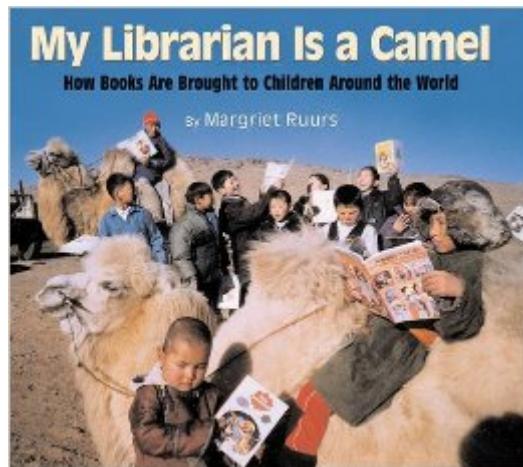


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# My Librarian Is A Camel: How Books Are Brought To Children Around The World



## **Synopsis**

Do you get books from a public library in your town or even in your school library? In many remote areas of the world, there are no library buildings. In many countries, books are delivered in unusual way: by bus, boat, elephant, donkey, train, even by wheelbarrow. Why would librarians go to the trouble of packing books on the backs of elephants or driving miles to deliver books by bus? Because, as one librarian in Azerbaijan says, "Books are as important to us as air or water!" This is the intriguing photo essay, a celebration of books, readers, and libraries.

## **Book Information**

Lexile Measure: 980L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 32 pages

Publisher: Boyds Mills Press (August 1, 2005)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1590780930

ISBN-13: 978-1590780930

Product Dimensions: 0.5 x 9 x 10 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 starsÂ  See all reviewsÂ  (21 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #26,951 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #4 inÂ  Books > Children's Books > Arts, Music & Photography > Photography #19 inÂ  Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Where We Live > Country Life #50 inÂ  Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > Books & Libraries

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

## **Customer Reviews**

What could be a more precious gift than learning to read? It's time for Santa to take second place! Do children today really lack interest in our 'wider world'? Writers for newspapers & magazines frequently write about \*GEOGRAPHICALLY-CHALLENGED\* young people. Author Margriet Ruurs' book tells children of the many ways in which libraries are brought to the doorsteps of readers in thirteen far flung countries in this world. It isn't dry-as-dust information -- it is exciting & colorful; mind-boggling in some instances. Our Bloomington (IN) daily paper does print a map frequently with squibs of news from about ten 'hot spots' on this Earth. Everyone could gain by studying such a map & adopting a regular habit of "connecting the dots" between countries and happenings, and

between happenings and long-term effects on individual lives, and our Universe. In Australia huge trailer-trucks are solar-powered & very high-tech, powering computers and air conditioning, plus. A librarian-storyteller travels with the materials and keeps kids' minds stimulated with stories.. In Azerbaijan (former Soviet republic) there are funds for sending library trucks to only two refugee settlements. In contrast beach deliveries of books are made in England with wheelbarrows! Native Inuits in Canada rely on the mail service with prepaid 'returns.' Finland supplies a boat for service to outer islands, some of which are populated only during the brief summer. Indonesia provides boats & bicycles for deliveries. The most dramatic carriers are in Kenya where camels carry tents for 'setting up shop' with boxes of books . . . AND, in the mountainous areas of Thailand elephants go on 20-day round trips to make their deliveries! Imagine elephants instead of Bookmobiles here in the U.S.!

"Neither rain nor snow, nor sleet nor dark of night shall stay these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds." The postman's creed, you say? Yes, but now it applies to a new group of people: mobile librarians. Margriet Ruurs, writer and educator, read a newspaper article describing the mobile library in the desert areas of Kenya. She began to wonder if children in other remote areas receive books. Thus began the scrapbook of mobile libraries from all over the world. After Ruur made the contact, librarians shared stories and photographs of their unique mode of book delivery. Ruur includes a total of thirteen mobile libraries. Each shows a two-page spread containing a map insert of the country's location, a box about the area, and the story and photographs of each mobile library in action. Because there are thousands of islands in Finland's geography, the library goes to the children by boat. In the northern Lapland region of the Arctic, a book bus serves Lapp children in Finland, Sweden, and Norway. In Mongolia a book minivan and a horse-drawn wagon take books to the herders' children in the Gobi desert. In Azerbaijan a blue truck serves refugee settlements. The children love their "library-in-a-truck." In fact, the librarian wrote: Because these children have nothing, not even school, "the mobile library is as important as air or water." Loaded with crates of books, elephants are library assistants in taking books to children in northern Thailand. Homeless children in Bangkok have access to a classroom and library in old, transformed train carriages in stations around the city. The most dedicated delivery of books occurs in Papua New Guinea, where trucks with four-wheel-drives go as far as they can.

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