

Sing out for books!

Sing out for books
The paper bread
That feeds the hungry
In the head.
Nibble a mystery
Swallow a star
Sip honeysong
Wherever you are.
Drink of adventure
Gobble the past
Now it's the time
And it goes so fast.

Taste of tomorrow
Slice science thin
The better to savor
The world we're in.
Salt the villain
Pepper the fakes,
Chew the poets,
Fork the rakes.
Relish words
They've much to tell.
Feast on the earth
Where heroes fell ...
Sing out for books !

Children's Book Week 1965

Attributed to Erza Jack Keats



Books, to the reading child,
are so much more than
books –
they are dreams and
knowledge,
they are a future, and a past.

~ Esther Meynell ~ (1940)



costruire

un paese di lettori

raising a nation
of readers

Reading is Fundamental and First Book
Two Successful Literacy Partnership Models

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Sobering statistics--US Literacy

- ▶ A recent study shows that while in **middle income neighborhoods the ratio of books per child is 13 to 1**, in **low-income neighborhoods, the ratio is 1 age-appropriate book for every 300**

children. -Neuman, Susan B. and David K. Dickinson, ed. *Handbook of Early Literacy Research*, Volume 2. New York, NY: 2006, p. 31.

- ▶ **41% of fourth grade boys, and 35% of fourth grade girls read below the basic level, and in low-income urban schools this figure approaches**

70% -U.S. Department of Education. Office of Educational Research and Improvement. National Center for Education Statistics. *The NAEP 1998 Reading Report Card for the Nation*



More Troubling Numbers...

- ▶ Across the (US) nation **just under half** of children between birth and five years (47.8%) **are read to every day** by their parents or other family members. - Russ S, Perez V, Garro N, Klass P, Kuo AA, Gershun M, Halfon N, Zuckerman B. Reading Across the Nation: A Chartbook (2007): Reach Out and Read National Center, Boston, MA.
 - ▶ **Nearly 2/3 of US families living in poverty have no books of their own.**
-



“Access to books and educational material is the single biggest barrier to literacy development in the United States and beyond. If we can solve the problem of access, we will be well on the road to realizing educational parity – a goal which has eluded this country for generations.”

- Susan B. Neuman, Ph.D. University of Michigan, *Center for Improvement of Early Reading Achievement*



The American Experience

- ▶ No history of a single, nationwide, centrally managed reading initiative
- ▶ Individuals saw the need; visionaries
- ▶ Developed ad hoc responses
- ▶ Decision to professionalize the programs
- ▶ Sought reliable funding streams
- ▶ Developed strong financial and professional partnerships
- ▶ Understood that community based organizations can be key partners in sustaining these enterprises





RIF
Reading Is
Fundamental®

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

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



**DO YOU
REMEMBER
THE MAGIC
OF YOUR
FIRST BOOK?**





RIF

**Reading Is
Fundamental®**

RIF = Reading Is Fundamental

- ▶ Founded in 1966
- ▶ Former teacher Margaret McNamara
- ▶ Few children owned own books
- ▶ November 1966 through the early 1970s, RIF expanded to 60 DC public schools
- ▶ Largest children's literacy program in the US



*When I look back,
I am so impressed again
with the life-giving power of literature.*

*If I were a young person today, trying
to gain a sense of myself in the world,
I would do that again by reading,
just as I did when I was young.*

~ Maya Angelou ~



RIF Comes to Appalachia

- ▶ A Librarian acts when too many kids couldn't participate in school Book Fairs
- ▶ <http://www.rif.org/maps/>



RIF's Mission Statement



- ▶ Ensure that every child believes in the value of books and the importance of reading.
 - ▶ Assist children and their families with the fundamental resources children need to become motivated to read.
 - ▶ Lead in the creation and development of national, regional and local collaborations building strong community-based children's and family literacy programs.
-



RIF Program Building Blocks

- ▶ **Always provide books for children to explore and *keep*.**
- ▶ **Always involve volunteers** in children's reading. (More than a third of RIF Program volunteers are parents.)
- ▶ **Always use imaginative activities** to spark a child's desire to read.



