

9/11 Day of Service Project

The 9/11 National Day of Service and Remembrance is a unique opportunity for students to identify how they can use their interests and passions to serve their communities. Use the lesson below to work with your class or school to identify a meaningful project.



Lesson Instructions:

Choose a Cause and a Service Strategy

- Brainstorm as a class: What do you think is the most important issue facing veterans or military families? (If possible, connect with local National Guard volunteer services or Veterans Affairs volunteer services to identify the needs of veterans and families served by that facility.)
- Distribute the Student Spark Activity Sheet to each student. Decide, as a class, on a cause to focus on, and have students write a short response about why this cause matters to them.
- Introduce the following terms with the ASAP acronym: Awareness, Service, Advocacy, and Philanthropy. (Access the [Classrooms With a Cause Teacher Toolkit](#) for more information on each service strategy.)
- Using the Student Spark Activity Sheet, brainstorm examples of each service strategy with students. Vote on a project idea that will meet the needs of veterans or military families in your community, and that will complement the strengths of your class.

Identify Sparks and Skills

- Introduce the idea of a “spark”—a passion or interest that brings out the best in a person. Have students complete the rest of the Student Spark Activity Sheet to identify the interests and strengths that they can bring to the service project. Connect students’ interests to the tasks you assign them. For tips, click [here](#).

Take Action

Organize your class into teams with team leaders (assigned or elected). Assign tasks to each team:

- Build Partnerships**—This team will contact potential partners in the community for support.
- Gather Resources**—This team will research costs, access to free resources, and develop a budget.
- Tell the Story**—This team will spread the word about the project using social media and through contacting local news media.
- Work With Volunteers**—This team will decide on the need for volunteers, then recruit and train them.
- Organize Event Logistics**—This team will create a plan for the event, including the schedule, facilities, equipment management, transportation, signage, and safety plans.

After the event, **reflect** with the class. Discuss: What impact did your project have? How do you know?

Sample Project: Care Packages for Military Members

Student volunteers will design and assemble care packages.

Cause: Support for Military Members

ASAP Strategy: Service

Step 1: Research and plan.

- Lead a discussion with your class about people serving in the military. What do the students know?
- Provide background resources to support student awareness of the issue. Get started with “Understanding Hunger in America” and “Dispelling Myths About Military Veterans” at <https://911day.org/lesson-plans/>.
- Invite an issue expert, such as someone working for your local National Guard volunteer services, to visit your class. Use the information to work with your students to shape your project and prepare questions.
- Decide which military members would benefit from receiving care packages and what to include. (Snacks? Toiletries? Art? Thank-you notes?)

Step 2: Recruit people to help.

- Ask community partners to donate supplies for the packages.

Step 3: Promote the issue.

- Have students create announcements (e.g., school newsletter or social media feeds) to raise awareness about the project.

Step 4: Host the event.

- Make sure to bring all necessary materials.
- Help students complete their assigned tasks—assembling boxes, writing thank-you notes, addressing packages.

Step 5: Recognize and say thank you.

- Have students write thank-you notes to people who helped with the project.
- Assess the impact of the project—how many military members and families were served?

Student Spark Activity Sheet

9/11 Day

After the events of September 11, 2001, people came together to honor those who lost their lives, to rebuild community, and to show a commitment to the country and to democracy. Use this activity sheet to plan your service project for the 9/11 Day of National Service and Remembrance.



As a Class

What's your cause?

What community issue will be your focus? Circle one:

Employment for veterans	Healthcare for veterans	Housing for veterans	Support for military families
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What's your action strategy?

Hey, changemakers! Which ASAP strategy will you use to address this cause? Circle one:

- **Awareness:** Share information and teach others to change people's behaviors for the better (such as organize a PSA campaign about the issues that veterans face).
- **Service:** Directly meet a need in your community by donating your time and talent (such as serve meals at an organization that assists veterans in need).
- **Advocacy:** Speak out or write letters to persuade policy makers to change regulations and laws (such as write letters to local legislators about providing healthcare for veterans).
- **Philanthropy:** Collect and donate money and supplies to an organization (such as raise money for an organization that provides support to veterans).

We will lead through _____ to _____. Our class project is _____.

As an Individual

What's your spark?

Your spark is an activity or interest that inspires you to do your best. What are you passionate about? Circle one or more:

creative arts	sports	computers	nature	other: _____
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How will you use your spark to contribute to the class project? I will use _____ to _____.

What's your skill?

We need lots of different skills to make changes in the world! Circle which skill is a strength for you.

Critical Thinking (looking at information to solve problems)	Creativity (coming up with new ideas)	Collaboration (working together to achieve a goal)	Communication (sharing questions and ideas)
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What skill will you learn from the class project? I will learn _____ by _____.