Help Your Child with Summer Reading

Talk about what you see and do
Talk about everyday activities to build your child’s background knowledge, which is crucial to listening and reading comprehension. Keep conversation alive. Use language while cooking together, visiting somewhere new, or after watching a TV show. Help your child speak in complete sentences.

Don’t leave home without it
Bring along a book or magazine any time your child has to wait, such as at a doctor’s office. Always try to fit in reading!

Once is not enough
Encourage your child to re-read favorite books and poems. Re-reading helps kids read more quickly and accurately.

Dig deeper into the story
Ask your child questions about the story you’ve just read. Say something like, “Why do you think Toad did that?”

Take control of the television
It’s difficult for reading to compete with TV and video games. Encourage reading as a free-time activity.

Pick books that are at the right level
Help your child pick books that are not too difficult. The aim is to give your child lots of successful reading experiences.

Make books special
Turn reading into something special. Take your kids to the library, help them get their own library card, read with them, and buy them books as gifts. Have a favorite place for books in your home or, even better, put books everywhere.

“You cannot open a book without learning something.”
—Confucius
West Haven Summer Reading Program

“There is no friend as loyal as a book.”
—Ernest Hemingway

Grades K-4 Elementary Students:

Read at least two books and complete the Governor’s Summer Reading Journal to receive a fun bag full of rewards when you return to school in the fall. Bring your completed journal to school to receive your reward bag.

Read 10 or more books, complete the Governor’s Summer Reading Journal, and go to TD Bank in West Haven. They will open up a savings bank account for you and start you off with $10.00 in the account or add $10.00 to your existing TD Bank Savings account.

K-4 SUMMER READING GUIDE

GRAPhIC NOVELS

Babymouse Series by Jennifer Holm. The continuing adventures of a girl mouse drawn in striking black and pink graphics.

Big Nate Series by Lincoln Peirce. The continuing comic adventures of Nate Wright, a confident eleven year old coping with daily life.

Captain Underpants Series by various authors. Broad comic strip illustrations highlight the hilarious adventures of an unlikely superhero.

Geronimo Stilton Series by various authors. A graphic series about a talking mouse who works as a writer and lives on Mouse Island with his family.

Lunch Lady Series by Jarrett Krosoczka. A crime fighting lunch lady superhero battles the forces of evil in this fast, comic and highly appealing series.

Robot Galaxy Series by Robert J. Kurtz. Follow the adventures of the good half of a robot that was considered lost by the government, when it returns to Earth to learn about his origins and figure out if he is at all like his evil counterpart.

Squish Series by Jennifer Holm. Another series by the author of Babymouse, this one focuses on the adventures of a young amoeba and contains a science background. Colorful inky cartoon illustrations make this an enjoyable read.

The Titanic by Joeming W. Dunn. A graphic (drawn) history of the events leading up to the shocking 1912 sinking of the ship.
**GRADES 2-4 FICTION**

**Battle Bunny** by John Scieszka. Alex transforms a boring story book into something he’d like to read—about a crime fighting bunny.

**Exclamation Mark** by Amy Krouse Rosenthal. An exclamation mark in a group of periods learns to embrace being different.

**Flora and Ulysses: The Illuminated Adventures** by Kate DiCammillo. A girl named Flora and a squirrel named Ulysses, team up to use Ulysses’ superpowers to conquer villains and protect the weak. A story with great characters, humor and heart.

**The Boy Who Cried Bigfoot!** by Scott Magoon. Ben has so often tried to convince people he has seen Bigfoot that when a real yeti arrives and borrows his bicycle, no one comes to see if Ben is telling the truth.

**The Day the Crayons Quit** by Drew Daywalt. When Duncan arrives at school one morning, he finds a stack of letters, one from each of his crayons, complaining about how he uses them.

**The One and Only Ivan** by Kathryn Applebee (2013 Newbery Award Winner). When Ivan, a gorilla who has lived for years in a down-and-out circus-themed mall, meets Ruby, a baby elephant that has been added to the mall, he decides that he must find a better life.

**The Year of Billy Miller** by Kevin Henkes. A funny story about a second-grader dealing with friendship, sibling rivalry and elementary school.

