

The TMSTARTM Month

AUTHOR PLAYBOOK

A Practical Guide to Supporting Authors,
Encouraging Honest Reviews &
Collaborating for Greater Visibility



4
REVIEWS



4
WEEKS



4
AUTHORS



REAL
IMPACT



Featuring the
4 Reviews
4 Weeks
4 Authors
Challenge

**Support Authors. Encourage Reviews.
Collaborate. Shine Together.**



An Author CollabTM Resource

MORE READERS. MORE IMPACT. TOGETHER.

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The STAR Month™ Author Playbook

A Practical Guide to Supporting Authors, Encouraging Honest Reviews & Collaborating for Greater Visibility

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A Note About Reviews

STAR Month encourages honest reader reviews.

Participation should never require a positive review, a particular star rating, or a favorable opinion. Reviews should reflect the reader's genuine experience and comply with the policies of the platform where they are posted.

STAR Month does not encourage review exchanges or arrangements in which one review is promised in return for another.

Share the STARshine ★

The best way to support this initiative is simple:

Use the graphics. Share the message. Invite someone to participate.

And whenever possible, send people to:

SupportAnAuthor.com

Read it. Review it. Support an Author. ★

Questions about using STAR Month™ materials, organizational participation, media inquiries, or collaboration opportunities? Visit SupportAnAuthor.com.

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Welcome to the STAR Month™ Author Playbook

A few words can make an author's day.

I loved your book.

That chapter was exactly what I needed.

I couldn't put it down.

Your story stayed with me.

Authors hear comments like these more often than you might imagine. Readers send emails, mention books in conversations, share recommendations with friends, and post about books they enjoyed on social media.

But there is one small step that often gets missed:

Leaving the review.

I know this from personal experience. I once sent 37 complimentary copies of one of my books to friends and colleagues, simply suggesting that if they enjoyed it, I would appreciate an honest review. Three people followed through.

At first, I was disappointed. Then I realized something important: readers often *intend* to leave reviews. They appreciate the book. They want to support the author. But life gets busy, the book gets put back on the shelf, and that good intention gets postponed.

I also speak with and work with authors regularly, and getting reader reviews is one of the challenges I hear about again and again.

That experience became part of the inspiration for **STAR Month™ — Support Through Author Reviews**, an annual October initiative of **The Author Collab™**.

More Than Asking for Reviews

STAR Month isn't about asking everyone you know to give *your* book five stars.

In fact, it's about something much bigger.

It's about creating a culture in which **readers support authors, authors support authors, and all of us become more intentional about sharing honest feedback about the books we read.**

That's where this playbook comes in.

Inside, you'll discover practical ways to participate in STAR Month, encourage your readers to leave honest reviews, support fellow authors, collaborate with other writers, share books with your community, and turn October into a month of meaningful connection and visibility.

You'll also find ideas, sample language, promotional strategies, a four-week action plan, and a checklist to help you put those ideas into action.

And at the center of it all is the **STAR Challenge**:

4 Reviews • 4 Weeks • 4 Authors

Choose four books you've read. Take a few minutes to share your genuine thoughts. Support four authors. Then invite someone else to do the same.

No required rating.

No required number of words.

No expectation of a review in return.

Just readers and authors taking a little extra time to support the people behind the books.

Collaboration, Not Transaction

As authors, we understand better than almost anyone how much work goes into creating a book. That's why STAR Month offers us an opportunity to model the kind of literary community we want to see.

Throughout this playbook, you'll find ideas for collaborating with other authors. Those collaborations should never become *"I'll give your book five stars if you'll give mine five stars."*

That's not what STAR Month represents.

Instead, we'll explore ways to introduce authors to new audiences, spotlight their books, share their accomplishments, encourage readers to discover their work, and when we have genuinely read their books, share our own honest opinions.

Support isn't something we trade. It's something we give.

And when enough of us give it, something wonderful happens.

More authors are encouraged.

More readers discover books.

More conversations begin.

More connections are made.

And more of those wonderful *“I meant to leave a review”* moments actually become reviews.

So grab a book—or four—and join us.

Let's read. Let's review. Let's collaborate.

And let's help authors shine.

Read it. Review it. Support an Author. ★

Heidi Richards Mooney

Founder, STAR Month™ — Support Through Author Reviews

Founder & Chief Collaboration Architect, The Author Collab™

More Readers. More Impact. Together.™

SupportAnAuthor.com

Why Authors Should Participate

If you're an author, your first thought when you hear “STAR Month” might be:

How can I use this to get more reviews for my book?

That's certainly one benefit of participating, but STAR Month begins with a different question:

Whose book can I support?

Authors are readers, too. We buy books. We recommend them. We learn from them. We give them as gifts. We discover new writers through our communities. And because we've written books ourselves, we understand just how meaningful it can be when a reader takes the time to leave a thoughtful review.

STAR Month gives us an opportunity to be the kind of reader we hope our own readers will become.

Start by Giving

One of the simplest ways to participate is to take the **STAR Challenge: 4 Reviews • 4 Weeks • 4 Authors**.

Think about four books you've already read. They don't need to be new releases, and you don't necessarily need to purchase four new books.

Is there a book sitting on your shelf that you loved but never reviewed?

A business book you still refer to?

A novel you couldn't stop talking about?

A fellow author's book you read months ago and meant to review?

Start there.

Writing four honest reviews during October may take less than an hour altogether, yet each review tells an author:

I read your words. They reached me. And I took the time to say so.

Participation Creates Visibility—Without Making It All About You

STAR Month also gives authors a natural reason to talk about books and reviews without every conversation becoming *“Please buy my book.”*

You can share the books you're reading. Celebrate another author's accomplishment. Post an **“I STARred an Author Today!”** graphic after leaving a review. Invite your readers to take the STAR Challenge. Feature another author in your newsletter. Ask your book club, writing group, or professional community to participate.

And yes, you can remind your own readers that reviews matter.

The difference is context.

Instead of simply asking people to review *your* book, you're participating in a larger movement that encourages readers to support **all authors through honest reviews**.

That feels different because it *is* different.

Authors Supporting Authors Creates Opportunity

When authors intentionally support one another, interesting things can happen.

