and the director said he would be amenable to offering another writing program, such as memoir-writing, in the future.

Advice

Programming is all about marketing and getting the word out! This program might have had more in attendance if information had been shared with churches and local assisted-living facilities.

Supporting Materials

[Download this Program as a PDF](#)

- Feedback (Coming Soon!)
- [Programming Librarian Facebook Group](#)

More Programs

May 23, 2016

Children (9 and under)+ | ☐☐

[Image](#)



WRITE Stuff Writing Club

Audiences:

Audience

Children (9 and under)

Young Adult (17 - 20)

Nov 20, 2018

Intergenerational+ |

[Image](#)



[The Path to Healthy Aging: Partnering with Aging Councils and Agencies](#)

Audiences:

Audience

Intergenerational

Jun 14, 2019

Intergenerational+ | \$\$\$

[Image](#)



Community Engagement: Healthy Living Outreach for Seniors

Audiences:

Intergenerational