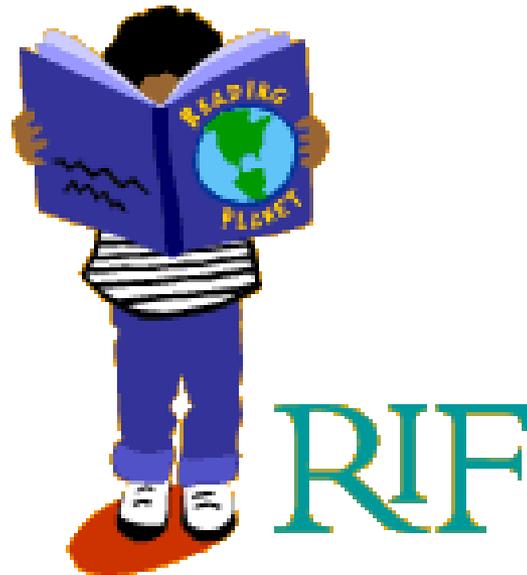
A RIF EVENT IN ACTION

- ▶ Librarians return to school on California's Monterey Coast to Volunteer for RIF
- ▶ [RIF MAP 2.0](#)



RIF...*By The Numbers*

- ▶ RIF provides **4.6 million children with 16 million new, free books and literacy resources each year**
- ▶ **75% of the cost** of most books are covered by **Federal Funds** (US Department of Education) administered by RIF



US Federal Funding for RIF

- ▶ 1975, the U.S. Congress created the "Inexpensive Book Distribution Program" (IBDP)
- ▶ 34 years of federal **matching funds** to sites that qualify for RIF's **Books for Ownership** program



RIF is Volunteer Driven

- ▶ **RIF** relies on community volunteers in every state and U.S. territory
 - ▶ You can see successful **RIF Programs and Volunteers** in action by sampling these videos from selected programs on the map <http://www.rif.org/maps/>
 - ▶ Schools, Public Libraries, Community Based Organizations are typical partners
 - ▶ **RIFNet** offers resources, distance learning and professional development programs for RIF adult leaders
-



RIF's Corporate Partnerships

- ▶ **RIF Book Suppliers offer books at deep discounts** to local RIF Programs (Scholastic, Penguin, Random House, etc.)
- ▶ RIF Partners have included Colgate, Target, Macy's, Saks Fifth Avenue, Mercedes Benz
- ▶ RIF Corporate Partners contribute both funds and volunteer hours; add visibility.



RIF Corporate Partner — Macy's

- ▶ RIF has an exciting and active presence at the annual **Miami International Book Fair** with the help of Macy's --the department store chain
- ▶ [RIF MAP 2.0](#)



“A house without books is like a room without windows.

No man has a right to bring up his children without surrounding them with books, *if he has the means to buy them.*”

(emphasis mine)

Horace Mann

19th C American Educator



RIF Building Blocks

- ▶ **Book ownership:** Children have the opportunity to **choose and keep two to five books per year** at no cost to the children or their families.
 - ▶ **Fun literacy-related activities:** Reading really is FUNdamental in Books for Ownership. **Volunteers motivate** children to read with a myriad of **festive book activities that accompany each book event.**
 - ▶ **Family and community involvement:** RIF headquarters provides **training and technical assistance** to enable program coordinators to **recruit and train volunteers**, who help run their Books for Ownership services.
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RIF Programs & Services

- ▶ Books for Ownership
- ▶ Running Start
- ▶ Books on the Menu
- ▶ Shared Beginnings
- ▶ Family of Readers
- ▶ Care to Read
- ▶ Reading Planet
- ▶ Read for Change
- ▶ Multicultural Initiative
- ▶ Leading to Reading
- ▶ ¡Leamos en familia!



RIF's *Books for Ownership*

- ▶ Formerly the National Book Program
- ▶ The oldest and largest of RIF's programs
- ▶ RIF's most well known program

- ▶ **Goals**
 - ▶ provide new, free books to children
 - ▶ motivate children to read
 - ▶ generate community support for literacy

- ▶ Distributed over 250 million books to children



More on *Books for Ownership*

- ▶ Reaches young people of all ages in a variety of settings, including schools, **libraries**, community centers, Boys & Girls Clubs, migrant labor camps, churches, hospitals, and health clinics.
- ▶ The program currently **operates in 25,000 sites in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories**
- ▶ **RIF has gone global**; now licensed in countries such as the United Kingdom and Argentina.



