Can You Go to School?



Features a diverse range of schools across six continents

Sharon Parsons

Nelson Literacy Directions

Can You Go to SCHOOL?

For teachers' inspection ONLY



My sincere thanks to the following people for their time, information, images and enthusiasm for this book:

David Ashby, Eddy Barillas, and the teachers, students, volunteers and family helpers at the Jungle School, Honduras, Central America

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Rebecca Tampion and students of Parkdale Primary School, Melbourne, Australia

Dear Reader

Are you reading this letter at your school? If your answer is "yes", you are among the many lucky kids who *can* go to school.

Unfortunately, there are millions of children who can't go to school, either because of poverty or the remote location of their homes. In developing countries, many children can go to school, but there is a shortage of trained teachers, and the schools have limited resources, both of which affect the quality of education available. Some of those students and their schools are featured in this book.

> A JUNGLE SCHOOL IN CENTRAL AMERICA IS FEATURED IN CHAPTER 5.

I have also featured some of the many people and organisations that do wonderful work to make a big, and very positive, difference to the future of children's education, no matter where the children live or what their circumstances are.

I hope you enjoy the book.

Sharon Parsons

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Child actors also need to attend school.

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1 Millions of Kids Can't Go to School

In most places around the world, school-age children have good access to schools and educational services. They *can* go to school.

But millions of other children have limited access to quality education, or cannot go to school at all. Often this is due to the children's families having a lack of money or living in remote locations, or the children being in poor health. Many children from poor families have to work to help support their families, and so do not get the opportunity to go to school. In many developing places or remote locations there is also a shortage of trained teachers, which affects the quality of school education for millions of children.

Schools from Six Continents



Some schools from the world's six inhabited continents are featured in this book.



inside a jungle-based school in Honduras



Students wait outside a classroom in India.

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Your School

Think about how your school might compare to another school from a completely different environment, climate or culture. Families with school-age kids live in all sorts of places so the world needs many kinds of schools.

No matter where the schools are situated, they all have one thing in common – they are places where kids learn essential skills, knowledge and capabilities to help them achieve their future life goals.

Technology in Schools

In recent years, technological advances, including the Internet, better connectivity and more advanced computers, have helped millions more students and teachers access a global school of knowledge.

Is This You?

Fortunate kids can ...

- 1. walk, bike-ride or get driven to school safely
- 2. take a healthy lunch in their school bag.

Good schools have ...

- 1. well-trained teachers
- 2. a variety of educational resources
- 3. equal learning rights for children of all cultures, gender, backgrounds and religion
- 4. clean drinking water
- 5. safe areas for activities
- 6. clean, flushing toilets
- 7. first-aid facilities.



a well-resourced classroom



Interactive whiteboard technology helps whole-class learning.

Hey, we're a school, too!



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2 Continent – Asia

Asia is the largest of the world's seven continents. In a world where there are almost seven billion people, Asia is home to the largest population (about four billion people). Education is a high priority in many parts of Asia and the facilities are excellent. But for millions of school-age Asian children, education in schools is unavailable or limited.

Asia (figures are approximate)

Population: 4 billion people, or 60 per cent of the world's total population

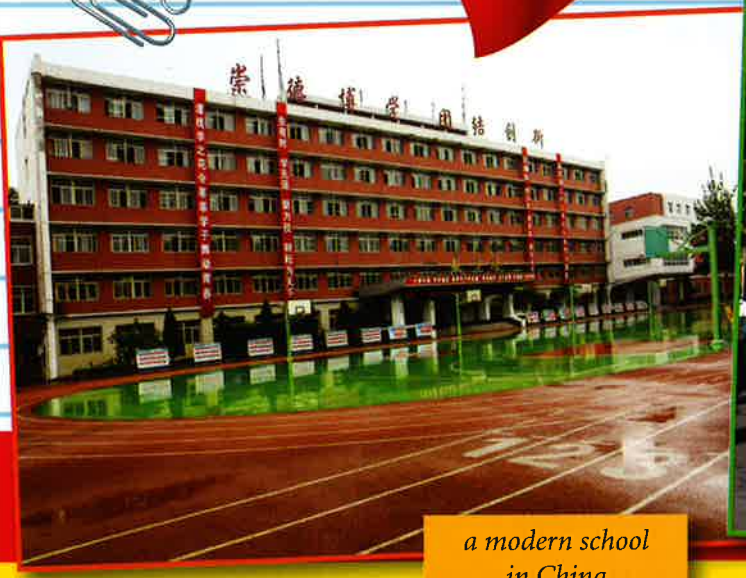
Land Area: about 30 per cent of Earth's total land area

