



Who can resist pizza? Who can resist a good book?  
Put them together for an unbeatable combination with this taste-tempting theme.

### **SETTING THE SCENE**

**Pizza Parlor.** Create a pizza parlor in a corner of the room. Cover a card table or two with red and white checked cloths. Display theme posters and Italy travel posters on the walls, along with Italian flags and bunting or streamers in red, white, and green. Drape silk or plastic grape vines around a window or on a freestanding trellis. Play Italian folk or street music ("That's Amore," "O' Sole Mio," strolling strings, accordions, etc.) in the background. If you're artistically inclined, use a cardboard box to fashion a brick oven on a table or stand for a Chicago pizza bistro look. Keyword search "pizza toy set" for kits that invite young kids to play at being pizza chefs.

**Bulletin Board.** Use a red and white striped or checked background and create a border in green. Title your

display "Carry out a Good Book." Use the cheese pizza poster from the Upstart theme materials. Write names of readers and/or their book recommendations on the top-popping pieces, and let kids add them to the poster.

**Book Display.** Display a combination of fiction and nonfiction books from your collection that feature pizza. Arrange the books on a red and white checked cloth and intersperse related kitchen items, like a cheese shaker, rolling pin, or pizza cutter, among them. A "Carry out a Good Book" poster above the display completes the effect.

**Incentives.** Gather pizza-themed stickers, book bags, and bookmarks. [www.birthdayinabox.com](http://www.birthdayinabox.com) has mini gummy pizzas and "Pizza Flyer" sticker kits. Ask local pizza shops to provide coupons for free pizzas. In return, hand out their promotional material.

**GAMES/CONTESTS**

**Alphabet Toppings.** Have some word fun by playing the familiar cumulative alphabet game. Sit in a circle. Begin by chanting, “I’m baking a pizza, and on it I’ll add . . . anchovies!” The next person repeats and adds a topping that starts with B, and so on. This game exercises both memory and creativity. You might pass around a traditional chef’s hat for each child to wear during his or her turn.

**Musical Pizzas.** Use a recording of Italian music to play musical chairs. Provide enough chairs, with a paper pizza taped to all but one (see page 7 for a pizza reproducible). The child who ends up on a chair without a pizza is out. Each round, take away another pizza or two from random chairs in the circle to move the game toward a final winner. Reward all participants with small prizes.

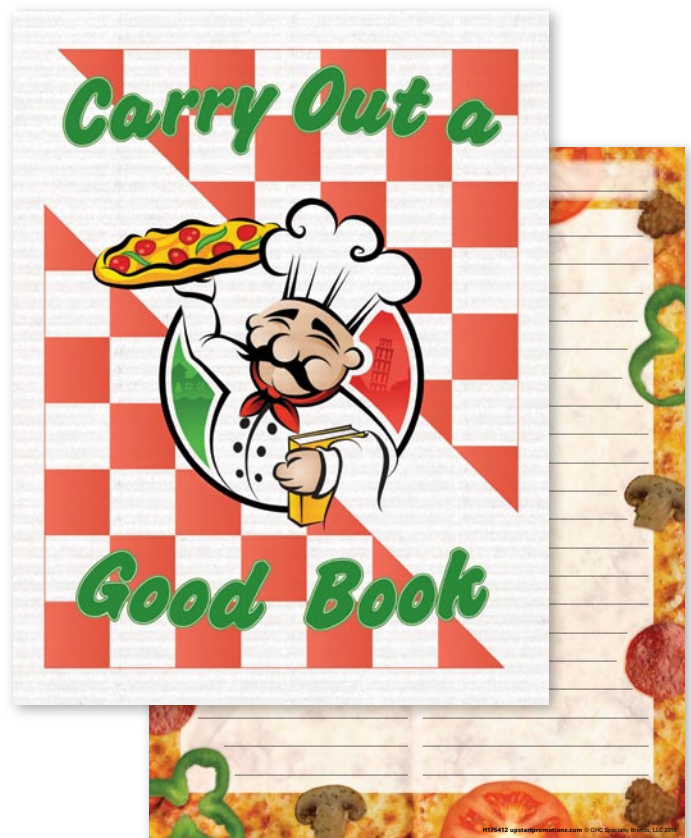
**Pizza Delivery Obstacle Relay.** Pizza must be delivered hot, so there’s no time to lose! Borrow a tricycle and find a cardboard pizza box. Set up an obstacle course outside or in a gym or meeting room, winding from one end of the space to the other with the tricycle marking the starting point at one end. Use whatever you can find—chairs, plastic wading pools, bumpy surfaces, frames with hanging beads or crepe paper streamers, and so on. Mark the bicycle track through your obstacles clearly with sidewalk chalk or painter’s tape. Form children into pizza delivery pairs. Station a partner from each pair at each end of the course. Pairs will take turns making their delivery. Seat the starting partner of the first pair on the tricycle. While you keep time, that child will ride through the course, carrying the pizza box and going through each obstacle. At the far end he or she will switch places with the partner and transfer the pizza box. The partner will race back through the course. Whichever pair completes the course fastest, without dropping the pizza box, wins a small prize. While individual pairs are competing, have contestants line the sides of the track to cheer on their friends.