One author introduces another to a new audience. A newsletter mention leads to a new reader. A social post creates a conversation. Two authors discover that their audiences overlap and decide to collaborate. A reader discovers a book they otherwise might never have encountered.

Not every act of support produces an immediate result, and it doesn't need to.

STAR Month isn't a transaction.

It's an invitation to become more intentional about creating the kind of author community in which we'd all like to participate.

Five Reasons to Participate

By participating in STAR Month, you can:

Support fellow authors. Your review, recommendation, or spotlight can encourage another writer and help readers discover their work.

Strengthen relationships. Genuine support creates opportunities for meaningful connections with authors, readers, book clubs, and literary communities.

Encourage your own readers. Your participation gives you a natural opportunity to educate readers about why honest reviews matter.

Increase book conversations. Every review, recommendation, author spotlight, and shared STAR graphic creates another opportunity to talk about books.

Lead by example. Instead of only asking readers to support authors, you're showing them what that support looks like.

Perhaps the best reason is the simplest:

If authors want readers to understand the value of reviews, we can help lead the way.

Start with four books. Support four authors.

Then see how far those four small acts of encouragement can travel.

The Authors-Supporting-Authors STAR Strategy

Supporting another author doesn't require a complicated campaign, a large following, or a marketing budget.

It starts with intentional action.

The **Authors-Supporting-Authors STAR Strategy** gives you four ways to put that idea into practice:

READ → REVIEW → RECOGNIZE → RECIPROCATE

Each step moves support beyond good intentions and into meaningful action.

R — READ

Discover and engage with another author's work.

Everything begins with reading.

Choose books you genuinely want to read—or begin with books you've already finished but haven't yet reviewed.

Look within your author communities. Explore books written by colleagues. Ask your readers what they're enjoying. Visit your local bookstore or library. Discover an author outside your usual genre.

And don't think only about new releases.

An author's backlist deserves attention, too.

STAR Action: Choose four books by four authors for your STAR Challenge. Books you've previously read count.

R — REVIEW

Turn your reading experience into honest feedback.

Once you've read the book, take a few minutes to share your thoughts.

Your review doesn't need to sound like professional literary criticism. It doesn't need to summarize every chapter or analyze every character.

Tell another reader what mattered to you.

What did you learn?

What surprised you?

What stayed with you?

Who might appreciate the book?

What was your genuine reading experience?

A few thoughtful sentences can be enough.

Most importantly, leave the review you genuinely believe the book deserves.

STAR Action: Post your honest review where appropriate and permitted, such as a bookseller, book discovery platform, or another place readers look for recommendations.

R — RECOGNIZE

Don't let the review be the end of your support.

Recognition means helping another author's work be seen.

After you've reviewed a book, you might share the book with your social community, mention it in your newsletter, recommend it to someone who would enjoy it, feature the author on your blog or podcast, congratulate the author on an accomplishment, or simply tell the author that you left a review.

This is where one review can become something larger.

Instead of quietly completing your STAR Challenge, share an “**I STARred an Author Today!**” graphic and encourage someone else to do the same.

You don't even have to reveal the rating you gave.

The important message is:

I supported an author today. You can, too.

STAR Action: Recognize at least one of your four STAR authors publicly during October.

R — RECIPROCATE

This word deserves special attention.

In the STAR Strategy, **reciprocate does not mean exchanging reviews.**

It does not mean:

“I’ll give your book five stars if you give mine five stars.”

It doesn't mean expecting another author to buy your book, promote you, endorse you, or return the favor.

Instead, reciprocation means **continuing the culture of support.**

Someone introduces you to an author? Introduce two other people who might benefit from knowing one another.

Another writer shares your work? Look for an authentic opportunity to support someone else's.

A reader leaves you a thoughtful review? Thank them, and encourage them to continue reviewing the books they enjoy.

Someone invites you onto a podcast? Consider introducing the host to another guest who would serve their audience.

Think of reciprocation not as:

You helped me, so now I owe you.

Think of it as:

Someone supported me, so I'm going to keep support moving.

That's how collaboration grows.

STAR Action: Pay one act of author support forward before STAR Month ends.

The STAR Strategy in Action

Imagine four authors decide to participate together.

Each chooses books to read and review honestly. They share one another's public book news and accomplishments when relevant. They introduce books to readers who might genuinely enjoy them. They share STAR Month graphics with their own audiences and invite those readers to participate.

No one promises a particular rating.

No one requires a review in exchange for a review.

No one keeps score.

They're simply helping one another create more conversations around books.

That's **authors supporting authors**.

And it's exactly the kind of collaboration The Author Collab™ was created to encourage.

READ the book.

REVIEW it honestly.

RECOGNIZE the author.

RECIPROCATE by keeping support moving.

Four actions. One philosophy: support travels farther when we pass it on. ★

10 Ways Authors Can Participate in STAR Month™

STAR Month isn't simply a month for asking readers to review your book.

It's an opportunity to become an active participant in a culture of **authors supporting authors, readers supporting authors, and book lovers helping good books find more readers.**

You can participate as much—or as little—as your schedule allows. Start with the STAR Challenge and build from there.

Here are ten ways to get involved.

1. Take the STAR Challenge

Start with the heart of STAR Month:

4 Reviews • 4 Weeks • 4 Authors

Choose four books you've read and leave an honest review for each one during October.

They don't have to be books you read this month. Look at your bookshelf, Kindle library, audiobook history, or recent reading list.

Chances are, there's at least one book you've been meaning to review.

STAR Tip: Put the four books on your calendar now, one for each week of October.

2. Take the STAR Pledge

Make your commitment visible.

Share the “**I Took the STAR Pledge!**” graphic and let your community know you're committing to leave at least four honest book reviews during October.

Publicly making the pledge also gives you an opportunity to explain *why* reviews matter.

Invite your readers and fellow authors to join you at **SupportAnAuthor.com**.

3. STAR an Author

Every time you leave a review, celebrate it!

Share the “**I STARred an Author Today!**” graphic on social media.

You can mention the book and author if you'd like, or simply say:

I STARred an Author today! ★ I took a few minutes to leave an honest review for a book I've read. Who will you STAR today?

