

Open house activities

Demonstrate the quality of your academic program

“Offering construction materials for an egg drop container was a great way to get all the families to visit each classroom. It was fun, and interactive, and the families really enjoyed working together to create their egg protectors.”

Katie Richmond
Foothills Adventist Elementary School

In case your brain is still in "spring break" mode... The purpose of this open house is to highlight the great academics that are happening at your school.

Each classroom should have at least one interactive demonstration or activity.

The week before spring break I promised you a list of great ideas for these activities from other teachers in our conference. Here are some highlights. (Click the name of the teacher to email them for more information.) In addition, these ideas will be listed in the Marketing Corner.

1. **Egg drop:** Students create a device to safely protect a raw egg when it is dropped from a height of 20' or so. One academy assigns this in advance to students for a physics project (Karin Strom). An elementary school has used this as an activity during their open house to encourage families to visit each classroom. In addition to the classroom activity, each room provides a family with a specific material (foam, duct tape, etc.) that can be used to construct a safe egg container. The eggs are dropped at the end of the open house and the winning family is awarded \$100, plus one free registration fee for the next year (Katie Richmond).
2. **Memory verse recital:** As a group, second grade students recite a chapter they have memorized from the Bible (JoAnn Moon).
3. **Refreshments from another culture:** Spanish language students research a Spanish-speaking country and culture. In addition to creating a presentation on elements of that culture, they prepare refreshments from that cuisine which are served as refreshments during the open house (Joy Fackenthall).
4. **Wax museum:** Fifth-grade students research and write a monologue about a famous person from history. At the open house they dress in an appropriate costume, when activated they "come to life" and deliver their monologue (Leslie Bartsch).

5. **"Another Brick in the Wall:"** Academy students can paint one of the cinderblock "bricks" comprising the classroom wall. A QR code in the corner allows parents/visitors to hear that student's recorded narrative explaining the thought process behind their painting (Heather Denton).
6. **Money management:** Third and fourth graders explain how they are spending the year in an ongoing simulation; experiencing a lifetime of paying for an education, earning money, tithing, investing, paying bills and taxes, saving for retirement, and much more (John Linhares).
7. **Scuba science:** Seventh and eighth grade students explain the science of scuba diving safety (Rick Nelson).
8. **Recorder karate:** Students in primary grades demonstrate a group recorder rehearsal and how they earn recorder "belts" for achieving increasing levels of proficiency (Arthur Borges).
9. **Build your own bubble wand:** Kindergarten and first graders build 3D shapes out of gumdrops and toothpicks, then use them to create giant soap bubbles (Tammy Priest).
10. **Popsicle stick bridges:** Physical science students are assigned, in advance, the task of making a bridge out of popsicle sticks. The bridges are tested to see how much weight they can bear until they break--very visual (John Gilley).
11. **Reading their own writing:** Students read aloud from something they've written. Academy students are challenged to participate in the NaNoWriMo event (nanowrimo.org) and read an excerpt from their book (Megan Brooks). First grade students read from their own writing--at a slightly lower level (Cheryl Miceli).
12. **All about your heart:** Second through fourth graders enjoy learning about their hearts through a sensory tub with touchable models of the various parts of their blood, a tennis ball model of the challenges of pumping blood and gathering heart beat data (Katie Richmond).
13. **Robotics:** Seventh and eighth grade students demonstrate the LEGO robots they have designed, built and programmed, showing the tasks the robots can perform (Rick Nelson).
14. **Galleries:** The academic work of academy students in various subjects--written and visual to address their student learning objective (SLO) #3--is displayed in public spaces throughout the campus (Peter Fackenthal). As a side note, each activity on the open house schedule includes a list of the SLOs which that activity addresses.

These ideas are also listed in the Marketing Corner. I will keep updating that list with the teacher contact information, as I hear of new ideas. If you, or your staff, have a successful idea to share, please call or email me.

Think about including a general activity that encourages people to visit each classroom.

Giving out different components for an egg drop container from each classroom is one such idea. Another idea is a "treasure hunt" in which kids look for a specific item in each classroom (e.g. a butterfly, LEGO figure, etc.).

Credits:

Peter Fackenthal

Justine Leonie

Rick Nelson

Katie Richmond

Binder tab: September

(This year I am asking you to do this now, but in future years you should start open house planning in the fall to be ready for it in January or February.)

School size: All