

10 Creative Ways to Promote Reading & Writing in the Summer

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Summertime. It's the time of the year for vacations, back yard cookouts, fireworks, and just relaxing in the pool on a hot summer day. Summer can be a lot of fun, but while we're busy enjoying ourselves, sometimes we forget to work with our little ones while they're home from school. For many children, all that fun can mean a slip in the skills they've worked hard to learn in school.

Try the following strategies to help keep young readers and writers on track throughout the summer months:

- **Community library**

Check out your local community library for free reading programs. Many libraries host weekly or monthly story times that your child can attend. Some libraries incorporate fun songs and poetry, while others offer playgroups that promote literacy through play.

- **Word searches**

Preschoolers start out by learning to read sight words. Create a list of sight words that you want your child to learn, and once your child is able to identify them, print out free word search worksheets and have them find the words they see.

- **Print out free fairytale coloring pages**

Children love fairytales! Print out coloring pages, and have your child color and decorate them as they please. Afterwards, help them to dictate the story, and help them to write the words on the pages. Bind the pages together to create a book of colored fairytales. Not only will they love the coloring, but they'll be proud of the book they created, and they'll read them over and over again.

- **Have them act out a favorite children's poem or song**

Read the poem or song lyrics slowly to your child, emphasizing certain words and bringing out the theatrics of the piece. Then have your child act out a line or a stanza, making different gestures or facial expressions to fit the lines. Have them act out the poem or song for a small audience of family members, and don't forget to be a good audience member yourself!

- **Print out free reading worksheets**

Perfect for rainy days, sometimes kids just need to sit down and get to work! Work one-on-one with your child, and print out [free worksheets](#) online that make reading fun for children. Look for reading worksheets that include mazes or puzzles.

- **Create TV/reading goals chart**

One positive way to keep your child motivated is to create a reward-based chart. Assist your child in creating a goal chart to give them an incentive to keep reading and writing. This should be a weekly chart to help log the time kids spend reading and writing, versus watching TV. If they read and write more than they watch TV, reward your child with a treat or a small prize. Increase the time spent reading and writing, and offer one grand prize at the end of the summer.

- **Keep them writing outdoors**

If you're at the beach, have kids write out words in the sand. Talk about what you see in the environment around you, and have them write simple words, like "sea" or "sand". If you're at home or a park, have your children write out words using sidewalk chalk.

- **Have them dictate their favorite story to you**

Much like the coloring page book idea from above, have your child pick a favorite story and have them dictate it for you. This time it could be any story, even if it's from TV. Help them write the words to create a book.

- **Print out free handwriting worksheets**

Handwriting doesn't have to be boring. Look for printable handwriting worksheets that incorporate other skills into the activity, like colors, numbers, or shapes.

- **Smartphone and tablet apps**

Last but not least, make sure to download quality smartphone and tablet apps so your kids can learn on the go! Make those long boring road trips fun by downloading apps that reinforce reading and writing through [interactive games](#). Look for apps that use sight words or tracing activities.

It can be difficult to keep children actively learning with so many summertime distractions. The above strategies will help motivate young readers and writers to keep learning, and they'll even have fun along the way.

