

Name:

Day One

Cheer in the Mail

Part 1: Silent read

→ Find out how Operation Gratitude thanks soldiers serving overseas. Read silently.

The September 11 attacks and the wars that followed made many Americans feel like they wanted to help out and give back. One of these Americans was Carolyn Blashek.

In 2003, as the Iraq War began, Carolyn found herself thinking about the soldiers fighting overseas. Did they feel forgotten by the people back home? She started fundraising and planning. She began Operation Gratitude, a group that sends care packages to soldiers.

Packages from Operation Gratitude contain personal items that can be hard to find overseas, like lotion and toothpaste. The packages also hold goodies that appeal to soldiers, like cookies, candy, and books.

Many packages also hold letters. Some of the letters are serious expressions of thanks from U.S. veterans. Others come from children, written in crayon. The writers make sure their letters are upbeat and personal, letting soldiers know that they are in the hearts of people back home.

Operation Gratitude grew quickly. Thousands of volunteers heard about the project and came to help. Their effort and teamwork brought treats and cheer to soldiers around the world. In 2013, the group mailed its one-millionth package.

Staff Sergeant Matthew Gomez received an Operation Gratitude package while serving in Afghanistan. He told *NPR*, “It’s just a good feeling to know that someone else is thinking of you . . . For soldiers, it’s a big deal, receiving something from back home.”

Sources: “Group’s care packages aim to lift troops’ spirits,” *NPR*, December 18, 2010.

“We honor Carolyn Blashek,” *The Women’s Conference*.



Day One

// one minute

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Part 2: First timed read

WPM _____

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In 2003, as the Iraq War began, Carolyn found herself thinking about the soldiers fighting overseas. Did they feel forgotten by the people back home? She started fundraising and planning. She began Operation Gratitude, a group that sends care packages to soldiers.	44 58 71
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Part 3: Comprehension and discussion

What does Operation Gratitude do, and why?

What is inside the care packages that Operation Gratitude sends?

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Part 4: Phrase-cued reading

- Read the passage **out loud** in phrases to your partner.
- Pause at each / mark for a phrase.
- Also pause at each // mark that shows the end of a sentence.

The September 11 attacks / and the wars that followed / made many Americans feel like they wanted to help out / and give back. // One of these Americans was Carolyn Blashek. //

In 2003, / as the Iraq War began, / Carolyn found herself thinking about the soldiers fighting overseas. // Did they feel forgotten by the people back home? // She started fundraising and planning. // She began Operation Gratitude, / a group that sends care packages to soldiers. //

Packages from Operation Gratitude / contain personal items that can be hard to find overseas, / like lotion and toothpaste. // The packages also hold goodies / that appeal to soldiers, / like cookies, / candy, / and books. //

Many packages also hold letters. // Some of the letters / are serious expressions of thanks from U.S. veterans. // Others come from children, / written in crayon. // The writers make sure their letters are upbeat and personal, / letting soldiers know that they are in the hearts of people back home. //

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I read the passage in phrases out loud to my partner.