

## **What can families do to encourage reading?**

As their student's first and most important teachers, families have a major role to play in motivating reading initiatives during the summer months. There are many strategies families might employ to encourage summertime reading:

### **Combine activities with books.**

Summer leaves lots of time for families to enjoy fun activities, such as going to the park, seeing a movie, or going to the beach. Why not also encourage everyone to read a book about the activity? If you're going to a sporting event, suggest that the family read a book about a favorite player beforehand. In the car, on the plane, or over a snack, you'll have lots of time to talk about the book and the game.

### **Visit the library.**

If your family doesn't have a library card, summer is a great time to sign up for one. In addition to a wide selection of books to borrow, many libraries have fun, student-friendly summer reading programs.

### **Lead by example.**

Read the newspaper at breakfast, pick up a magazine at the doctor's office, and stuff a paperback in your beach bag. If students see the adults around them reading often, they will understand that literature can be a fun and an important part of their summer days.

### **Talk it up.**

Talking with your family about what you have read also lets everyone know that reading is an important part of your life. Explain why you liked a book, what you learned from it, or how it helped you—soon the entire family might start doing the same.

### **Help your family find time to read.**

Summer camp, music lessons, sporting events, and videos are all fun things our students like to do during the summer. However, by the end of the day, they may be too tired to pick up a book. When planning summer activities with your family, remember to leave some time in the schedules for reading. Some convenient times may be before bedtime or over breakfast.

### **Relax the rules for summer.**

During the school year, students have busy schedules and often have required reading for classes. Summer is a time when we can read what, when, and how we please. 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. You may even want to make bedtime a little bit later if you find that your child can't put down a book.

### **Have plenty of reading material with you.**

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

### **Use books to break the boredom.**

Without the regular school regimen, adults and students need more activities to fill the hours. Books that teach us how to make or do something are a great way to get everyone reading and keep them occupied. Don't forget to take your family's favorite reading series along on long trips.

### **Read aloud with kids.**

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

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<http://www.rif.org/us/literacy-resources/articles/what-can-families-do-to-keep-children-reading-during-the-summer.htm>

