

## 8 tips to stop literacy loss over the summer

As children's first and most important teachers, families have a major role to play in motivating children to read during the summer months. According to the nonprofit organization Reading is Fundamental, there are many strategies families might employ to encourage summertime reading.



### Combine activities with books

Summer leaves lots of time for kids to enjoy fun activities, such as going to the beach or seeing a movie. Why not also encourage them to read a book about the activity? If you're going to a baseball game, suggest that your child read a book about a favorite player beforehand. In the car or over a hot dog, you'll have lots of time to talk about the book and the game.

### Lead by example

Read the newspaper at breakfast, pick up a magazine at the pediatrician's office, or stuff a paperback into your beach bag. If kids see the adults around them reading, they will understand that books and other reading material can be a fun and important part of their summer days.

## Talk it up

Talking with your kids about what you have read also lets them know that reading is an important part of your life. Tell them why you liked a book, what you learned from it, or how it helped you. Soon they might start doing the same.

## Help kids find time to read

Summer camp, baseball games, and videos are all fun things kids like to do during the summer. However, by the end of the day, children may be too tired to pick up a book. Remember to leave some time in their schedules for reading, such as before bedtime or over breakfast.

## Relax the rules for summer

During the school year, children have busy schedules and often have required reading for classes. Summer is a time when children can read what, when, and how they please. Don't set daily minute requirements or determine the number of pages they should read. Instead, make sure they pick up books for fun and help find ways for them to choose to read on their own.

## Have plenty of reading material around

Storybooks aren't the only thing that kids can read for fun. Be sure to have newspapers, magazines, and informational material on hand that might spark the interest of a young reader.

## Use books to break the boredom

Without the regular school regimen, adults and kids need more activities to fill the hours. Books that teach kids how to make or do something are a great way to get kids reading and keep them occupied.

## Read aloud with kids

Take your children to see a local storyteller—or be one yourself. The summer months leave extra time for enthusiastic read-alouds with children, no matter their age. Don't forget to improvise different voices or wear a silly hat to make the story that much more interesting!

**(Source: May 2011 PTA Parent)**