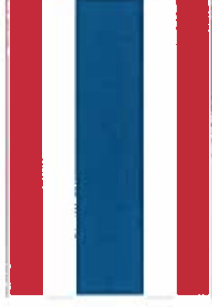




Kingdom of Thailand
Capital: Bangkok

Estimated Population: 62, 860,000

Thailand (Tie-land) which means “the land of the free,” lies in Southeast Asia. The climate varies from season to season: dry in January and February, hot in March and May, wet from June to October, and cool in November and December. The official language of the country is Thai.



Thailand

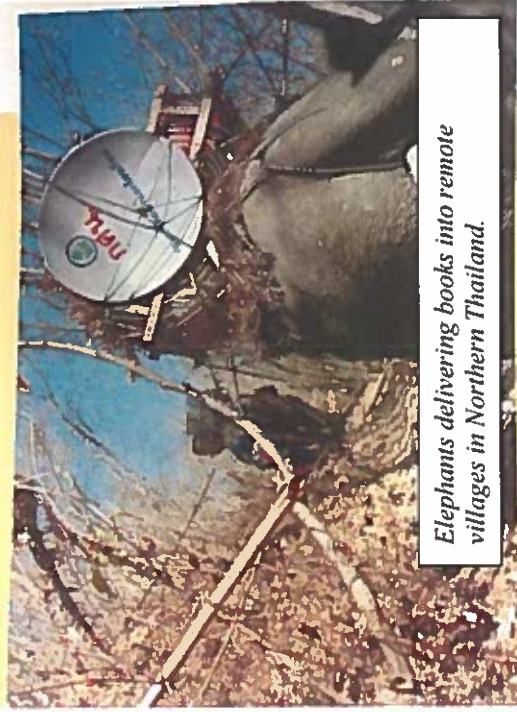
In Northern Thailand, there are no schools or libraries. Tribal people cannot read or write. The government of Thailand wants to change that. They created a program that includes bringing books to remote villages in the jungle.

The Elephant Library

Most of these villages in the jungle can only be reached on foot. This makes transportation difficult, especially during the rainy season. How do you get books to people who need them most, when they live in hard-to-reach mountainous regions of northern Thailand? Use Elephants!

A group called the *Chiangmai Non-Formal Education Center* had the idea to use elephants as libraries. Elephants are already being used in Thailand to plow the fields and carry logs and crops. Now more than twenty elephants in Northern Thailand are used to carry books. The elephant teams spend two to three days in each village they travel to. Each trip covers seven or eight villages, so it takes each elephant team eighteen to twenty days to complete a round-trip.

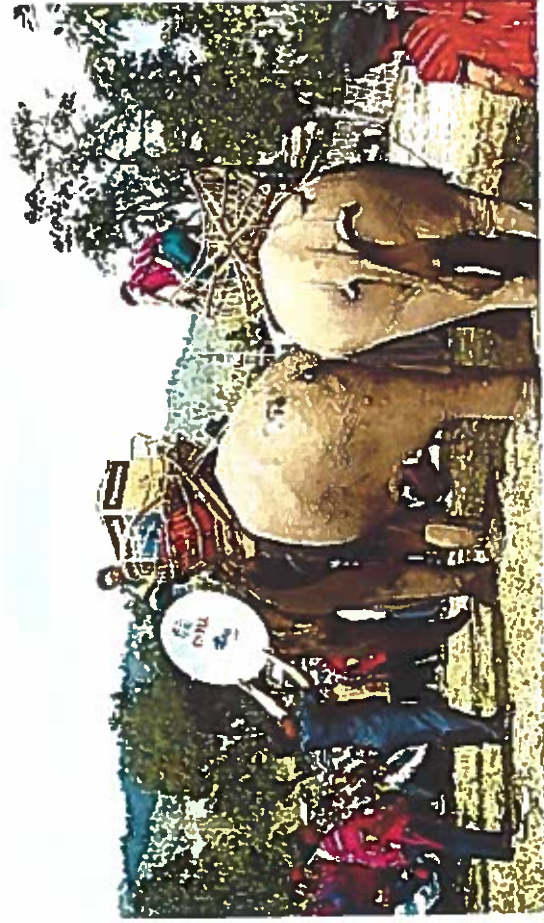
The Books-by-Elephant delivery program serves thirty-seven villages, providing education for almost two thousand people in Northern Thailand. They have even designed special metal slates that won't break when carried on the elephants' backs across the rough terrain.



Elephants delivering books into remote villages in Northern Thailand.



The library, carried by the elephants, set up in a village for the children to look through the books.



The elephant library is headed for the remote villages in Northern Thailand.

These metal slates are used to teach Thai children how to write and read. (There are also two-person teams carrying books to about sixteen villages, bringing learning materials to another six hundred people.)

Train Carriage Library

In Bangkok, the capital of Thailand, old train carriages have been transformed (changed) into a library. The train is called *Hong Roffai Yoawachon* which means "Library Train for Young People." The train serves the homeless children of Bangkok. The Railway Police Division in Bangkok realized there was a need for a safe place for children who are homeless to go, so they refurbished (cleaned and fixed up) the old train carriages at the railway station. The railway station was where many of the homeless children liked to hang out. The police restored the trains and turned them into libraries with classrooms. In the train cars, the children learn to read and write. The police have even transformed (updated and changed) the area around the trains. They turned the area into a garden where herbs and vegetables can grow.



These children in Bangkok are enjoying the new library and classroom created from old train cars.

Tuesday:

2) What challenges are faced? How are they overcome? Use details from the text in your response.

3) They created a program that includes bringing books to remote villages in the jungle.

In this sentence, remote most likely means:

- a. Far away
- b. Close
- c. Friendly
- d. Needy

Wednesday

4) What do the illustrations (photographs, maps) tell you? How do they help you to understand the text?

5) What questions do you now have after reading? What would you like to learn more about? Why?

Thursday

6) Why are these two sentences so important?

"A number of these villages can be reached only on foot. This makes transportation difficult, especially during the rainy season.

"How do you get books to people who need them most, when they live in hard-to-reach mountainous regions of northern Thailand? Elephants!"

- a. They support the main idea of the article
- b. They explain why the people in Thailand love elephants
- c. They teach the reader about Thailand
- d. They show how the people of Thailand love books

7) What does the text tell you about the importance of reading, books, or education? Explain your thinking.
