

Summertime Reading Adventures

Resources

Resources for Parents

1001 Things to Do with Your Kids. Caryl Waller Krueger. Galahad Books, 1999. \$7.99.

The Best Summer Ever: A Parents' Guide. Joan M. Bergstrom. Tricycle Press, 1995. \$9.95.

How to Take Great Trips with Your Kids. Sanford Portnoy, Joan Portnoy, and Linda Ziedrich, editor. Harvard Common Press, 1995. \$9.95.

Resources for Kids

Backyard Bird Watching for Kids: How to Attract, Feed, and Provide Homes for Birds. George H. Harrison and Kit Harrison, editor. Willow Creek Press Inc., 1997. \$14.95.

Car Travel Games. Tony Potter and Jenny Tyler, editor; Iain Ashman and Chris Lyon, illustrators. EDC Publications, 1989. \$4.95.

Constellations for Every Kid: Easy Activities That Make Learning Science Fun. Janice Pratt VanCleave. John Wiley & Sons Inc., 1997. \$12.95.

The Everything Kids' Nature Book: Create Clouds, Make Waves, Defy Gravity and Much More! Kathiann M. Kowalski. Adams Media Corporation, 2000. \$9.95.

The Hole in the Wall Gang Cookbook: Kid-Friendly Recipes for Families to Make Together. A.E. Hotchner and Paul Newman. Fireside, 1998. \$14.

Making Books That Fly, Fold, Wrap, Hide, Pop Up, Twist, and Turn: Books for Kids to Make. Gwen Diehn. Lark Books, 1998. \$19.95.

Reading Is Fundamental, Inc. (RIF®), develops and delivers children's and family literacy programs that help prepare young children for reading and motivate older children to read regularly. Through a national network of teachers, parents, and community volunteers, RIF programs provide books and other essential literacy resources for children, at no cost to them or their families. RIF focuses highest priority on the nation's neediest children, from birth to age 11.

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A guide for parents from
Reading Is Fundamental®



Encourage Your Children to Open Books Even after School Doors Close

Children acquire skills throughout the school year, but they can lose ground if learning stops during the summer break. Fortunately, learning never has to stop. Children who read throughout the summer *gain* skills, can start the new school year with a better understanding of language and the world around them, and discover the joy of reading. The more they *like* to read, the more they *will* read.

It's not hard to help your children keep their interest in reading and learning. Children learn through a variety of activities, and almost everything we do presents an opportunity to read. When you're eating breakfast, read the cereal box; if you're in a restaurant, read the menu. Read the newspaper with your children and discuss what's happening in the world.

Make the most of those long summer days and warm summer nights. Relax, spend time outside, visit friends, and enjoy your time as a family. But don't stop reading. Make it part of your family's summer fun.

A Summer of Fun Learning

You can make sure your children's summer vacation is enriching and entertaining by introducing them to new experiences, encouraging them to pursue their own interests — and combining reading and writing with their new adventures. Open this brochure for 10 weeks of reading-based summer activities.

Throughout the summer, take advantage of local resources and everyday activities to read with your children and help them learn. For example:

- **Check out the library.** Take your children to the library regularly. See if your library has a summer club, story hours, or other reading events.
- **Visit parks, zoos, and nature centers.** Visit the library afterward to get books on favorite animals and field guides to help identify wildlife in your area.

- **Go to museums, science centers, and historical sites.** Many have extended summer hours, special exhibitions, and hands-on activities for children.
- **Check out local arts.** Summer events often include summer stock theater, puppet shows, outdoor concerts, and crafts fairs.
- **Read up on your trip.** If you are traveling, involve your children in the planning. Read about the trip together and highlight your route on a map.
- **Encourage pen pals.** If your children will be separated from good friends for the summer, suggest that they write to each other. If they have access to e-mail, have them write online.
- **Share the fun of reading.** Encourage your children to swap books with their friends. Host a book party and invite the guests to come dressed as their favorite characters.

Week 1

Celebrate summer

- 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.
- Write down on your calendar the time the sun sets today.
- Start a summer scrapbook. Include souvenirs of any trips you take, photos, ticket stubs, and projects you work on during the summer.
- List all the books by your favorite author. See how many you can read this summer.
- Swap books with a friend. Keep sharing books throughout summer.
- Take a walk. Write about or draw the things you see that show summer is here.

Week 2

Keep in touch

- Make a personal phone book. List phone numbers and addresses of your friends and relatives.
- Design your own stationery and write a letter to a friend.
- Start a journal with a friend or relative. Take turns writing in it all summer long. You can even do this by mail or e-mail.
- Write a letter to your favorite author. A librarian can help you find a postal or e-mail address.
- Draw a picture postcard of an imaginary place. On the back, write a message. Mail it to a friend or relative or put it in your scrapbook.
- The first U.S. postage stamps were designed in 1847. Be a philatelist. Design your own stamp.
- Word game! Invent a code (A=1, B=2, for example). Send a message in code to a friend.

