



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
- Studies show that making sure there are always interesting books at home can increase the likelihood of a child being a frequent reader, especially among ages 9-11 and 15-17.⁷
- An overwhelming 91% of kids say they are more likely to finish a book they picked out themselves, with 86% of kids saying they feel proud when they finish reading a book.⁷
- Reading frequency declines after age eight – and boys are more likely to be low frequency readers than girls.⁷
- Researchers have found that children growing up in homes with many books gain higher academic achievement than children from bookless homes, independent of their parents’ education, occupation, and class.⁸

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™ conducted by Yankelovich and Scholastic, 2010

⁸ Research in Social Stratification and Mobility, Evans, M. D. R., et al. Family scholarly culture and educational success: Books and schooling in 27 nations, 2010