

Kick Start Summer Learning

By Abby Bailes

Do kids really need to study over the summer?

Summer learning loss leads to achievement gap in students that widens over the years. Students can lose 2-2/12 months of language and math skills. Studies show that kids who spend **just 2-3 hours per week** can prevent falling behind.

Here are a few tried and true ideas:

- Grace has her boys do independent Bible reading in the morning. They read and then summarize verbally to mom and dad what they learned. You can have kids lead a Bible study at dinner by talking about what they read and they can practice being the leader.
- Kevin and Gabrielle play board games with their kids. Kids learn rules, strategy and in games like Monopoly you can make the kids be the banker to practice math. Chronology teaches history by ordering events on a timeline.
- Science Experiments are a fun way to learn and experience something totally different. There are great books like “501 Science Experiments” that teach science using everyday ingredients and simple experiments.
- CHORES can be educational too. If you have a “honey do” list this can become an opportunity to learn life skills for older kids. Paint a room, clean the walls, change light bulbs, wash the car.
- Cooking can be educational too. Make a new recipe together or be brave and let you kids make dinner by themselves. Find a new recipe online and try it. For younger kids, counting the ingredients may work. For older kids challenge them to cut the recipe in half and practice fractions.

How do parents come up with ideas that fit the unique challenges and needs of their individual kids?

- Build on the skills that come naturally to them, by supporting their interests.
- Take time to purposely develop a plan to support your students in their areas of weakness.

How can parents keep kids learning while they are stuck at home?

- Take a virtual field trip that can take you around the world, or to a local ZOO CAM to watch the baby animals.
- Virtual VBS
- Create a scavenger hunt in your neighborhood. Amazing Race and Survivor
- Give older kids the assignment to teach what they learned to a younger sibling.

How can I respond to the constant summer refrain of “I’m bored!”

- Create a “Go To” list of activities that they CAN do when they want to say “I’m bored!”
- Be curious with your kids. Don’t miss an opportunity to explore and learn with your child.
- Create a theme for the day or the week and use that to inspire new learning. For example: Talent Show, Theme Nights, including cultural exploration of countries, foods, traditions, etc.