This isn't about announcing the rating you gave. It's about making the *act of reviewing* visible.

The more people see others leaving reviews, the more normal the habit becomes.

4. Spotlight Another Author

Dedicate one social post, newsletter mention, blog post, podcast segment, or community post to another author.

Introduce the author.

Show the book.

Tell people why they might find it interesting.

Link to where they can learn more.

You don't need to turn every spotlight into an elaborate interview. Sometimes a simple “**Author You Should Know**” or “**What I'm Reading**” post is enough.

5. Turn Your Newsletter Into a STAR Platform

Your email list already consists of people who care about you, your ideas, or your books. Invite them into STAR Month.

Include a short section such as:

★ Who Have You STARred Lately?

Explain the STAR Challenge, feature a book you've recently reviewed, and invite subscribers to choose four books of their own.

And yes, you can gently remind readers that if they've read one of *your* books, an honest review is always appreciated.

6. Create a STAR Circle With Other Authors

Invite three or four fellow authors to collaborate during October.

But remember: **a STAR Circle is not a review-exchange group.**

Instead, look for ways to amplify one another.

Share an author's interview. Celebrate a book launch. Introduce an author to your audience. Recommend an appropriate book. Comment meaningfully on their posts. Invite them into a conversation or collaboration.

The goal is **shared visibility without transactional reviews.**

We'll explore this idea more deeply later in the playbook.

7. Invite Your Book Club or Reading Group

Book clubs are natural STAR Month partners because they're already doing the most important part:

They're reading books and talking about them.

At the end of the discussion, invite members to take a few minutes to leave their own honest reviews.

Imagine a book club with ten members finishing its monthly selection.

That's potentially ten individual reader perspectives that might otherwise never make it beyond the meeting.

8. Revisit Your Own Books

STAR Month is also a good time to review the places where you communicate with readers.

Does your book's back matter mention reviews?

Does your website make it easy for readers to find your books?

Do your reader emails occasionally include a gentle review invitation?

Do you have direct links to appropriate review pages?

Don't make readers search for where to leave feedback.

Remove friction whenever you can.

9. Thank the Readers Who Already Reviewed You

STAR Month isn't only about getting *new* reviews.

It's also an opportunity to appreciate the people who already took the time to leave one.

Without pressuring anyone or exposing information they may not want shared, consider posting:

“To everyone who has ever taken the time to review one of my books: thank you. Authors notice. And it matters more than you probably realize.”

Sometimes gratitude is the best invitation for others to participate.

10. Keep the STAR Spirit Going

October ends.

Author support shouldn't.

At the end of STAR Month, ask yourself:

What is one STAR habit I can continue?

Maybe you'll review one book every month.

Maybe you'll feature another author quarterly.

Maybe you'll add a book recommendation to your newsletter.

Maybe you'll make a point of reviewing books while they're still fresh in your mind.

STAR Month gives us a reason to begin.

The real impact comes when support becomes a habit.

Your STAR Month Goal

You don't have to do all ten things.

Choose the ideas that fit your audience, schedule, and personality.

But start with four:

Four reviews. Four weeks. Four authors.

Then look for one additional way to help another author's work shine.

Because sometimes the smallest action...a review, recommendation, introduction, or share, is exactly the encouragement an author needs.

Read. Review. Recognize. Reciprocate. ★

How to Ask Readers for a Review—Without Making It Awkward

For many authors, asking for reviews feels uncomfortable.

You've already asked someone to buy your book.

Now you're supposed to ask them to do something else?

It can feel like too much.

But there's an important difference between **pressuring someone for a review** and **letting a reader know that their honest feedback would be appreciated**.

The goal isn't to convince someone to praise your book.

The goal is to make it easy for someone who *already wants to support you* to follow through.

Start With the Right Mindset

Instead of thinking:

“I need to get more reviews.”

Try:

“I want to give readers an easy opportunity to share their experience.”

That small shift changes the tone of the request.

You're not asking readers to help manufacture a reputation for your book.

You're inviting them to contribute their genuine perspective.

Some will.

Some won't.

And that's okay.

The Three Rules of a STAR Review Request

Keep your requests:

Simple. Don't give readers a list of instructions.

Honest. Ask for their genuine opinion, not a particular rating.

Easy. Whenever possible, provide a direct link so they don't have to hunt for your book.

And then let the reader decide.

When a Reader Compliments Your Book

This may be the easiest and most natural opportunity.

Someone tells you:

“I loved your book!”

Instead of simply saying thank you, you might respond:

Thank you! I'm so glad you enjoyed it. If you're comfortable doing so, would you consider sharing those thoughts in an honest review? Even a few sentences can help other readers decide whether the book might be right for them.

Notice what isn't there.

No request for five stars.

No suggested wording.

No guilt.

Just an invitation.

When Someone Emails You About Your Book

Readers sometimes write beautiful emails describing exactly how a book affected them.

Those messages can mean the world to an author.

After thanking them, you might say:

Your message made my day. Thank you for taking the time to tell me about your experience with the book. If you'd be willing to share some of those thoughts in an honest review, I'd be incredibly grateful. Here's the link to make it easy: [REVIEW LINK]

You aren't asking them to write something new.

You're reminding them that what they already said could help another reader.



In Your Newsletter

Your newsletter gives you room to explain *why* you're asking.

During STAR Month, try:

Have you read one of my books?

If you have, I'd love to hear what you thought. An honest review doesn't need to be long or sound like it came from a professional critic. A few sincere sentences about your experience can help another reader decide whether the book is right for them.

And while you're at it, think about another author whose book you've enjoyed but haven't reviewed yet. Let's support authors together this STAR Month.



That last paragraph changes the entire spirit of the request.

You're not merely asking for yourself.

You're encouraging a behavior that supports the larger author community.

On Social Media

Keep social requests conversational.

For example:

A STAR Month reminder for book lovers:

Think of a book you've read and enjoyed but never reviewed. Today might be the perfect day to change that. Your review doesn't need to be long, just honest.

And if one of my books happens to be on that list, I'd be delighted to hear what you thought.

Read it. Review it. Support an Author.

Another option:

Someone recently told me how much one of my books meant to them, and it reminded me why we created STAR Month.