**Pizza Variations.** Play traditional games with a pizza twist by fashioning spiral board game paths made of “pepperoni” slices on a cardboard pizza, or game spinners from card stock pizzas with numbered slices.

**ARTS/CRAFTS**

**Serve Pizza Pillow.** Enjoy a simple sewing and gluing project. Use crust-colored fabric decorated with red felt sauce, felt vegetable shapes, yellow yarn strips for cheese, buttons for pepperoni, etc. Pin your pizza to a same-sized fabric circle with the decorated side in. Hand stitch most of the way around, leaving a small gap to add stuffing. Turn the pillow pizza-side out. Insert stuffing from a fabric store, and seal the opening with a blind stitch. A fun decoration for kids’ rooms.

**Refrigerator Magnets.** Provide self-hardening clay or make salt dough (recipe at [www.firstpalette.com/toolbox/art\\_recipes/Salt\\_Dough/Salt\\_Dough.html](http://www.firstpalette.com/toolbox/art_recipes/Salt_Dough/Salt_Dough.html)), gather poster paints and brushes, craft foam, glue, and flat magnets. Demonstrate the process of shaping the clay into pizza circles or wedges with thick rims, decorating them with paint and craft foam toppings, and affixing the magnets. Then let kids get their hands dirty! They can use the magnets to display their reading records with pride.



**Pizza for the Birds.** Do birds love pizza? Try this fun craft that turns pizza into a favorite food for feathered friends:

What you'll need:

- A plastic cloth to cover your work surface—this is messy!
- Bagel halves
- Peanut butter or thick tahini
- Birdseed mix
- Dried cranberries
- Plastic knives
- Plastic plates
- 12" lengths of ribbon or yarn

What you'll do:

- Give each child a plastic plate, plastic knife, and half bagel
- Sprinkle birdseed on each plate
- Pass around the peanut butter or tahini and have kids spread it on their bagels
- Place bagels, spread side down, on the plates to coat with birdseed
- Pass around cranberries and have kids add them as toppings to their bird pizzas, using peanut butter or tahini as glue.
- String ribbon or yarn through the holes.

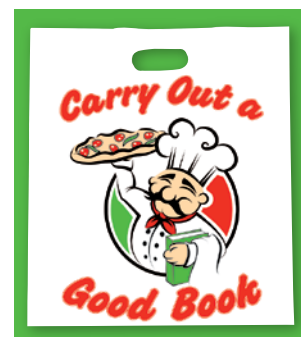
The pizzas are ready to hang from trees at the library or at home.

**Vegetable Print Pizzas.** On a background of light brown card stock circles, create pizza artwork by spreading poster paint in appropriate colors on cut vegetable slices and pressing the slices on the paper. Leave the sliced vegetable chunks large enough to grip. Tomatoes, bell peppers, mushrooms, and zucchini work well. If time allows, have kids make a few brush strokes in red around the vegetables, to indicate sauce.