**KINDERGARTEN—GRADE 1 NONFICTION**

**ABC Zooborns!** by Andrew Bleiman. Scamper through the alphabet with a herd of irresistible zoo babies. Featuring adorable animal photos, zippy text, and a fact-filled glossary. This just might be the cutest ABC book ever!

**Anno's Counting Book** by Mitsumasa, Anno. Counting and number systems are introduced by showing mathematical relationships in nature.

**Around the World on Eighty Legs** by Amy Gibson. An illustrated collection of poems that provides information about animals around the world.

**Bugs! Bugs! Bugs!** by Bob Barner. A nonsense rhyme and a section of fun facts introduce children to familiar bugs.

**Comets, Stars, the Moon, and Mars** by Douglas Florian. A collection of twenty whimsical poems about comets, the stars, moon, and the planets.
**KINDERGARTEN—GRADE 1 NONFICTION**

*Hatch!* by Roxie Munro. Presents illustrations of various eggs with related clues, prompting readers to guess which type of bird laid the eggs.

*How Many Baby Pandas?* by Sandra Markle. Basic counting skills combine with panda facts to introduce readers to numbers along with these cuddly cubs, from the moment they were born to the time they started climbing trees. Tracked as they play and grow in captivity, until they are strong enough to be released into the wild, these baby pandas will steal any reader’s heart!

*How To* by Julie Morstad. Explores simple, amusing ways in which to do things.

*Insects* (Pebble Books Series). Young scientists can use these books to discover similarities and differences among unique creatures. Includes bibliography, glossary, index, and Internet sites.

*More, Fewer, Less* by Tana Hoban. Photos fire the minds with a full-color lesson on quantities. Where are there more? Or where are there less?

*My First Day* by Steven Jenkins. A beautiful book about what baby animals do on the day they are born. Over twenty different animals are described.

*On the Farm* (Pebble Books Series). Beginning readers learn about each farm animal’s physical appearance, basic needs, and why farmers raise these types of animals.

*Pale Male: Citizen Hawk of New York City* by Janet Schulman. Recounts the true story of Pale Male, a red-tailed hawk living in New York City, who has become one of the city’s most-watched celebrities as bird watchers, tourists, and residents admire the bird and his nest which is built on a Fifth Avenue apartment building.

*Peace* by Wendy Halperin. A lovely book full of watercolor art that gracefully tries to explain the concept of peace using different view points.

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**GRADES 2-4  FICTION SERIES**

*39 Clues Series* by various authors. An adventure series about Dan and Amy, orphans searching for the 39 clues that will lead to the secret of their lineage

*A to Z Mysteries Series* by Ron Roy. An exciting mystery series about Dink and his friends who solve mysteries.

*Bad Kitty Series* by Nick Bruel. The comical adventures of Bad Kitty, the neighborhood cat!

*Bink and Gollie Series* by Kate DiCamillo. Two best girlfriends—one tiny, one tall—share humorous adventures involving outrageously bright socks, an impromptu trek to the Andes, and a most unlikely marvelous companion.

*Franny K. Stein Series* by Jim Benton. A fun series about a girl who is a mad scientist.

*Magic Tree House Series* by Mary Pope Osborne. A suspenseful fantasy series in which Jack and Annie travel through time.

*Mercy Watson Series* by Kate DiCamillo. Mercy Watson is an adorable pet pig who lives with her family, the Watsons. Join Mercy on a series of funny and exciting adventures from trick-or-treating to driving the family car!


*The Dragon in the Sock Drawer (The Dragon Keepers series)* by Kate Klimo. *The Dragon in the Sock Drawer* is the first book in a series by author Kate Klimo. In this series readers can image what it would be like to find a dragon egg, hatch it and raise a dragon. Would you be up to the challenge?
GRADES 2-4 NONFICTION

Locomotive by Brian Floca. Caldecott winner with detailed exploration of America’s early railroads. This book will appeal to train buffs of many ages.

Mirror Mirror by Marilyn Singer. This beautifully illustrated book renews the fun and magic of both poetry and fairy tales with a twist! First, read the poems forward, then reverse the lines and read again to give familiar tales, from Sleeping Beauty to that Charming Prince, a fun new spin.

Never Smile at a Monkey: And 17 Other Important Things to Remember by Steve Jenkins. Incredible cut paper illustrations highlight eighteen creatures whose weapons of teeth, claws, spines, and venom make them dangerous to humans, while the captivating text explains what you should never do if you encounter one of these animals.

