



Dear Parents,

School's out. It's hot out. And yet, summer is a time for learning.

For little ones, summer is filled with teachable moments and opportunities to read aloud.

For school-aged ones, summer can be a dangerous slide that erodes knowledge built over the school year. Or, summer can be a time to make gains in knowledge, stimulate imaginations, and build enthusiasm for learning by reading and reading aloud.

PARENTS, YOU ARE YOUR CHILD'S FIRST AND MOST IMPORTANT TEACHER:

SEIZE THE SUMMER!

EMBRACE TEACHABLE MOMENTS:

- Reading aloud is the single most important thing a parent or caregiver can do to help a child prepare for reading and learning.
- Grow the garden of words this summer. New experiences, new places, new friends and new books can introduce new words to your child's vocabulary.
- Build your child's castle of knowledge: If she has an interest in butterflies, nurture it! Read about butterflies, talk about butterflies, catch a few butterflies.
- You are your child's most important role model. Demonstrate how learning and reading are priorities to you and your family by reading aloud together 15 minutes every day.



DON'T RIDE THAT SLIDE:

- Teachers may spend a month re-teaching old material that has been forgotten over the summer, at the expense of new learning.
- Some experts say time spent re-teaching forgotten material costs more than \$1,500 per student each year, or more than \$18,000 from K-12.
- Studies have shown that low-income students are especially at risk, losing between one to two months of reading achievement during the summer.
- A read aloud habit over the summer can halt the summer slide, and even lead to gains in reading and knowledge building.

MAKE IT A HABIT:

- Make reading aloud part of your daily routine. Bedtime is a great time to read aloud.
- Get excited to read aloud, and let your enthusiasm become infectious. Read with expression. Be silly. Use funny voices. Your child will love it.
- Find books with awesome pictures. Find books with great stories. Talk as you read. Ask questions. Point to pictures. Engage!
- Books, books everywhere and lots of stuff to read. Nurture a reader: Make books and reading materials an accessible part of the environment.
- Practice makes perfect, for the listener and the reader. The more you do it, the better it will be!

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