**Edible Art.** Read *Pizza Counting* and focus on the page that presents a plain cheese pizza as “a great place to create a picture.” Invite kids to be creative and use toppings to make their own pizza pictures. You could use paper, felt, or craft foam; or have an art and cooking workshop and create edible art with real pizza ingredients; or have children create pizza art at home and bring in photos. Whatever the medium, be sure to display the creations in your library or classroom.

## WRITING PROJECTS

**Pizza Anagram Game.** Write in large letters, on a board or flip chart, a phrase like “Everything Pizza” or “Mushroom Pizza.” Set a timer and see who can make the most words using the letters in the source phrase.



**Pizza-rific Books Part I.** Use the reproducible graphic organizer on page 9 to have kids identify elements of their favorite books (see page 8 for a sample of how the organizer is filled out). If you are counting the number of books read to win prizes, you might count books analyzed on one of these forms as double or triple credit toward incentives. The forms can be used to help kids share their favorites at the **Pizza-rific Books Part II** special program on page 5.

**The Pizza Channel.** Read *Dragon Pizzeria*. Talk about how each pizza BeBop makes is personalized to be just right for the character who ordered it. Have children draw slips of paper naming animals or fictional characters from books, TV, etc. They will write scripts featuring their character as the host of a Food Network TV show, describing how to make his or her idea of a perfect personalized pizza. For example, drawing a slip that says “chimpanzee” might result in a script for a show in which Charlie Chimp makes banana and bark pizza. Little Jack Horner could share his secret family recipe for plum pizza.

**Rebus Stories.** Read Dana Meachen Rau’s *Pizza* as an example of a rebus story. Challenge kids to write and illustrate simple rebus stories with plots that involve pizza. As in Rau’s book, their stories should begin with a dictionary of picture substitutions for words, as used throughout the story. Create a display of the stories or compile them into an anthology for your collection.

## FOODS/RECIPES

**Pizza for Every Occasion!** Pizza is not just for dinner! There are hundreds of pizza recipes featuring everything from pepperoni to peppermint, and spanning

the day from breakfast to bedtime! Display cookbooks that include pizza recipes. Try recipes from *Cool Pizza to Make & Bake* or check out online sources, like [www.nickjr.com/recipes/all-shows/pizza/all-ages/index.jhtml](http://www.nickjr.com/recipes/all-shows/pizza/all-ages/index.jhtml), <http://chefmom.sheknows.com/featured/2008/07/29/breakfast-pizza-recipes>, or <http://kids.cdktichen.com/recipes/cat/896>.

**Pizza Originals.** Challenge kids to come up with original recipes for pizzas in different categories: Main dish pizzas, cold pizzas, breakfast pizzas, fruit pizzas, dessert pizzas, etc. They will experiment at home and bring in samples, along with their recipes. To make it a contest, recruit judges (a local pizza chef?) and award small prizes in each category.

### SCIENCE ACTIVITIES

**Pizza Chemistry.** There's science in pizza? Of course! Scientific Explorer makes a Pizza Activity Kit that includes materials for exploring how yeast works, among other things. The kit costs around \$15.00 and is available through [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) or elsewhere online. Combine it with a viewing of Robert Krampf's short video called "The Science of Pizza" ([www.metacafe.com/watch/921810/the\\_science\\_of\\_pizza](http://www.metacafe.com/watch/921810/the_science_of_pizza)), which explains specific heat.

**Pizza Nutrition.** Pizza may not always qualify as health food, but it can be nutritious. The *My Very Own Pizza* Web site, [www.mealsmatter.org/CookingForFamily/Activities/pizza.aspx](http://www.mealsmatter.org/CookingForFamily/Activities/pizza.aspx), explains where pizza ingredients fit into basic food groups. Kids learn a little history and focus on nutrition as they put together a custom pizza



with foods from the food pyramid. Bookmark this site for kids to explore independently, or use it to shape your own program on pizza nutrition.

### MATH ACTIVITIES

**Pizza Fractions.** Toys 'R Us carries several games or kits for using toy pizza slices to explore fractions with young children, or you can make your own using cardboard pizzas cut into different fractions, with the appropriate fraction written on the bottom of each slice. *Give Me Half!* is a great read to go with this activity.