Nic Bishop Snakes by Nic Bishop. A brilliant examination of snakes including full page photographs with detailed captions. Includes descriptions of uncommon snakes, and an afterward describing the difficulties in photographing the snakes.


Orangutans Are Ticklish: Fun Facts From an Animal Photographer by Jill Davis. Provides interesting facts about animals and explores what it takes to photograph them, with animal photographer Steve Grubman sharing some of his favorite and scariest encounters.

Water Sings Blue: Ocean Poems by Kate Coombs. A lovely book with 23 poems about the sea including humorous and more contemplative poems. Different poetic forms are used for this beautiful collection.

KINDERGARTEN—GRADE 1 FICTION

123 versus ABC by Mike Boldt. Numbers and letters, the colorful characters in this story, compete to be the stars of this book.

Again! by Emily Gravett. It’s nearly Cedric the dragon’s bedtime, and for Cedric, bedtime means storytime! When his mother reads him his favorite book, he likes the story so much that he wants to hear it over and over again.

Any Titles by Eric Carle. Whimsical tales such as The Very Hungry Caterpillar and The Very Busy Spider will enchant readers with Eric Carle’s brightly colored illustrations and engaging prose.

Bailey Goes Camping by Kevin Henkes. Bailey is too young to go camping with the Bunny Scouts, but his parents take him on a special camping trip—in the house.

Bats at the Beach by Brian Lies. On a night when the moon is full, bats pack their moon-tan lotion and baskets of treats and fly off for some fun on the beach.
KINDERGARTEN—GRADE 1 FICTION

Cool Dog, School Dog by Deborah Heiligman. Tinka, a dandy, sandy Golden Retriever, pays a surprise visit to her owner at school and helps his class learn to read. Join the excitement in this playful back-to-school story about a boy and his "loves-to-hear-a-book" dog.

Creepy Carrots by Peter Brown (2012 Caldecott Honor Award). The carrots that grow in Crackenhopper Field are the fattest and crispiest around. Jasper Rabbit cannot resist pulling some to eat each time he passes by, until he begins hearing and seeing creepy carrots wherever he goes!

Elephant and Piggie Series; Pigeon Series by Mo Willems. Comical books that follow the antics of Elephant, Piggie and the Pigeon will provide many chuckles and lots of fun!

Fly Guy Series by Tedd Arnold. Fly Guy is not your average fly, and children will love the way in which this likeable little creature communicates with the people around him. Humorous illustrations fill the pages and the text is easy to read!

Frog and Toad Series by Arnold Lobel. Simple, often funny, short stories about good friends Frog and Toad. Some of their adventures include: attempting to fly a kite, and cleaning Toad's messy house as opposed to waiting until "tomorrow" to do so.

Goldilicious; Pinkalicious; Purplicious; Silverlicious; Emeraldlicious by Victoria Kann. These sparkling picture books, filled with favorite things in each color, celebrate all things pink, purple, silver, etc. while showing that being yourself is best of all.

Gorillas by Gail Gibbons. An illustrated introduction to gorillas, describing their physical characteristics, behaviors, diets, and other related topics.

Henry Aaron's Dream by Matt Tavares. In this beautiful picture book biography of Henry "Hank" Aaron, Henry overcomes many obstacles to realize his childhood dream of becoming a major league baseball player.

Henry and the Cannons: An Extraordinary True Story of the American Revolution by Don Brown. A well written biography about a bookseller who helped move 59 cannons during the Revolutionary War, that were needed to help George Washington fight an important battle.

Hide and Seek: Nature's Best Vanishing Acts by Andrea Helman. This beautifully photographed book takes the reader to ecosystems around the world to show how animals camouflage themselves for protection in each unique habitat.

Inkblot: Drip, Splat, and Squish Your Way to Creativity by Margaret Peot. In addition to interesting facts about the world of art, step-by-step instructions and examples are provided for using inkblots to spark creativity.


Just a Second: A Different Way to Look at Time by Steve Jenkins. A great nonfiction title about how we think about time, encompassing science and math with many unusual facts.
GRADES 2—4 NONFICTION

Can We Save the Tiger? by Martin Jenkins. A beautifully illustrated nonfiction book about ways to save the tiger from extinction.