If a book has educated, entertained, encouraged, challenged, or inspired you, consider telling the author—and future readers—by leaving an honest review.

Who will you STAR today? ★

In the Back of Your Book

The best time to invite a reader to review your book may be immediately after they've finished it.

Consider adding a short note to your back matter:

Enjoyed This Book?

Thank you for reading.

If you'd like to share your experience, please consider leaving an honest review. Your feedback helps other readers decide whether this book might be right for them and it lets me know that my words reached someone.

Even a few thoughtful sentences are appreciated.

Thank you for reading, and for supporting authors.

You could also include a QR code or appropriate review link in formats where that makes sense.

After Speaking Engagements or Events

If attendees receive your book as part of an event, don't immediately turn the gift into an obligation.

Give them time to actually read it.

Later, in an appropriate follow-up communication, you might say:

I hope you've had an opportunity to enjoy the book you received at [EVENT]. If you've read it, I'd welcome your honest thoughts. Reviews help authors understand what resonates with readers and help future readers discover books that may be useful to them.

Again, **the reader chooses whether to participate.**

What About Complimentary and Advance Copies?

If you've given someone a complimentary or advance copy, you can still invite them to share their honest thoughts where permitted, but the applicable platform's review policies matter.

A simple request might be:

Thank you for reading the complimentary copy. If you'd like to share your honest experience with other readers, I'd be grateful. Please follow the review guidelines of whichever platform you choose to use.

STAR Month should always encourage authors and readers to respect the rules of the platform where a review is posted.

What NOT to Say

Avoid requests such as:

“Please give my book five stars.”

“If you liked my book, leave a review.”

If you're specifically soliciting reviews, it's better to welcome honest feedback rather than imply that only readers with positive opinions should respond.

“I'll review yours if you review mine.”

“Leave me a five-star review and I'll send you a gift.”

And don't tell readers what their review should say.

The goal is **authentic reader feedback**, not manufactured praise.

Make the Next Step Easy

One reason readers don't follow through may be remarkably simple:

There are too many steps between intention and action.

Whenever appropriate, give them the direct review link.

Instead of:

"You can find my book on Amazon."

Give them the relevant destination.

If you're communicating digitally, make it clickable.

If you're communicating in print, consider a QR code.

The fewer steps readers have to take, the easier it is to turn:

"I should review that book someday."

into:

"I just did."

The STAR Review Request Formula

Here's a simple formula authors can remember:

THANK → INVITE → EXPLAIN → SIMPLIFY → RELEASE

THANK the reader for reading or sharing their experience.

INVITE them to leave an honest review.

EXPLAIN briefly why reviews can be meaningful.

SIMPLIFY the process with a direct link when possible.

RELEASE the expectation. You've made the invitation; the decision belongs to the reader.

That last step matters.

Ask graciously.

Make it easy.

Then move on.

Because the goal of STAR Month isn't to pressure readers into reviewing books.

It's to help more good intentions become meaningful actions.

Honest reviews. Genuine readers. Meaningful support. ★

Collaborate With Other Authors During STAR Month™

One of the most powerful things an author can have isn't a massive advertising budget or an enormous social following.

It's a community.

Authors often share audiences, experiences, resources, ideas, and opportunities. STAR Month gives us another reason to turn those connections into meaningful collaboration.

But there's an important distinction:

Collaboration is not review swapping.

STAR Month does not encourage authors to exchange positive reviews, promise particular ratings, or create arrangements in which one review is expected in return for another.

Instead, STAR Month collaboration asks:

How can we help one another become more visible, reach more readers, and create more conversations around books?

That's where things get interesting.

Create a STAR Circle ★

Invite three or four authors to form a temporary **STAR Circle** during October.

Your authors don't necessarily need to write in the same genre. In fact, a little variety can introduce everyone to new audiences.

The purpose of the STAR Circle is simple:

Support one another without keeping score.

During October, members might:

- Introduce one another to their audiences.
- Share another author's book or interview.
- Celebrate an author's award, launch, milestone, or media appearance.
- Recommend books when they're genuinely appropriate for a reader.
- Invite followers to participate in the STAR Challenge.
- Share STAR Month graphics and messages.
- Comment meaningfully on one another's posts.
- Make useful introductions.
- Interview one another.
- Encourage readers who have already read the featured author's book to leave an honest review.

And if you've personally read another STAR Circle member's book and want to review it, leave the review that reflects your genuine experience, while following the policies of the platform where you post it.

The collaboration itself should never depend upon the review.



Try a Four-Author, Four-Week Spotlight

Here's an easy collaboration structure.

If four authors participate together, designate one author to spotlight each week.

Week 1 — Author One

Week 2 — Author Two

Week 3 — Author Three

Week 4 — Author Four

During someone's spotlight week, the other participants might share the author's book, post a short introduction, feature a quote or approved graphic, mention an interview, share an existing article, or invite readers to learn more.

The featured author can provide the group with a simple **STAR Spotlight Kit** containing:

Book cover • short description • author bio • headshot • website • purchase link • social links • two or three suggested graphics

Notice what's missing?

A requirement to say the book is wonderful.

The authors aren't being given canned praise to post.

They're being given the materials they need to make an authentic introduction.

Host a STAR Author Roundup

Instead of spotlighting one author at a time, collaborate on a themed roundup.

For example:

4 Books for Entrepreneurs We're Talking About This October

4 Memoirs That Started Meaningful Conversations

4 Authors to Discover During STAR Month

4 Books for Writers and Authors

4 Novels for Your Fall Reading List

Each participating author can share the roundup with their own audience.

Now four individual audiences have the opportunity to discover four authors.

That's the multiplier effect of collaboration.

Swap Interviews, Not Reviews

This could become one of my favorite STAR Month strategies.

Instead of asking:

“Will you review my book if I review yours?”

Ask:

“Would you like to interview each other?”

Interview one another on blogs, podcasts, newsletters, livestreams, social media, or community platforms.

Ask about the book's inspiration, writing process, lessons learned, research, characters, message, or what the author hopes readers take away.

Then both authors share the interviews.

You've created original content.

You've introduced each other to new audiences.

You've given readers a reason to discover both books.

And nobody had to manufacture a review.

