

Book Topic Descriptions & Tracking Sheet

Please copy this Book Topic Descriptions Packet & share it with any teachers at your school who are making books with their students. Use the table on the following pages to help you track which books your students are making so you can be prepared to fill out our online sister school selection form.

Sister schools in our program have the opportunity to request books in the subject areas and at the “grade levels” described in this packet. Once you register, you can choose a sister school based on their book requests. **Please do not begin making books until you’ve registered and had a chance to choose a sister school so you know which books they need.**

A few quick reminders about your books:

1. We are no longer accepting student-written autobiography, fiction, poetry, or folklore.
2. All books must be type-written.
3. You can improve English language literacy in all of your books by adding a glossary of terms at the end to define advanced vocabulary.
4. The more pictures, the better! The students learn orally and rarely get to see images of the things they are learning about.
5. Your books should be as interactive as possible, including reflection questions, quizzes, math problems, word puzzles, fabrics and textures, pop-ups, and suggestions for simple science experiments and observation.
6. There is a great need for maps, charts, posters, flash cards, and all sorts of visual aids
7. Art supplies, sports equipment, and simple musical instruments are great supplements to your books, too, provided they fit in your boxes.

What do the “grade level” categories mean when making the books?

It’s extremely difficult to generalize grade levels in Uganda because many students have missed years of schooling due to war and displacement. Below, we have tried to summarize what we mean on the topics list by each general grade level:

Elem = Elementary Level Books (ages 3-8) *Students are learning to read and count in English.*

English Language Literacy: Students are acquiring basic skills: identifying the alphabet, reading and pronouncing simple words.

Mathematics: They are learning to count and doing simple arithmetic

Science & Social Studies: Students are learning basic concepts about the world around them mostly through observation and experience of their family, community and natural environment. They are beginning to understand measurement.

Health: They are learning about basic hygiene and health practices. They are not yet personally aware of sexuality but basic lessons start at this time about personal decision-making.

Art & Crafts: They enjoy drawing and coloring, but there is very little formal art education (mostly because of the lack of supplies)

Music: They are practicing rhythm and memorizing songs taught to them. They use rhythmic call and response to learn concepts.

Recreation: Children spend a lot of time playing outdoors, though mostly not through organized sports.

Int = Intermediate Level Books (ages 9-13) *Students can now “read to learn.” They are now taught all subjects in English.*

English Language Literacy: Students are now able to read a book on their own. They can learn by reading now, and they are able to verbally summarize and report back on their learning. They are learning the basic elements of grammar in order to learn English. They are beginning to write their own poetry, and they are now learning the structures of writing (organizing an essay or a research paper, for example). Their English vocabulary is now beginning to expand.

Mathematics: They are moving on to more advanced arithmetic and possibly being introduced to simple algebraic concepts.

Science: They are involved in more sophisticated scientific reasoning and are fascinated by earth sciences such as archeology, geology, weather, and astronomy.

Health: They begin to get more in-depth sexuality education, particularly in regards to personal decision-making and the consequences of being sexually active. They begin to learn about disease, and they continue to learn about hygiene.

Social Studies: They are learning to read maps (if available).

Art & Crafts: At home, the girls are cooking and sewing. It’s not clear whether there is any other formal art education.

Music: They continue to sing songs as part of their school day, though it’s not clear if they’re receiving any formal instruction.

Recreation: All of the students are actively involved in outdoor sports, especially soccer and volleyball (or “netball”).

Adv = Advanced Level Books (ages 14-18) *Students are now capable of dealing with more abstract material.*

English Language Literacy: They are studying poetry, literature, and philosophy, when it’s available. They are acquiring more advanced English vocabulary words, now in specialized subject areas (science, political science & government, etc.)

Mathematics: They are learning algebra, geometry, trigonometry, calculus, probability and statistics.

Science: They are now studying scientific subjects in-depth, such as physics, chemistry, and biological sciences. They are beginning to learn to use computers when they have access to them.

Health: They continue to receive sexuality, disease, and hygiene education.

