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For Immediate Release

Summer Reading

The “Summer Slide” is the tendency for students to slide backwards in their scholastic achievement during the summer, and this is especially seen in those students from low-income families. Summer is in full swing, so it is important to explore ways to lessen the summer slide with youth. A great way to combat the summer slide is providing reading opportunities for youth during the summer and making reading a priority. According to the Scholastic Teacher and Principal School Report, “96% of educators agree that providing year-round access to books at home is important to enhancing student achievement.” Not only does reading help students scholastically but reading books also helps youth understand people that are different than themselves as well as reading helps youth understand how to process emotions and develop empathy. It is obvious youth would rather do other summer activities than reading during the day, so it is important to make it fun and interactive. Below, I have listed ways that have proven to help kids enjoy reading, especially during the summer!

1. Turn books into field trips! A great way to get kids excited and intrigued into books is to choose a theme and find a few books that follow that theme. After reading through those books, maybe over a week period, take a field trip to a place that goes along with the theme. An example of this could be to pick a theme of animals. Some of the books you could read with youth are, “Giraffes Can’t Dance,” “The Rainbow Fish,” and “Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you See?.” To finish off the book series, you can take youth to a field trip to a zoo or farm!
2. Another great way to make reading fun is to make the reading environment fun for youth! A favorite of youth I have babysat is to make a fort in the basement and read with flashlights. Another great idea is to take it outside on nice days or take it to the park with you and read there!
3. Public Libraries not only have a lot of books, but they also have programs and activities throughout the summer to keep youth engaged with books. Check out your local library for their summer reading programs!
4. The internet has tons of activities and lessons that pair with certain books that can make reading fun for youth. Nebraska Extension has STEM specific lesson plans that pair along with books, go to <https://child.unl.edu/nebraska-4-h-stem-reading-connections-program> to check them out! All lessons use everyday objects that can teach youth about STEM.
5. The last tip I have is to build reading into your summer routine. At school, youth are used to a routine and can thrive on knowing generally what they are going to do every day and how long each activity will take. Now, summer does not need to be a strict structure, but having a general outline of the day encourages youth participate in the activities even if it isn’t their favorite one.

Although for some youth, summer reading is not their favorite activity, these tips can help them enjoy it more and defeat that summer slide!

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