

- ★ Americans go to school, public and academic libraries more than twice as often as they go to the movies.
- ★ Reference librarians in the nation's public and academic libraries answer more than seven million questions weekly. Standing single file, the line of questioners would stretch from Boston to San Francisco.
- ★ Federal spending on libraries annually is only 54 cents per person.
- ★ A 2002 poll conducted for the American Library Association found that 91% of respondents expect libraries to be needed in the future, despite the increased availability of information via the Internet.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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Quotable Facts About America's Libraries

2002



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SCHOOL

- ★ Research shows the highest achieving students attend schools with good library media centers.
- ★ Americans spend seven times as much money on home video games (\$7 billion) as they do on school library materials for their children (\$1 billion).
- ★ School library media centers spend an average of \$7 per child for books – less than half the average cost of one hardcover school library book.
- ★ Students visit school library media centers almost 1.5 billion times during the school year – about one-and-a-half times the visits to state and national parks.

PUBLIC

- ★ There are more public libraries than McDonald's – a total of 16,220, including branches.
- ★ Americans spend more than three times as much on salty snacks as they do on public libraries.
- ★ Americans check out an average of more than six books a year. They spend \$25.25 a year for the public library – much less than the average cost of one hardcover book.
- ★ Public libraries are the number one point of online access for people without Internet connections at home, school or work.
- ★ 95% of public libraries provide public access to the Internet.

ACADEMIC

- ★ Academic librarians answer 97 million reference questions each year – almost three times the attendance at college football games.
- ★ College libraries receive less than three cents of every dollar spent on higher education.
- ★ If the cost of gas had risen as fast as the cost of academic library periodicals since 1990, it would cost \$3.00 a gallon to put fuel in your car.

Sources:

ALA Office for Research & Statistics
ALA Washington Office
Library Research Service, Colorado State Library