Create a Newsletter Collaboration

Two or more authors can agree to feature another author's work in their newsletters during STAR Month.

Keep the recommendation authentic.

You might write:

My STAR Month Author Spotlight ★

This month I'm participating in STAR Month and introducing my readers to authors and books they may enjoy. Meet [AUTHOR], author of [BOOK]. [Two or three sentences about the author/book and why your readers might be interested.] Learn more: [LINK]

Again, you're introducing, not guaranteeing an endorsement.

Go Live Together

Host a short online conversation around a subject that connects your books.

Two business authors might discuss entrepreneurship.

Two novelists might talk about creating memorable characters.

Memoirists might discuss writing personal stories.

Children's authors might talk about encouraging young readers.

At the end, mention STAR Month and invite viewers to review books they've already read.

The event promotes the authors while advancing the larger mission.

Introduce Authors to One Another

Collaboration doesn't always have to be public.

Sometimes the most valuable thing you can do is say:

“You two should know each other.”

Maybe one author would be a great podcast guest for another.

Maybe two writers speak to similar audiences.

Maybe one knows a book club looking for speakers.

Maybe another has experience with an award, association, event, or publishing resource that could help.

A thoughtful introduction can create opportunities you may never see.

And that's okay.

STAR support isn't about receiving credit.

It's about keeping support moving.

Create a STAR Month Event

Author associations, writing groups, bookstores, libraries, book clubs, and online communities can organize their own STAR Month activities.

Consider:

STAR Review Night — everyone brings or identifies a book they've read and spends a few minutes writing an honest review.

Meet the STAR Authors — several authors participate in a panel or informal conversation.

STAR Book Showcase — spotlight participating authors and their books.

Review-a-Thon — challenge community members to catch up on books they've been meaning to review.

STAR Reading List — create a community-curated list of books to discover.

The event doesn't need to be elaborate.

The goal is simply to turn awareness into action.

Remember the STAR Collaboration Rule

Before participating in any collaboration, ask:

Would I still be comfortable doing this if I received nothing in return?

If the answer is yes, you're probably approaching it in the right spirit.

Collaboration isn't:

“What's in it for me?”

It's:

“What can we create together that neither of us could create quite as effectively alone?”

That's the heart of The Author Collab™.

And it's the heart of STAR Month.

More Readers. More Impact. Together.™

Turn Reader Praise Into a Review

Sometimes the review you're hoping for has already been written.

It just isn't on a review site yet.

A reader emails you:

“Chapter Seven changed the way I think about my business.”

Someone sends you a message:

“I stayed up until 2:00 a.m. because I had to know what happened.”

A client says:

“I've already recommended your book to three people.”

Someone posts on social media:

“This is exactly the book I needed right now.”

Those are wonderful moments for an author.

They're also opportunities.

Not opportunities to pressure someone into praising your book publicly, but opportunities to help an enthusiastic reader take **one small additional step**.

They've Already Found the Words

One reason people postpone writing reviews is that they don't know what to say.

They imagine a review needs to be polished, lengthy, analytical, or clever.

Yet the email they just sent you may already contain everything they need.

If someone writes:

Your chapter about starting before you feel ready was exactly what I needed. I've been putting off my book for almost a year, and after reading it I finally started writing.

That is meaningful reader feedback.

You might respond:

Thank you so much for sharing this with me. Knowing that the book helped you take that step means a great deal. If you're comfortable doing so, would you consider sharing some of what you just told me in an honest review? You certainly don't need to write anything elaborate, what you shared here beautifully describes your experience.

Then provide the appropriate review link.

You're not giving them words.

They already supplied the words.

You're simply showing them that their genuine reaction is enough.

Listen for Review-Worthy Moments

Throughout the year—but especially during STAR Month—notice phrases such as:

“I loved...”

“I learned...”

“I couldn’t stop...”

“This helped me...”

“I recommended it to...”

“My favorite part was...”

“I never thought about it that way...”

“That character reminded me of...”

“I wish I’d had this book years ago...”

These are natural expressions of the reading experience.

When someone voluntarily shares something like this with you, thank them first.

Always.

Then, when appropriate, gently invite them to share those thoughts as a review.

The Two-Sentence Ask

You don't need a paragraph.

Try:

Thank you, that means so much to me. If you'd be comfortable sharing those thoughts in an honest review, I'd be incredibly grateful.

Or:

I appreciate you telling me that! What you just shared would make a wonderful honest review if you'd like to post it for other readers.

Or:

I'm delighted the book connected with you. If you'd like to help other readers discover whether it might be right for them, would you consider sharing your experience in a review?

Short.

Gracious.

No pressure.

The “You Already Wrote It” Approach

This can be particularly helpful when someone sends you a detailed email or message.

You might respond:

Thank you for this wonderful note. You may not realize it, but you've practically written your review already! If you'd like to share these same thoughts as an honest review, here's the link: [REVIEW LINK]. Either way, thank you for taking the time to tell me how the book affected you.

I especially like the final sentence.

Either way, thank you.

It makes clear that your appreciation for their message isn't conditional on their doing something else for you.

When Someone Posts About Your Book on Social Media

Suppose a reader tags you in a post saying how much they enjoyed your book.

First, engage with the post.

Thank them.

Share it if appropriate.

Then you might privately or publicly say:

Thank you for sharing this! I'm so glad the book resonated with you. If you haven't already and would like to, I'd also be grateful if you shared your thoughts as an honest book review. ★

If appropriate, include a direct link.

Again, don't turn every compliment into an immediate request.

Use judgment.

The relationship matters more than the review.

Make It Easy to Follow Through

Your reader may genuinely intend to leave the review.

Then they close the email.

Open another tab.

Answer a phone call.

Make dinner.

Go to work.

And forget.

Sound familiar?

That's why **convenience matters**.

Instead of saying:

"I'd love it if you reviewed my book sometime."

Try:

If you'd like to share your thoughts, here's the direct link: [LINK].

One click can make the difference between:

"I'll do that later."

and

"Done."

What If They Say Yes—but Still Don't Review?

This is where authors need to resist the temptation to chase.

Someone may enthusiastically say:

“Absolutely! I’ll do it tonight.”

And then nothing happens.

