

Make Summer Reading Fun!

Summer reading is different from reading during the school year. It should be less structured and much more informal. Summer reading should emphasize:

- student interest to keep students motivated to read
- wide-reading to help students learn the meanings of new words

As Louis L'Amour said, "For one who reads, there is no limit to the number of lives that may be lived, for fiction, biography and history offer an inexhaustible number of lives in many parts of the world, in all periods of time."

By helping your teen find just the right books, you will:

- provide a means for your student to improve his or her reading skills
- harness your students' needs for excitement, adventure and entertainment,
- help your student resolve some of life's ambiguities and conflicts.

Scheduling time for reading on a daily basis throughout the summer helps support your students' reading development. Make reading a priority this summer for yourself and your students.



Closing the Summer Reading Gap for Secondary Students: Parent Resources

Did you know that your student may be a victim of summer reading loss? Students can lose up to three months' worth of reading progress over one summer. And, if you take into consideration all summers combined, students could possibly lose 1.5 years' worth of reading progress. Summer reading loss can be defeated through time spent reading with your student, providing a variety of reading material, using various Internet resources, and encouraging them to just read for fun and the pleasure of learning!

You can protect your child against summer reading loss by:

- Encouraging your student to read a variety of different materials
- Discussing stories or articles you have both read
- Asking your student questions about what was read
- Encouraging your student to write in response to what was read
- Ensure your student reads widely—at least one book every ten days. The amount of time spent reading outside of school is important.

For example, a student who reads 21 minutes per day outside of school reads almost 2 million words per year, whereas a student who reads less than a minute per day outside of school reads only 8,000 to 21,000 words per year.

Every Question Counts!

Part of literacy progress is learning how to think as you read. Asking questions supports learning how to think. Examples of some questions you might ask your student before, during, or after they read might be:

- What was the most significant concept from the text?
- What do you think will happen next?
- Did you learn about anything that impacts your life?
- What was your favorite part of the story?
- How did the characters change over time?
- Does this text remind you of something that you've read before? How?



Every Word Counts!

It is very important that students spend time reading every day. Wide reading promotes growth in vocabulary and comprehension and builds background knowledge. Students who do not read well tend to read less than those who are proficient readers. In order to maintain and improve reading ability, students should read a minimum of one book every two weeks. You can encourage your student to read by:

- Valuing literacy in your home
- Discussing books, articles, and stories that interest you with your student
- Providing access to reading materials that interest your student

Your student should read different types of text at different levels, including text that is simple and enjoyable and some that is challenging.

Your student will not be able to comprehend text that has too many unfamiliar words (more than 10%.) However, your student will not encounter many new words if they always read text that is too easy. Finding the right balance is the key.

High performing students have well developed vocabularies. The more students read, the more vocabulary they learn. By increasing the opportunities for encountering new words by reading, students' improve their ability to read more complex text. The single most important thing a parent can do to improve their students' vocabulary is to get them to read more.

"Students say that the number one reason why they do not read more is because they cannot find books they like to read" (Kids and Family Reading Report, June 2006, Scholastic/Yankelovich)

There are an array of reading materials and activities that can assist parents with keeping your students motivated to read during the summer and prevent reading loss from occurring. The following is a list of resources that can help.

Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) Resources:

■ "Find a Book, Florida" (<http://florida.lexile.com>) is a free online book search utility that helps users build custom reading lists based on their reading ability level and interests or school assignments. By providing this utility, students and their families will have greater access to more ability-appropriate/targeted reading options year-round.

■ Summer Recommended Reading List:

<http://www.justreadfamilies.org/> provides lists of books by grade bands that students are sure to enjoy over the summer.

■ For Teens by Teens: <http://www.justreadflorida.com/recommend/> is a recommended reading list for middle and high school students. Students make recommendations which are part of a statewide reading list created for Teens by Teens:

Other Resources:

■ Adolescent Literacy: Resources for parents and educators of kids in grades 4-12 (<http://www.adlit.org/>) offers a wealth of reading strategies, lessons, and activities designed to help adolescent students learn how to read and read better. The reading resources assist parents, teachers, and other educators in helping students build fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension skills.

■ American Library Association (ALA) - <http://www.ala.org/ala/professionalresources/libfactsheets/alalibraryfactsheet17.cfm> This is a compendium of research and resources highlights the effectiveness of summer reading programs in assisting with student achievement and the public library's role.

■ International Reading Association (IRA): Parent Resources (<http://www.reading.org/informationfor/parents.aspx>) Provides a wide variety of resources for parents of students of all ages.

■ ReadWriteThink (<http://www.readwritethink.org/parent-afterschool-resources/>) This website, sponsored by the IRA and National Council for Teachers of English, provides a wide variety of resources and activities for parents of students grades K-12. The materials are created by experts to be fun, educational, and easy to use outside of school. The resources are organized by grade level and the website is very user friendly.

"Students say that the number one reason why they do not read more is because they cannot find books they like to read"

