



Build a Love of Reading on International Book Giving Day

By Shawnta S. Barnes – February 14, 2019

The United States is one of over 44 countries that participate in International Book Giving Day. This initiative is crucial to improving literacy in countries across the world. Too many children lack access to books or any reading materials. Without access, it is difficult for children to become literate. Literacy is an important skill to obtain to become a fully functioning adult in society.

The International Book Giving Day website does list six ways to participate in this initiative, but I would like to offer some additional suggestions:

1. Donate books to school libraries.

As an elementary librarian, I can tell you that book purchasing budgets are limited. Part of that budget goes to replacing old and damaged books. Receiving books for free is a welcomed gift.

2. Give a book to a child you know.

With any work I try to do, I like to start at home base. It would be a shame if you are gifting books to strangers but your children, young cousins, nieces, or nephews do not have access to books.

3. Make a habit of purchasing more than one copy of a book.

When I was an elementary literacy coach, one of the nicknames I picked up (because children tend to not understand what academic teacher coaches do) is book lady. I would read as much children's literature as possible and purchase multiple copies to give away. The bonus is then you can have follow-up conversations about the book.

Yes, children can go to public library and access books for free, but there is nothing like owning a copy of a book that you don't have to share. What warms my heart the most is placing a book into the hands of a child. Let international book giving day be a catalyst to help get more books into the hands of children.