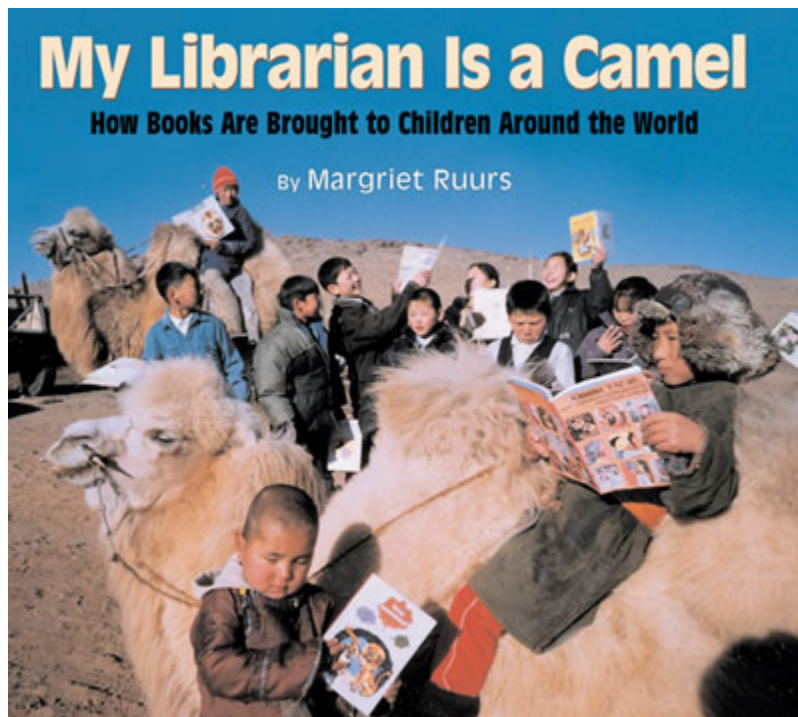


My Librarian is a Camel

Resource Guide

Created by Katherine Abel



Ruurs, Margriet. *My Librarian is a Camel: How Books Are Brought to Children around the World*. Boyd's Mill Press. (2005).

About the Author

<http://www.margrietruurs.com/> -- Margriet Ruurs Homepage



Margriet Ruurs writes children's and educational materials. She has a Master's Degree in Education from Simon Fraser University and has studied the use of technology in teaching reading and writing to children. "I love to use my imagination and to dream up stories" says this creator of many books for children.

Margriet also loves to work in schools - to tell children about being a writer and to share her love of playing with language. Her favorite genre of writing is poetry and she likes to make silly rhymes!

Margriet, her husband and two sons have lived in many places - including California, Oregon, Alberta, British Columbia and the Yukon. They like hiking and camping in the mountains and traveling. Once they traveled for a whole year!

Margriet currently lives in Shedd, Oregon. She also spends much time in British Columbia. Margriet can visit schools and conferences in any part of the world. Margriet teaches [writing programs in schools](#) and at Okanagan University College's Institute of Working Writers. She speaks at [conferences](#) around North America to parents, teachers, and librarians, but the thing she likes most is getting children excited about reading good books.

Margriet is editor of **KIDSWWRITE**, a web magazine that publishes writing by children: www.kalwriters.com/kidswwrite.

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Annotation

When most of us think of a library, we imagine an actual building or even a room in a school. But some libraries aren't kept behind four walls. Instead, they move from place to place in a variety of methods. Some travel by bus, boat, elephant, donkey, camel and more! These unusual and diverse mobile libraries are often the only way that people in remote areas such as in Thailand, Mongolia or Azerbaijan can have access to books.

This book is written with a two page spread about each country (alphabetical order from Australia to Zimbabwe) and includes geographic information about the country in addition to information about the library systems used. Includes photographs from all of the locations mentioned in this book.

Genre – Nonfiction

Theme – Various ways children has access to libraries and books all over the world.

Interest Level and Reading Level -- Grades 3-5

Booktalk (adapted from review at www.amazon.com)

When you go to the library, what does it look like? Is it a building with lots of shelves of books? Are there lots of people there? Well, not every community is lucky enough to have a library like the ones you may have visited. But that doesn't mean that people in places all over the world don't want a library. Many of them have other ways to get their books. This book will tell you about the children in the remote areas of Australia who visit their library on a truck. Or the boat library in Finland. And yes, even the camels who deliver books to the children of Kenya. While reading, you'll learn many interesting tidbits about these countries and see photographs from all of these locations.

