



May 27, 2022

Dear Parents,

Did you know that children who don't spend time reading over the summer can lose up to two months of what they learned while in school? On the other hand, children who participate in summer reading programs perform significantly better in school and are more likely to read at or above their grade level.

*With this in mind, Beacon Hill Classical Academy has adopted a **mandatory** summer reading program for the **incoming 1st through 5th grade students**. Each child must read a **minimum of 20 minutes per day (1,000 minutes over the summer)**, with the parent or student recording minutes on the attached sheet. The sheet should be returned on the first day of school, August 25th. A list of grade-level appropriate books has been provided on our website, although this is just a starting point. Let your child choose books that they find interesting. Choice empowers students, leads to an intrinsic motivation for reading, and often times serves as a springboard for meaningful conversations.*

*Here are ten ways to make literacy an **enjoyable** part of your kids' summer:*

1. Go to the library and borrow some books

Set a weekly date for a trip to the library. There are many fun local programs at your local library to help motivate your child.

2. Pick out a good chapter book to read to or with your child

Find a good book to read with your kids. This may be a book that you want to read to them or one for them to read to you (or a bit of both). It can be hard to find time to work all the way through a chapter book during the school year, but it can be easier during the summer months. Books by Roald Dahl, Beverly Cleary, and E.B. White are always popular, but here are some other possibilities:

Kindergarten through Grade 3	Grades 4-6
<i>Abel's Island</i> by William Steig	<i>The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe</i> by C.S. Lewis
<i>Winnie the Pooh</i> by A.A. Milne	<i>The Hobbit</i> by J.R.R. Tolkein
<i>Babe, the Gallant Pig</i> by Dick King-Smith	<i>Treasure Island</i> by Robert Louis Stevenson
<i>The One and Only Ivan</i> by Katherine Applegate	<i>The Secret Garden</i> by Frances Hodgson Burnett

<i>Ben and Me</i> by Robert Lawson	<i>The Last of the Mohicans</i> by James Fennimore Cooper
<i>The Tale of Despereaux</i> by Kate DiCamillo	<i>A Wrinkle in Time</i> by Madeleine L'Engle
<i>Mr. Popper's Penguins</i> by Richard Atwater	<i>The Mysterious Benedict Society</i> by Trenton Lee Stewart
<i>A Bear Called Paddington</i> by Michael Bond	<i>The Jungle Book</i> by Rudyard Kipling
<i>The Incredible Journey</i> by Sheila Burnford	<i>The Phantom Tollbooth</i> by Norton Juster
<i>Winnie the Pooh</i> by A.A. Milne	

3. Celebrate the completion of a book

Make it a family celebration when you finish a chapter book. Here are a few suggestions: rent a video of the book that you've read and pop some popcorn, take a trip to a museum related to the book's content, put on a backyard camping trip, cook something mentioned in the book, or put on a play for friends and family.

Some children's chapter books that have been into films include: *Fantastic Mr. Fox*, *Black Beauty*, *The Hobbit*, *Bridge to Terabithia*, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, *Harry Potter*, *Johnny Tremain*, *Jumanji*, *Mary Poppins*, *Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH*, *Harry Potter*, *My Side of the Mountain*, and many more.

4. Write a letter to your child and drop it in the mail

Kids love to get mail. In our digital age people write fewer real letters, but a letter can be a surprising and stimulating experience for children. Who doesn't like to get a personal letter? Write a letter that requires some response: What do you most want to do this summer? What are you reading now? What's that about? etc. Take it one step further and find a friend or family member to be a summer pen pal for your child.

5. Start a diary

Buy your child a composition notebook, journal, or diary to use over summer vacation. At the end of each day or every few days, have your child either write or dictate an entry. Leave places to tape in postcards and mementos and to draw pictures.

6. Schedule a daily reading time

Summer can get kind of boring for kids and having regularly scheduled activities helps. Parents are often good at loading up kids' schedules with things like soccer or swimming—which are great—but schedule in some quiet reading time too, they'll come to appreciate it.

7. Subscribe to a magazine

We tend to champion book reading. And why not? There are so many great books. However, children's magazines are fun too, and they change things up and bit which can encourage kids to read.

There are lots of good choices of kids' mags. Here are a few suggestions: Highlights, National Geographic Kids, Ranger Rick, Boy's Life, American Girl, Sports Illustrated for Kids, Cricket, Cobblestones, Dig. Pick one that fits your child's interests.

8. Start a book club

Some kids find reading to be lonely. There are things that you can do to make it more social and fun for them. For instance, get your child and his/her friends to agree to read a particular book each month. Then have a get-together—perhaps a sleepover—at your house for the kids to share their favorite snacks and talk about the book.

9. Encourage your child to read and use “to do” books

Kids love to get their hands dirty. Doing stuff is fun. Use reading as a jumping-off-point for arts and crafts activities, sports, cooking, science experiments, etc.

Here are some terrific “to do” book suggestions:

- *Rosie Revere's Big Project Book for Bold Engineers*
- *American Girls' Handy Book*
- *American Boys' Handy Book*
- *Baking Class: 50 Fun Recipes Kid Will Love to Bake*
- *The Everything Kids' Science Experiments Book*

10. Family reading time

Parents can get in on this reading thing, too. Maybe one night a week, try turning off all the screens, and everyone pick up a good book or magazine; 15-30 minutes. Not only does that create some good reading practice time for your kids, but it shows them that you're into this reading thing too, which can encourage reading. Modeling will always be more powerful than telling. If you get into reading, they will, too.