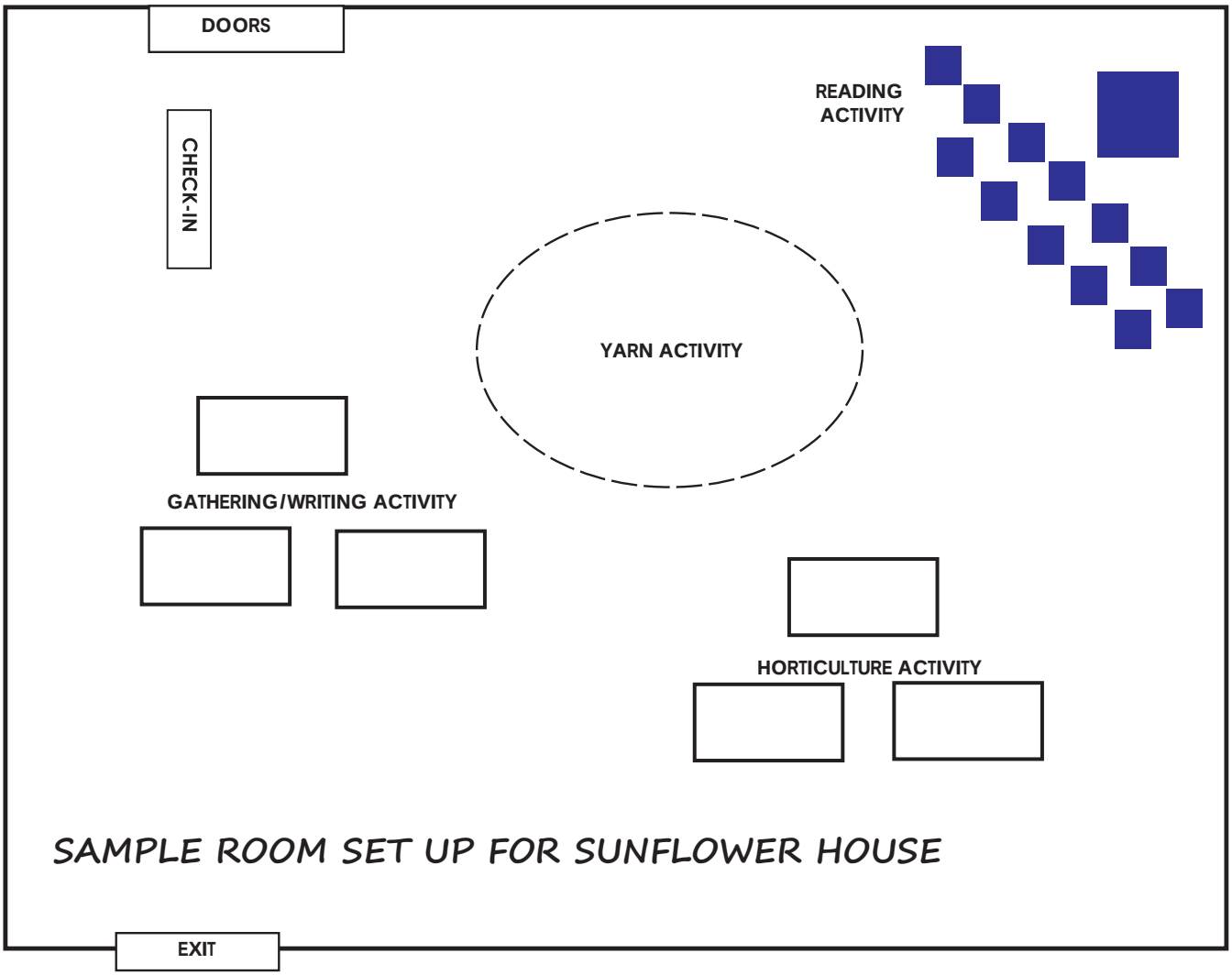

ACTIVITIES ROOM GRIFFIN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Room Set-up

To accommodate several activities within a short amount of time, it is best to set up your activity space with areas for each individual task. Look ahead to each session and determine what activities are included and how many stations you will need. Each session has four parts. As children move from one part to the next, the supporting volunteers can help tidy the work areas and prepare the next activity. This is especially important if you are short on space and need to use the same area for more than one activity.

It is best to not have children waiting while you set up an activity. Attention spans are short. If for some reason you cannot take the children from one activity right into the next, be prepared with a short game or distraction.

Check-In

Designate a specific space for checking in youth participants. Make sure you have pens for parents to sign in the children and write their phone numbers. Have blank nametags on hand, along with a few markers to write names. Keep your registration note book in this space, too.

Gathering Activity

As participants arrive, be prepared to engage them in a simple activity that relates to the session and prepares everyone to focus their attention on the leader. If you do not have enough space to make this a separate area from other activities, then be prepared to direct the children to another area for the next activity and have supporting volunteers tidy the area for the next activity in this space.

Potting and Planting

Activities that require work with potting soil and plants or seeds are best contained to one area. Use a disposable table cloth (available at the Dollar Store) to cover the work space. When the activity is complete, simply pick up the corners of the table cloth, fold it into itself so no bits of soil and plants fall out, and dispose of the entire thing in a trash bag.

It is helpful to pre-moisten potting soil before the session starts. An easy way to do this is to put potting soil into a medium-sized, clear plastic storage box with a snap-on lid. Bring the moist soil mix in the box to the session and place in the area designated for potting and planting. Participants can work over top of the box to fill their individual pots. Alternately, the pre-moistened potting soil can be divided among aluminum pans, such as disposable roasting or food service pans, that are placed in several spots around the work space. Any remaining potting soil can be returned to the storage box for clean-up and transport.

Coloring and Crafting

Activities that include coloring and crafting can be set up at separate stations from potting and planting. Newspaper or a roll of brown craft paper can be put down to protect work surfaces and make clean-up easier. If an activity calls for glue, you can measure a small amount of glue into individual containers, such as a small Dixie cup, or onto the lid of a plastic recycled container. Toothpicks, paint brushes, or Q-tips can be given to each child to spread the glue onto their project or activity. This helps reduce waste and avoid issues with sharing limited bottles of glue. Dispose of the individual glue pots and any toothpicks or Q-tips at the end of the session (Wash glue from paint brushes at end of session to reuse).

Crayons and markers are easily stored in a shoebox-size box. When placed in the center of the table, they can easily be shared. Alternately, place a handful of crayons or markers at several spots in the middle of the table so that everyone can easily reach some. If you have a younger group, you may want to invest in the jumbo-sized crayons.

Reading

Designate a space for the reading activity. You will want to move the children away from the activity centers to keep them from fidgeting with supplies while the story is being read. Choose a corner or space where each child can sit quietly to listen to the reader. Individual mats to sit on are great, but not required. A row of small chairs or a carpeted space where children can sit on the floor will be fine. The adult reader should face the children in a way that the book and pictures can be shared while reading occurs.