

The Reading Corner 6th Issue

Written by Patricia J. Lear, M.Ed. Learning Specialist/Diagnostician

Summer Reading Ideas for children and adolescents

Welcome to *The Reading Corner*. Summer vacation is here for our children and The Reading Corner has some suggestions for you to try over the summer. Most of us want to be ready with some ideas to continue our child's education during the summer, without a lot of fuss. Maybe some parents want to make sure their children don't lose important skills and others may want to insure their children master new skills over the summer. Summer vacation is actually an excellent time for children to gain new skills. Children are growing physically, mentally and emotionally over the summer, which makes it the perfect time for them to grow academically. Remember children read every day in school and need to continue to read during vacation to keep their skills sharp.

The key to creating a stress free environment is to develop different activities that are fun, interesting, can be done daily and will build skills without causing stress to the parents or children. Summer is a great time to evaluate what your child has accomplished over the school year and assess their strengths and challenges. No matter the age of the child it is the time to promote self advocacy and discuss educational choices to determine likes and dislikes. We often assume that our children understand and analyze more than they are really capable of accomplishing on their own. Summer gives you, as the parent and mentor, time to talk about all the different subjects, academic, personal and emotional that your child may have questions about. Take advantage of this gift of time. Like many parents you may need to continue to work throughout the summer and it will be even more important to establish a time line for your child to follow when reading and writing on their own.

Begin by creating a calendar of reading and writing goals the first week of vacation. The earlier the calendar is finished the easier it is to get started. As the parent, send the message that vacation should be fun but there are responsibilities that go along with enjoying free time. Your children will appreciate their free time more when they have accomplished their calendar goals each day, boosting their pride and self esteem.

Here are just a few ways to mix things up a bit with reading and writing.

- It is recommended that you set aside a consistent time each day for reading for your calendar activities. With the daily time set, the family can choose what day off will be good according to the week's activity schedule.
- Go on a shopping tour and choose books of interest to your child and have you child choose some of their own to read. Pick short story, chapter books and magazines to make up short assignments. To be frugal, visit the library on a set schedule on your calendar. Our public library is a great resource for children's reading services in addition to materials.
- Read together with your child. It is researched that reading to your child at all ages develops comprehension and builds listening vocabulary.
- Take turns reading out loud at all ages. Have your child complete a short writing assignment when you are busy, and then read the assignment together with discussion.
- Have children write to a pen pal.
- Have the entire family take quiet time together to read something of their choice. This will model the skill of taking time out to relax and enjoy reading.
- Allow reading time on a web site only once a week. Mix it up a bit.
- Introduce your child to new genres in reading. If you normally don't read poems it will be a perfect time to do something new.
- If on vacation, have your child keep a travel journal. This is a nice way to finish the evening and your child will appreciate their journal in the months to come.
- Keep scrap books with written descriptions.
- Carry a bag in the car with books for all your children to be read when you are traveling or just waiting for one or another child to complete an activity.
- Have your younger children describe their reading with crayon and pencil, by creating a story board of pictures describing the sequence of events. This sequence of events is practice for the reading and recall of details for comprehension. You want to stress that we should not add or delete details from the story.
- Have children create and write a new ending to a story they have read. Remember, you can always have a child dictate their story to you.
- Subscribe to Sports illustrated for kids, National Geographic World, Highlights and other children's magazines.
- Have the children write a book review for other children. It won't seem like the same work they practice in school. Writing the summary puts a new twist on how they can share their opinions about what they read.
- Have the entire family read the same book and discuss the different opinions at meal time.

- Mix up audio books and printed books with videos. All methods introduce the communication of information in different ways while building vocabulary and listening skills.
- Award prizes for the best book reports.
- Choose one new vocabulary word a day, placed on a 3 X 5 Card after your review. Revisit you cards for a few minutes daily.
- Establish a neighborhood book club with children of all ages. Some parents like to start breakfast clubs and take turns with neighbors. Children learn to share opinions and have fun at the same time. Of course it is recommended that the parent read the same books facilitated at the discussion.
- Children spend a lot of time in the backyard pool these days and it is a great time to take some time out of the pool, diving instead into books with discussion. Children learn the value of earning privileges.
- Travel journals are excellent for all ages. The key is to keep the journaling to a page but require that the content be well written and that each sentence states something new and interesting.
- Reading games are excellent. Expand to different age levels. Use Scrabble games for spelling and improving the retrieval of words.
- Personally model reading a book or magazine 10 or 15 minutes a day.
- Most important, talk with your child every day about the world and bring new experiences to them through your eyes.

The more information you can bring to your child the more empowered you both will be. Government research has determined that at least 20% of children need highly individualized programs in order for them to be successful and meet their grade level goals. Some children need one-on-one instruction. The learning specialist will work with you and your child to develop a specialized summer programs to meet your educational goals. You will watch your child gain self esteem, and become a successful and independent student for the next grade.

Have a great summer. We all know how fast the time goes. Enjoy your family!

If you have additional questions about the content of this month's *The Reading Corner* please contact me at leareducationalcenter@juno.com or call me at the Lear Educational Center at 610-252-0965. We will make every attempt to answer all questions submitted. Look for more information about reading and related subjects in the next issue of *The Reading Corner* or visit on line for information and links about reading issues at <http://leareducationalcenter.com> . Thank you so much for your interest in your child's reading development. Reading is the primary means to learning and education. Let's all help to see all children reach their full potential while supporting learning and education through the advancement in reading.