

Tips to Maintain Academic Skills During Summer

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The CHC Education Department would like to encourage all parents to help their kids maintain their academic skills during the summer. The summer can be a great time to practice skills without the usual additional stress of homework and learning many new topics in the course of one school day. Practicing in a relaxed manner over the summer will help ease the shock of returning to school in the fall!



Reading

Get together with friends and have a kids' book club. Reading and talking about books with your children not only gives you time together but helps foster a love of reading and important language and literacy skills. Check out www.pbs.org/parents and run a search for "book club" for suggestions on how to start and run a children's book club.

- Chart or graph the number of books your child reads this summer. Celebrate reached goals by buying a new or used book and then donating gently loved books so someone else can enjoy them too.
- Listen to books on tape/cd. Be sure to have your child read along as he/she listens to the story. This is a great activity as you're driving to camp and other activities!
- Read the book first! There are many movies based on great children's books. After reading the book, watch the movie and discuss with your children how the movie was the same or different from what they pictured in their minds as they read. Some classic books that have been made into movies recently include "Charlotte's Web" by E.B. White, "The Spiderwick Chronicles" by Tony DiTerlizzi and Holly Black, and "Bridge to Terabithia" by Katherine Paterson. For more suggestions, go to www.kidsreads.com and click on the "books into movies" link.

Writing

- Create a book! Start by writing a basic story and then printing it onto the bottom half of pieces of paper. Illustrate the top half of the page with drawings, clip art or digital photographs. This is a great way to document an outing to the park, visits with friends and family and other fun summer activities.
- Keep a journal of three wonderful things that happened each day. Younger children may want to illustrate their

pages as well. This also builds the ability to find the good in small things on days when "there is nothing to do."

- Write letters to family and friends. Even a postcard is a good way to stay in touch with favorite people. Getting mail is fun for kids of all ages.
- Make new friends through pen-pal associations! Go to http://www.studentsoftheworld.info/menu_penpals.php3 for information on finding pen-pals in other countries.

Math

- Games regularly played at home can be adapted to include math skills. For example, when playing the card game UNO (or "Crazy Eights"), the players can add or multiply the card being played to the top card in the stack. The card game "War" can be adapted so that the first person to correctly add the two cards gets to keep the cards. Flashcards with math fact problems can also be used and the winner is the one with the higher solution.
- Memory/Concentration will help build visual memory skills at the same time the players are making a graph of who has won the most games or has the most pairs of cards.

Websites

- It's okay to let your child play computer games this summer! Check out the following websites for different types of games that your child can play both on and offline: www.iknowthat.com; www.funbrain.com; <http://resources.kaboose.com/games/>; www.funschool.com; www.yabooligans.com.
- There are also multitudes of websites offering more suggestions for home-based activities. General ideas to investigate through a search engine can include "math/spelling/reading games," "homeschooling lessons" and educational websites set up by museums and children's publishing companies.



If you would like further ideas regarding summer home practice ideas, please feel free to contact the members of the CHC Education Department to set up a consultation. We will be glad to help you tailor ideas to your child's specific needs. We also offer educational therapy services during the summer. Please call Access, Information and Referral at 650.688.3625 or email: intake@chconline.org.