

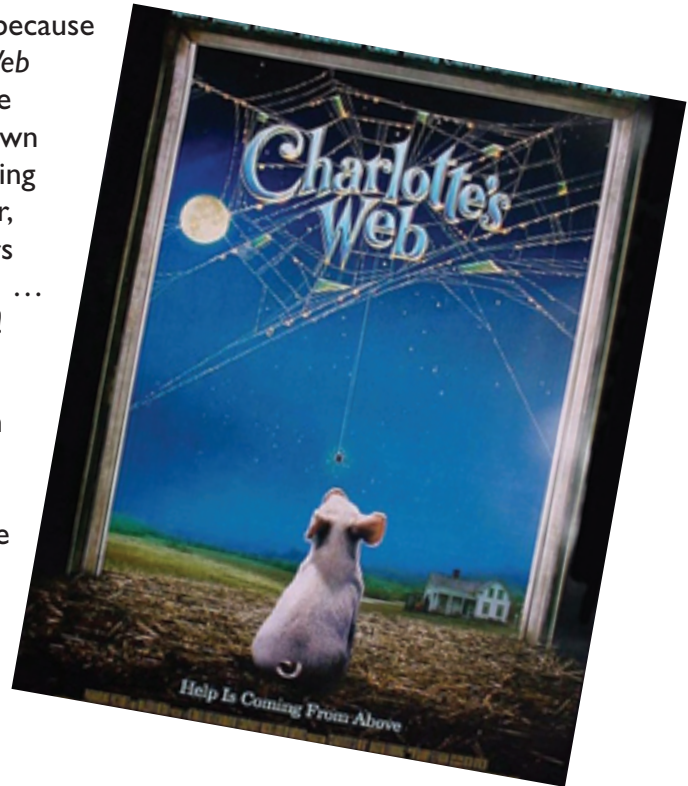
Charlotte's Web Premiere Party

• Keep 'em Reading •

by | Marie Castellano Boyum

Roll out the red carpet and send out the searchlight because “one terrific pig” is back in the spotlight! *Charlotte's Web* is set to hit the silver screen again this December. Use the following ideas to bring back those who have known and adored this beloved favorite for years while drawing into your library those who are yet to learn of Wilbur, Templeton, Charlotte, and all the wonderful characters from E. B. White's classic tale. So, lights, camera, action ... let's get started with a gala affair for the whole family!

Our opening scene begins on a farm and moves to the county fair—although preparing for the scene can be time-consuming, setting the stage for a grand down-home event everyone will enjoy doesn't have to be. But, like any grand affair, you need to spread the word and invite the elite—your community's families, of course!



Become the Promotions Department

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Since Wilbur is an award-winning pig, a picture of him with his medal would make a grand promotional poster. Enlarge the illustration on page 5 listing your date, time, contact, and location information, as well as who may attend and the fee, if any. Listing “free” with refreshments is always a crowd pleaser!

Begin by announcing the event as a press release to local papers, and place posters in area businesses, your library lobby, area community centers, and medical clinics. Don't forget to make a smaller version of your poster as reminder slips for your patrons at the checkout desk.

Manning the Booths

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Fair booths enlist the help of volunteers and so can you. Local seniors, retirement and assisted living centers, Friends of the Library members,

or Teen Advisory Board members are all good places to start. Your local Girl and Boy Scouts as well as some area schools and churches require volunteer hours to gain badges, graduation, or advancement. Many of these people are able to assist with the advance preparation and also help at the event.

Set the Stage for Fun!

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Ladies and gentlemen, children of all ages, come one, come all, step right up and test your skill and try your luck! Stroll down the midway to the game booths where you will find fun, challenge, and maybe even a small prize or two. (The prize part is up to you but maybe some of those extra Summer Reading Program incentives are left. Many local retailers in your town might also have a small incentive they can donate, and stickers and stamps are also a hit with smaller children.)