Social Studies: They are much more aware of world history, of politics, of current events, of issues of poverty, war and human rights.

Art & Crafts: It’s not clear whether there is any art education. Some students enter vocational school to learn sewing or carpentry.

Music: Some students are involved in the school choir and learning traditional folk dances.

Recreation: Students (especially boys) are now involved with competitive sports across the District.

These descriptions are here to give you a sense of the kinds of books that are most helpful to our sister schools. They are meant to be general guidelines and were left intentionally vague so you could fit a variety of material into these categories.

	Topics	Description	Elem	Int	Adv
English Language Literacy Remember that you can enhance English Language Literacy in all of your books by adding a glossary of terms at the end.					
1.	Alphabet	Alphabet books can be created for a variety of grade levels. For younger students, they can help teach the recognition and sounds of letters. For older students, they can help teach increasingly advanced vocabulary, though we want to be careful not to supplement these with illustrations that are too childish for older students.			
2.	Grammar & Mechanics	Books about the logical and structural rules that govern the composition of sentences, phrases, and words. This can include parts of speech, syntax, and punctuation.			
3.	Vocabulary	The purpose is to help expand the English vocabulary of our readers. Consider making subject-specific vocabulary books (like science terms) to support learning through English. This can also be accomplished in all of the other subject areas simply by adding a glossary to the end of the book.			
4.	Poetry	Poetry books should not solely contain student-written poetry. By poetry, we mean the study of poetry and its form and history. For example, terms such as rhyme, meter, verse, repetition, alliteration, assonance, onomatopoeia, metaphor, and simile. We encourage you to include samples of published, canonical poetry to illustrate these terms, and student examples are welcome alongside these. Ideally, these would include some writing exercises to give our readers some practice.			
5.	Writing Instruction	Books should be about "How To Write" in various forms, including creative fiction, nonfiction essay, prose, research papers, persuasive essays, etc. You can cover terms such as outline, plot, theme, voice, tone, characterization, point of view, narrative, transitions, descriptive language, etc. You can also teach the process of writing a research paper, right down to creating the bibliography. Ideally, these would include some writing exercises to give our readers practice.			
6.	World Literature	These books can include a discussion of fictional literature from any part of the world, but should not be focused solely on American literature. Comparative literature is ideal. This could include short stories, dramas, and novels, and discuss terms such as plot, theme, symbolism, and character. You can also compare eras of literature, such as Romanticism, Realism, etc.			
Mathematics Ideally, books in this category would have sample math problems and solutions guides. You can also include manipulatives and tools to help teach concepts.					
7.	Counting	Counting books can be created at various grade levels and can be used to help teach English number vocabulary. For example, counting by 10s to a trillion for an Intermediate level book: you can show the number and the words (one million and 1,000,000). You can also introduce other vocabulary words for the objects being counted. For example, "5 balloons" accompanied by pictures of balloons.			
8.	Arithmetic	This includes addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions and decimals, and can be modified for advanced grade levels (for example, division with fractions).			
9.	Algebra	This can include the introduction of variables, constants, operations, equations and equation solving, polynomials (algebraic expressions), factorization, etc.			
10.	Geometry	Topics related to the size, shape and relative position of figures, including concepts such as area of 2D figures and volume 3D figures, circumference, coordinate systems, Pythagorean Theorem, and proofs. Also introducing tools such as the compass and straightedge.			