You might choose to send one gentle reminder if the relationship and circumstances make that appropriate.

But repeated requests can quickly turn appreciation into obligation.

Remember the STAR principle:

Invite. Make it easy. Then release the expectation.

You cannot control whether someone follows through.

You can only create a gracious opportunity.

What About Testimonials?

Sometimes readers send comments you'd love to use on your website, promotional materials, social graphics, or book pages.

That's different from asking them to post a review.

If you want to use someone's private email or message publicly, **ask permission first**.

For example:

I really appreciate what you shared about the book. Would you be comfortable with me quoting your comment as a testimonial in my marketing? I would be happy to show you exactly what I'd like to use.

Don't assume that because someone sent praise privately, they intended it for public marketing.

A reader may be comfortable leaving a review but not appearing in your advertising, or vice versa.

Let them choose.

Create a Reader Review Path

Take a few minutes to experience the process from your reader's perspective.

Ask yourself:

Where would someone go to review my book?

Can they find that place easily?

Do I provide a direct link?

Is there a review invitation on my website?

Does my newsletter make reviewing easy?

Does my book's back matter invite feedback?

Could a QR code simplify the process in printed materials?

The goal is to remove unnecessary friction.

Readers shouldn't need detective skills to support your book.

The Compliment-to-Review Formula

When a reader praises your book, remember:

APPRECIATE → ACKNOWLEDGE → ASK → ASSIST → ACCEPT

APPRECIATE

Thank them sincerely for taking the time to share their experience.

ACKNOWLEDGE

Respond to what they actually said. Let them know you heard them.

ASK

Invite them—without pressure—to consider leaving an honest review.

ASSIST

Make it easy by providing the appropriate link or directions.

ACCEPT

Accept whatever happens next.

They may leave a review immediately.

They may do it next week.

They may forget.

They may decide not to.

Their original compliment still mattered.

And your gratitude should still be genuine.

Because STAR Month isn't about turning every reader into a marketing tool.

It's about helping readers understand that the words they already share with authors can become something even more meaningful when they share them with other readers, too.

A compliment encourages an author.

A review can encourage an author and help the next reader discover the book. ★

Your STAR Month™ 4-Week Action Plan

You don't need to do everything at once to make STAR Month meaningful.

In fact, one of the easiest ways to participate is to focus on **one simple theme each week**.

Over four weeks, you'll read and review books, support fellow authors, collaborate with your community, encourage readers to participate, and celebrate the difference those small actions can make.

The goal isn't to create another overwhelming marketing campaign.

It's to create a habit of support.

And it begins with four books.

Before You Begin: Choose Your Four STAR Authors ★

Take a few minutes to choose the four books you'll review during STAR Month.

They can be books you're currently reading or books you've already finished.

Write them down:

Book #1: _____

Author: _____

Book #2: _____

Author: _____

Book #3: _____

Author: _____

Book #4: _____

Author: _____

Now you're ready.

WEEK ONE ★ **READ & REVIEW**

Theme: Turn Good Intentions Into Action

Week One is about beginning with the simplest and most important STAR Month action:

Leave an honest review.

Choose the first book on your list.

If you've already read it, spend a few minutes thinking about your experience. If you're still reading, finish it before reviewing.

You don't need to write a literary critique.

Consider:

What did I enjoy or appreciate?

What did I learn?

What surprised me?

What stayed with me?

Who might find this book useful or interesting?

Then write your honest review and post it on an appropriate platform.

Your Week One STAR Actions

- ☐ Take the STAR Pledge
- ☐ Choose your four STAR Month books
- ☐ Leave your first honest review
- ☐ Share the “**I STARred an Author Today!**” graphic
- ☐ Invite one other reader or author to take the STAR Challenge

This Week's Extra STAR

Send the author a short message letting them know you reviewed their book.

It can be as simple as:

I participated in STAR Month today and chose your book as one of my four! I left an honest review and wanted you to know how much I appreciated the opportunity to read your work. ★

No expectation.

No request for anything in return.

Just encouragement.

Week One Goal

1 review completed.
1 author supported.
1 person invited.

WEEK TWO SUPPORT & SHARE

Theme: Make Another Author More Visible

Reviews matter... but support doesn't have to stop with the review.

This week, choose your second STAR Month book and leave your honest review.

Then take one additional step:

Help someone else discover the author.

Share the book on social media.

Mention it in your newsletter.

Recommend it to a friend.

Feature the author in a post.

Share an interview they've done.

Congratulate them publicly on an accomplishment.

Or simply post:

My STAR Month Author Spotlight

This week I'm shining a STAR on [AUTHOR], author of [BOOK]. If this sounds like a book you'd enjoy, take a look, and if you've already read it, consider leaving an honest review.

Read it. Review it. Support an Author.

Your Week Two STAR Actions

- ☐ Leave your second honest review
- ☐ Spotlight or recognize another author
- ☐ Share an “**I STARred an Author Today!**” graphic
- ☐ Recommend a book to someone who might genuinely enjoy it
- ☐ Share **SupportAnAuthor.com** with your community

This Week's Extra STAR

Look through your social media feed.

Find an author whose work you appreciate and meaningfully engage with one of their posts.

Not just a quick “Congratulations!”

Add to the conversation.

Ask a thoughtful question.

Share the post if it's relevant to your audience.

Sometimes visibility begins with something as simple as helping a good post travel a little farther.

Week Two Goal

2 reviews completed.

2 authors supported.

At least 1 author publicly recognized.

WEEK THREE COLLABORATE & CONNECT

Theme: Support Travels Farther Together

By Week Three, you've already reviewed two books and helped another author gain visibility.

Now let's expand the circle.

Choose your third STAR Month book and leave your honest review.

Then connect with another author.

You might invite someone to participate in a STAR Circle, interview another writer, feature a fellow author in your newsletter, introduce two authors who should know one another, organize a joint social post, or create a themed book roundup.

Remember:

Collaboration does not mean exchanging positive reviews.

Your goal is to create opportunities for discovery, conversation, and connection.

