

INTERNATIONAL
LITERACY
ASSOCIATION

Service Project Kit: Make Your Steps Count!



International Literacy Day | 8 September 2016

Make a Big Difference With Steps to Advance Literacy

Our theme for this year's International Literacy Day is "**Steps to Advance Literacy**," and our goal is to inspire you to put your best foot forward for students everywhere!



Although most kids in the United States never have to worry about how—or if—they're going to get to school, it's a much bigger challenge for students in developing nations across the world.

Many children walk for miles just to spend a few hours at school—and that's only if their families can afford to send them in the first place.

According to the National Education Association, children sometimes walk 5 to 10 miles each way to attend school in countries like Zambia or Pakistan, where school supplies and trained, qualified teachers are in short supply.

In countries where violence isn't uncommon, like South Africa, the walk can be dangerous, and students may be robbed and beaten on the way to or from school.

At ILA, we want to grow awareness about this issue—and we need your help! Join our Steps to Advance Literacy initiative by tracking your steps as an individual, class, school, or community, then comparing these distances to the miles students around the world must travel each day in order to learn.



Here's How to Kick Off Steps to Advance Literacy:

ON YOUR OWN

Download a pedometer app and use it to count your steps. Track them when you're taking a stroll in the park with your four-legged friend, running around with your kids outside, or participating in a local 5K. How long would it take you to walk the 10 miles students in Africa and Asia go every day to get to school?

Keep ILA updated with your progress. Be sure to report back on social media using #steps4literacy.

Share the reasons you're tracking your steps with your social networks. Let your progress inspire your family, friends, and colleagues to get involved.



Post your progress using [#steps4literacy](#).

For example: "I took 784 #steps4literacy today. #ILD16."

WITH YOUR CLASS

Integrate walk breaks into your daily lesson plans. With the app in hand, take your students out into the schoolyard for a "brain break" or a stroll through the hallways, or hit the gymnasium to collect some extra steps.

Talk to your students about the great distance some kids have to travel just to be able to attend school and learn to read and write.

Count your students' steps and tell them how they're making an impact. The steps they're taking can help raise awareness and make a difference for students just like them in countries all over the world.

Share class results on social media (using #ILD16 and #steps4literacy) and post a tally inside or outside your classroom to encourage other classrooms to get involved.

AT YOUR SCHOOL

Team up with your fellow educators. Pair up with another class for walks, or connect with the gym teacher to share your mission of tracking steps to advance literacy. Discuss how it can be integrated into the physical education curriculum (like a class warm-up that includes a brisk walk).

Set a goal such as taking 50,000 steps by the end of the year and work toward this goal together.

Talk to administrators about tracking steps schoolwide or ask if you can initiate a contest for the most steps taken. Tie it into the greater mission of enhancing literacy for students by awarding prizes like gift cards to bookstores, baskets of grade-appropriate books, or maybe extra library time.



Kick Off Steps to Advance Literacy (continued)

IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Participate in a local 5K. Search for running/walking events on a community website or race sites like [Race Forum](#) and [Active](#). Form a team and solicit donations from friends and family to benefit the cause. On the day of the race, wear t-shirts that promote “Steps to Advance Literacy” or advertise

International Literacy Day.

If there isn't a 5K in your area, consider starting your own to raise funds for literacy, locally.

Although it can be a complex process, there are plenty of resources to help you along the way. Start with a free download of “[How to Organize a 5K Race](#)” from Active. These types of resources can help you with the basics of where to hold your event and how to raise funds.

Here are some other things to consider:

- Once you've ironed out the details, begin promoting your event. Start with social media go-tos like Facebook and Twitter (don't forget

those #steps4literacy and #ILD16 hashtags!) and posting fliers around your neighborhood.

- Ask local businesses to help advertise and defray expenses as a sponsor.
- Use [Run the Day](#) or [Chronotrack](#) to help you keep in touch with participants, form organized teams for fundraising, and time the run/walk.
- Use the funds you've raised to benefit literacy in your community—like helping a local library buy new books or purchasing books or school supplies for local families in need.



AT THE ILA 2016 CONFERENCE

Put your best foot forward on July 10 at our first-ever Steps to Advance Literacy 5K at the ILA 2016 Conference in Boston. Stay tuned for more information on how to register for the race and join us to walk, run, cheer, and grow awareness for the cause!

