

Appendix F: Writing a Great Thank-You Letter

Why write a letter?

The African Library Project is able to send books because volunteers, called book drive organisers, collect the books and the money for shipping. The book drive organisers are individuals, families, schools, youth groups, church groups, or other organizations. Most of the book drive organisers are children or youth. Receiving a thank you letter lets them know that you appreciate the work they have done to get books to your community. This inspires them to continue to want to help others. Often, they sign up to do another book drive for another school after they receive a thank you letter. Your letter is the way the people that sent you books know that the books arrived and are being used.

The best letters:

Are personal. Do address the letter to the specific book drive organiser. Their name should be on the packing slip inside every box. It might be the name of an individual or organisation. It is fine to write: “Dear Girl Scout Troop 673” or “Dear Westview High School.” If you cannot find a packing slip with the name, write “Dear Book Drive Organiser.” The ALP partner organisation in your country also gets a list of all the book drive organisers and their addresses in case you have not kept the papers inside the boxes of books.

Are detailed and include a story (and photo). Wait to write the letter until your library is set up and functioning. Include some specific details. For example, which are the favorite books among the learners? What changes have you noticed in their academic performance? How have the books helped the teachers? Sharing a story about one individual learner or teacher who has benefited academically or socially makes a great letter. Wherever possible, send a photo of your library with learners using

it, like the photo below of a young reader in Sierra Leone. This means a tremendous amount to the donors.

Are appreciative. Do thank the donor but do not ask for additional donations. Different cultures have different norms, and in American culture it is considered rude to ask for an additional donation at the same time you are thanking for the first one.

Are timely. Write within 6 months of when you added the books to your library.

Format and Delivery

Your letter can be hand-written or typed. It can be on school letterhead or plain paper. It does not need the school stamp.

If the book drive organiser included an email address and you have email access, it is fine to send your thank you by email. If you do this, please cc: info@africanlibraryproject.org and the ALP partner organization in your country.

Otherwise, deliver your letter to the ALP partner organisation in your country and it will be scanned and emailed to the African Library Project and to the book drive organiser.