Discussion Questions

Pre-reading

- How do you get books from the library here in the USA?
- How often do you visit the library?
- How does the library system work?

Australia

- What is special about the 72 library trucks in rural Australia? (p. 7)

Azerbaijan

- What does it mean too be a refugee and to be living in a refugee settlement? (p. 8)
- Why do you think the librarian said, “For us, the mobile library is as important as air or water” and do you agree? (p. 9)

Canada

- Explain how the borrower-by-mail program works. (pgs 10-11)

England

- What does “Libraries are services, not buildings” mean? (p. 12)
- What different kinds of libraries you can find in England? (p. 13)

Finland

- What different kinds of libraries you can find in Finland? (p. 15)
- Why is Finland known as the “land of lakes and islands?” (p. 15)

Indonesia

- How does the geography of Indonesia affect the library system? (p. 16)
- Explain the two kinds of libraries used and tell why they are used. (p. 17)

Kenya

- Explain how the camels help bring the libraries to people here. (pgs 18-19)

Mongolia

- What does it mean to be a nomad? (p. 21)
- Which do you think is sweeter? Candy or books? Why did the children there choose books? (p. 22)

Pakistan

- How do libraries get books to children here? (p. 23)

- How would you feel if you only could read a book for one hour each week? (p. 23)

Papua New Guinea

- Why does the geography of Papua New Guinea make it difficult for children to get books? (p. 25)

Peru

- What is a reading promoter? Could you be one in your neighborhood? (p. 27)

Thailand

- How do the people of Northern Thailand use elephants as libraries and how it works? (p. 29)
- Explain the four different ways children get their books. (p. 29)

Zimbabwe

- Think about the abandoned train cars that have been turned into places for homeless children to learn to read and write. Can you think of a way we could use these ideas right here in Indianapolis? (p. 31)

End of Reading

- Does reading this book help you appreciate the library system that we have here?
- What are some other ideas you have for helping children get access to libraries?

Language/Vocabulary

Page	Word	Definition
7	mobile	Movable
7	high-tech	Lots of technology, such as the solar powered library in Australia.
7	current	Solar power creates an electric <i>current</i> which runs the van.
8	refugee	People who have been forced to leave their homes and countries and move somewhere else.
8	poverty	People who do not have enough money or food or other things are said to be living in poverty.
11	horizon	The place in the distance where the land meets the sky and during part of the year the sun does not go above this line.
11	tundra	A climate region like rainforest, prairie, wetlands. The tundra is dry and cool.
15	populated	Number of people in an area. Densely would mean a lot, sparse would be a little.
16	means	ability
17	economical	Cost effective
19	itches	Sets up the tent.
19	remote	Far away from other people/cities.
20	vast	Really big area.

Page	Word	Definition
20	scattered	The towns are spread out or <i>scattered</i> across the desert, they are not close together.
24	hamlets	Another word for small towns or villages.
25	desperately	They REALLY need medicines and food.
26	innovative	Using modern technology.
26	enables	Allows them to share books with the kids.
27	promoter	A person in the town that gets the books and then they lend them to neighbor's, kind of like a neighborhood librarian.
30	province	A way the place is divided up, kind of like states or counties where we are from.
31	semiarid	Arid means very little rain, like in a desert, so <i>semiarid</i> means close to this, but not quite as dry.
31	agricultural	This community grows crops rather than having other kinds of businesses like factories.

Indiana Academic Standards met by novel content (Intermediate -- 3-6)

- LA3.3.1 Recognize different common genres (types) of literature, such as poetry, drama, fiction, and nonfiction.
- 3.2.1 Use titles, tables of contents, chapter headings, a glossary, or an index to locate information in text.
- 3.2.9 Identify text that uses sequence or other logical order (alphabetical, time, and categorical).
- 3.2.2 Ask questions and support answers by connecting prior knowledge with literal information from the text.

