

Spark Self-Directed Summer Learning

The struggle is real. Summer learning loss, or the “summer slide,” creates a need to reteach material and reorient students to academic learning at the start of each school year. While unstructured time to run and play is valuable, many students could also benefit from intellectual stimulation during the summer.

Program-based summer learning can be quite effective at preventing summer learning loss. But it is costly and certainly does not reach all students. Thanks to dozens of free resources from Share My Lesson and our partners, teachers can inspire students with self-directed—and joyful—summer learning.

Make It Fun

Would your students jump at the chance to take photographs of their community? Make and launch a rocket? Evaluate the reliability of news reports on current events? For resources on helping students engage in activities like these, visit Share My Lesson’s “Summer Learning at Home” collection, where you’ll also find lessons devoted to baseball. An entire collection covers the sport’s significance, across nearly all subjects and grade levels, which lets a parent or teacher bring learning right to the ball field.

Students vacationing at the beach can learn more about ocean tides or the phases of the moon while gazing at the night sky by visiting the “Celebrate Science” lesson collection. Content-rich lessons and handouts are perfect to give students to take home before summer break. You might also e-mail ideas for summer learning directly to students and parents. Encourage them to post pictures and reflections on your class web page or your school’s Facebook page.

Harness Screen Time

Most students will spend lots of time on electronic devices during summer break, so help them use screen time productively. If your students like to watch movies, find films they might enjoy, such as *Finding Dory* and *Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl*, and distribute the corresponding reflection activities from Share My Lesson’s collection of “Teacher Resources Inspired by Films.”

One of our partners, Storyline Online, features famous actors reading stories. For instance, Karan Brar of the *Diary of a*



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Recommended Resources

“Summer Learning at Home”
<http://go.aft.org/AE118sml1>

“Baseball”
<http://go.aft.org/AE118sml2>

“Celebrate Science”
<http://go.aft.org/AE118sml3>

“Teacher Resources Inspired by Films”
<http://go.aft.org/AE118sml4>

Storyline Online
<http://go.aft.org/AE118sml5>

“Tap, Click, Read: Growing Readers in a World of Screens” webinar
<http://go.aft.org/AE118sml6>

“Math Homework Help for Parents”
<http://go.aft.org/AE118sml7>

Wimpy Kid films reads *The Kiss That Missed*, and Betty White reads *Harry the Dirty Dog*. Which actors do your students admire? Take advantage of these performers’ appeal to demonstrate that reading is cool. Each video comes with a home activity sheet.

Interested in learning how to use digital resources to foster students’ love of reading and build their literacy skills? Watch our webinar with the authors of *Tap, Click, Read: Growing Readers in a World of Screens*.

Involve Parents

A recent study* revealed that simply text messaging tips to parents of third- and

fourth-graders at risk of summer learning loss is a powerful strategy for increasing reading scores. Try sending a newsletter, e-mailing, or calling home to let parents know about ways they can support students’ summer learning. Or incorporate these resources at your next parent-teacher conference. Better yet, curate several ideas geared toward the ages and interests of your students and let us know so we can feature you and your efforts on our blog.

We can also create a collection of resources specifically designed for you and your students. Simply send an e-mail to content@sharemylesson.com to let us know which Share My Lesson resources would be most useful.

Have a great summer!

*Matthew A. Kraft and Manuel Monti-Nussbaum, “Can Schools Enable Parents to Prevent Summer Learning Loss? A Text-Messaging Field Experiment to Promote Literacy Skills,” *ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 674 (2017): 85–112.

—THE SHARE MY LESSON TEAM