

Reading Is Fundamental's (RIF) Summer Literacy Tips & Activities

Help your child soak up the sun and good books all summer long with some quick tips and activities from RIF.

- 1 Set a monthly reading goal for your child. Decide how many books to aim for and track them by making a fun chart or using RIF's Reading Log, available at [Printable Reading Logs and Certificates](#). Make all kinds of books available to your child. Get the entire family involved and have everyone set a summer reading goal.
- 2 Every child needs to see that reading is important. Whenever you have free time – whether you are looking for an activity for quiet play or there's stormy weather outside – suggest reading! Adults can set a good example by reading magazines, newspapers, and books in front of their children. This type of modeling will be powerful as children get older and are able to read independently.
- 3 Create a special reading area in your home: a designated, cozy location to enjoy a good story where a selection of great books is always within arm's reach. Encourage your child to build reading forts with their favorite blankets and pillows and, of course, a flashlight. Sometimes books are best when read in a cozy or unique spot!
- 4 Ask your child to tell you a real or made up story. Giving detailed descriptions and telling complete stories helps children learn about story structure and sequencing: what happens in the beginning, middle, and end of a story. These skills set a foundation for reading. A favorite summer activity, a day at camp, a vacation, or a playdate all make for great storytelling.
- 5 Read aloud with your child. Bring books to life by using different voices for each character; consider dressing up like one of the characters or using puppets or stuffed toys related to the story; ask open-ended questions that start with *how* or *why*; and ask your child to make predictions about the plot, characters, and setting. RIF offers many [resources](#) for making the most of your read aloud time. And, check out our suggested summer collection of books right here on our Soar into Summer page.
- 6 Get your shopping list ready! Did you know grocery shopping can also be a way to encourage reading and writing? At the store, help your child figure out the first letter of specific brands. Then, together, go on a hunt to find foods from those brands. Or, use the aisle markers to find items with your child. Even have your child (if age appropriate) write out grocery lists.
- 7 Cooking with your child is a fun and special way to develop literacy skills. Show your child how to read a recipe—measurements, order of steps, and preparation instructions. As you prepare the recipe, double check each instruction and look at the labels on ingredients. You can even make a family cookbook using your favorite recipes and develop oral literacy by talking about family recipes and cooking tips along the way.

- 8 Summertime is the perfect time to take a walk with your child. You can enjoy the warm weather and point out environmental print to your child – this includes any text outside your home – think about street signs, posters in buildings, and even flyers at the grocery store. Note signage during nature walks and other outings. Ask your child to point out print inside of the home, too.
- 9 Nursery rhymes play a critical role in language and literacy development. Rhymes help children develop an understanding of the patterns of language and understand the sounds and blends that are the building blocks of words. Sing songs with rhymes and word play with your child. Play rhyming games with questions like, “What other words sound like honey?” Get silly with nonsense words or speed play.
- 10 Write with your child. Provide a variety of writing materials (such as chalk, markers, crayons) and encourage your child to draw and write on their own. Encourage your child to practice letters and sight words, write thank-you notes, make to-do lists, and even create their own stories to share with family. This is a great time for your child to capture a special summertime moment as a keepsake.
- 11 Tie literacy to art for a fun way to encourage reading. You could visit an art museum together (virtual or in-person, based on COVID-19 guidelines) and let your child interpret and explain the artwork however he or she views it. Have your child create their own drawings, painting, sculptures, and even installation pieces made from recyclables in your home. Create sentence strips describing each piece or make a video in which your child talks about the artwork.
- 12 Visit the library and/or bookstore (based on COVID-19 guidelines), making trips as often as you can. Help your child sign up for his or her own library card – an exciting day when they can start to choose and check out their own books. Take advantage of summer library programs, such as read-alouds and family book clubs. There are even many online read-aloud opportunities. Find some of RIF’s latest read aloud videos at [RIF.org/literacy-central/read-aloud-collection](https://www.rif.org/literacy-central/read-aloud-collection)
- 13 Need a game for a summertime playdate? Get a set of dice and play Read, Roll, and Tell. After reading a story, roll the dice. Have the children answer the questions related to the numbers rolled: (1) Talk about where the story takes place, (2) Identify and describe the main character, (3) Talk about when the story takes place, (4) Talk about your favorite part of the story, (5) Talk about a problem that took place in the story, (6) Talk about what this story made you think of when reading it.
- 14 Encourage your child to read all types of books across many genres including picture books, chapter books, comic books, drawing books, and more! Don’t forget to mix in some nonfiction. Make it exciting – use the [RIF 40 book reading challenge](#) to get your child started.
- 15 Encourage vocabulary development using word searches, matching games, and criss cross puzzles. RIF makes it easy to create these to use in class or at home at [Puzzle Creator Interactive and Printable | RIF.org](#). These are perfect activities for a rainy summer day or to keep a young child busy on a road trip.

- 16 Before reading a book with your child, show the cover and introduce the title, author, and illustrator. Ask your child what they think will happen in the book, and suggest things your child can look or listen for during the story. Also ask (1) What do you think this book is about and why? (2) Where do you think the story takes place? (3) Have you ever read anything like this before? (4) What do you have in common with the characters or setting in the story?
- 17 After reading a book with your child, support their comprehension by asking deep questions: (1) What was your favorite part of the story? Why? (2) Who was the most important character? Why? (3) What was the problem in the story? How was it solved? (4) Does this book remind you of another book? Why? (5) How did the story make you feel? and (6) Do you remember a time when you....? What happened?
- 18 Inspire your child to read by using the engaging activities you can find in [RIF Book Bingo](#) and help them play along as they read their favorite stories. Book Bingo is a great activity to play with a friend or family member during a vacation or a staycation!
- 19 Have your child write an acrostic poem using the letter in his or her name. Each letter should describe your child. Here's an example for Stella: Sweet, Talkative, Eager, Living, Likes to Learn, Adventurous. Or how about trying an acrostic poem using the word SUMMER.
- 20 Create a reading treasure hunt for your child today. For the treasure, pick something you want them to find. As appropriate, leave pictures and/or word clues to follow to reach the treasure. Then, flip the activity and have them do the same for you. Turn the treasure hunt into a summer theme by using flowers, leaves, bathing suits, etc. as your clues.
- 21 Before starting to read a book with your child, flip through the pages and point out the illustrations and make predictions based on what you both see in the book (be careful not to give away the ending!).
- 22 How about starting a books-for-breakfast routine on weekends? While you wait for the toast to pop or cereal to hit the bowl, have your child read a couple of pages from their favorite book. Talk as a family about the book while you enjoy your breakfast.
- 23 There are many reading strategies to help your child take control of their own reading and get through tough words. Remind them they can sound it out, look for a base word, chunk it, try a different sound, reread, use picture clues, use context cues, and use their background knowledge.
- 24 Use the 3:2:1 strategy to get your child or student engaged in a book. Write down 3 things they learned, 2 things that are interesting, and 1 question they have. These questions boost engagement while improving reading comprehension.
- 25 Create a word wall to help your child work on spelling, vocabulary, and reading skills. Add a new word to it every day and refer to it often. Give it a summer theme and see how many words you can associate with summer.