



The Kindergarten Chronicles

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Summer Reading is Hot!

Southern Nevada
Regional Professional
Development Program

Enhancing Literacy in the Summer Months

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As kindergarten teachers, we have spent this school year teaching our students early literacy skills and instilling good reading and writing habits. Now that the summer months are approaching, teachers at nine-month schools know that our young learners are facing a summer that may or may not include use and practice of the skills and behaviors they've learned this year. Even students who are in year-round schools may have that "vacation" mind-set in the summer months. Let's take some steps to help our students retain what they've learned so they can hit the ground running when they start first grade!



Summer Reading" list.

Summer reading log: Make a summer reading log that your students can complete over the summer. Set a goal of how many minutes to read per week.

Promise your students a trip to your treasure chest or another small prize if they return the completed log to you when they return to start first grade. You know what kids will do for a prize!

Other summer reading programs: Scholastic has an online reading challenge for kids. You can get more information to pass on to your students by going to <http://www.scholastic.com/summerreading/>. Barnes and Noble also has a summer reading program offering children the opportunity to earn free books. Go to <http://www.barnesandnoble.com/summerreading/> for details.

Everyday reading: Encourage parents to build reading and writing into everyday activities. Some ideas: turn off the sound on the TV and turn on closed-captioning or use the subtitles for favorite movies; have children read the directions for a new game; bake cookies from scratch and have the child(ren) read the recipe; have the kids help plan meals and write a grocery list. The ideas are endless!



With a little creativity and communication on our part, we can help provide our students with many opportunities to enhance their literacy skills this summer!

www.rpdp.net



Bill Hanlon, Director



The value placed on literacy in the home, time spent reading with children, and the availability of reading materials are all important factors in children's reading success. But it is not enough to simply tell parents of the importance of reading. We need to offer concrete programs and suggestions on how to participate in family literacy. Here are some suggestions for teachers to implement or pass on to parents:

Public library summer reading programs: If your school librarian has not given you information about your local public library's summer reading program, get the information and pass it on to your students' parents. Many parents simply need to know where and how to access these programs.

Summer reading lists: Compile a list of books you know your students have enjoyed during your read-alouds in class and send it home with your students as a "Recommended

Hot Tips!

Here are some ideas you can use to give your students literacy experiences this summer:

Keep in Touch! Give each of your students a stamped self-addressed post card or paper-and-envelope set and encourage them to write you a letter this summer. Promise them that you will write back to them if they send you a letter. Children LOVE to get mail, so this may be the best incentive you can offer!



Prepare! Ask the first grade teachers in your school about what things the children will be learning in first grade. Give the parents advance notice of any special units or projects so they can do some reading and research. First grade teachers may give you summer reading recommendations as well, to get their future students prepared.

Keep a Record. Make a diary or journal for your students to take home over the summer. Tell them that this is a special place to record the fun and exciting things they do over the summer or on vacation.

Write On! Make a response journal for your students. Put a small writing prompt on each page such as "One thing I want to do this summer is..." and tell them to write and illustrate in response to the prompt. Parents love this!

Get Interactive! Give your students' parents some great Web resources that will encourage reading and thinking. Here are a few sites to get you started: Explore dinosaurs and take part in a virtual dinosaur dig at the National Museum of Natural History's "Dinosaurs" page: <http://paleobiology.si.edu/dinosaurs/index.html>

Time for Kids covers current events, but there are also some fun games that build knowledge while kids are having fun: <http://www.timeforkids.com/TFK/kids/games>



These are just a few of the many ways that teachers can help their students retain all the learning they did over this past school year.

This is the final edition of *The Kindergarten Chronicles* for the 2008-2009 school year. Thank you for all of the positive feedback and support you gave us. Look for the next edition to come out in September 2009. Have a great summer!