MI Library Quest: Mystery Edition / Winter Quest 2021 FAQs

1. What is MI Library Quest?

In May 2020, a group of librarians met to collaborate on providing virtual programs for teens. Libraries were closed due to COVID-19, and librarians were shifting to virtual programming and looking for ways to more effectively reach and engage teens. We hoped we could do more together than we were individually.

From that initial meeting, the first MI Library Quest was created. In July 2020, 92 libraries from throughout the state participated in a virtual scavenger hunt for teens. Teens collected virtual tools from the libraries' websites to slay a dragon and enter to win a prize.

See more information about MI Library Quest here.

2. What is MI Library Quest: Winter Quest 2021?

The Quest Team is now launching the second Quest – a Mystery-themed Quest which will be held from January 1 through February 14, 2021. Teens will find clues on participating libraries' websites to help them determine who the thief is and what they are going to steal.

 3. How will the teens participate?

Teens will be directed to the MI Library Quest website, where they will find an explanation of the Quest, a list of suspects, and a list of participating libraries. They will visit the participating libraries' websites, collect clues from each one, and use those clues to determine who the thief is and what they plan to steal. They will enter their responses on a Google form and be entered to win a prize.

3b. Do teens need to register?

Teens do *not* need to register in advance to participate in MiLibraryQuest. They will enter their answer and contact info on the Google form after they have solved the mystery. A link to that Google form (being called a "case file" for this Quest) will be on the Current Quest tab of our website (here) on January 1 when the Quest begins.

4. What ages may participate?

We do not specify ages, only "teens." However you define teens at your library is the age/grade group that may participate from your library. We only use the word "teen" in our publicity,

website, etc. Our flyers will have an editable box at the bottom for you to add any specific information for your library, including what specific age/grade ranges may participate. And you can specify your age/grade range in the text that accompanies the social media posts.

5.   What does each participating library need to do?

Each participating library will:

 - post a clue on their website (The clue will be assigned to you by the Quest Team.)

 - promote the Quest to their teens (A digital publicity kit will be provided.)

 - award at least one prize to a teen from their library

6.   What do I need to post on my website?

After the deadline for libraries to sign up (December 11), we'll assign a clue to each library – things like "a strand of red hair was seen on the table" or "a librarian saw someone walking away in a coat," information that will lead the teens to identify the suspect. We will provide you with the clue for your library and all the details you will need to post it on your website.

We will provide you with the Quest logo, your specific clue, and details for adding the clue so they are all uniform (e.g. if one part needs to be bold). You'll link to the Quest website so anyone stumbling on your image will be able to get more information about and participate in the Quest. And you'll include alt text for the image so the Quest is accessible to everyone. If you're not familiar with alt text, it is adding a description of an image that screen readers can read so anyone who can't see the image can hear the description read to them. If you need more information about adding that, let us know.

We will give you a checklist of exactly what to add. You'll just go down the checklist, add the things, and you'll be all set! Or forward the list to your tech person/website person, and they'll add them.

7.   Where will I post the information?

We are asking for your clue and the image to be placed either on your home page or on your teen page. We want solving the mystery to be the focus, not hunting for the clues on websites. Choose one of those places that you will be able to add an image and text. Let us know what page you choose when you sign up to participate in the Quest.

8.   How will I promote The Quest?

The Quest team will provide a digital Publicity Toolkit of resources including flyers, bookmarks, and social media posts. You can print and share these resources with your community.

Here is our initial publicity blurb:

Extra! Extra! Read all about it! An anonymous tip has come in that a thief has announced that they will steal an iconic Michigan landmark on Valentine's Day. We're recruiting teenage private detectives charged with stopping the heist! Figure out what they're stealing and who the thief is to prevent the crime and enter to win a reward. The challenge begins on January 1. Visit www.mi.gov/MiLibraryQuest to learn more!

The Publicity Toolkit will be available December 1. A link will be emailed to everyone who has signed up to participate in the Winter Quest.

9.   What do we award as prizes? Who awards the prizes?

Each participating library is responsible for providing at least one prize to at least one teen from their library.

The prizes are entirely up to each individual library.

For the Summer Quest, many libraries awarded books as prizes, some had gift cards to local businesses or bookstores, some had posters or other items already in their prize collections, and some may have had other things.

Some libraries drew one name from their participants and awarded one prize. Some awarded prizes to multiple winners. Some awarded something small to each of their participants.

As a group, we wanted the focus to be on participating in the event with an extra bonus of possibly winning a prize instead of a big, elaborate prize as the main incentive. And, we wanted each library to be able to do what worked for them. It is entirely up to you.

10.   What about teens who don't belong to a participating library?

We want all teens in Michigan to be able to participate. Teens who enter and don't belong to participating libraries, will be included in participating libraries' drawings. Your library can choose to accept one/some of these unaffiliated teens – or keep your drawing only for your teens. It is your choice.

If you are able to include unaffiliated teens in your drawing, we don't expect there to be more than 1 extra teen for each library willing to accept them. For the Summer Quest, there were only 4 unaffiliated teens, so 4 libraries each added one of them to their drawings. We can't predict what teens will do, but in general, most teens find out about the Quest through their library that is participating in the Quest, so most teens who enter are from a participating library.

11. Do you record Quest meetings so we can watch them later?

We don't record our meetings, but we do email notes after each one to everyone who is signed up for the Quest. You will be added to the list when you register your library to participate. If additional staff members would also like to receive those emails, please let us know and we'll add you/them to the list.

12. Other questions?

If you have any other questions, please email us at milibraryquest@gmail.com.