RIF's *Running Start*

- ▶ **Reading motivation program for first graders (6-7 year olds)**
 - ▶ Builds on the excitement of **first grade**, when 'real' reading takes hold
 - ▶ **Parents' expectations for success are high** when kids are at this stage
 - ▶ Challenges students to read **21 books in 8-10 weeks.**
 - ▶ Goal is for parents to give children a **burst of ambition and measurable successes** at a crucial stage in their development as readers
 - ▶ Partners are most often schools
-



RIF's *Books on the Menu*

- ▶ **Student-to-student mentoring programs**
 - ▶ Older children are paired with younger children as “book-mates”
 - ▶ Aim is to significantly increase the amount of time students spend reading and discussing books
 - ▶ Skills of younger children improve
 - ▶ By building relationships between older and younger children, the confidence and self-esteem of the older child is increased
 - ▶ **Both groups of ‘at-risk’ children (mentors/mentees) gain skills and experience success**
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RIF's *Shared Beginnings*

- ▶ Program for **both parents and children**
 - ▶ Helps young parents develop their children's **early language and literacy skills**
 - ▶ Parents are encouraged to read to their children, and the program conveys the importance of "nurturing" literacy.
 - ▶ Parents receive practice in activities meant to foster early learning skills, thus giving them the confidence they need to continue to teach their children.
 - ▶ Parents are excited by their children's learning and proud of their own achievement
 - ▶ **Free books for participants; volunteer support**
-



RIF's *Family of Readers*



- ▶ Focuses on developing a **Family Reading ‘Habit’**
 - ▶ Seeks to enhance and celebrate the time families spend **reading together**
 - ▶ Multiple children, ages and reading skills
 - ▶ Free books for participants
 - ▶ **Trained Volunteers Model Family Reading Time**
-



RIF's *Read For Change*

- ▶ <http://www.rif.org/readforchange/>
 - ▶ Inspired by President Obama's new Volunteer Initiative *United We Serve* <http://www.serve.gov/>
 - ▶ GOAL= Log over 3 million minutes of reading with kids by September 11, 2009—the *National Day of Service and Remembrance*
 - ▶ Raise awareness of the impact of children's illiteracy on the long term economic health of America
 - ▶ First Book is an organizational partner in this effort as well as the [PTA](#) and [Communities in Schools](#)
-



RIF's *Reading Planet*

- ▶ <http://www.rif.org/kids/readingplanet.htm>
 - ▶ Kids ages 6-15 can sign in and join **Reading Planet**
 - ▶ Kid Friendly Design
 - ▶ **24/7 Interactive website for reading promotion**
 - ▶ Areas include: Activities, BookZone, Game Station and an area for kids to post their thoughts and writing
 - ▶ Videos and online stories
 - ▶ Kids can keep a **reading log and a reading wish list**—chronicle achievements and keep kids future-focused
-



RIF & *Multicultural Literacy*

- ▶ http://www.rif.org/multicultural_campaign.msp
 - ▶ Begun in 2007 ; Multi-year initiative
 - ▶ Targeted effort to **promote and support early childhood literacy in African-American, Hispanic and American Indian communities**
 - ▶ **Spokespersons and educational leaders**
 - ▶ Essay by Dr. Rudine Simms Bishop of Ohio State Univ.
 - ▶ **Visible corporate partners** that have strong cachet within the specific target communities
 - ▶ UNIVISION, **RadioOne**, Native America Calling, Koahnic (Native American Radio)
-



RIF's *Leading to Reading*

- ▶ Reading Is Fundamental | Leading to Reading Home
- ▶ For Preschoolers (ages 0-5) and their parents
- ▶ Animated characters, **Rita** and **Riffy**, guide users
- ▶ Bilingual (English and Spanish versions of same content)
- ▶ Simple design for low literacy adults



RIF's ¡Leamos en familia!