- 3.2.3 Show understanding by identifying answers in the text.
- 3.2.5 Distinguish the main idea and supporting details in expository text.
- 3.2.6 Locate appropriate and significant information from the text, including problems and solutions.
- Sci3.1.6 Give examples of how tools, such as automobiles, computers, and electric motors, have affected the way we live.
- 4.2.1 Use the organization of informational text to strengthen comprehension
- 4.2.2 Use appropriate strategies when reading for different purposes.
- 4.2.3 Draw conclusions or make and confirm predictions about text by using prior knowledge and ideas presented in the text itself, including illustrations, titles, topic sentences, important words, foreshadowing clues (clues that indicate what might happen next), and direct quotations.
- 4.2.4 Evaluate new information and hypotheses (statements of theories or assumptions) by testing them against known information and ideas.
- 4.2.9 Recognize main ideas and supporting details presented in expository texts.
- 4.2.6 Distinguish between cause and effect and between fact and opinion in informational text.
- Sci4.1.7 Discuss and give examples of how technology, such as computers and medicines, has improved the lives of many people, although the benefits are not equally available to all.
- 5.2.1 Use the features of informational texts, such as formats, graphics, diagrams, illustrations, charts, maps, and organization, to find information and support understanding.
- 5.2.3 Recognize main ideas presented in texts, identifying and assessing evidence that supports those ideas.
- 5.2.4 Draw inferences, conclusions, or generalizations about text and support them with textual evidence and prior knowledge.
- Sci5.1.5 Explain that technology extends the ability of people to make positive and/or negative changes in the world.

Anticipation/Reaction Guide

Response Before Reading	<i>My Librarian is a Camel</i>	Response After Reading
	Libraries are in every country in the world.	
	Children read everywhere.	
	Access to books is different in different places.	
	Geography is related to how children get books to read.	
	Every child has access to books.	







Read-Aloud pages/passages (minimum 2 per novel)

Passage 1: (page 5) the introduction would be the first passage I would read aloud. The author explains that she read an article about mobile libraries and that she had a question that lead to the research and ultimately to this book. My hope is that kids see that many books are written (and that they can write them as well) because of a simple research question a writer may have.



Passage2: (page21) There is a paragraph that talks about the book tour being called *Amttai Nom* which means “candy book.” The story that goes with it is cute, but more than that, it helps readers understand just how important these book services are for the children in these countries.

“If you like *My Librarian is a Camel*, you’ll love...” (Read-Alikes)

Books about Libraries

-  *“B” is for Bookworm: A Library Alphabet*, by Anita Prieto
-  *The Librarian of Basra*, by Jeanette Winter
-  *Cut Down Shin Creek: The Pack Horse Librarians of Kentucky*, by Kathi Appelt and Jeanne Cannella
-  *Library Dragon*, Carmen Agra Deedy
-  *Our Librarian Won’t Tell Us Anything*, by Toni Buzzeo
-  *The Boy Who Was Raised by Librarians*, by Carla Morris

Books by Margriet Ruurs

-  *A Pacific Alphabet*
-  *Emma at the Fair*

Across the Curriculum Connections

Math/Social Studies - Map Skills. Have students locate these countries on the map and give the location in terms of latitude and longitude. This relates to both geography and math.

- 3.2.1 Use titles, tables of contents, chapter headings, a glossary, or an index to locate information in text.
- 3.3.3 Identify the northern, southern, eastern and western hemispheres; cardinal and intermediate directions; and determine the direction and distance from one place to another.
- 4.3.2 Estimate distances between two places on a map, using a scale of miles, and use cardinal* and intermediate directions* when referring to relative location.
- * latitude: imaginary lines that circle the globe from east to west; the equator is the line of latitude that divides the globe into two equal hemispheres
 - * longitude: imaginary lines that circle the globe from north to south and pass through the poles
 - * cardinal directions: north, south, east and west
 - * intermediate directions: northeast, southeast, northwest and southwest
- 5.3.1 Demonstrate that lines of latitude and longitude are measured in degrees of a circle, that places can be precisely located where these lines intersect, and that location can be stated in terms of degrees north or south of the equator and east or west of the prime meridian.
- 6.3.2 Use latitude and longitude to locate the capital cities of Europe and the Americas and describe the uses of locational technology, such as Global Positioning Systems (GPS)* to distinguish absolute and relative location and to describe Earth's surfaces.

Language Arts – Letter Writing. Students will write letter to some of the organizations in the book requesting more information so that they can decide which ones they would like to work to support during a service learning project.

- 3.2.1 Use titles, tables of contents, chapter headings, a glossary, or an index to locate information in text.
- 3.4.5 Use a computer to draft, revise, and publish writing.
- 3.4.6 Review, evaluate, and revise writing for meaning and clarity.