Spider Web Toss

Materials:

- black construction paper
- white chalk
- plastic fly, grasshopper, cricket, or other bug

Directions:

1. On the black paper, draw a circle in the center with white chalk. Swirl the center circle many times, creating a spiral effect. Continue making circles outward about ½" apart, until the circles are as large as the page. Then draw lines down and across in a star pattern over the circles creating what will look like a spider web.
2. Place the "web" on the floor and have the children stand a predetermined distance away and toss the bug onto the web.

Spider Walk

Materials:

- masking tape
- decorations (*optional*)

Directions:

1. Use the masking tape to mark lines on the floor in which your "spiders" can walk.
2. Have the children walk on all fours, face up, from one end of the lane to the next.
3. You can be as elaborate as you wish with the decorations in this area. The lanes can lead to a web, a barn, or a fence. If you are doing this activity outside, you may have a straw bale at one end of the lane.

Templeton's Rat Race

Materials:

- old magazine pages or coupons
- hand-written simple words on scrap paper
- discarded boxes from food packages

Directions:

1. Place the above items in a pile at the end of your "booth area."

2. Have the children quickly go to the pile and grab an item that has a word on it they can read and bring back to you. Discuss, just as Charlotte did with Templeton, whether the word they found is a good word to describe Wilbur. For younger children, ask them to tell you about a picture on the paper or box and discuss if that word describes Wilbur.

Pigpen Play

Farmer's know that pigs are smart and like to stay busy so many play with balls and old tires.

Materials:

- beach ball(s)
- pig snout mask (*optional*)
- masking tape or circular gate

Directions:

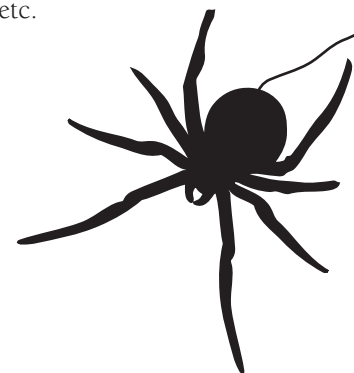
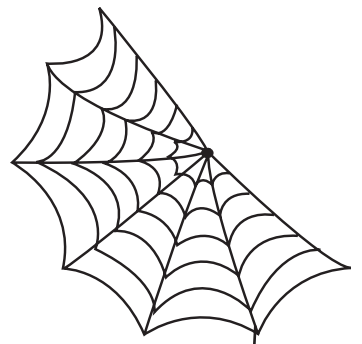
1. Set up a circular gate (pigpen) or use masking tape to create a circle on the floor.
2. Those "little piggies" wishing to play may put on the pig snout (if available). Using their "snout" or nose, have the children push the ball around the circle. Snorting and pig "oink" sounds are optional.

Barnyard Petting Area

No fair would be complete without the animals, especially enjoyed by the youngest in your crowd.

Materials:

- masking tape or circular gate
- stuffed animals or puppets found on a farm—pig, sheep, frog, cow, goose, spider, etc.



Directions:

Place the animals in the pen with a sign reading "Please handle the animals with care."

Concessions

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What county fair is complete without Cracker Jack and candied apples? Those were the treats of choice for Fern and Avery. Popcorn, cotton candy, or raspberry soda would also be options to serve.

Pig Snouts

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Note: Make sure parents are aware of the small hot dog pieces.

Materials:

- cooked hot dogs sliced
- round crackers
- cream cheese
- red food coloring

Directions:

1. Tint the cream cheese to a pink color.
2. Slice the cooked and cooled hot dogs into small circles.
3. Have children spread the cream cheese mixture onto the cracker and top with two hot dog slices to make a pig's snout.

Spider Snacks

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Spiders

Materials:

- chocolate chips
- string (black) licorice cut into 2" pieces (8 per sandwich)
- thin pretzel sticks (8 per sandwich)
- mini chocolate muffins

Directions:

1. Have the children place either the pretzel sticks **or** licorice pieces into the sides of the muffin for the legs.
2. Add chocolate chips for the eyes (remember, **most** spiders have eight eyes).