- ▶ <http://www.rif.org/kids/leer/es/leerhome.htm>
- ▶ New Bilingual site specifically designed for Latino families
- ▶ Areas highlight **early literacy activities**: shared reading, singing, sharing stories...together as a family



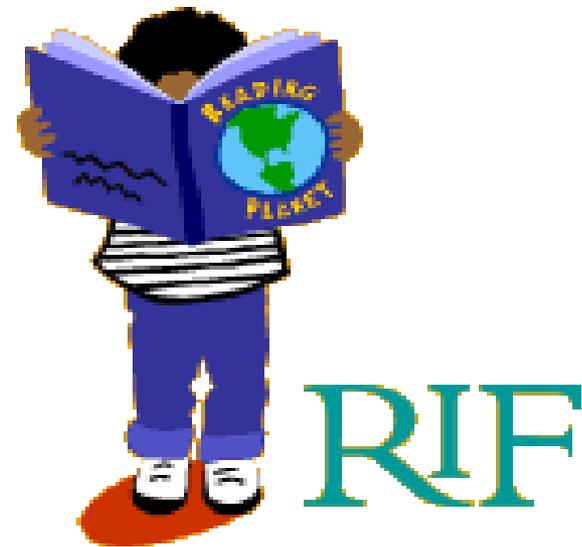
A RIF Corporate Partner—Macy's

- ▶ RIF has an exciting and active presence at the annual Miami International Book Fair with the help of Macy's -- the department store chain
- ▶ [RIF MAP 2.0](#)



RIF... By The Numbers

- ▶ RIF provides **4.6 million children with 16 million new, free books and literacy resources each year.**
- ▶ **19,000 RIF Program Locations** around the US
- ▶ **75% of the cost** of most books are covered by Federal Funds (administered by RIF/US Dept. of Education)



RIF Building Blocks

- ▶ Children always **choose Free Books** for their very own home 'library'
 - ▶ Motivational, celebratory, reading/literacy **enhancement activities** must be part of every RIF Book Program
 - ▶ Program **partners** offer books to RIF groups at deep **discounts; fundraising and matching**
 - ▶ **Volunteer support** (community and businesses) is key
 - ▶ **Literacy research and training support for RIF** Coordinators and Volunteers and now...Parents
 - ▶ **National branding and marketing opportunities** for corporate and/or nonprofit partners
-



MY BOOK!

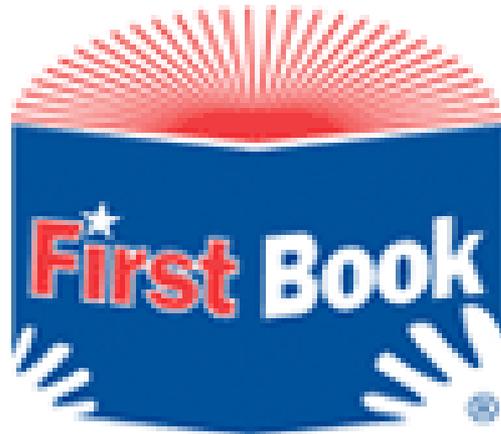
I did it!
I did it!
Come and look
At what I've done!
I read a book!
When someone wrote it
Long ago
For me to read,
How did he know
That this was the book
I'd take from the shelf
And lie on the floor
And read by myself?

I really read it!
Just like that!
Word by word,
From first to last!
I'm sleeping with
This book in bed,
This first **FIRST** book
I've ever read!

~ David L. Harrison ~
(from *Somebody Catch My Homework*)



First Book



**DO YOU
REMEMBER
THE MAGIC
OF YOUR
FIRST BOOK?**



First Book Beginnings

- ▶ First Book was founded in 1992
- ▶ Kyle Zimmer, and two friends joined together to create an organization to deliver books to children in need
- ▶ In that first year, First Book distributed 12,000 books in three communities



First Book Vision Statement

“First Book envisions a world where all children have an enriched learning environment with new books and educational resources of their own.”



First Book Programs & Services

- ▶ **National Book Bank** (FBNBB)
- ▶ **Advisory Boards** and Volunteers at all levels
- ▶ **Entrepreneurial**; employs a business model
- ▶ Strong emphasis on **marketing** and creating **mutually beneficial nonprofit/for profit partnerships**
- ▶ Strong **Web 2.0 presence** and web sales/marketing
- ▶ **Research** on literacy and data that documents First Book program effectiveness
- ▶ **Training and resources** for volunteers



First Book Advisory Boards

- ▶ At the local level, all activities are managed by **First Book Advisory Boards (ABs)**
 - ▶ Network of volunteer community leaders
 - ▶ Advocates and ambassadors
 - ▶ Tasks
 - ▶ Fundraise for Program...and books!
 - ▶ Award book grants to local literacy programs,
 - ▶ Raise awareness of literacy issues; spokespersons
 - ▶ Build collaborations within communities, college campuses and universities.
-



