

Summer learning activities

Summer holidays should be fun and enjoyable, but that doesn't mean children stop learning. With guidance, children can continue their education throughout the school break. Here are some ways parents can keep their children's minds sharp during summer holidays.

Activities for young children

READ ALOUD – Visit your local library and find a book containing rhymes, such as a book on nursery rhymes. Each day, read aloud one of the rhymes to your child. Re-read the rhyme several times, encouraging your child to join in. During one of your re-readings, you might ask your child to pick two words he or she heard that rhyme or begin with the same sound.

PLAY “I SPY” – Play the game I Spy with your child. In this version, say the name of the object you spy, syllable by syllable. For example, you might say: “I spy a ta...ble. What do I spy?” You can play the game at home, while taking a walk, or on a trip.

SING A SONG – Sing a popular children's song such as Row Your Boat or Wheels on the Bus. During another singing of the song, focus on words that rhyme or begin with a specific sound by emphasizing those words.

SOUND OF THE DAY – Pick a sound of the day. It is best to choose sounds that are easier to hear in words, such as consonants m, s, f, l, n, or r. Throughout the day, point out and challenge your child to find objects with names that begin with the “sound of the day”.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS – Check out the numerous community recreation and continuing education programs offered in your community.

Activities for older children

READ – Visit the library, join a book club, or set aside a family reading hour. One of the best investments that a parent can make towards their children's education is to inspire a love of reading in the home.

VACATION PLANNING – Let your children read the map and give directions. Encourage your children to create a travel journal of the vacation.

WRITING ACTIVITIES – Create a family album of stories written by family members about family activities and events. Have your children write and illustrate a book on their summer adventures.

MATH ACTIVITIES – Engage your children in practical math. For example, have them calculate the cost of admission to outings, or have them estimate the cost of groceries. Children can be shown how to figure out the time it will take to get to a certain destination: $\text{Time} = \text{Distance} \div \text{speed}$.

PLAY WORD GAMES – Games such as Twenty Questions, or spelling games can be enjoyable as well as educational.

FIELD TRIPS – Have your child research the history and significance of a site you will be visiting. Gather brochures when you are on your field trip to be read later. Ask questions that encourage your child to continue their interest in the subject. Give your child a number of brochures and have them select one activity, providing three reasons for their choice.