

Keep a Reading Routine to Avoid "Summer Loss"



Studies show that students who don't read, or read very little during their summer vacation, see their reading abilities decline as much as 1-3 months. In order to help us improve, our amazing brains adapt and change according to what we

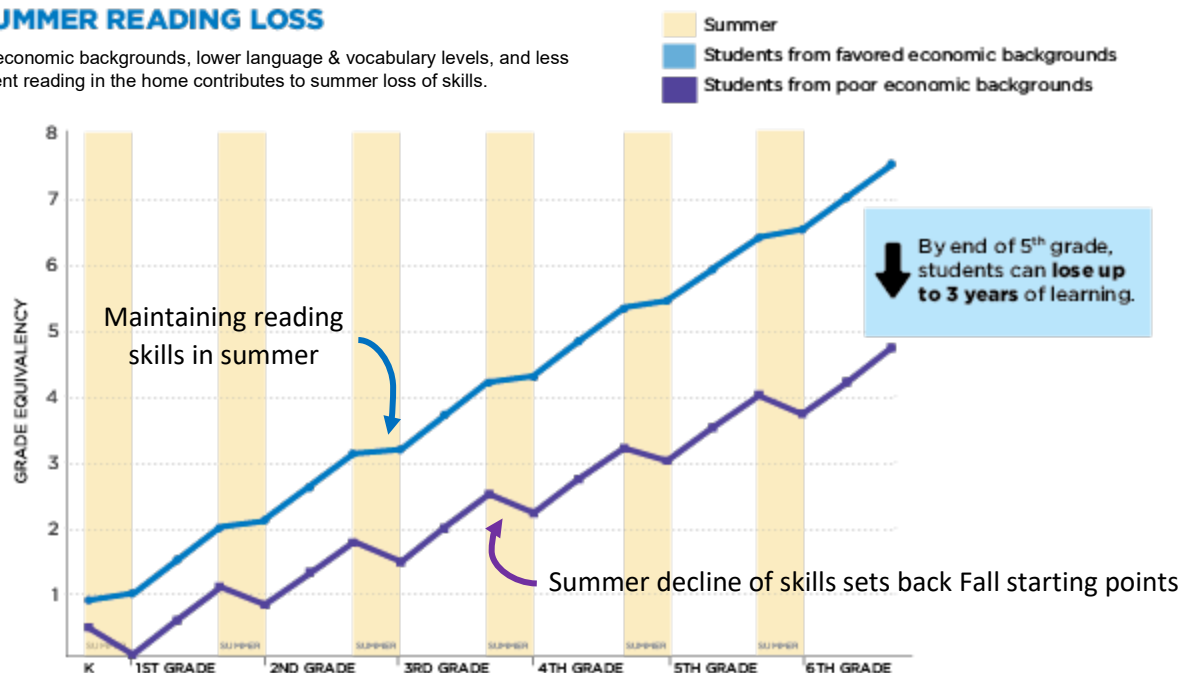
routinely do. That's why educators promote daily reading habits. The brain stops maintaining neural connections that are no longer used. The saying, "use it or lose it," certainly rings true in terms of the brain, and for our reading, writing and language skills.



Why is this important? Studies show that "summer loss" for infrequent readers can contribute to a widening gap compared to learners who maintain or continue to develop language and reading skills during the summer. Those who experience "summer loss" spend the first part of their next school year making up what they lost over the summer. Over many years, they can fall further behind leading to increased difficulty and frustration with grade-level tasks.

SUMMER READING LOSS

Poor economic backgrounds, lower language & vocabulary levels, and less frequent reading in the home contributes to summer loss of skills.



Source: Alexander, K.L., D. R. Entwistle, and L.S. Olson. 2007. "Lasting Consequences of Summer Learning Gap." American Sociological Review 72 (4): 167-80; professional presentation by Dr. Alexander, February 12, 2015.



Making time for reading for pleasure, entertainment, or for finding information about summer interests, can help to minimize "summer loss" of reading skills.

How to Support Reading at Home

Make reading important. Be a role-model for reading. Show that you value it.

- Children closely follow the actions of people they love. Parents who read frequently are six times more likely to have children who will become avid readers. If they see you as a reader, they will want to do the same.
- Talk and think out loud about the reading you do for pleasure and as needed parts of daily routines such as reading recipes, reading instructions, reading signs and notices, looking for information on-line, reading lyrics to songs, or following a map all provide authentic reading experiences showing the value of reading.
- Read aloud to your children when they are young and share/take turns reading to each other as they get older. All ages love listening to a good story.



Make time for reading every day.

- Regular reading promotes increased accuracy, fluency, and enjoyment of reading. During the summer, encourage your child to read for at least 20 minutes per day. It helps if it's a family routine where family members can enjoy pausing from other activities and reading together, either aloud or quietly to themselves.
- For some, an evening family reading routine cuts down on screen time, associates reading with family and relaxation time, and is a nice way to end the day. Other families may prefer other times depending on their schedules.
- Keeping track of progress by recording book titles, pages read, and minutes spent and help children visualize their accomplishments over time.
- When might be a good time for your family to slip in some reading?



