



*Launching young readers!*

# Reading Rockets

10 Weeks of Summer Reading Adventures for You and Your Kids  
By: Reading Is Fundamental

It's not hard to help your children keep their interest in reading and learning during the summer break. Here are ten weeks of suggestions to encourage your children to open books even after school doors close.



Check out Reading Rockets' new summer website, [Start with a Book](http://www.startwithabook.org) (<http://www.startwithabook.org>). You'll find a treasure trove of themed children's books, parent-child activities, and other great resources for summer learning.

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.

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 and fun!

## 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.

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### 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.

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### Week 3: Discover recipes for fun

- List all the ice cream flavors you can think of. Now put them in A-BC 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*?

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### 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. Write to the tourist bureau for more information. If you plan to visit a foreign country, write to the embassy. Visit the library and find books about the place you want to visit. Or search online for information. 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.

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### 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.

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### 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*.

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### 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.

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### 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.

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### 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.

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### 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.

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You can also download these activities as a colorful two-page PDF (696 k)\* called [Summertime Reading Adventures](#)(<http://www.rif.org/assets/Documents/parents/Summer.pdf>) from the Reading Is Fundamental site.

\* To view this file, you'll need a copy of Acrobat Reader. Most computers already have it installed, or you can [download it](#)(<http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>) now.

Excerpted from "Summertime Reading Adventures: A Guide for Parents," [Reading Is Fundamental](#),(<http://www.rif.org>) 2001.

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Comments

The best book for kids to read during the summer is my new children's book, THE BELLY BUTTON THAT ESCAPED -- featuring amazing illustrations by Janice Phelps Williams. If your kids (or you) like Shel Silverstein or Roald Dahl, this is the book for you! (How's that for a crass plug!) [www.thebellybuttonthatescaped.com](http://www.thebellybuttonthatescaped.com)

Submitted by Chuck (not verified) on March 5, 2014 - 9:34am

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Reading Rockets is a national multimedia project that offers a wealth of research-based reading strategies, lessons, and activities designed to help young children learn how to read and read better. Our reading resources assist parents, teachers, and other educators in helping struggling readers build fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension

skills.

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"I have always imagined that paradise will be a kind of library." — Jorge Luis Borges