

## Build Strong Readers This Summer

By

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How do you keep your youngsters reading all summer in the face of electronic diversion? Children are led to reading by all manner of enticements, as they say.

1. Make your mornings TV-free. Read aloud while kids eat breakfast from something funny like one of the Junie B. Jones or Ramona the Pest series (even older kids enjoy their antics) or The Peterkins, Mrs. Piggle Wiggle, or The Twits.

2. When you are driving with the kids, put a book in the CD-player. Highly recommended: titles from Listening Library which has almost every current best-seller for kids on tape or CD, including Lois Lowry's stunning The Giver.

3. Go to the library once a week, every week, on the same day. Give the kids an hour or two to find something to check out. Afterward, spend an hour over ice cream or pizza or slow-food and share your choices along with expectations.

4. Journey to a bookstore on the day you pay the rent or mortgage. It's just as important as investment, with more immediate return. Don't buy anything but books, though. Show kids (or have a staff person do it) where the "bargain" books are, where the books for kids their age are, where the books about their individual special interests are.

5. Give books as gifts at any birthday party over the summer. Have your child select the gift book! Popups are especially coveted in this circumstance. Highly recommended: all titles by Robert Sabuda, especially *America the Beautiful*.

6. Read your kids to sleep whenever possible. Soon they'll be hooked on reading as a way to let sleep come. Try one of the Lemony Snicket books.

7. When crisis hits, reach for a book first. Ask your librarian or children book specialist about titles on death, divorce, disease, disaster.

8. Reward kids for reading. Buy them more books!

9. Read on vacation. If you're camping, be sure to pack books along with sleeping gear. Add a book to every suitcase and for yourself, choose several read-aloud collections of old favorite stories.

10. Treasure those books! Go through the bookcases and weed out the titles you're done with. Planning to give them away is bound to put a new slant on things. Find out if your local Headstart, or library, or nursing home can use those donations.

Make this a summer to read!

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