Your Week Three STAR Actions

- ☐ Leave your third honest review
- ☐ Connect or collaborate with at least one author
- ☐ Make one helpful introduction
- ☐ Share or spotlight another author's work
- ☐ Invite your writing group, book club, association, or online community to participate in STAR Month

This Week's Extra STAR

Try a **STAR Introduction**.

Think of two people in your network who might benefit from knowing one another.

Then send a simple introduction:

I thought the two of you should know each other. You're both doing interesting work around [TOPIC], and STAR Month reminded me that one of the best ways we can support one another is by making meaningful connections. I'll let you take it from here!

One thoughtful introduction can lead somewhere you never expected.

Week Three Goal

3 reviews completed.

3 authors supported.

1 new connection or collaboration created.

WEEK FOUR CELEBRATE & CONTINUE

Theme: Complete the Challenge—and Keep the Habit

You're almost there.

Choose your fourth book and leave your final STAR Challenge review.

Then take a moment to recognize what you've accomplished.

Four reviews may not sound enormous.

But imagine what happens when 10 people participate.

That's potentially **40 reviews**.

100 participants completing the challenge would mean **400 individual acts of reader feedback**.

The power of STAR Month isn't one person doing something enormous.

It's many people doing something small.

Your Week Four STAR Actions

- ☐ Leave your fourth honest review
- ☐ Celebrate completing the **4 Reviews • 4 Weeks • 4 Authors** STAR Challenge
- ☐ Thank the authors whose books you reviewed
- ☐ Thank readers who have reviewed your own books
- ☐ Share what you learned from participating

- ☐ Encourage someone else to continue the habit
- ☐ Choose one STAR habit you'll continue after October

This Week's Extra STAR

Post a simple reflection:

★ I completed the STAR Challenge!

This month I took the time to leave four honest reviews for four authors.

The biggest thing I learned?

Supporting an author doesn't have to be complicated. Sometimes it takes only a few thoughtful sentences.

I'm not stopping just because October is ending.

Read it. Review it. Support an Author.

Week Four Goal

4 reviews completed.

4 authors supported.

STAR Challenge completed. ★

Your STAR Month Scorecard

At the end of October, fill this in:

Honest reviews I left: _____

Authors I spotlighted: _____

Books I recommended: _____

Authors I connected with: _____

People I invited to STAR Month: _____

Reader reviews I thanked: _____

Collaborations or introductions created: _____

My favorite STAR Month moment:

One STAR Habit I Will Continue

STAR Month ends October 31.

The habit doesn't have to.

Choose one action you'll continue:

- ☐ Review one book every month
- ☐ Spotlight one author every month
- ☐ Recommend books more intentionally
- ☐ Thank readers who review my books
- ☐ Make more author introductions
- ☐ Feature authors in my newsletter
- ☐ Participate in author collaborations
- ☐ Encourage readers to leave honest reviews
- ☐ Other: _____

You Did It!

If you completed four honest reviews during October, you completed the:

STAR Challenge

4 Reviews • 4 Weeks • 4 Authors

But the real accomplishment isn't checking four boxes.

It's knowing that four authors received something many readers intend to give but never quite get around to:

feedback.

You turned intention into action.

And perhaps along the way, you introduced a reader to a new book, encouraged another author, started a collaboration, made a connection, or inspired someone else to leave a review.

That's how STAR Month grows.

Not one giant campaign.

One reader.

One review.

One author.

One STAR at a time. ★

Read it. Review it. Support an Author.

STAR Month™ Social Media Toolkit

STAR Month grows when readers and authors talk about it.

We've created shareable graphics and simple messages you can use throughout October to tell your community you're participating, celebrate the authors you support, and invite others to join the STAR Challenge.

You don't have to post every day.

You don't need an elaborate social media campaign.

Share when you have something meaningful to say, and make it easy for others to participate.

Your STAR Month Graphics

I'm Participating in STAR Month

When to use it:

Share this at the beginning of October... or whenever you decide to participate.

Suggested caption:

I'm participating in **STAR Month™ — Support Through Author Reviews!**



This October, I'm joining readers and authors in a simple challenge:

4 Reviews • 4 Weeks • 4 Authors

Reviews don't have to be long, and they certainly don't have to be five stars. STAR Month is about taking a few minutes to leave thoughtful, honest feedback about the books we read.

Want to join me?

SupportAnAuthor.com

#STARMonth #SupportAnAuthor

I Took the STAR Pledge!

When to use it:

Share after committing to the STAR Challenge.

Suggested caption:

I took the STAR Pledge! ★

I'm committing to leave at least four honest book reviews during October... one each week for four different authors.

Who wants to take the pledge with me?

4 Reviews • 4 Weeks • 4 Authors

SupportAnAuthor.com

#STARMonth #STARChallenge #SupportAnAuthor

★ I STARred an Author Today!

When to use it:

Share whenever you leave a review.

You don't have to reveal your rating or even identify the book. The purpose is to celebrate the *act of reviewing* and remind others that they can do the same.

Suggested caption:

I STARred an Author Today! ★

I took a few minutes to leave an honest review for a book I've read.

One small action. One author supported. One more reader reminded that reviews matter.

Who will you STAR today?

SupportAnAuthor.com

#STARMonth #SupportAnAuthor #BookReviews

★ Take the STAR Challenge

When to use it:

Anytime you want to invite your readers, author community, book club, or friends to participate.

Suggested caption:

★ Take the STAR Challenge!

4 Reviews • 4 Weeks • 4 Authors

Think of four books you've read but haven't reviewed.

Then turn those good intentions into action, one honest review at a time.

Read it. Review it. Support an Author.

Join us at **SupportAnAuthor.com**

#STARMonth #STARChallenge #SupportAnAuthor

Create Your Own STAR Posts

You don't have to use our suggested wording.

In fact, we'd love to see STAR Month conversations take on a life of their own.

Try prompts such as:

“The author I'm STARring today is...”

“A book I should have reviewed a long time ago is...”

“One thing I appreciated about this book was...”

“A book I frequently recommend is...”

“An author I'd like more readers to discover is...”

“I finally left the review I'd been meaning to write for...”

“My STAR Month reading list includes...”

Make it personal.

Tell a story.

Talk about books.

Celebrate authors.

And invite someone else into the conversation.