Create good locations and conditions for reading

- Find quiet and comfy places in the home to read without distractions.
- Combine reading times with other activities and have fun finding how many different places you can read -in the backyard, in the forest, on the patio, at the beach, in the car, under a tree, at the park, inside a big cardboard box, in a waiting room, inside a blanket fort, etc.
- Set up a tent or create a reading fort. Add comfy pillows, and blankets along with a basket of books to make a fun, relaxing spot for reading. Look for the possibilities in your own home.

Pair books with activities

- Read the book before or after viewing the movie.
- Find non-fiction books related to activities that your child is interested in.
- Find 'how-to' books on crafts, sports, or leisure activities that are of interest.

✚ Talk about books and reading

- You might read the same novel that your child is reading and talk about it. Share your thoughts: Tell why you liked a book, what you learned from it, or how it helped you or changed your thinking. Soon you may find them sharing similar thoughts with you.
- Talk about books during and after reading -this helps to improve memory, comprehension, and language skills. Ask open-ended questions (questions that can't be answered with a single word or phrase). For example, instead of asking: "Did you like that book?" you could ask, "What parts of this book did you like?" "What will you want to remember about this story?" or "Why do you think the author wrote this? What do you think the author wanted us to understand or think when reading her book?"
- You can ask, "What do you predict will happen next?", "What are you wondering about?", "What are you thinking about how that problem was solved?"

✚ Keep reading materials readily available

- You might include books, magazines, comics, and materials such as brochures, local newspapers, pamphlets, and other reading materials.
- Take reading materials or audiobooks along with you in your car on longer trips.
- It's also helpful to carry a bag of books for doctor visits, shopping trips, and long waits.
- Take your children to the library regularly.
- Subscribe, in your child's name, to magazines like Sports Illustrated for Kids, or National Geographic World.
- Encourage older children to read the newspaper and current events magazines to keep up the reading habit over the summer and develop vocabulary. Ask them what they think about what they've read, and listen to what they say.

✚ How To Pick the Right Books

- Pick something of **interest** to the child
- Read small portion to check that the **vocabulary can be understood**
- Use the **5 Finger Rule**

The Five Finger Rule--Choosing a "Just Right" Book

0 - 1 fingers--too easy

2 - 3 fingers--just right

4 - 5 fingers--too hard



- Have the child read a page and hold up a finger for every word they do not know
- 0-1 fingers up = easy to read with independence
- 2-3 fingers up = just right
- 4-5 fingers up = difficult, read with support or pick an easier book

✚ Introduce your child to a series

- A book series fosters reading motivation as readers want to find out 'what happens next' or look forward to the next adventure that familiar characters are going to face.

✚ Take field trips

- Read a book and then visit a place where you can see or learn more about what was read - museum, nature walk, garden, tourist location, etc.

- Go on an adventure and then read about topics or questions that arose while on your excursion.

✚ **Take a “virtual vacation” via reading** about a place or activity. (Hawaiian volcanoes, Great Barrier Reef, Amazon jungle, Mayan Temples, BMX biking, fly fishing, etc.)

✚ **Play games with words.**

- | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| • Apples to Apples | • Scrabble | • Boggle |
| • Crosswords | • Scrabble Slam | • Bananagrams |
| • Password | • Word Search | • Scattergories |

✚ **Play word games in the car**



- Letter or letter pattern **scavenger hunts** or “**I Spy**”. Ask your child to pay attention to signs, words and objects in the environment as they travel. Find letters, specific letter patterns, specific sounds, words or objects that rhyme with chosen words, etc.
- **Word find.** Make a list of words that will likely be found on the trip. First person to call the word when they see it or an object for that word gets the point for the word. (*e.g. Stop, slow, merge, moose, passing, next, exit, one way, deer, yield, parking, fuel, sale, yard, lake, bridge, river, danger, caution, garage, haul, hospital, police, ambulance, fire, construction, Escape, Explorer, Tundra, Echo, etc.*) When all words are found, you can start a new round.
- Collaborative **rhyming chains** –how long of a chain of rhyming words can be created before you get stuck? (*truck, duck, muck, buck, puck, pluck, stuck, cluck... ; black, back, track, sack, tack, rack, lack, hack, jack, pack, stack... blue, canoe, shoe, glue, true, zoo, moo, who... wide, hide, ride, cried, tried, tide, sighed, lied, side... etc.*) A good opportunity to notice and talk about different patterns used to represent a sound or rhyme.
- Take along some **riddle** and **joke books** and have your child read jokes. Explain the vocabulary or meaning of jokes as need to help your child get the humour and to build their background knowledge and vocabulary.
- Take **turns reading to one another** in the car.
- Building a **visualization** and **memory game**: (Each person repeats what was said before and adds one thing to the list. Start with a sentence stem such as I am going shopping and I will pick up... or I am going on a trip and I will pack... etc. It can be funny when someone introduces an odd or silly object.)
 1. *I am going on a trip and I will pack... a camera.*
 2. *I am going on a trip and I will pack a camera and a book.*
 3. *I am going on a trip and I will pack a camera, a book, and a Frisbee.*
 4. *I am going on a trip and I will pack a camera, a book, a Frisbee, and a diary.*
 5. *I am going on a trip and I will pack a camera, a book, a Frisbee, a diary, and a giraffe.*

Make reading accomplishments visible

If it interests your child, create an interesting way to **keep track of reading**. Making progress/accomplishments visible provides encouragement and motivation.

