

Resources for Summer Reading

Access to reading materials has been identified as a vital element in enhancing the reading development of children over the summer months.

Here are some useful sites for reading resources.

www.readingrockets.com

www.scholastic.com

www.bookadventure.org

www.storylineonline.net

www.netrover.com

www.starfall.com

Honors & A.P. English:



Summer
Reading!



What can be done to curb summer reading loss?

The value placed on literacy in the home, time spent reading with children, and the availability and use of reading materials have been identified as important elements in children's reading success (Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1998).

At the family level, the International Reading Association (1998) suggested that parents look for reading materials that relate to interests that a child enjoys, such as baseball, animals, or nature.

Reading books that seem slightly below a child's reading level or books that have become "old favorites" can help a developing reader to build confidence and fluency.

The value of modeling reading for children needs to be part of daily family life. Provide daily reading opportunities. Reading a recipe, referencing the internet, reading directions for a new gadget, or reading about a place the family may visit during the summer can all provide authentic reading experiences.

Customized Learning Team

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Solving the Problem of Summer Reading Loss

Summer reading loss refers to the decline in children's reading development that can occur during summer vacation times when children are away from the classroom and not participating in formal literacy programs (Allington & McGill-Franzen, 2003).

*Researchers have uncovered evidence to suggest that the impact of summer reading loss on students in general, and on at-risk students in particular, is **significant**.*

Between the grades of 1 to 6, the impact of not reading over the summer months can equal 1.5 years of lost reading development (Cooper, Nye, Charlton, Lindsay & Greathouse, 1996).

It is suggested that 80% of the achievement difference between high-income and low-income students may be attributed to summer reading loss (Hayes & Grether, 1983).

Addressing the summer reading loss may help reduce the achievement gap between low-income and middle-income children.



Summer Reading Loss

Just because school is out, does not mean that reading and learning should stop. We know that many children can't afford to take such a long break from reading. Your readers who don't continue to read over the summer especially those who are reluctant or at-risk are likely to lose crucial ground.

Regardless of other activities, the best predictor of summer loss or summer gain is whether or not a child reads during the summer.

Without books that can be read easily with good comprehension, these less-skilled readers will not improve. Providing children with books that match their skill levels and their interests is an important first step in encouraging voluntary reading.

Why is it so important?

- Children need to engage with books every day so they can maintain, and strengthen all the literacy skills they learned during the previous school year. Parents should compare reading to exercising, telling their children that any time they read they are "strengthening their reading muscles."
- The stakes for children who do not read over the summer vacation are high. Research on this topic shows it is usually the students who can least afford to lose ground as readers who are most likely to suffer from summer reading loss and fall far behind their peers.
- The months of loss in reading skills compounds over the years: by the time children reach middle school, those who have not read during the summers may have lost as much as two years worth of achievement.



What can parents do?

If children read just six books over the summer vacation, they will likely avoid the summer reading loss. Here are a few ideas for reaching and going beyond the six book goal:

- Take books with you and your child everywhere you go; to the doctor's office, on picnics, on road trips, etc.
- Let your child choose the books he/she wants to read (as long as they are age-appropriate and are written at just the right level of difficulty).
- Support the reading experiences by talking about the books and helping your child understand and interpret what they read.
- Read aloud to your child, even if they can read on their own. This helps build vocabulary and listening comprehension skills.
- If you are more comfortable reading to your child in a language other than English, by all means do so. What your child learns in his/her native language will help create a bridge to learning English.
- Encourage your child to participate in a summer reading program. Many libraries host them. Some book stores do too. You might also consider the **PBS KIDS & PARENTS READING CHALLENGES** which run through the summer months.
- In addition to reading books, children can practice their reading skills by engaging in many different online reading experiences. Literacy-building sites such as **PBS KIDS Island** for children ages 3-5, and the **Great Word Quest** for ages 6-8 (both of which are free) are great examples. *Encouraging your child to flex his or her reading muscles over summer vacation is the single most important thing you can do to help develop literacy learning.*