

Summer Reading Suggestions

During the long summer days of high humidity and sweltering heat, it's great to find an activity that the whole family can do to stay in and cool off. While you might be tempted to head for your nearest video store, take a detour and head for your neighborhood library instead. It's a good way to beat the heat and they have books there of interest to the whole family. Reading is recommended as one of the best ways to help students keep their skills sharp over the summer and it's also fun. So when the temperatures begin to hit that 100 degree mark, put down the remote and pick up a book. Don't worry, book worms don't bite.

Suggestions for Reading to Young Children

Young children love to have adults read to them. When you read to your children, they know they have your undivided attention and it makes them happy to know that you are enjoying something together. Very young children like books with the "Three R's" -- rhythm, rhyme, and repetition. These three important ingredients help children memorize the story.

Don't be surprised or annoyed if they want to read the same book over and over again. This also helps them memorize the story. Memorizing the story is important for children learning to read. It helps with skills adults take for granted such as how to hold the book right-side up, when to turn the page, and to turn the pages from the beginning of the book to the end. All of these things are easier to do with a book the child is familiar with.

Pick books with bright, life-like pictures and interesting story lines. Books with sing-song, nonsense words and flip-up interactive parts are a big hit with young children.

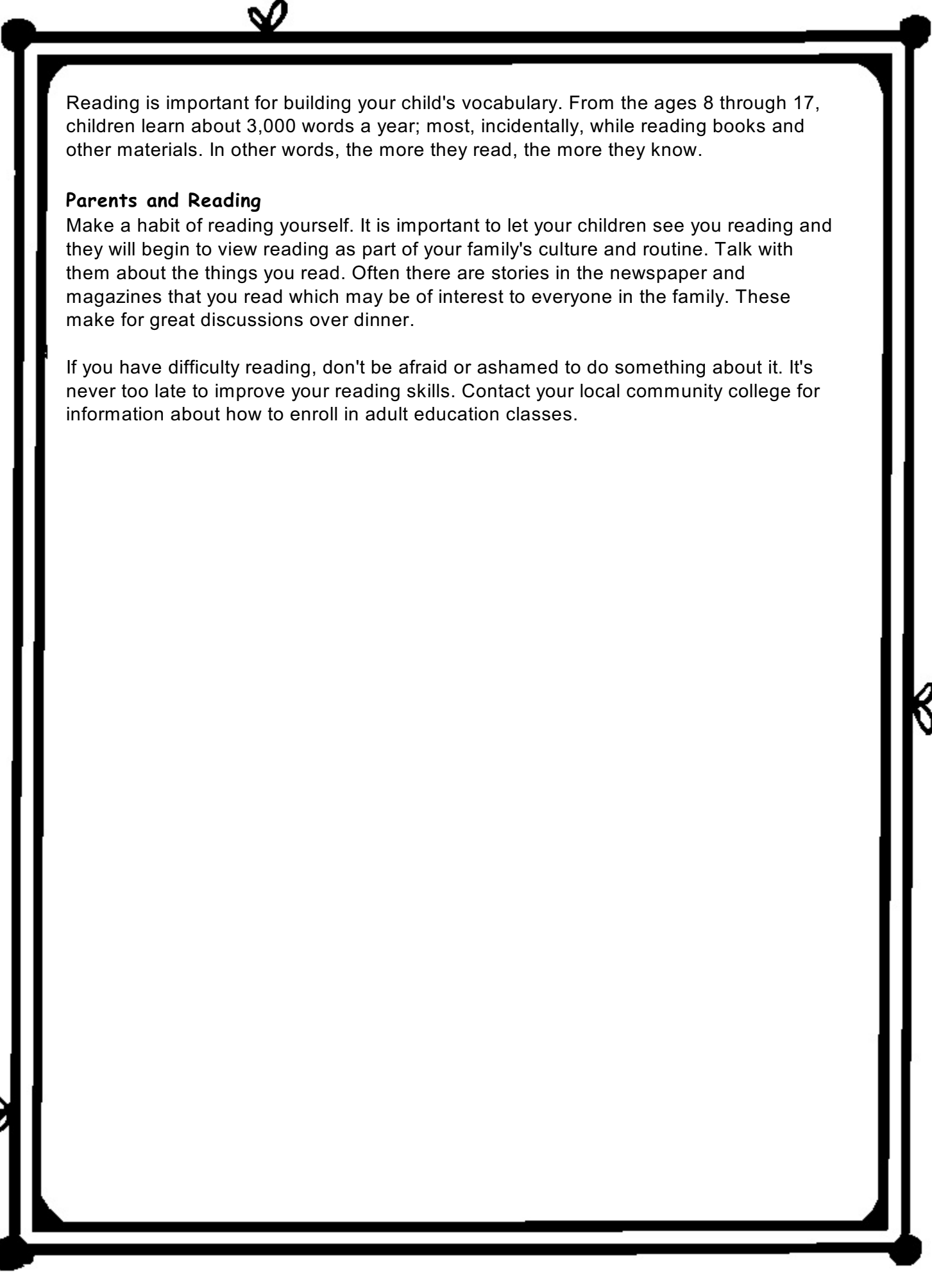
As you read to your child, talk about the story and ask questions. You might say, "What do you think is going to happen next?" or "What would you do if that happened to you?" Children love to get involved and feel as though they are part of the story.

Pick special times and special places for reading. Bath time and bedtime are great. Keep books in places where children can get them. On long road trips, encourage children to read in the car. Older children could read to the younger ones or one adult could read while the other drives.

Older Children and Reading

Getting your older child interested in reading is more difficult. You have television, Nintendo and time with friends to compete with. The key to gaining older children's interest is letting them choose what they read. At this age, series books, books about teenagers, science fiction, love stories and magazines are popular.

Children also love books about strange, but true facts and events like those found in the Guinness Book of World Records. These may not be your choice for fine literary reading, but if it is what your child likes and it's not completely inappropriate, let him read.



Reading is important for building your child's vocabulary. From the ages 8 through 17, children learn about 3,000 words a year; most, incidentally, while reading books and other materials. In other words, the more they read, the more they know.

Parents and Reading

Make a habit of reading yourself. It is important to let your children see you reading and they will begin to view reading as part of your family's culture and routine. Talk with them about the things you read. Often there are stories in the newspaper and magazines that you read which may be of interest to everyone in the family. These make for great discussions over dinner.

If you have difficulty reading, don't be afraid or ashamed to do something about it. It's never too late to improve your reading skills. Contact your local community college for information about how to enroll in adult education classes.

