

Programming Ideas for *We the People Bookshelf* on “Becoming American”

Many of the following ideas are based on actual We The People Bookshelf programs.

Library events/Activities

- Welcome “We The People Bookshelf” celebration with a display of the We The People Bookshelf books, prizes, and readers’ guides to selected topics in the set, bookmarks, posters and readings from the volumes.
- Create a We The People Bookshelf school/library Web page featuring the titles of the We The People Bookshelf books, including images of the book jackets, book quotes and reviews, and pictures of famous Americans who tie in to the theme.
- Launch an All-School Book Club using the We The People Bookshelf books for each grade level.
- Make the We The People Bookshelf books central to your library’s Summer Reading Program. Offer prizes to children who read a certain number of We The People Bookshelf books, including those titles in the bookshelf.
- Host a writing workshop for elementary, junior or senior high school students, and other audiences emphasizing the works of We The People Bookshelf authors. Offer special prizes.
- Host a library “favorite author project” – ask local celebrities to record audio or video and tell why they selected a certain We The People Bookshelf book as their favorite.
- Use other library services to spotlight the We The People Bookshelf, Dial a story, Homework help hotline.
- Spotlight the We The People Bookshelf by holding programs during National Library Week and/or School Library Media Month in April, or Teen Read Week in October.
- Award ribbons or certificates that recognize young readers who read the We The People Bookshelf books in their age category;
- Provide a bulletin board in the school for students to post essays on the theme of “My family’s story about becoming American...”
- If your school has an Awards Day, present certificates to students who read a certain number of the We The People Bookshelf books.
- Create an interactive display encouraging the public to share personal experiences that explore the theme.

Partnerships with Other Community Groups

- School libraries: Work with public and special library staff to offer programs that highlight the We The People Bookshelf titles and tie in the theme. These programs can be offered at night and on weekends and be targeted to all ages.
- Public and special libraries: Work with teachers and /or school administrators to prepare a special curriculum with the We The People Bookshelf books for elementary and secondary schools.
- Contact community organizations such as storyteller guilds, community centers, historical societies, league of women voters, Kiwanis, American Legion, etc., for possible program speakers.
- Ask the local newspaper, local cable access television station, or radio station to feature a story or editorial about the We The People Bookshelf books and supporting the school or local library. Be sure to contact book editors and well as news and feature editors.

Story Hours/Readings/Discussions

- Schedule story time sessions for K-3 reading levels using bookshelf titles to explore and explain "becoming American." Hold guided discussion after each story time to allow the children to share stories of someone they know or experiences they've had related to "becoming American."
- Invite community leaders to a "Special Celebrity Readers Breakfast." After the breakfast have each of the celebrities read and discuss one of the books with a selected class.
- Combining hands-on activities with story time by reading passages from a "becoming American" selection follow with crafts activities.
- Invite the local teen group to plan and present a book discussion for school age audiences.
- Start a reading incentive program encouraging youth & families to read We The People Bookshelf books, track the books they read, and end the program with prizes.
- Create take home book discussion guides, so that families can talk about the books from the Bookshelf read in school or checked out of the library.
- Ask parents and students to co-present and lead book talks and discussions using the selected We The People Bookshelf books.
- Sponsor a "Young Authors" competition after students have been exposed to the We the People Bookshelf materials and themes. Ask students to write their own books with stories of becoming American.

Presentations or performances

- During a weekly lunchtime, select different students to give a book talks to other students to encourage them to read the We The People Bookshelf books.
- Invite community leaders to speak to students concerning their personal experiences related to the theme.
- Invite a school or adult drama group to reenact scenes from We The People Bookshelf books.
- Hold a panel discussion with teachers and community leaders highlighting real-life stories of becoming American that relate to the stories told in the We The People Bookshelf volumes.
- Invite a local or nationally known poet or author to talk about the authors included in the We The People Bookshelf and the influence of those books on their work.
- Have a panel presentation or lecture by a humanities scholar or other special guest on the theme of “becoming American” found in the We The People Bookshelf volumes.
- Invite a local genealogist or area historian to tell stories of American immigration