



10 Critical Facts about Summer Reading

Losses from the "Summer Slide"

– learning or reading skill losses during the summer months are cumulative, creating a wider gap each year between more proficient and less proficient students. By the time a struggling reader reaches middle school, summer reading loss has accumulated to a two-year lag in reading achievement. ²

- Regardless of ethnicity, socioeconomic level, or previous achievement, children who read four or more books over the summer fare better on reading-comprehension tests in the fall than their peers who read one or no books over the summer. ¹
- Teachers typically spend between 4 to 6 weeks re-teaching material students have forgotten over the summer. ³
- It is estimated that the "Summer Slide" accounts for as much as 85% of the reading achievement gap between lower income students and their middle- and upper-income peers. ⁴
- During the school year, lower income children's skills improve at close to the same rate as those of their more advantaged peers – but over the summer, middle- and upper-income children's skills continue to improve, while lower income children's skills do not.³
- Reading as a leisure activity is the best predictor of comprehension, vocabulary and reading speed.⁵
- 3rd graders who can't read on grade level are four times less likely to graduate by age 18 than a proficient reader.⁶
- Having reading role-model parents or a large book collection at home has a greater impact on kids' reading frequency than does household income.⁷
- An overwhelming 92% of kids say they are more likely to finish a book they picked out themselves.⁷
- Ninety-nine percent of parents think children their child's age should read over the summer.⁷
- Parents think their children should read an average of 11 books over the summer, ranging from 17 books for children ages 6-8, to 6 books for 15- to 17-year olds.⁷

1. Summer Reading and the Ethnic Achievement Gap, Jimmy Kim, Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk, 2004.
2. Ameliorating summer reading setback among economically disadvantaged elementary students, Richard Allington, April 2007.
3. Lasting Consequences of the Summer Learning Gap, Karl Alexander, Doris Entwistle, Linda Steffel Olson, April 2007.
4. Why Summer Matters in the Rich/Poor Achievement Gap, Richard Allington and Anne McGill-Frazen, August 2009.
5. The Power of Reading, Stephen Krashen, Libraries Unlimited, 1993.
6. Annie E.. Casey Foundation, Hernandez, Donald J., 2011.
7. The Kids and Family Reading Report™ 4th edition conducted by Harrison Group and Scholastic, 2012.