

What can associations do to help promote children's books?

Q: Is it effective to promote topical books to associations? What can these organizations do with children's books?

A topical book can be effectively marketed to associations that have a special interest in the subject. This is particularly true of non-fiction titles, but can work for fiction too if your book information is factually based.

Start by contacting the publicity department of organizations you've used as sources in writing your book. Ask about services they provide for their members and for outsiders needing information on the subject.

Find out whether they publish bibliographies of recommended books; have a hotline or information service that refers callers to source material; give awards for topical books; host an annual conference that showcases related products; or sell mailing lists you can buy for direct mail purposes. Consider sending complimentary copies of the book to the president or other key members of the organization. They may be willing to endorse or refer others to the book. If you can claim special expertise in explaining how to present the information to children, ask whether you could be considered as a guest speaker at regional or national conferences.

You're likely to find that some organizations are more receptive than others, but if your book relates closely to what they do, it is likely that the contact will prove worthwhile. In addition to organizations you may have discovered in researching your book, you can check your local library for the Encyclopedia of Associations. 4:5/93