



The Freedom Project

Weekly Reader and Champions of Hope will encourage schools across America to organize volunteer projects called "Freedom Projects" to honor the brave men and women in our military. Schools will perform service projects:

1. To let the military know America's children appreciate their sacrifice.
2. To turn their appreciation into action and strengthen America.
3. To teach young people that what they do makes a difference.

Freedom Readers

Reading is an important ingredient of a strong nation. Weekly Reader and Champions of Hope encourage you to host a book drive at your school! You can collect books for children who don't have books of their own, homeless shelters, hospitals, and community centers. Make yellow ribbon book marks to let people know the project is in honor of the troops.

Start It Up

1. Register your project with Champions of Hope online at www.championsofhope.org.
2. Recruit your friends, family and classmates for your team. Share the Freedom Readers message.
3. Get the help of an adult mentor. This could be a teacher, school administrator, parent or other trusted adult.
4. Ask your mentor to help spread the word to others in your community including local radio, television and newspapers.
5. Make a timeline of everything you need to do.
6. Ask your mentor to help find a place for people to drop-off books. The space you select must be clean, free from dust and moisture, and contain enough room to hold several boxes of books.
7. Identify a local charity, library, school, government agency or health care, senior care or any other facility that needs or would welcome used books. Be creative. Think about who could use these books and what type of reading material they would enjoy. For example, your local Department of Health and Human Services might help you provide children's books to families in need.
8. Confirm that the organization you select is able to distribute your books.
9. Arrange a date and time when you can personally drop the books off to make sure that they get into the hands of the right person.
Establish the following details:
 - When and where you will deliver the books.
 - The types of books the charity will accept (children's, adult fiction, textbooks, dictionaries, encyclopedias, etc.).
 - The maximum number of books they will accept (10, 50, 100, 1000).
7. Contact the media before the event. Encourage them to cover the event. It'll make a great photo opportunity, after all. Go to the Spirit of America front page for our Public Relations Tip Sheet.
8. Have a "Plan B" in case of bad weather.

All You'll Need

- Several clearly marked boxes or containers to hold the books
- Yellow ribbon book marks to show support for military families
- Poster board
- Markers

Get the Word Out

1. Put up posters and hand out flyers.
2. Describe your group, the organization who's getting the books and why the event is so important. Include when and where people can drop off book donations.
3. Explain that you're part of Weekly Reader and Champions of Hope.
4. Spread the word around your school and your community.
5. Invite businesses, churches and other social organizations to join you.
6. Ask local libraries to put you in touch with local book clubs.
7. Remind all the local news or media organizations about your event.

The Day Before the Event

1. Make a list of all your recruits, along with their shifts and the supplies they will bring.
2. Remind everyone where to show up, shift times and supplies.

The Day of Freedom Readers

1. Call the team together for a quick meeting. Remind them why what they are doing is important. Make sure that everyone knows what to do.
2. Tell them when you want the project to end and when you will all meet up again to count books.
3. Distribute necessary supplies.
4. When new volunteers join the effort or relieve others, make sure that they understand their new job assignment. Don't forget to thank volunteers who have to leave early.
5. Make sure that participants thank each person who contributes a book to this cause.

When You're Done

1. Clean up the Freedom Readers site. Return all extra supplies.
2. Collect and count the book donations. Have your mentor check the total.
3. Celebrate your accomplishment and congratulate everyone for making a difference.
4. Present the donations to your local charity organization.
5. Tell the media about your success.
6. Type "Freedom Readers" on the subject line and email Champions of Hope at oneteam@championsofhope.org.
Tell us how many books you collected. We want to add it to the Freedom Readers total and share your success story on our website. Feel free to send pictures and other information about your project so we can share your success with military families and troops overseas!
7. Include how many books you collected, the organization your project benefited, names of team members, where the project was held and a contact name with phone number.