

Summer Reading Tips for Parents of Young Learners



- **Be a reader and writer yourself!** When you spend time reading books on the beach or even directions for how to put together the grill this summer, you demonstrate for your child that reading is both fun and useful.
- **Set aside a consistent time each day for reading.** Depending on your family's schedule, reading time might be in the morning, afternoon or before bed. Whatever time you choose, stick to it, but also remember that flexibility around trips and special family events is OK.
- **Read aloud TO your reader.** As school-aged children become better readers, parents often stop reading aloud to them. However, by reading more difficult books aloud to your reader, you help him/her learn new vocabulary words, concepts, and ways of telling stories or presenting information. You also enjoy the closeness of sharing a book with your child.
- **Connect read-aloud choices to summer activities.** Read your child books about camping, such as "Webster and Arnold Go Camping", before or after a camping trip. When you read and discuss books about things your child has experienced, you help him/her learn important vocabulary and extend a strong understanding of experiences.
- **Allow your child to choose books for summer reading.** While it is important for your child to read books that are level appropriate, it is equally important for him/her to read about topics of interest, whether it is insects, princesses or a favorite book series.
- **Encourage your child not to limit summer reading to books.** Encourage your child to read the sports page to check up on his/her favorite baseball team or to read children's magazines such as Ranger Rick or National Geographic World.

- **Help your child select books at a comfortable level.** Listen to your child read. If he/she reads smoothly, uses expression and can accurately tell you about what he/she read, the book is probably at a comfortable level. If you are having troubling judging, consult your local children’s librarian, who is likely to be an expert at matching books to readers. In addition, teach your child to use the “5-Finger Rule” in selecting books: if he/she makes five or more errors in reading a page of about 50 words, the book is too challenging.
- **Read a book and watch the video together.** When you finish reading and viewing, discuss the similarities and differences and talk about which version you prefer. Many books, including “Stone Fox”, “Sarah, Plain and Tall” and “Charlie and the Chocolate Factory,” are available in movie versions.
- **Take books along on outings.** Pack books in your beach bag or picnic basket, and bring a stack on long car rides. You and your child can enjoy books together anywhere you go this summer.
- **Encourage your child to write this summer, too.** From writing postcards to friends and relatives to keeping a journal while on a trip, summer presents unique ways for your child to write about his/her own experiences. Have your child pack a disposable camera on vacations or day trips and help him/her create a book about the experience.