First **Book** *Book Bank*

- ▶ First Book National Book Bank was created in 1999
- ▶ supported by **donations** from more than 50 publishers
- ▶ **centralized distribution system** for large-scale donations
- ▶ distributes millions of books annually
- ▶ works with **warehousing partners and volunteer networks.**
- ▶ largest single distribution of the FBNBB was 2 million books in 2002



First **Book** *Book Relief*

- ▶ First Book's Book Relief offered support for Gulf Coast communities affected by Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma
- ▶ 5.1 million books distributed over 2 years



First Book is Entrepreneurial

The logo for First Book Marketplace. The words "First Book" are in a bold, sans-serif font, with "First" in red and "Book" in blue. A small blue star is positioned above the letter 'i' in "First". Below "First Book", the word "Marketplace" is written in a larger, bold, black sans-serif font.

First Book
Marketplace

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

“...an online store selling high-quality children's books and educational materials at deeply discounted prices to organizations serving children from low-income families.”



FirstBook Connects Volunteers

- ▶ Web 2.0 employed for **peer to peer volunteer recruitment and support**
- ▶ Web 2.0 methods for **grassroots marketing of program and fundraising**
- ▶ <http://blog.firstbook.org/>



First Book and Literacy Research

- ▶ Maintains a valuable resource site [Literacy in the United States](#)
- ▶ Useful for FB Advisory Boards and volunteers
- ▶ Effectively leverages literacy research data for grant writing with corporate and foundation partners, educators, librarians



First Book Funding

- ▶ FB is funded by a network of corporate partners
- ▶ More than 80% of its \$ from cause-based marketing
- ▶ Savvy; private sector strategies
- ▶ Social venture marketing with “cause-related” marketing campaigns
- ▶ Leverages print, online, and retail presence by/with/for corporate partners



First Book By The Numbers

- ▶ 17th Year
- ▶ 60 million brand new books to children
- ▶ Hundreds of communities...nationwide
- ▶ The largest single distribution of the FBNBB was 2 million books in 2002
- ▶ First Book delivered approximately 8 Million books in 2008
- ▶ Largest single book donation to the NBB? 1.9 million books from Random House in 2005



First Book Building Blocks

- ▶ Children receive the FIRST and/or Free Books for their very own home ‘library’
 - ▶ Advisory Groups are central; corporate and volunteer support is built in to the programs
 - ▶ Books from NBB are sold to FB Advisory Groups at deep discounts; fundraising and matching funds
 - ▶ Heavy emphasis on national branding and marketing opportunities for corporate and/or nonprofit partners
 - ▶ Leverages literacy research for “cause marketing” and training support
 - ▶ Uses Web 2.0 tools for marketing and recruitment
-



"Many things we need
can wait.
The child cannot.
Now is the time
his bones are formed,
his mind developed.
To him we cannot say tomorrow,
his name is today."

~Gabriela Mistral ~



Selected US Literacy Resources

- ▶ The Center for Summer Learning at Johns Hopkins University <http://www.summerlearning.org/> This program offers simple, 'doable' solutions for parents and how to slow the 'summer slide'
- ▶ Storybook Corner on the Harvard Family Research Project Site <http://www.hfrp.org/>
- ▶ Center for Family Literacy <http://www.famlit.org/>
- ▶ [The 2008 Kids and Family Reading Report: Reading in the 21st Century](#) (sponsored by Scholastic and Yankelovich Research)
- ▶ International Reading <http://www.reading.org/>



More US Literacy Resources

- ▶ Collaborative Summer Library Program [CSLP](#)
Cooperative—multiple states share the same theme
- ▶ A collaborative public web site managed by NYC's Tri-Li [Brooklyn](#) [New York](#) and [Queens](#) Libraries to support summer reading for all ages
<http://www.summerreading.org/>
- ▶ Develop/share research on the impact of summer reading and “summer set-back” [IMLS](#) supported study on impact of Summer Reading ([Dominican University](#))
- ▶ Reading Rockets <http://www.readingrockets.org> “Teaching kids to read and helping those who struggle.”



**Books to the ceiling,
Books to the sky.
My pile of books
Are a mile high.
How I love them!
How I need them!
I'll have a long beard
By the time I read them.**

~ Arnold Lobel ~



Grazie Mille!

- ▶ **Thank You!**
- ▶ **Further Questions? Please contact:**

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