Week 3

Discover recipes for fun

- List all the ice cream flavors you can think of. Now put them in A-B-C order.
- Invent a recipe for a cool summer drink. Write it on a recipe card. Serve the drink to your friends.
- Go to the library and find a cookbook. Make the most interesting dish in the book.
- Read the directions on a box of gelatin. Ask a parent if you can help make dessert tonight.
- Work up an appetite by reading a story about food. Make and eat the food you read about.
- Word game! How many smaller words can you find in the word *watermelon*?

10 Weeks of Fun: RIF's Summer Reading Calendar

Reading every day, even if it's for just a few minutes, improves children's ability to read and learn all year long. Here are 10 weeks of activities that involve reading and related skills. There's no special order, and you don't have to do everything listed in a particular week. Just pick the ones that look interesting — or think of your own ideas for summertime reading fun.

Week 4

Travel the world

- If you are going on a family vacation this summer, read about your trip. Mark your travel route on a map.
- Pretend you are going to visit another city, state, or country with a friend or relative.
 1. Write to the tourist bureau for more information. If you plan to visit a foreign country, write to the embassy.
 2. Visit the library and find books about the place you want to visit. Or search online for information.
 3. Plan your itinerary — and don't forget to check the weather!
- Pick an important news event from another city, state, or country. Find as much information on the topic as possible — read newspapers, listen to the radio, and watch TV news. Talk about what you learned.
- Word game! Look for out-of-state license plates. Make a list of all the state names and slogans. Decide which ones you like the best. Ask friends and relatives which are their favorites.

Week 5

Enjoy the great outdoors

- Pick wildflowers and press them between the pages of a heavy book until the end of summer.
- Plan a backyard camping trip with a friend. List all the things you will need to survive.
- Plan a family "booknic" at your favorite outdoor spot, such as the beach, a park, or the woods. Pack lunch and plenty to read.
- Collect shells at the beach or rocks along a trail. Use a nature guide to identify them.
- Find something small enough to put in your pocket. Write or tell a story about it.
- Look for shapes and designs in the clouds. Draw them.
- Word game! Make a list of words to describe fireworks.

Week 6

Visit fun places

- 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.
- What museums are close to your house? Are there any old, historic buildings in the area? Find these places on a map. Find out what is on exhibit at the museums and why the old buildings are important.
- Go back in time and pretend you lived in — or did business in — the oldest building in your area. Write a story about how you spent your time.
- Make a list of zoo animals. Sort them by different categories, such as type of animal (mammals, fish, etc.) or coloring (green, brown, striped, etc.).
- Visit the zoo with friends or relatives and find the animals on your list.
- Visit a museum or historical building with friends or relatives. Write a list of things you see that you didn't expect.
- Word game! Think of the softest animal or the oldest thing you've ever touched. Write a poem about it, but don't use the word *soft* or *old*.

Week 7

Become a publisher

- Make your own joke book. Collect jokes and riddles from your family and friends.
- Cut out pictures from an old magazine or catalog. Write a story about them.
- 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.
- Start a round-robin story. Write the beginning, then ask friends to add to it until it has an ending.
- Visit www.kidauthors.com or www.kidnews.com and find out how you can publish your stories and poems online.

Week 8

Watch the skies

- Learn what birds live in your area. (Birds are described in books called Field Guides.) Wake up early to go bird watching and list the birds you see.
- Which constellations can you see on a clear summer night? Look at the sky using a star guide to help you find the constellations.
- People have been looking at the skies for generations. Ask a grandparent or a much older friend to tell you a story about his or her childhood.
- The first UFO was reported in 1947. Read a science fiction book in honor of it.
- Word game! Baseballs also fly through the sky in summer. Find a list of baseball teams in the sports section of the newspaper. Put them in A-B-C order.

Week 9

Design something big

- Invent a tool to help you do chores more easily. Draw a picture of it or make it from some old junk.
- Read aloud the names of some of the cars in the classified section of your newspaper. Design a new car and name it.
- Walk around your neighborhood and look at the houses. Design a house that would best suit your lifestyle.
- Design your own board game and write the rules.
- Everything we use was designed by someone. Start a collection of things you like, or add to a collection you already have. Use a guide to learn the value of your collection.

Week 10

Honor summer's end

- Remember the wildflowers you pressed between the pages of a heavy book? Remove them, and put them in your summer scrapbook or paste them on heavy paper to make a bookmark.
- Review the chart you made to track the books you read this summer. Pick new books to read.
- Notice what time the sun sets today. Compare it to the time the sun set during week one.
- Make a list of the supplies you need for school. Start shopping.
- Plan an end-of-summer celebration. Write a list of the 10 best things you did this summer. Design a menu of your favorite summer treats.
- Word game! Summer days are the longest days of the year. List the longest words you know.