

## The International Reading Association

The International Reading Association promotes high literacy levels by focusing on improvements in reading instruction, reading research and information, and the importance of a lifetime reading habit. Diverse reading professionals, including teachers, reading specialists, faculty, and researchers, are among IRA's 85,000 members. With councils and affiliates in more than 100 countries, IRA's network extends to 350,000 people worldwide.

Resources and activities further five goals:

*Professional Development* to advance knowledge of the field by reading educators worldwide

*Advocacy* for policy, practices, and research that improve instruction and promote the best interests of all learners and reading professionals

*Partnerships* with national and international governments, nongovernmental organizations, community agencies, and business and industry to strengthen and support literacy efforts

*Research* that informs the decisions made by professionals, policymakers, and the public

*Global Literacy Development* that identifies and focuses leadership and resources on significant literacy issues worldwide

### IRA Programs

**Advocacy and Global Outreach.** Members seek influence in policy, curriculum, and education reform initiatives that affect literacy, reading, and reading instruction. IRA recommendations in these areas are disseminated through position statements. Government relation reports reflect advocacy by the legislative action team related to U.S. policy.

Global projects, like Pan-African Reading for All, encourage professional communication and collaboration across borders. Educators' needs are met by region through international development committees. Teacher education and professional standards development are examples of IRA initiatives that increase awareness and recognition of reading professionals.

**Awards and Grants** honor teaching, service to the profession, research, media coverage, and writers and illustrators of children's books. Grants support professional development and action research. Some awards and grants are available only for international programs and achievement.

**Councils and Affiliates** facilitate direct and immediate access to educators. Through this network, IRA's community extends to more than 350,000 reading professionals in more than 100 countries.

**Meetings and Events** include large and small conferences and gatherings across the globe. A weeklong annual convention, held each spring in a North American city, represents a premiere professional development opportunity. A one-day research conference precedes this meeting. World Congresses are held biennially, and the cosponsored Pan-African Conference is also a biennial event. National, regional, and state/provincial meetings occur throughout the year.

**Publications** include more than 100 print and nonprint publications, with 25-30 new titles added each year. The professional journals are

*The Reading Teacher*, directed toward preschool, primary, and elementary school educators;

*Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, directed toward middle school, secondary, college, and adult educators;

*Reading Research Quarterly* for those interested in reading theory and research;

*Lectura y Vida*, a Spanish-language journal based in Latin America.

IRA's bimonthly newspaper, *Reading Today*, received by all members, contains news and features about the reading profession, as well as information about Association activities.