**Pizza Geometry.** Review simple geometric shapes with young children as they create paper pizza collages using large circles in light brown for dough, smaller red circles for sauce, yellow rectangular strips for cheese, brown rounds for pepperoni, green triangles for spinach, green or black circles for olives, and so on.

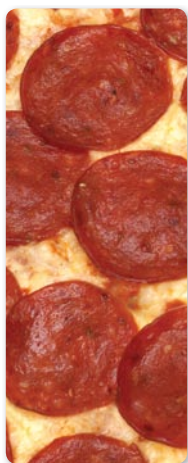
**Pizza Counting.** There are lots of ways to use the book by this title to "play math." Read through it and count toppings as you go. Use the formulas around the pizzas to make the connection between counting and simple addition problems. Make card stock or craft foam manipulables based on the pages and set them at a table for kids to explore independently, creating hands-on versions of the problems. As the numbers increase and the concepts advance later in the book, invite children to find other combinations and problems that make up 100 topping pieces. Challenge them to write word problems based on the fractions section of the book, or to figure out how many twelve-inch pizzas it would take to reach from one place to another, within the room or across the country!

### INTERNET ACTIVITIES

**Pizza Games,** <http://pizza.com/pizza-games>.

Kids can play pizza-themed video games that exercise basic computer skills, speed, and accuracy.





**Pizza History.** In honor of National Pizza Month in October, the *Michigan Kids!* Web site offers a brief, illustrated history of pizza at [www.michigan.gov/kids/0,1607,7-247-49067-53822--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/kids/0,1607,7-247-49067-53822--,00.html).

**Pizza Poetry.** Read pizza-inspired poems at [www.helium.com/knowledge/154888-poetry-pizza](http://www.helium.com/knowledge/154888-poetry-pizza).

**Pizza Jigsaw.** Bookmark the online jigsaw puzzle at [www.afunzone.net/adailyjigsaw/pizza.html](http://www.afunzone.net/adailyjigsaw/pizza.html), or try an online pizza box puzzle at [www.crazy4jigsaws.com/jigsaw/915](http://www.crazy4jigsaws.com/jigsaw/915).

**Pizza Toppings Wordsearch.** Check out the online wordsearch at [www.thekidzpage.com/learninggames/searchword/pizza-word-search-15x15.html](http://www.thekidzpage.com/learninggames/searchword/pizza-word-search-15x15.html).

**Pizza Trivia.** This student-generated site includes interesting facts and statistics, along with pizza tongue-twisters and a scrambled toppings word game: <http://library.thinkquest.org/J0112790>.

## SPECIAL EVENTS

**Pizzeria Tour.** Arrange for children to visit a local pizza shop to see how the pros make pizza. Is there a local chef who tosses the dough and makes a show of the process? Even better!

**Potluck Pizza.** Combine a program for kids or families with a pizza potluck. Invite participants to bring their favorite homemade pizzas, cut in bite sizes for sampling, along with the recipes for fans to copy. Encourage variety—main dish pizzas, breakfast or dessert varieties, etc. Provide punch or soft drinks, and celebrate the many versions of just about everyone’s favorite food!

**Pizza-rific Books Part II.** Gather readers to share recommendations of their favorite books using the graphic organizers completed in Part I of this activity on page 3.

To encourage children to read from different genres, use a large poster of a cheese pizza, like the Upstart theme poster. This time, unlike the graphic organizer, the basic pizza represents the total number of books read and the toppings stand for literary genres. Tomato slices might represent mysteries, mushroom slices fantasy, pepperoni for realistic fiction, etc. Create your own toppings, too, with construction paper (pineapple bits for general non-fiction, olives for poetry, etc.). Add an appropriate topping piece to the poster for each favorite book presented. Encourage kids to complete a loaded “everything” pizza by reading more books in the less-represented genres.

**Pizza Prep Party.** Anyone can have a pizza party—just order pizza and invite friends! It’s more interesting to prepare interesting pizza creations together. Try a pizza-making workshop, led by a local pizza chef, and have participants bring their favorite toppings to share. Provide disposable gloves for the cooks to avoid spreading germs. This makes a fun family or community event, and can be a time to showcase the accomplishments of children who reached their reading goals. Set up or expand your in-house pizza parlor, and use the kids’ reading records, theme posters, and bulletin board or Pizza-rific Books poster as decorations. Movies go great with pizza! Turn this into a video event and watch an appropriate movie. *A Kid in Aladdin’s Palace* (Lions Gate, 1998 DVD) stars a teen who works delivering pizza.