11.	Trigonometry	Books related to trigonometric functions which describe the relationships between sides and angles of triangles.			
12.	Calculus	Books related to calculus as the mathematics of change, including topics such as limits, functions, derivatives, and integrals, and the various applications of calculus.			
13.	Probability & Statistics	Books about probability theories, particularly discrete probability distributions with terms such as set, subset, sample space, event, element, etc. Statistics topics relate to the collection, analysis, interpretation and presentation of data (surveys, models, etc.).			
Science Ideally, books in this category would have ideas for simple experiments, activities and observations. You can also include simple science experiment kits (as long as none of the objects are breakable) in your final shipment.					
14.	Scientific Method & History	Books should discuss the scientific method, scientific reasoning, scientific theory vs. hypothesis, experimentation, and the fundamental nature of science. You can also write about the history and development of various scientific theories and models.			
15.	Earth Sciences	Can include books about Geology, Archeology, Dinosaurs, Astronomy, Oceanography, and Weather Systems			
16.	Chemistry	Books about the composition, behavior, structure and properties of matter. This can include topics such as atomic structure, organic chemistry, analytical chemistry, etc.			
17.	Physics	Books about the study of matter and its motion through spacetime. Topics can include energy, force, magnetism, electricity, thermodynamics, Chaos Theory, classical physics, Relativity, Quantum Mechanics, String Theory, etc.			
18.	Environmental Sciences	Can include books related to ecology, conservation, endangered species, pollution, habitat destruction, climate change, etc.			
19.	Biological Sciences	Can include books about cellular biology, animal biology, plant biology (botany), human biology and anatomy (physiology), Evolution, etc.			
20.	Agricultural Sciences	Books should be about topics in crop choice, crop rotation, planting, harvesting, fertilizing, composting, raising livestock, marketing and selling agricultural products, and especially subsistence vs. commercial agriculture.			
21.	Computer Science	Books can be an introduction to modern-day hardware and software. Commonly used software packages available in Uganda include Microsoft Windows, Microsoft Office, and Internet Explorer. Many Ugandans also use webmail, including Yahoo and Gmail. Students can write simplified software guides (how to use Microsoft PowerPoint), HTML reference guides for simple webpage creation, a tour of a computer's hardware components (how a computer works), or guides about basic computer skills (turning on and off, using the mouse to right-click, using the Start Menu, etc).			
Health Sciences Feel free to enclose wash clothes, tooth brushes, floss, tooth paste, bar soap, deodorant, and other personal hygiene items.					
22.	Hygiene	Topics include basic hygiene practices and their health consequences, bearing in the limited access to soap, washcloths, and dental cleaning supplies (feel free to include toothbrushes!).			
23.	Sexuality	Topics related to the biological aspects of human sexuality and development, the health consequences of being sexually active (early pregnancy and diseases such as HIV), and the personal decision-making that goes into being sexually active.			
24.	Disease	Books should primarily be about diseases found in East Africa, such as HIV, Malaria, Ebola, and various other parasites, bacteria, fungal infections, etc.			

25.	Nutrition	Books related to the components of a healthy diet and the consequences of not getting certain nutrients. Bear in mind that not everyone has consistent access to food so the books should not scold its readers for not eating properly. The Gulu diet consists mostly of beans, millet, sorghum, wheat (bread), cassava, bananas, spinach, potatoes, sweet potatoes, noodles, chicken, beef, goat, fish, eggs, tomatoes, eggplant, onions, mangoes, peanuts (ground nuts), and salt.			
26.	Exercise	Books should discuss the importance of regular exercise, including cardiovascular, flexibility, and strength training. Share examples of exercises (possibly even routines) that do not require equipment.			
Social Studies There is a great need for maps, particularly world maps and maps of Africa.					
27.	Geography	Books about the Earth and its lands, features, and inhabitants, describing the way things are and how they got that way, with a special emphasis on maps and map-reading skills, since the students have almost no visual aids to help them understand the world. This also includes both human geography, which describes human interactions with their environment, and physical geography, which is primarily earth science.			
28.	World Cultures	These can be books about traditions, clothing, holidays, music, architecture, family structures, social mores, and lifestyle of any country in the world. We ask that the focus not be on U.S. culture as they do get a lot of that through the media.			
29.	World Religions	These books should be objective comparisons of various religions throughout the world. Their purpose is not evangelical. We want to give students the opportunity to learn about the different faith traditions that people around the world practice.			
30.	World Folklore	These books can include stories and folklore from countries around the world, such as creation myths, legends, proverbs, nature myths, etc. You can also discuss different elements of folklore. Student-written folklore is welcome as a teaching tool if it's included alongside well-known examples and terminology.			
31.	World History	This topic can include the history of any region or country in the world. This might involve biography, illustrated timelines, essays on specific events, or a study of a major civilization or other modern-day entity. U.S. history is fine; we just ask that not all of your books focus solely on American history, as it is not part of the Ugandan curriculum.			
32.	Political Science & Government	Books in this topic can describe different forms of government, the history and attributes of democracy, the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in a modern-day democracy, and movements involving the suffrage of various minority groups.			
33.	Current World Issues	These books can cover any contemporary world issue, group, or person in the last 5 years. They should discuss the history and the implications of the event or figure.			
34.	Human Rights	Books in this category can help our readers, as former child soldiers, learn about their rights as human beings. Books can rely on various U.N. documents and discuss other times in history when people have been oppressed or enslaved.			
35.	Economics	Books about the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services, including terms from micro- and macroeconomics and international economics, such as resources, scarcity, supply & demand, Gross Domestic Product, inflation, monetary policy, fiscal policy, globalization, tariffs, international trade, etc. This may also include international economic organization and important figures in economic history.			
36.	Philosophy	Philosophy incorporates many subjects, such as ethics, logic, the fundamental nature of existence, justice, truth, beauty, etc. You can also discuss famous figures in philosophy and their theories.			