- 3.4.7 Proofread one's own writing, as well as that of others, using an editing checklist or list of rules.
- 3.4.8 Revise writing for others to read, improving the focus and progression of ideas.
- 4.4.10 Review, evaluate, and revise writing for meaning and clarity.
- 4.4.11 Proofread one's own writing, as well as that of others, using an editing checklist or set of rules, with specific examples of corrections of frequent errors.
- 4.4.12 Revise writing by combining and moving sentences and paragraphs to improve the focus and progression of ideas.
- 5.4.8 Review, evaluate, and revise writing for meaning and clarity.
- 5.4.9 Proofread one's own writing, as well as that of others, using an editing checklist or set of rules, with specific examples of corrections of specific errors.
- 5.4.10 Edit and revise writing to improve meaning and focus through adding, deleting, combining, clarifying, and rearranging words and sentences.
- 6.4.8 Review, evaluate, and revise writing for meaning and clarity.
- 6.4.9 Edit and proofread one's own writing, as well as that of others, using an editing checklist or set of rules, with specific examples of corrections of frequent errors.
- 6.4.10 Revise writing to improve the organization and consistency of ideas within and between paragraphs.

Resources:

<http://www.icdlbooks.org/>

International Children's Digital Library

The mission of the International Children's Digital Library Foundation is to excite and inspire the world's children to become members of the global community – children who understand the value of tolerance and respect for diverse cultures, languages and ideas -- by making the best in children's literature available online.



<http://www.history-magazine.com/libraries.html>

History of Libraries – History Magazine

Learning Activities

Activity 1 – A Closer Look at the Countries

Students, working in partner groups, will each study one of the countries in the book. They can choose how to present the information that they find to the class. Options include a PowerPoint slide show, Publisher newsletter, talk show interview, Poster, or other creative ideas students may have. They should focus on finding out how the children live in each of these countries.

Standards:

- 3.2.1 Use titles, tables of contents, chapter headings, a glossary, or an index to locate information in text.
- 3.2.5 Distinguish the main idea and supporting details in expository text.
- 3.5.8 Write or deliver a research report that has been developed using a systematic research process (defines the topic, gathers information, determines credibility, reports findings) and that:
- uses a variety of sources (books, technology, pictures, charts, tables of contents, diagrams) and documents sources (titles and authors).
 - organizes information by categorizing it into more than one category or includes information gained through observation.
- 4.2.1 Use the organization of informational text to strengthen comprehension.
- 4.4.2 Select a focus, an organizational structure, and a point of view based upon purpose, audience, length, and format requirements for a piece of writing.
- 4.4.5 Quote or paraphrase information sources, citing them appropriately.
- 4.4.6 Locate information in reference texts by using organizational features, such as prefaces and appendixes.
- 5.2.1 Use the features of informational texts, such as formats, graphics, diagrams, illustrations, charts, maps, and organization, to find information and support understanding.
- 5.4.5 Use note-taking skills when completing research for writing.
- 5.4.6 Create simple documents using a computer and employing organizational features, such as passwords, entry and pull-down menus, word searches, the thesaurus, and spell checks.
- 6.2.4 Clarify an understanding of texts by creating outlines, notes, diagrams, summaries, or reports.
- 6.4.5 Use note-taking skills when completing research for writing.
- 6.4.6 Use organizational features of electronic text, such as bulletin boards, databases, keyword searches, and e-mail addresses, to locate information.
- 6.4.7 Use a computer to compose documents with appropriate formatting by using word-processing skills and principles of design, including margins, tabs, spacing, columns, and page orientation.

Activity 2 – Service Learning Project

After spending time looking at the different ways books get into the hands of children, we will try to find a way we can help, note taking and letter writing will be involved.

Possibilities: School-wide “Book Swap,” creating books for our Book Buddies, collecting books for one of the organizations referenced in the book, or partnering with a school in another location to help them gather books. This is pretty open because it depends on kids’ ideas, but there will be research and writing involved in anything that we choose.

Standards:

- 3.2.1 Use titles, tables of contents, chapter headings, a glossary, or an index to locate information in text.
- 3.4.5 Use a computer to draft, revise, and publish writing.
- 3.4.6 Review, evaluate, and revise writing for meaning and clarity.
- 3.4.7 Proofread one’s own writing, as well as that of others, using an editing checklist or list of rules.
- 3.4.8 Revise writing for others to read, improving focus and progression of ideas.
- 4.4.10 Review, evaluate, and revise writing for meaning and clarity.
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