

February 17, 2016

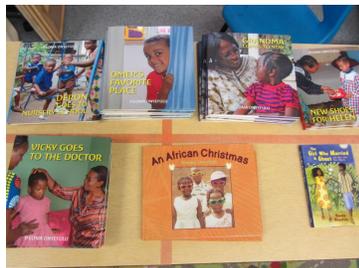
Warm winter greetings!

As a friend of An Open Book, you may know that a critical component of AOB's mission is that we put books into the hands of young readers. When children and teens own books and build their personal libraries, they read more for pleasure and improve their literacy skills. For many students, the book handed to them by AOB is likely the first book they have ever owned. The personal interaction that comes with meeting the book's author or illustrator amplifies children's enthusiasm and reiterates the message that reading and writing are valuable skills.

Last year, AOB distributed over 9,000 new books to students in the DC Metro area. Interested in learning more about it? Read on for the first chapter of the [Story of the Books](#).

## What Comes First, the Author/Illustrator or the School?

The author! Authors and illustrators generously contribute their time for AOB events. While it is typically a new book's release that brings an author to town, many authors and illustrators spend a day with AOB when they are in the area for other personal or professional reasons. When not on a book tour, he or she might present a favorite backlist title. We are also lucky to have a wealth of talented local children's authors and illustrators in the DC area. Many of our visiting luminaries return repeatedly for various events.



Gorgeous books by Ifeoma

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## Fundraising Spotlight

AOB is grateful for the continued support of our donors. This month, we would like to extend a special thanks to these unexpected and incredibly creative contributors:

### [Philip Stead & Matthew Cordell](#)

Last March, [Philip Stead](#) and [Matthew Cordell](#) auctioned off five pieces of original artwork inspired by their book *Special Delivery* as a fundraiser for children's literacy organizations, including An Open Book. The auction is over, but in [this video](#) Phil made explains how it worked. Thanks

Onyefulu, including backlog,  
await distribution

An Open Book works hard to match each title and author with the right readers, so next we pick the school that the author will visit. So, for example, a middle school writing group might gather for a workshop with an author based on her latest poetry collection. The

book, the author/illustrator, and the students combine for a wonderful AOB experience!



**A student at the Martha's Table after school program is engrossed in Marilyn Nelson's autobiography in verse**

## Where does AOB get all those books?

Once AOB has confirmed that an author or illustrator will be presenting a specific title to a given number of students at a school, we next turn to the ordering books. An Open Book will order a copy of one of the author's books for every student who attends, plus that book and a selection of the author's other works for the students' classrooms and the school's library.

An average event order is **75-90 books!** With around **100 AOB author events every year**, the books quickly add up!



**The library at Washington School for Girls was thrilled to receive this selection of Kimberly Willis Holt books!**

Because of our nonprofit status and the number of books we order, publishers offer AOB a very generous discount. Even so, as the lynchpin of AOB's program, books account for almost half of our annual operating budget.

## Delivery and Preparation

With an average AOB book delivery of five boxes weighing 35-40 pounds each, we keep our backs strong and UPS on its toes.



for thinking of AOB,  
Phil and Matthew!

## Cheap Art Sale

This annual holiday event offers DC shoppers the chance to purchase unique, original art and collectibles. Each year, the CAS selects one organization to be the event's beneficiary. This year, AOB was the chosen beneficiary and received half of the day's proceeds—\$1,655. Thank you to Mike Ferguson and the [Cheap Art Sale](#) crew for your generosity!

**DONATE NOW**

powered by **RAZOO**

UPS delivers books several times each week

Before each event, staff or a volunteer will prepare the books by adding an AOB bookplate to the interior.

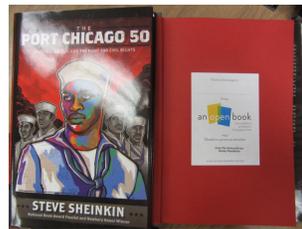


**A volunteer applies bookplates**

The bookplates—which can be personalized to thank donors—give each student place to label the book as theirs, enhancing the young

reader's feelings of ownership and pride in their new acquisition.

**One of Steve Sheinkin's award-winning titles with a bookplate in place, ready to be autographed for its new owner!**



## Final Steps

When the books are stickered and repacked into their boxes, they are ready for their final journey to happy readers and new homes. Because the typical AOB author event includes several dozen children, multiple classrooms, and a school library, AOB staff and volunteers double-check to ensure there is a book for every child and ferry those books from the AOB office to the event.



**Capital City Charter School students, some with their new books in hand, with author Ruta Sepetys**

Next month we will dive deeper into the logistics of a typical AOB author event. In the meantime, we hope this winter finds you healthy and happy, with a good read of your own in hand.

Sincerely,

Dara La Porte, Co-Founder and Executive Director  
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