

Summer Bookbag - Read 5 and Thrive!

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Part I



Summer is almost upon us, and our children are eagerly awaiting the break from the routines of school. Yet these long lazy days can also bring "brain drain," as students' skills in reading and writing slip away from lack of practice.

Here's the good news: *Research has shown that reading just 4 or 5 books during the summer can keep a child's reading on level.* Below are a few simple ways to fit in some fun practice during the summertime.

- ❖ The **Woodbury Public Library** is a great place to explore. Your child can get a library card and take advantage of the children's programs. During summer 2009, preschool and elementary children can participate in reading and arts and crafts with the theme "Be Creative." For more information, see the library website at www.woodburylibrary.org or call (856) 854-2611 .

Summer should be a time when reading is a relaxed activity, so allow your child to choose what and when to read. Need help with book suggestions? Age-appropriate books lists are included at the end of this article.

- Look for **inexpensive reading materials**, in the library (free!), discount stores, at Goodwill. Keep a tub of books in the car for long drives or while waiting at the doctor's office, the bank, and so on. Kids' magazines such as Ranger Rick or Sports' Illustrated for Kids can motivate a reluctant reader with colorful graphics and specific interests.
- **Everyday materials**: ask your child to read everything - the cereal box at breakfast, the menu in a fast food restaurant, and the back of the video that describes the movie. Your kids can find the items that match a coupon in the grocery store, sort the mail, or read the ingredients to a recipe.
- With younger children, **sing songs and nursery rhymes**. Your kindergarten and first grade students learned poems and songs throughout the year - ask them to teach you!

- With older children, **discuss the books** they are reading and ask questions. What did they like? How does one book compare to another? Share some books that you enjoyed at their age.
- **Read the book then watch the movie!** Read a book like "Shrek," "Matilda," or "Sounder," with your children, then watch the movie together and discuss the similarities and differences.
- **Play games**, like Scrabble Jr., Boggle Jr., Deal a Word, card games. Any kind of board game involves reading and following directions. In the car, play games like looking for different license plates (keep track!) or "The Alphabet Game" where the kids find letters, in ABC order, on signs.
- **Be a role model.** Let your children see you read for information (newspapers, cookbooks, manuals) and pleasure (books, magazines). Talk about what you are reading and why.