Spider Sandwiches

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Materials:

- seedless rye bread
- round cookie cutter (or donut cutter)
- peanut butter
- thin pretzel sticks (8 per sandwich)
- raisins
- cheese curls—crunchy style works best (8 per sandwich)

Directions:

1. Cut the bread into circles (two circles for every sandwich).
2. Spread the peanut butter on one side of one piece of bread. Top with the other piece of bread.
3. Place either the pretzel sticks or the cheese curls into the side for the spider's legs.
4. Place the raisins on for the eyes (either 2, 4, 6, or 8).



Take-home Souvenirs

Pig Trivia

You may wish to give a small prize if the questions are answered correctly.

Truth or Hogwash?

1. Pigs are easier to train than dogs.
2. Pigs can get sunburned.
3. Pigs like to play.
4. Pig hair is used for artist's brushes, insulation, and upholstery.
5. Pig's hide is used for making footballs, gloves, and shoes.
6. Pig's bones are used in bone china.
7. Some pigs have straight tails.
8. Pigs love to be clean.

[The answer to all is *true*.]

Spider Trivia

You may wish to give a small prize if the questions are answered correctly.

Truth or a Web of Deceit?

1. Your chances of being bitten by a venomous spider are extremely rare.
2. Spiders have eight legs.
3. Wolf spiders eyes reflect light and cause a night meadow to appear to twinkle.
4. All spiders produce silk.
5. Crab spiders can walk forward, backwards, or sideways.
6. Some spiders can jump.
7. Spiders can't get caught in their own webs.
8. Spiders can get up to three feet tall.

[The answers to 1–7 are *true*.]

Charlotte's Words

List each word or phrase separately at the top of a piece of paper: "Some Pig," "Terrific," "Radiant," Zuckerman's Famous Pig," "Humble," and "Charlotte's Web."

See how many words can be made from the word list. You may also wish to make up sheets with

"Wilbur," "Templeton," "Fern and Avery," and other character names.

Related Web sites

ABC Teach Directory—Charlotte's Web
www.abcteach.com/directory/theme_units/literature/charlottes_web/

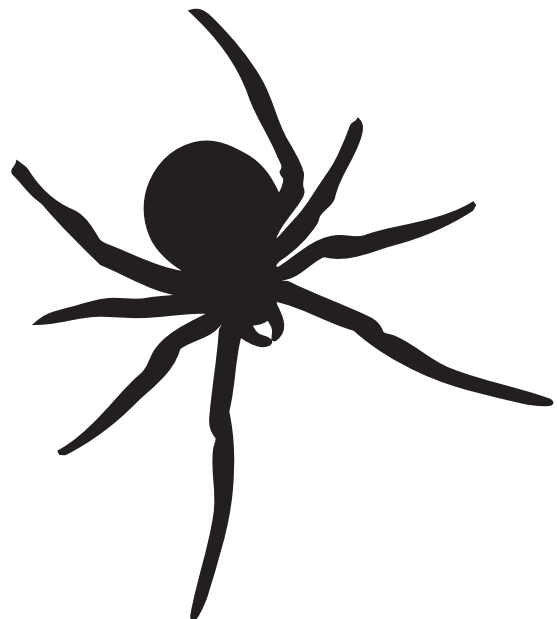
Charlotte's Web Poster
www.impawards.com/2006/charlottes_web.html

Charlotte's Web Theme Unit
www.pickens.k12.sc.us/hesteachers/laboonac/web%20pages/charlotte's%20web%20theme.htm

TeacherVision.com—Charlotte's Web
www.teachervision.fen.com/page/1732.html

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Marie Castellano Boyum served as the Head of Youth Services for the Waterford Public Library (Waterford, Wisconsin) for eight years. She also has ten years of experience teaching preschool and kindergarten, as well as early childhood classes for adults and parents. She is currently a Literacy Instructor for Milwaukee Public Libraries. She is the author of *Simply Super Storytimes* and *More Simply Super Storytimes* from UpstartBooks.



Pig