## “CARRY OUT A GOOD BOOK” RESOURCES

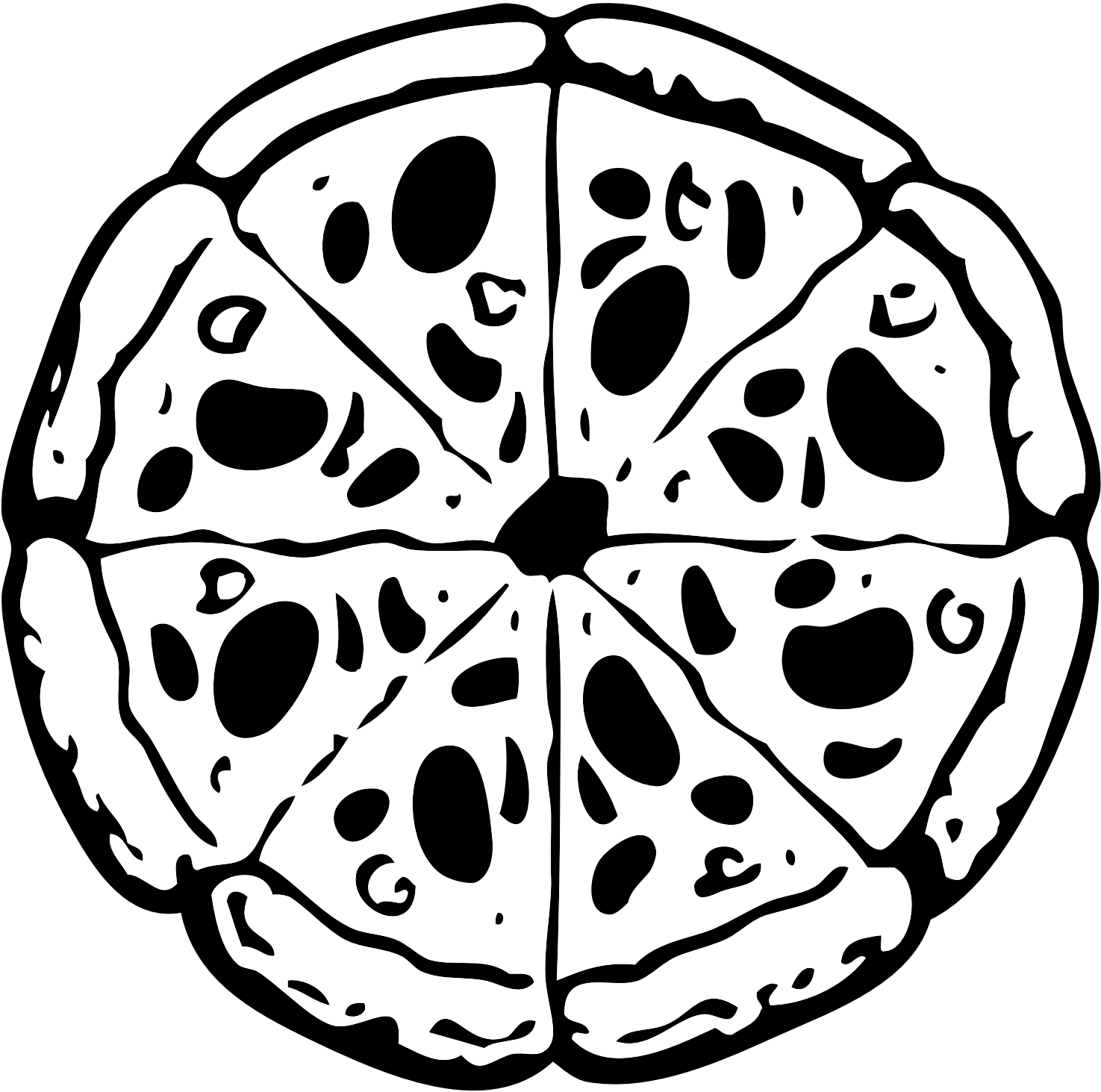
- *Any Way You Slice It* (Katie Kazoo, Switcheroo) by Nancy E. Krulik. Grosset & Dunlap, 2003. 0448432048. 2–4.
- *Cool Pizza to Make & Bake: Easy Recipes for Kids to Cook* by Lisa Wagner. ABDO, 2007. 1599287250. 3–6.
- *Dragon Pizzeria* by Mary Morgan. Knopf Books for Young Readers, 2008. 0375823093. K–3.