Art Pencils and paper are relatively common (though not for our more remote schools), but any other supplies will most likely not be found there. You can also include small sewing kits.					
37.	Drawing & Painting	“How To” books related to various drawing and painting techniques, concepts, and tools. This could include life-form or human figure drawing, portraiture, shading, perspective, depth, scale, color, etc. You can discuss various mediums such as pencil, colored pencil, charcoal pencil, oil pastels, watercolor, oil, and acrylic.			
38.	Craft Skills	Books about metal working, wood working, sewing/needlework (some do have access to sewing machines – you could include sewing patterns),			
39.	Cooking	Books about cooking techniques, scientific basis for cooking methods, or recipes containing the following foods available in Gulu: beans, millet, sorghum, wheat (bread), cassava, bananas, spinach, potatoes, sweet potatoes, noodles, chicken, beef, goat, fish, eggs, tomatoes, eggplant, onions, okra, mangoes, peanuts (ground nuts), corn, and salt.			
40.	Art History	Art history can have examples of important pieces of art from around the world and discuss its form, medium, context, history, the biography of the artist, its symbolism, its style, etc. The purpose is to expose students to different kinds of art and artistic movements and their context in history and culture.			
Music You are welcome to send along small musical instruments.					
41.	World Music	This topic can include a history and explanation of musical traditions from around the world, including an illustrated guide to various instruments or a description of when and how music is used in different cultures. If you would like to send along a CD, please consider making a financial donation with a note for us to purchase a battery-operated CD player on our trip. We can also buy a year’s supply of batteries to make sure it keeps working. Otherwise, our schools do not have electricity, and CD players are likely to break when shipped.			
42.	Notation, Theory & Rhythm	These can be books that teach students about the underlying structure of how music works, including the language and notation of music. This can include rhythm, harmony (harmonic function), melody, structure, form, texture, pitch, scales, dynamics, etc.			
43.	Musical Instruments	If your school would like to donate some small musical instruments, you can include books that teach the students how to use them to play some simple songs.			
Recreation You are welcome to include games and sports equipment in your shipment, just please be aware of volume. For example, an inflated ball will take up a lot of your allotted space. You can send shoes, play clothes, board games, decks of cards, volleyball nets, chalk, etc.					
44.	Indoor Games	These books should include ideas for games that children can play inside with minimal equipment. These could be word games, math games, card games, etc.			
45.	Outdoor Games & Sports	This topic can cover a wide range of outdoor sport and activities. You can include descriptions of games that don’t require equipment (for example, Red Rover or Hide and Seek). You can also write about sports or sports figure from other countries.			

Please do not begin making books until you’ve registered and had a chance to choose a sister school so you know which books they need. Thank you!

If you have any questions, please contact Abha at 608-466-4534 or info@booksofhope.org