

Tips for Summer Reading

Children tend to lose academic skills and knowledge over summer vacation – typically about two school months worth, according to a study by the Johns Hopkins Center for Summer Learning - but children who read during the summer actually gain reading skills.

Here are some tips that will help you help your child to stay interested and involved in reading over the summer:

Choose books related to the child's interests and that are not too difficult, offer several choices, and let the child's choice stand.

Encourage your child to take some additional reading time with any book/magazine he or she chooses – even if it seems much too easy or hard.

Offer books with appealing illustrations.

Ask your child which books he/she likes, and why or why not.

Continue to read aloud to your child even after he or she reads independently, and talk about the book – illustrations, plots, characters, what the characters *should* have done – wherever appropriate. Read a book you loved as a child, and talk about why you loved it.

Read aloud or read together the beginning or an especially interesting part of the book.

Encourage your child to choose a book to read aloud to someone else – perhaps to you, while you fold laundry, sort mail, chop vegetables, or drive the car. Have your child read a recipe out to you while you follow the steps.

Broaden your child's horizons by helping to select from a wide range of subjects.

Let the child see your enjoyment of your own reading. Comment on something you find interesting in your newspaper, magazine or book.

Find time for your child to visit and browse in libraries, and consult with the children's librarian, who can suggest books in your child's interests and at your child's level that you may never have found on your own. Make sure that your child is part of the consultation.

Consider a summer reading program, either from your local library or from some other source. If no summer reading program is convenient, set (reasonable) goals and consider offering prizes for reaching them – preferably, the prizes should be more books!

Use audio books when traveling by car. Many can be borrowed for free at your local library. A child can typically comprehend a read-aloud or audio book about two grade levels above his/her reading level, and this gives absolutely invaluable vocabulary and comprehension practice.

Cut down on TV use.

When you are going to buy a gift, consider a book.