- *Dragons Don't Cook Pizza* (The Adventures of the Bailey School Kids) by Debbie Dadey and Marcia Thornton Jones. Scholastic Paperbacks, 1997. 0590849042. 3–5.
- *Drew's Famous Kids' Pizza Party Music* by the Hit Crew. TUTM/ Drew's Famous, 2009. ASIN B000PMLJ44. P–4.
- *Give Me Half!* (MathStart 2) by Stuart J. Murphy. HarperCollins, 1996. 064467015. 1–3.
- *Grow Your Own Pizza! Gardening Plans and Recipes for Kids* by Constance Hardesty. Fulcrum Publishing, 2000. 1555913989. 3–6.
- *How It Happens at the Pizza Company* by Shawndra Shofner. Oliver Press, 2006. 1881508986. 1–4?
- *How Pizza Came to Queens* by Dayal Kaur Khalsa. Doubleday Canada Limited, 1995 (Out of print but widely available). 0517885387. K–3.
- *Killer Pizza* by Greg Taylor. Feiwel & Friends, 2009. 0312373791. 5+.
- *Little Red Hen Makes a Pizza* by Philemon Sturges. Puffin, 2002. 0142301892. K–3.
- *Make Mine with Everything* (Robbie Packford: Alien Monster) by Heather Sander. Orca, 2004. 1551433087. 3–5.
- *Nothing Beats a Pizza* by Loris Lesynski. Annick Press, 2001. 1550377000. K–4.
- *Pete's a Pizza* by William Steig. Live Oak Media, 2004 (DVD version also available from New Video Group, 2009). 1591127408. P–3.
- *Pizza* by Dana Meachen Rau. Benchmark Books, 2009. 0761435220. K–3.
- *Pizza Counting* by Christina Dobson. Charlesbridge Publishing, 2003. 088106338X. K–3.
- *Pizza for Sam* by Mary Labatt. Kids Can Press, 2003. 1553373316. P–2.
- *Pizza for the Queen* by Nancy Castaldo. Holiday House, 2005. 0823418650. K–3.
- *The Pizza Monster* (Olivia Sharp: Agent for Secrets) by Marjorie and Mitchell Sharmat. Yearling, 2005. 0440420598. 1–3.
- *The Pizza Mystery* (The Boxcar Children Graphic Novels) by Rob Worley. Magic Wagon/ABDO, 2010. 1602707197. 3–5.
- *Pizza Party* by Grace Maccarone. Cartwheel, 1994. 0590475630. K–2.
- *The Princess and the Pizza* by Mary Jane Auch. Holiday House, 2003. 0823417980. K–3.
- *Wilky and the White House Cockroach* by Howie Schneider. Putnam Juvenile, 2006. 0399243887. K–3? Out of print, but available in libraries and online.
- *Young Cam Jansen and the 100th Day of School Mystery* by David A. Adler. Viking Juvenile, 2009. 0670061727. K–2.
- *Young Cam Jansen and the Pizza Shop Mystery* by David A. Adler. Puffin, 2001. 0142300209. K–2.