Asia's Most Populated Countries: China and India

China in Asia

China is home to Asia's highest population, about 1.3 billion people, and over 200 million primary and secondary school students!





a modern school in China



a school built in China during ancient times

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Snapshot of China's Schools

Children usually start school at the age of seven. Fifteen years ago, the school week was six days, but it has since changed to five. Children go to primary school for six years, and then to secondary school for about six years.

However, up to 50 per cent of the boys and 75 per cent of the girls in many of China's poorest villages do not attend school. Instead, they must work to help support their families.



a school in China



School

The Future?
Improve access to quality education for children from rural areas or from poor families.

India in **Asia**

India has Asia's second highest population of about 1.2 billion people. In India, education is free for all children between the ages of 6 and 14, but because many families are very poor, many children work instead of attending school.

The Indian government is trying to improve education for children and, in the last 15 years, they have built over 160 000 new schools. Despite this, many schools do not have enough teachers or resources, particularly in rural areas of India.





The Future?
Improve access to quality education for children from rural areas or from poor families.





students in Indian schools



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students working outside at an Indian school



happy students outside class in India



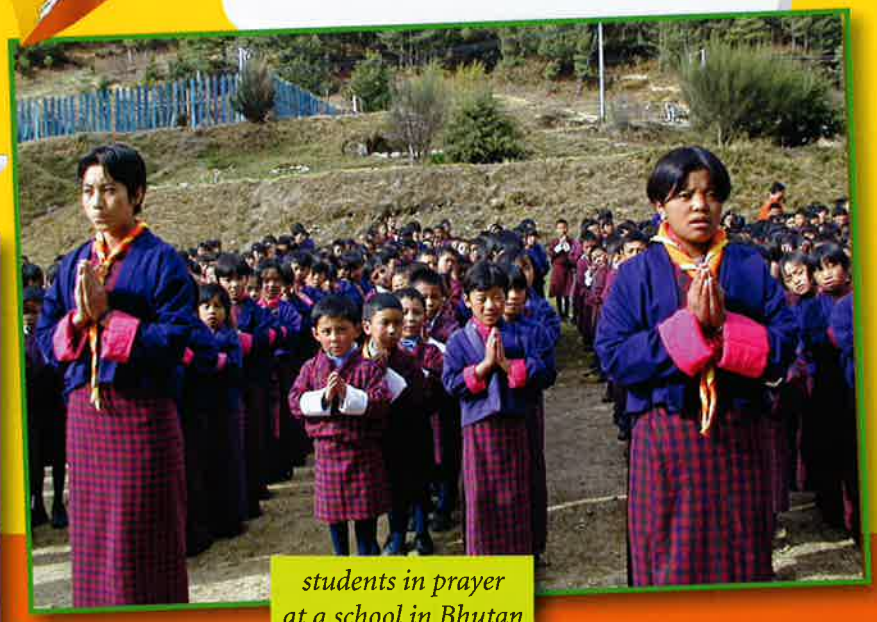
students ready to go home from an Indian school

Bhutan in **Asia**

In Bhutan, around 75 per cent of children attend primary school. Because Bhutan is a mountainous country, with many children living in remote areas, it is estimated that one in every five children must walk for over an hour to get to school.

The Future?
Provide transport to remote schools for students.





students in prayer at a school in Bhutan