

# MINION ARMY

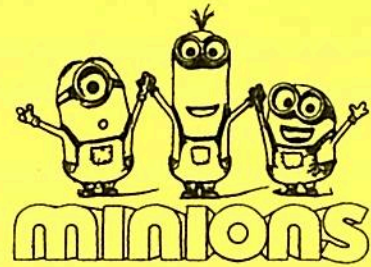
## Collaborators

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**Questions:** How do I create a teen volunteer program that lasts? How do I get teens to enjoy and come to the library? What do I need to do to create my own Minion Army?

## WHEN LIGHTNING STRIKES - THE AMAZING RESULTS

### FINDLAY PUBLIC LIBRARY -

YAB group with 25-35 regular members that are elected by the group

Summer volunteer group with 65-83 'volunteens' with more than 600 hours volunteered per month

#### YAB Member Duties:

\*Volunteer 3 hours a month, every month.

\*Do one book display a year. (Display changes every two weeks and consists of 10 shelves and the teens are responsible for pulling 50 books based on a theme. Librarian sets up and decorates the display)

\*Book shifting in the teen collection and keeping shelves clean.

\*Weed the teen collection about every 3 to 4 months. (They know how to use the pull lists and they are happy to give their opinions as to what stays and what goes)

\*Attend, set up and clean up after programs. Sometimes they also run programs, with a staff member checking in (only) every 15 minutes (!!).

\*YABs also plan programs based on their age and responsibility level

\* Complete various volunteer work in children's department such as cleaning puzzles, prepping story time crafts, popping popcorn, doing sidewalk chalk advertisements, etc.

**Staff motto:** Always make sure YAB's have something to do when they stop in to volunteer and never turn them away.

### BLUFFTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

TAG group with 15-20 regular members that are elected by the group

Summer volunteer group with about 25 teens covering nearly all open library hours

#### TAG Member Duties:

\*Show up and participate in weekly meeting

\*Offer input on books to order

\*Plan, prep, run, & clean up programs for teens and younger children

- \*Author bulletin board display once a year
- \*Book reviews for display when requested
- \*TAG newsletter
- \*Get teen events announced at school
- \*Recruit other teens to the group
- \*Bring, make, or bake snacks for programs
- \*During summer: register children and award them their prizes, sort prize tickets, etc.
- \*Complete various tasks for Youth Services Coordinator including Storytime prep, cleaning, etc.

## **HOW WE MADE THE MAGIC HAPPEN - AND YOU CAN, TOO!**

Focus 10-15 hours a week on TAG/YAB related matters

Keep constant contact with teens and their parents

Track the hours they volunteer

Listen to their ideas and try to make it happen

Laugh and cry with them

Trust them to do stuff and be forgiving when they don't

Send weekly emails with reminders about programs and work that needs done

Go above and beyond the call of duty to make these teens feel special and important

\*Talk to them, know their interests & hobbies, visit them at their first job or sporting events

Let them get to know YOUR hobbies and interests

Be a positive adult in their life and do things for them that are not in your job description (graduation parties, taking them home for Thanksgiving, visit them in college, host alumni events for them, etc.)

## **HOW WE KNOW IT MATTERED**

### **Questions we asked them:**

What made TAG/YAB work?

What did you like about it most?

Why did you keep coming back?

What was the most influential program/person/whatever you had during your time?

### **Responses:**

Almost all of them answered in the same way!

### What made it work:

The people involved,

"A rainbow of personalities"

Ownership

Opportunity

Enthusiasm of the librarian

What they liked most:

Meeting new people & making lifelong friends  
Service to the community  
Making a difference  
Helping Children  
Developing new skills (Becoming more outgoing!)  
Putting existing skills to use  
Being trusted with huge projects

Why they came back:

FUN  
Doing something worthwhile  
Rewarding work  
Felt respected and valued  
Used new and old skills  
Loved the group

What some of them do now:

Teachers, Working college students, & BECOMING LIBRARIANS!

Most influential Program/Person:

Programs were varied (Summer Reading, Craft programs, Harry Potter, etc.)  
but the **Person** was always the same: **THE LIBRARIAN**

The librarian was:

A great leader  
Cared  
Guided  
A perfect role model  
A mentor  
A Friend  
Always there  
Someone who made everything seem possible

**NOW IT'S TIME FOR SOME VULNERABILITY –**

What have you done for a teen? What have they done for you?