**Musical Pizzas**

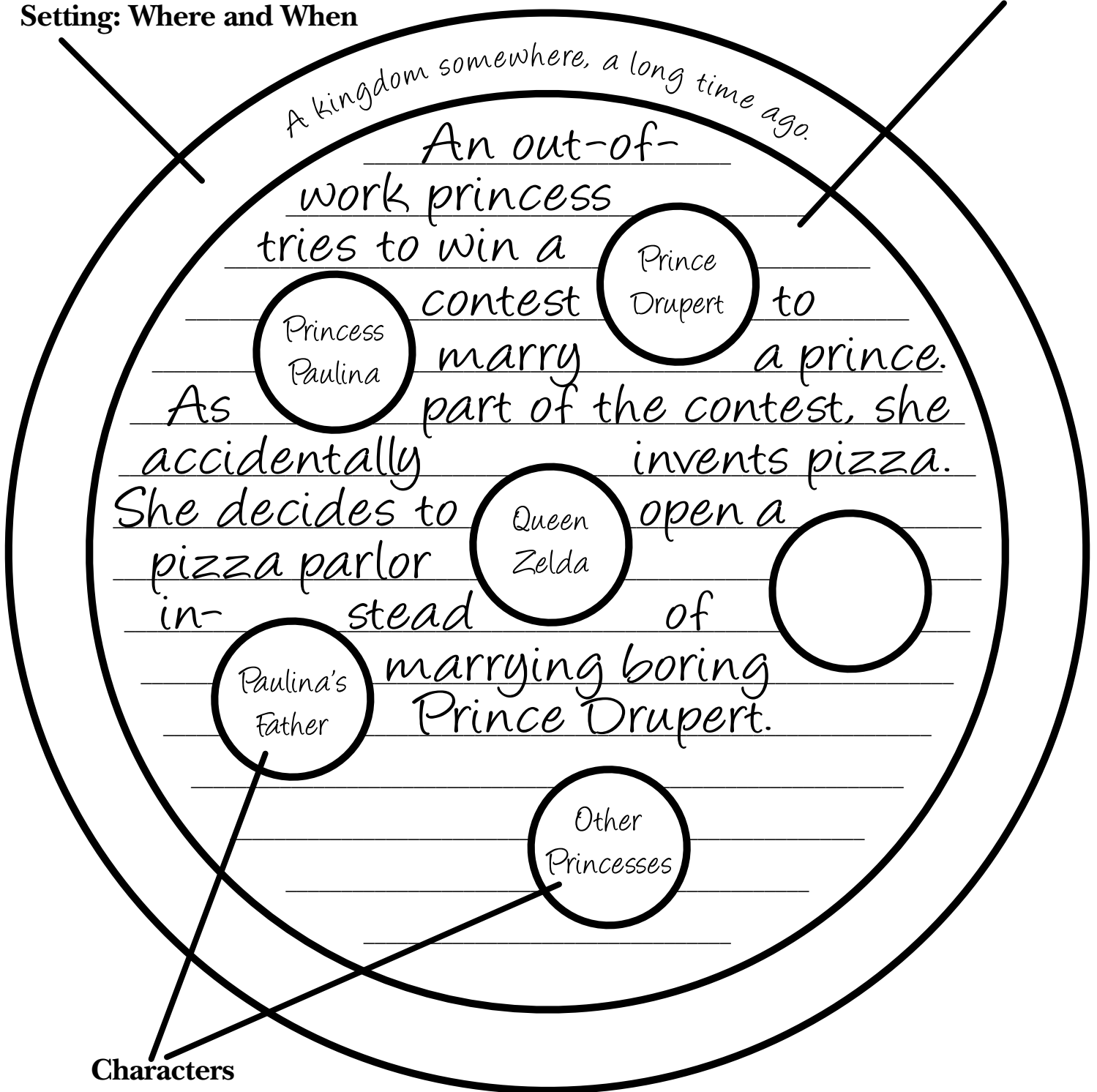


# Pizza-rific Books: A Story Elements Graphic Organizer

Title: The Princess and the Pizza  
Author: Mary Jane Auch

**Setting: Where and When**

**Plot: What Happens**



# Pizza-rific Books: Story Elements Graphic Organizer

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Author: \_\_\_\_\_

**Setting: Where and When**

**Plot: What Happens**

The graphic organizer is a large circle with a double-line border, representing a pizza. Inside, there are six smaller circles representing toppings, arranged in a pattern. The background of the large circle is filled with horizontal lines for writing. Three labels with arrows point to different parts of the organizer: 'Setting: Where and When' points to the outer circle, 'Plot: What Happens' points to the inner circle, and 'Characters' points to one of the toppings.

**Characters**