

RESOLUTION

On Book and Other Literacy Material Donations to Economically Developing Nations and Newly Democratized Nations

WHEREAS the International Reading Association recognizes that an adequate supply of high quality books and other reading materials is essential for the human development of any community, and that despite a surplus of books, newspapers, and magazines in the industrialized world, economically developing nations often face serious shortages of these materials, and

WHEREAS the Association commends the good intentions of individuals and groups who seek to address the literacy needs of developing countries through donations of no-longer-needed books and other literacy materials, yet is compelled to point out the need for careful screening and coordination of these donations, and

WHEREAS, all too often, outdated content, poor pedagogy, lack of cultural responsiveness, or inferior quality, make donated materials inappropriate for use by the countries receiving them, and that unrecognized bias or insensitivity in donated books and other literacy materials can and does cause offense, and that, in such cases, sending the wrong materials may do more harm than sending none at all; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the International Reading Association strongly recommends that all donations of books and other literacy materials be governed by the following criteria:

1. Donations should be limited to high-quality, recently-published books and other literacy materials that will meet the actual needs of the receiving communities.
2. Donations should be coordinated by individuals or groups with firsthand knowledge of the receiving communities and their specific literacy needs. The recipients must be actively involved in the selection process.
3. Donation of funds to permit local purchase of books and other literacy materials should be given a high priority.
4. Donors consider including the donation of electronic texts and supporting equipment in their programs.

(Adopted May 1999 as "On Book Donations to Developing Nations";
Revised February 2010)