

Coaches' Corner: Betsy Gresh, Literacy Coordinator & Coach K-5

Say "No" to the Summer Slide!



Summer is right around the corner!! For students, summer is a time for fun and play. It is also the time when a child's learning slides. Research shows children lose one to three months of learning every summer. They forget math and reading skills that they worked hard to acquire during the school year. This "summer slide" requires schools and teachers to spend valuable time during the next school year helping students "re-learn" lost skills. Also it greatly reduces the time available to master new skills and subjects.

Parents, we need your help this summer to continue the great learning your child has achieved this school year. But as a parent myself, I know that is easier said than done. The moaning and groaning when you ask your child to read or write over the summer is enough to put one over the edge. So, here is our proposal. Below is an eight week summer reading calendar produced by Reading Is Fundamental, Inc. These sixteen activities can be completed by all grade levels (with a little parent help in the primary grades). If possible, purchase a writing journal from your local dollar store. Have your child personalize the cover with photos, pictures, and "fanciful" summertime words. Now, your child has their own special place to record their summer time experiences with these activities and/or vacation adventures! Return these journals to school in August to share with your new teacher and classmates. Remember, some of the best reading adventures take place right at home!!

8 Weeks of Fun
RIF'S SUMMER READING CALENDAR

Reading every day, even if it's just a few minutes and even if it's not a book, improves children's ability to read and learn year round. Here are 8 weeks of literacy activities to share with your children. Do them in any order you choose, just pick the ones that look interesting, or think of your own ideas for summertime reading fun.

- Write a list of things you want to do this summer. Don't forget to include reading!
 - Make a chart to keep track of all the books you read this summer.
 - Swap books with a friend. Keep sharing books throughout the summer.
 - Read aloud the names of cars in the classified section of your newspaper. Design a new car and name it.
- Write a letter to your favorite author. A librarian can help you find a postal or email address.
 - The first U.S. postage stamps were designed in 1847. Be a stamp artist and design your own stamp.
 - Start a journal with a friend or relative. Take turns writing in it all summer long. You can even do this by mail or email.
 - Summer days are the longest days of the year. List the longest words you know.
- Work up an appetite by reading a story about food. Make and eat the food you read about.
 - How many smaller words can you find in the word *watermelon*?
 - Cut out words from a newspaper. Paste them on paper and make a letter for a friend.
 - List all the summer insects you can think of. Then see how many you can find.
- Find something small enough to put in your pocket. Write or tell a story about it.
 - Plan a backyard camping trip with a friend. List all the things you will need to "survive."
 - List all the ice cream flavors you can think of. Now put them in A-B-C order.
 - Collect shells at the beach or rocks along a trail. Use a nature guide to identify them.
- Read a picture book without words. Use your own words to tell the story.
 - Invent a tool to help you do chores more easily. Draw a picture of it or make it from some old junk.
 - Draw a picture postcard of an imaginary place. On the back, write a message to a friend.
 - An animal has escaped from the zoo! Make up a story about it. Tell it to a friend or family member—or write it down. Add pictures if you'd like.
- Make your own board game. Include game pieces, cards, and a spinner or dice.
 - Start a round-robin story. Write the beginning, and then ask friends to add to it until it has an ending.
 - Pretend you are going to visit another city or state. Write to a tourist bureau for more information.
 - Find a list of baseball teams in the sports section of the newspaper. Put them in A-B-C order. Find their cities on a map.
- Make your own joke book. Collect jokes from your family and friends.
 - Create a rebus story (a story that uses pictures to represent words). Write a short story, and then substitute pictures (that you draw or cut out) for some of the words.
 - List all the ways you used reading today.
 - Which constellations can you see on a clear summer night? Look at the sky using a star guide to help you find the constellations.
- Sit under a tree and read or write a poem.
 - Take a walk with a friend. Write about or draw the things you see that show summer is coming to an end.
 - Draw a reading poster about the books you read this summer. Hang it in your room.
 - Play charades with your family. Take turns acting out book titles and characters.

For other activities & ways to prevent the “Summer Slide,” check out these websites:

Web Resources to Explore:



- **PBS Parents: How to Create a Literate Home** <http://www.pbs.org/parents/issuesadvice/> This website offers a section devoted to the "literate home," which includes tips for setting up literacy-rich home environments for children ages 0-8.
- **Creating a Home Literacy Environment** <http://www.lili.org/isl/rlrtm2.htm> This article, found on the LiLI (Libraries Linking Idaho) Web site, is an excerpt from the University of Idaho Emergent Literacy Project.
- **Education Place: Monthly Themes** <http://www.eduplace.com/monthlytheme/> Each month, this website spotlights a seasonal theme and provides a list of related activity ideas and web links.
- **Children's Literature: Monthly Features** <http://www.childrenslit.com>
- **Book Adventure** <http://www.bookadventure.org> Book Adventure is a free, reading-motivation program for children in grades K-8. Children create their own book lists from recommended titles, take multiple-choice quizzes on the books they've read, and earn points and prizes for their literary successes.
- **Carol Hurst's Children's Literature Site** <http://www.carolhurst.com/> This site is a collection of reviews of great books for kids, ideas for using books in the classroom, and collections of books & activities about particular subjects, curriculum areas, themes, and professional topics.
- **Children's Book Council** <http://www.cbcbooks.org/> A cosponsor (with the International Reading Association) of the Children's Choices project, CBC promotes the use and enjoyment of children's trade books and is the official sponsor of Young People's Poetry Week and National Children's Book Week.
- **Education.com** <http://www.education.com> Education.com is an online resource for parents with kids in preschool through grade 12. It features over 4,000 reference articles from the best and most authoritative sources across the web, as well as hundreds of ideas that take learning beyond the classroom and into everyday family life. It also has virtual neighborhoods where parents with similar interests or challenges can connect to trade advice and share their experiences with one another—whether it's about dyslexia or dioramas.

Parent Center News—Need Parent Volunteers for the Move!

All Parent Center Materials Due Friday, May 14th

If you have checked out instructional materials from the Parent Center, **please return them by Friday, May 14th.** After this date, Mrs. Jackson will be contacting parents by phone to remind them of overdue materials. The Parent Center is going to be indoors next year, and all materials need to be boxed up. If you would like to assist her with this move, please contact Kathy Jackson at 678-639-3884. Materials will be boxed up during the week of May 17th. Your help would be greatly appreciated! Thanks for visiting the Parent Center and be sure to come again next year!