

Raise Funds for Books

Organize a Bookplate Drive—To raise funds for the purchase of books, your club can organize a “Bookplate Drive.” Bookplates are the stickers people put on the inside front cover of a book that say something like “This Book Belongs To: _____,” so the book’s owner can write his or her name. To do this simple fund-raiser, just set up a table in a high-traffic area at a shopping mall, bookstore, or discount store with a display of the kinds of books you will buy. Sell each plate for \$3 (the cost of one book) and let the purchaser sign the bottom of the bookplate (not on the owner line) as the book donor. In this way, individuals donating \$3.00—or multiples thereof—also can choose to donate books in honor of special teachers or loved ones. This is a fund-raising activity developed by First Book, so please collaborate with its local advisory board in your area.

Stage a Readathon—Encourage all the students in a school to get pledges for the number of pages or books they read over a two-week or four-week period. Explain that the funds they earn will buy books for needy children. Set up special reading times during the week, and promote reading at home. If possible, collect progress reports so you can indicate how many books are being read and how many books are being earned.

Work with Our Partners

The Kiwanis family of clubs has several partners for *Read Around the World*. Take advantage of these connections to have a greater impact in the community!

First Book—First Book is a US-based national nonprofit organization with a single mission: to provide low-income children with their first new books. Its network of more than 200 local advisory boards (LABs) raise funds and acquire books for distribution through established, effective mentoring, tutoring, after-school, and child development programs. Research indicates that 55 percent of participating children in First Book activities demonstrate an increased interest in reading, and the number indicating high interest in reading nearly tripled. The Kiwanis family can work with First Book LABs on a reading event or fund-raising project.

First Book
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Points of Light Foundation—The Points of Light Foundation sponsors an annual event called “Make a Difference Day,” which encourages volunteers to spend a day helping others. For 2001, Make a Difference Day is October 27, which coincides with the conclusion of the Kiwanis family’s *Read Around the World* service project. Through the Points of Light Web site, you can reach planning guides and other resources that assist groups in creating Make a Difference Day projects.

The Points of Light Foundation
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Reading Is Fundamental—RIF serves 3.5 million young people by giving them the chance to choose and keep three books each year and by engaging them in activities that motivate reading. RIF serves young people of all ages in a variety of settings, including schools, community centers, Boys and Girls Clubs, Head Start and child-care centers, migrant labor camps, churches, hospitals, and health clinics. RIF’s National Book Program runs in more than 16,000 locations throughout the US and its territories.

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Kiwanis Membership Potential

In every service project your club develops, watch for opportunities to recruit new members.

- As you develop partnerships and coalitions with other organizations, invite representatives to your meetings and urge them to join your club.
- As you seek additional resources from companies to support a project, invite representatives to a meeting for the club to formally thank them. Then, follow up with an invitation to join.
- When club members bring spouses or friends to assist at events, ask if they’ve considered joining the club.
- When people talk to you during service projects, invite them to come to a club meeting.
- When you send press releases about your projects to local newspapers and radio stations, include the club’s meeting time and location.

Remember that everyone who helps you with a project or tells you it’s a good idea is a potential member for your club. Point out that they would have many more opportunities to serve the community and to influence the direction of club service projects if they became members. And, tell them how rewarding you find the club.

A Kiwanis-family Annual Event

READ AROUND THE WORLD

KIWANIS



Read Around the World

The average child growing up in a middle-class US family has been exposed to 1,000 to 1,700 hours of one-on-one picture book reading. In contrast, the average child growing up in a low-income family has only been exposed to 25 hours of one-on-one reading.

A New Event for an Ongoing Need

All children need to understand the joy of reading. The first step is reading to them. The second is to give them books they can treasure and read again and again.

This is an ongoing process. There are always children who need inspiration. We simply need to create the opportunities to celebrate reading with them.

That is why the International boards of Key Club, Circle K, and Kiwanis committed to an annual event called *Read Around the World*, urging all clubs to conduct an event that shares the joy of reading with children. This is the first time all three boards have committed to an organization-wide Kiwanis-family service project.

Read Around the World events will focus on October 27 and the days leading up to that Saturday. However, clubs can schedule their reading event any time between October 1 and 27.

Provide Reading Activities

Conduct a book party—Organize a book-reading party at which you and other club members read books to children. Make it a party by adding other activities related to the books, such as:

- Drawing pictures of the stories.
- Making cards or letters about favorite stories.
- Dressing up as characters.
- Making hats or other costume pieces related to the stories.
- Acting out the stories using people or puppets.
- Playing a game from a story.
- Making or serving food from stories.
- Staging a book quiz show, with prizes of books.