Suggested STAR Month Hashtags

Keep hashtags simple and consistent:

#STARMonth
#SupportAnAuthor
#STARChallenge
#BookReviews
#AuthorsSupportingAuthors

You don't need to use all of them on every post.

The two we'd most like you to use consistently are:

#STARMonth
#SupportAnAuthor

Remember the STAR Month Promise

When posting about STAR Month, please help us protect the spirit of the initiative.

Encourage **honest reviews**, not positive reviews.

Never ask someone to give a particular rating.

Never promise a review in exchange for another review.

Never offer a reward specifically for a favorable review.

And respect the review policies of the platform you're using.

Honest reviews. Genuine readers. Meaningful support. ★

STAR Month™ Author Checklist

You don't need to do everything on this list.

STAR Month isn't another giant marketing project to add to your already overflowing author to-do list.

Start with the four reviews.

Then choose the activities that make sense for you.

Before STAR Month

- ☐ Visit **SupportAnAuthor.com**
- ☐ Take the STAR Pledge
- ☐ Choose four books by four authors
- ☐ Add one review to your calendar for each week
- ☐ Download your STAR Month shareable graphics
- ☐ Invite a fellow author to participate with you

During STAR Month

- ☐ Leave Review #1
- ☐ Leave Review #2
- ☐ Leave Review #3
- ☐ Leave Review #4
- ☐ Share your “**I’m Participating in STAR Month**” graphic
- ☐ Share your “**I Took the STAR Pledge!**” graphic
- ☐ Share “**I STARred an Author Today!**” after leaving a review
- ☐ Invite readers to take the STAR Challenge
- ☐ Spotlight at least one author
- ☐ Recommend a book to someone who might genuinely enjoy it
- ☐ Mention STAR Month in your newsletter
- ☐ Thank someone who has reviewed one of your books

- ☐ Make one meaningful author introduction
- ☐ Collaborate with another author
- ☐ Share **SupportAnAuthor.com**

Review Your Own Reader Experience

- ☐ Make sure readers can easily find your books online
- ☐ Check that your website includes appropriate book links
- ☐ Consider adding a gentle review request to your book's back matter
- ☐ Create or save direct review links where appropriate
- ☐ Consider using a QR code in printed materials
- ☐ Make it easy for readers to share feedback

Remember the STAR Promise

Before asking for or leaving a review:

- ☐ Am I encouraging an **honest** opinion?
- ☐ Am I avoiding requests for a particular rating?
- ☐ Am I avoiding review-for-review arrangements?
- ☐ Am I following the platform's review policies?
- ☐ Am I supporting the author without expecting something in return?

If the answer is yes, you're supporting the spirit of STAR Month.

At the End of October

- ☐ Celebrate completing the STAR Challenge
- ☐ Thank the four authors you supported
- ☐ Thank your readers and STAR Month participants

- ☐ Share your favorite STAR Month experience
- ☐ Tell us how you participated
- ☐ Choose one STAR habit to continue

And most importantly...

- ☐ **Keep supporting authors after October ends. ★**

Read it. Review it. Support an Author.



About The Author Collab™

More Readers. More Impact. Together.™

The Author Collab™ was created around a simple idea:

Authors don't have to build visibility alone.

Founded by author, publisher, entrepreneur, and collaboration advocate **Heidi Richards Mooney**, The Author Collab brings authors together to share ideas, resources, promotional opportunities, and practical strategies for reaching more readers.

Rather than viewing every other author as competition, we believe collaboration can create opportunities that are difficult to achieve alone.

Through author education, collaborative promotions, interviews, resources, visibility initiatives, and community-driven projects, The Author Collab encourages authors to help one another grow while building stronger connections with readers.

STAR Month™ — Support Through Author Reviews is one expression of that mission.

It brings readers and authors together around one simple action that can make a meaningful difference:

Leave the review.

Because when readers support authors—and authors support one another—we all have an opportunity to reach farther.

More Readers. More Impact. Together.™

TheAuthorCollab.com
SupportAnAuthor.com

Keep the STAR Shining

October gives us a reason to focus on reviews.

But authors need readers all year long.

The next time you finish a book, don't put it back on the shelf or close your e-reader and think:

"I'll leave a review later."

Take a few minutes while the experience is still fresh.

Share what you thought.

Recommend the book when it's right for someone.

Tell the author when their words mattered.

And keep looking for opportunities to help good books and good authors find their readers.

STAR Month may last 31 days.

The habit of supporting authors can last all year.

Read it.

Review it.

Support an Author. ★

SupportAnAuthor.com



Reviews Make a Difference!

SUPPORT ★ TAKE ★ APPRECIATE ★ REVIEW

AT A GLANCE

A SIMPLE WAY FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION TO MAKE A BIG IMPACT

1
CHOOSE
How you'll participate.



Pick one or more ideas that fit your organization and your members. Start small or make it a bigger event!

2
ANNOUNCE
Invite your community.



Share STAR Month through your newsletter, website, social media, and member communications.

3
PARTICIPATE
All month long.



Encourage members to read and review, host activities, share recommendations, and spotlight authors.

4
CELEBRATE
Recognize the impact.



Thank your members, share highlights, and tell us what your community accomplished together!



WE SUPPORT STAR MONTH
Share it. Celebrate it.

- No registration required
- Use the Supporter badge
- Share the message and resources
- Encourage your members to participate

OR



OFFICIAL STAR MONTH PARTNER
Take your participation further.

- Register through our Partner Form
- Display the Official Partner badge
- Be recognized as part of the STAR Month community
- Get access to additional resources

★ YOUR STAR MONTH CHECKLIST

- ☐ Choose your activity or activities
- ☐ Download your graphics and resources
- ☐ Announce your participation
- ☐ Encourage members to read and review
- ☐ Share reminders and conversation starters
- ☐ Celebrate your results
- ☐ Tell us what your community accomplished

🔗 QUICK LINKS

 **Download Graphics & Resources** >
Logos, badges, social graphics, banners and more.

 **Become an Official Partner** >
Complete the brief Partner Form.

 **Visit the STAR Month Website** >
Learn more about STAR Month and get involved.

One Reader. One Review. One Difference.

Together, Let's Make Reviews Shine.

www.STARMonth.org