- Use an old game board, or make one, and work your way around the board based on the amount of books or chapters read.
- Blow up some balloons and pop a balloon every time a book is read.
- Start a bracelet or necklace and add a bead each time a new chapter or book is read.
- Add stickers to a chart each time a new book is read.
- *(Foster reading with your attention, genuine interest, and time spent with your child. Foster an attitude of valuing the experience of reading and accomplishments in reading. Avoid high value irresistible rewards that undermine intrinsic motivation –we want them to read because they are enjoying it not because they are seeking special rewards or treats.)*

Check out online sites to support reading

- **Epic!** <https://www.getepic.com/>
 - A digital library for kids 12 and under. (Parents will need an invitation from the teacher to sign-up)
- **Storyline Online** <https://www.storylineonline.net/>
 - Videos of celebrities reading children's books alongside creative illustrations.
- **StoryNory** <https://www.stornory.com/>
 - Free audio stories for kids
- **BC Library Association 2020 Summer Reading Club Parent's Menu with pages for Grown ups, Younger Children, Older Children** <https://bcsr.ca/parents/>
 - **2020 Summer Reading Club website** landing page with Fun things for Younger Kids and Cool Things for Older Kids: <https://bcsr.ca/>
 - View brochure on the web: https://kidssr.libraries.coop/wp-content/downloads/2020/resources/SRC_Newcomer_Brochure_English_Web.pdf
 - Download PDF brochure for printing: https://kidssr.libraries.coop/wp-content/downloads/2020/resources/SRC_Newcomer_Brochure_English_Print.pdf

Be part of a summer reading challenge.

- Check with the Burns Lake Public Library, or with opportunities online, for summer reading programs and activities that may be fun and engaging for young readers.

Check out book lists or check with a librarian for suggestions of what to read

- **Burns Lake Public Library** <https://burnslake.bc.libraries.coop/>

Listed below are a few lists online to get your child started.

- **Summer Reading Book List** – A downloadable list that you can take to the library.
 - <https://www.readingrockets.org/books/summer>
- **Chapters-Indigo** -Kids books listed by age
 - <https://www.chapters.indigo.ca/en-ca/kids/books/shop-by-age/>
- **Scholastic Books** -Kids books listed by age
 - <https://www.scholastic.com/parents/books-and-reading/books-and-reading-guides/recommended-childrens-books-by-age.html>

- [The Nerdy Book Club Awards](https://nerdybookclub.wordpress.com/nerdy-book-awards/2012-nerdies-book-awards/) – A site run by three teachers who love, love, love books for kids.
 - <https://nerdybookclub.wordpress.com/nerdy-book-awards/2012-nerdies-book-awards/>
- [Barnes & Noble Summer Reading Program](https://www.barnesandnoble.com/b/summer-reading/_/N-2m39) –Book selections sorted by grade level.
 - https://www.barnesandnoble.com/b/summer-reading/_/N-2m39
- [American Library Association \(ALA\) Notable List](http://www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/notalists) –Numerous lists of exceptional children’s books.
 - <http://www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/notalists>



✚ How to Support Young Readers While Reading

- Position the **book in front of the child** even when you are the reader
- **Point to words/lines** as you read them
- Remember that the purpose of reading and writing is to communicate ideas, feelings, and construct meaning. So **avoid disrupting your child mid-sentence**. If you need to draw their attention to something, wait until an appropriate point to pause so that they can keep the thread of meaning.
- When they make a miscue, pause to **let them try their strategies** to solve the word or meaning on their own first before jumping in to help. If children aren't given space to problem-solve they don't activate the brain for learning and are delayed in becoming independent
- Ask them to **identify** which **part they know** or **which part is tricky**
- **Model how to solve the word** –don't just "tell" the word
 - Look for **picture** or **text feature clues**
 - Think about **what would make sense** in that spot
 - Go back and **reread** if necessary
 - Look at the **letter clues** –segment and blend the sounds represented
 - Find word **parts** or **chunks** you know within the word
 - **Skip** the word, **read on**, then **go back**. Now **what makes sense?**
 - "Flip" (try) the letter or **phonogram sounds** possible
- Have them **repeat the word** once it is solved
- Reread from the beginning of the sentence to keep the thread of meaning intact