

World Book Day is a fantastic opportunity for students to celebrate their favourite book characters by dressing up in costumes. However, purchasing new costumes each year can be costly for parents and contribute to environmental waste. Organising a costume swap event at your school is a wonderful way to address these concerns while fostering a sense of community and creativity among students.

Why host a swap-shop?



- **Cost savings for parents:** By swapping costumes, parents can save money that would otherwise be spent on new outfits.
- **Environmental benefits:** Reusing costumes reduces waste and the demand for new materials, promoting a more sustainable approach to celebrations.
- **Community building:** A costume swap event encourages collaboration and sharing within the school community.

What kinds of swaps are there?

- **True swap:** You must leave an item to take another. This guarantees stock but may exclude those who don't have items to swap.
- **Donations-based:** People with something to donate do so beforehand, then on event day anyone can take items. This allows anyone to participate, however means stock can run out and there is time required in advance to collect donations.



1: Decide what model of swap shop you will be using.

While both models have their merits, the donation-based model is generally more inclusive and easier to manage. It ensures that all students can participate in the costume swap, regardless of their ability to contribute items, promoting a more equitable and community-focused event. This guide will focus on the donation-based model.

2: Allocate roles



You will need:

Communication Lead - To organise promotional materials like leaflets and copy for school newsletters etc.

Responsibilities:

- Promotion: Use newsletters, social media, posters, and emails to promote the event.
- Engagement: Raise awareness and encourage participation through various channels.
- Content Creation: Develop flyers, social media posts, and emails.



Donation Manager -To manage the collection of the donations, and ensuring they are in a fit condition to pass on to someone new.

Responsibilities:

- Collection Coordination: Organize drop-off points and collection times.
- Sorting and Quality Control: Ensure donated items are in good condition and sorted.
- Inventory Management: Track available items and identify gaps.
- Storage Solutions: Arrange proper storage for donations.
- Volunteer Coordination: Guide volunteers in sorting and organizing.



Event Day Volunteers - To manage the swap event itself. They will need to be available to set up the shop, help people find what they are looking for and keep a record of what's been swapped.

Responsibilities:

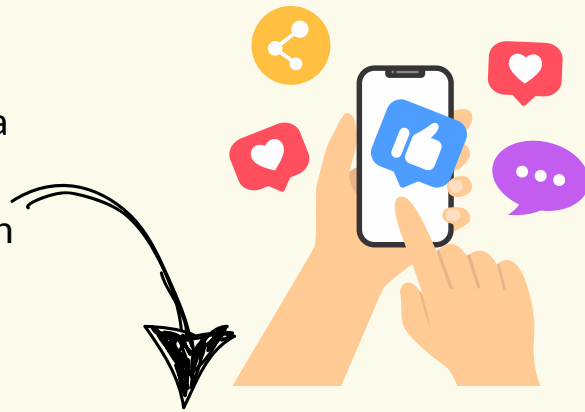
- **Setup and Decoration:** Arrange tables and decorate the space.
- **Customer Assistance:** Help participants find items and provide friendly service.
- **Restocking and Organization:** Keep the display neat and restocked.
- **Monitoring and Security:** Ensure the event runs smoothly and safely.
- **Cleanup:** Assist with packing up and cleaning the area post-event.



3: Set dates and promote your event

Remember you will want to give yourself time to promote and to take donations, so choose a date at least a month after your first planning meeting. Remember to leave yourself plenty of time before the swap shop to accept donations too.

Start by announcing the event in the school newsletter and on social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Create engaging posts with eye-catching graphics and clear information about the event.



Send out email reminders to parents and staff when you announce the event, before and during the donation period and before the swap shop itself.

Promote inside the school too. Put up posters around the school and consider holding a brief assembly or classroom visits to inform students directly.





Next steps

4: Gather the required materials



Think about the materials you will need to gather. Again, it will depend on which model you choose to use, but you will likely need:

- A donation box
- Sorting bags/boxes
- Stall display equipment (Tables, clothes rails, coat hangers)
- Posters/Leaflets to promote

5: Expand your search for donations

Remember: you don't just have to rely on donations from students and parents for items. Make use of local groups like Freecycle, social media groups, schools forums etc. by putting out requests for items. This will ensure you have plenty to stock your rails with on the day.

6: Quality checking items

Not everything donated will necessarily be fit for re-distributing. Some things you should check for when taking donations:

- Are there any tears or holes?
- Are there any parts missing?
- Are there any noticeable stains or marks?
- Some items like fairy wings use metal wire to hold their shape - are there any sharp edges sticking out anywhere?