

# Summer Learning

Queen Anne Elementary  
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Research shows that over the summer, most students who aren't actively learning lose an average of one month of school learning and students with fewer books in their homes can lose up to three months of learning in the areas of reading and math computation. I developed this handout so that you can support your child over the summer to help continue their learning growth.

## Reading Practice Ideas

just a few ...

- Encourage kids to choose what they read. All readers are motivated by making their own selections of what to read, increasing their interest and commitment.
- Choose from a variety of options, including chapter books, magazines, fiction, nonfiction, and comic books. All reading helps develop reading! Make it fun, rather than a "chore."
- Get hooked on a series! Ramona books, Stink, or Warriors. Included in this packet is a list of series by "just right" reading levels. Check out the "Series Checklist" on the QAE Library Site.
- Read next to your child. Consider reading the same book so you can talk together about what you read.
- Listen to audio books in the car.
- Turn on closed captioning once in a while when watching TV. Encourage your child to read along.

## How much reading is enough?

Your child should read (or you should read to him/her) a minimum of 30-45 minutes each day. Kids who are less experienced readers than their same age peers will need to read at least 90 minutes a day to really develop their reading skills. In reality, kids who get hooked on books will likely read much more. Have fun, and mix up the reading experiences. There should be no drudgery involved. Read on for some options!

## What are ways to read with my child?

- Reading aloud to your child, even if they can read. Kids list "hearing books read aloud with expression" as a favorite, all the way into their high school years.
- Sharing the reading, where you take turns with characters (e.g. Frog and Toad, Elephant & Piggie) or chapters. This is a powerful and fun way to help your child read beyond their independent reading level and build their reading skill.
- Reading independently, where your child reads on his or her own. As a ballpark figure, about 50% of your child's reading should be from "just right" books that they select. (Educators define "just right" as books kids can read with 96-97% accuracy. Give your child time to read 2 or 3 pages to get going, and then listen in. If a reader can self-correct as s/he reads, the book is likely a good match.) If they aren't reading comfortably on their own, the book isn't a good match for independent reading. Better to share the reading.
- Reading on favorite topics, like snakes or jellyfish or pandas. What kid doesn't have a passion? Choose 3-4 books, magazines, even web pages on a favorite topic and explore them together. Read captions and text boxes and illustrations. Ask authentic questions and read to find new information. Here's a chance to be learners together!

## What books should my child read?

Check out your child's report card for their current "just right" reading level and then seek out books at your local library or book store. The local libraries have a summer reading program and will be able to give your child suggestions of books based on their interests and reading level. Attached is a list of book recommendations based on reading level.

See

- <http://home.comcast.net/~ngiansante/> for another resource of books by "just right" levels
- <http://www.qaelibrary.org> for book and series recommendation, as well as online learning activities
- <http://www.readwritethink.org/parent-afterschool-resources/> for a large collection of family literacy activities

## How else can I support my child's reading?

Ask your child what he or she would like to read about. Encourage your child to talk about his/her reading. Here are some possible questions. Ask just a couple of them, and in a natural way, when you read together:

<b>Prior to reading:</b>	<b>During reading:</b>	<b>After reading:</b>
Can you look at the cover, title, and pictures to predict what the story will be about? Do you think there will be a problem in the story? Why?	What do you think will happen next? What can you tell me about the story so far? What would you have done if you were the character? When I read _____, it made me picture _____, what do you picture? Does this make sense?	Can you retell the story? (First,...Second....) Were your predictions about the story similar to how it developed? Do you agree with the author? Why? What was your favorite part of the story? Who was your favorite character? Why?

## **Writing**

Encourage your child to write this summer.

- Keep a daily summer journal, jotting down the favorite things you do each day, or special "small moments. Encourage younger kids, in particular, to begin with a picture. Everyone in the family might add entries.
- Update your child's blog with "Summer Happenings" – email me if you can't access your child's blog.
- Write letters to friends or relatives. Gather around the table together with some stationery, postcards and stamps. Talk about who you want to get in touch with and write together.
- Make a photo vacation scrapbook and add a caption for each picture. If you're not traveling out of the area, find ways to document and celebrate your own stay-cation!
- Keep a learning journal on something you've always wanted to learn more about. Sketch, write, take notes. If you study an animal, watch it for extended periods in the wild or at the zoo, and take notes of its habits and the questions that come to you.
- Write directions, or what we call a "How-to" book, for something new you're learning how to do over the summer, e.g. How to raise chickens, or how to make ice cream.
- Make a family tree. The 1940 census records are just available, extending those research archives from 1790-1940.
- Write brief book reviews of the books you read. You might want to create your own Good Reads or Teen Reads list online! [www.goodreads.com](http://www.goodreads.com), [www.teenreads.com](http://www.teenreads.com). Check out what other kids your age are reading!