Hold a book-related field trip—Read about a topic with children and then take them to see it

firsthand. Read about the weather, and visit a meteorologist—about fires and visit the fire station—about trees or wild animal, and visit a state park. You get the idea!

Sponsor a read-in—Work with a school or with the mayor to have an hour or several hours on Read-In Day when everyone stops other work and reads (or listens to someone else read).



Plan a story marathon—At a library, school, shopping mall, town square, radio station, or public access cable station, conduct a continuous reading of children's books for four to 24 hours. Establish a schedule to read a single author's books for 30 minutes or organize themes to be covered at set times. Plan periods when books brought by the public will be read each hour. Publicize the event as a family activity, and display the schedule in ads and on-site. Recruit enthusiastic, emotive readers,

The only behavior measure that correlates significantly with reading scores is the number of books in the home. An analysis of national data on nearly 100,000 US school children found that access to printed materials—and not poverty—is the "critical variable affecting reading acquisition."

and provide them with a sound system, comfortable chairs, props, costumes, and lots to drink. Set up displays about featured authors, and encourage the library and bookstores to set up booths. Put out contribution canisters, and encourage the readers to collect pledges for the number of books or hours they read. Bring a microwave and make "s'mores" untraditionally.

Conjure a Potter-athon—Set up a story marathon specifically for the Harry Potter books. Encourage children to come dressed as characters. Or consider another popular book series, such as the Chronicles of Narnia, Dear America, or the Lord of the Rings.

Stage a Story Sleep-Over—Organize a story-reading marathon for a Friday night at an elementary school, YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, or other facility where children and their parents can stay up late listening to stories and camp out in another room when they get tired.

Organize a Books-Open or TV-Off Day—Promote a day (or week) without television viewing. Encourage parents to agree with their children on the books they will read during the time usually



devoted to TV-watching. Arrange for themed story events at locations around the community, such as an ice-cream parlor, a pizza restaurant, the fire station, a park, a toy store, the train station, a car dealership, a hospital, the zoo, or a farm.

Stage a Make-a-Book Day—Provide a workspace with paper, markers, staplers, string, and glue. Encourage parents to make a storybook with their children, or recruit teachers to make storybooks with groups of children. Read the newly completed books, as well as a few old favorites.

Increase Access to Books

Provide books—You can do more than read to children or encourage students to share what they are reading. You can make sure they each receive a new book to keep. Discount book purchases are possible through Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) and First Book. You can become an official RIF program by committing to give a group of children at least three books each during the year. You can work with a First Book local advisory board (LAB) to order books, raise funds for a book purchase, or plan a joint event. You also may arrange for a discount at a local bookstore and stage a fund-raising event or book drive with the store's support.

Support book shipping—First Book's National Book Bank often receives large donations from First Book's publishing partners. These books are shipped to community-based literacy programs around the US. Your club may be able to put books into the hands of children just by paying for the shipment. For more information about First Book's National Book Bank, call Mary McManus at 202-393-1222, ext. 24.

Children from low-income families, on average, score 27 points below the mean reading level score for all students. Students from wealthy families score 15 points above the average.

Help a library—There are many ways to promote reading to children at a library.

- Arrange a book party at the library.
- Provide new children's books.
- Organize a special display of children's books.
- Sponsor a weekly story hour.
- Organize a seminar for parents on reading to children.
- Help set up, decorate, or build a special children's section.
- Invite a children's author to speak.
- Develop a children's library-card drive.

Motivate

Set up reading incentives—Collect in-kind donations of small awards from local businesses. The gifts can be offered to children as rewards for reading books. Work with the library or a school to establish incentive rules on:

- Types of books allowed for each age group.
- Awards by number of pages or books.
- Levels of awards.
- How students demonstrate they read the books.
- Time period for the program.

Set up times when club members can meet readers, award prizes, and total up the number of books or pages the children have read. If the program is set in a school, consider adding a competition between classes and provide ice cream or pizza to the class that reads the most.

Involve a celebrity—There are many types of celebrities you can bring to your book party or library event to read to children:

- Children's book author.
- Mayor or other elected official.
- Radio disk jockey.
- Television personality (children's show, newscaster, or weatherperson).
- Sports star (including local school athletes).
- Business owner or spokesperson.
- Police chief.
- Stage actor.
- Clown.
- School principal.

As long as the celebrity reads with enthusiasm and talks to the children about books they like, it will be a hit. They can talk about how important reading is in what they do and what their favorite books were when they were children.