Crazy About Soccer! by Loris Lesynski. A new collection of poems that capture the joys, thrills and challenges of one of the most popular sports on the playground.

Derek Jeter by Sandra Donovan. A well written and informative biography of the Yankees shortstop.

Diggin’ Dirt Science Adventures with Kitanai the Orgami Dog by Thomas Kingsley Troupe. When Kitanai the origami dog tries to find the source of an interesting smell in the garden, he meets Roger, an earthworm who teaches him all about dirt, the different layers of dirt, and the importance of dirt to life on Earth. Includes instructions for making an origami dog.

Dreaming Up: A Celebration of Building by Christy Hale. This poetry collection features illustrations and photographs that show how young children’s constructions, created as they play, are reflected in notable works of architecture from around the world.

Golden Domes & Silver Lanterns; A Muslim Book of Colors by Hena Khan. Magnificently capturing the colorful world of Islam for the youngest readers, this informative picture book celebrates Islam’s beauty and traditions. From a red prayer rug to a blue hijab, everyday colors are given special meaning as young readers learn about clothing, food, and other important elements of Islamic culture.

Gravity by Jason Chin. Stunning artwork on a complex subject highlight this beautiful expandable book.

Helen’s Big World: The Story of Helen Keller by Doreen Rappaport. A lovely biography with quotes and excerpts from letters. This biography is particularly well written and visually appealing.

How Rocket Learned to Read by Tad Hills. An irresistible dog named Rocket finds an unexpected reading teacher in a little yellow bird. Follow along as Rocket masters the alphabet, sounds out words, and finally learns to read all on his own!

If You Give a Cat a Cupcake by Laura Numeroff. The latest in the If You Give...series by Laura Numeroff features a familiar cat whose every whim is indulged by a young friend.

Ivy and Bean by Annie Barrows. This series features humorous stories about two mischievous and delightful girlfriends, Ivy and Bean, who were never meant to like each other in the first place!

Judy Moody Series by Megan McDonald. An enjoyable series about a free-spirited third grade girl.

Maple by Lori Nichols. A young girl and a tree grow up together. A whimsical joy.

Maria Had a Little Llama by Angela Dominguez. New twist to classic rhyme with Peruvian-inspired illustrations. Text in English and Spanish.

Mr. Wuffles! by David Wiesner. Near wordless book about a cat playing with a little spaceship full of aliens—but the ship wasn’t designed for rough treatment.

Rocket Learns to Write by Tad Hills. Rocket wants to write a book, but he can’t think of a story. His friend, the little yellow bird, encourages him to look closely at the world around him for inspiration. As he follows the bird’s advice, Rocket discovers small details that he has never noticed before, makes friends with a shy baby owl, and finds an idea for his story.

Shark vs. Train by Chris Barton. A shark and a train compete in a series of contests on a seesaw, in hot air balloons, bowling, shooting baskets, playing hide-and-seek, and more.

Sleep Like a Tiger by Mary Logue. A young girl who is not sleepy, incorporates the sleeping habits of animals into her own bedtime routine. A lovely story with beautiful artistic details.
KINDERGARTEN—GRADE 1 FICTION

That is Not a Good Idea! by Mo Willems. A suspenseful, funny and thrilling story of a fox trying to outsmart a goose. It’s structured like a silent movie with commentary accompanying each new situation.

This is Not My Hat by Jon Klassen. (2013 Caldecott Award Winner). Follow the antics of a small silly fish as he tries to steal a blue hat from the big fish as he sleeps. This little fish has an answer for everything, but will he succeed in keeping the hat?

Whose Shoes? A Shoe for Every Job by Stephen Swinburne. There is a right shoe for every job! Swinburne explores various occupations through a simple, lively text and bright, colorful photographs. The book includes a guessing game that invites young readers to guess which shoe matches which job.

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”
— Nelson Mandela

GRADES 2–4 NONFICTION

All in the Family: A Look-It-Up Guide to the In-Laws, Outlaws, and Offspring of Mythology by Steven Otfinoski. Greek mythology hall of famers meet the modern age in a new series that brings the superstars of Greek mythology to life.

Animal Heroes: True Rescue Stories by Sandra Markle. Nine riveting tales share examples of animals saving humans, along with photos and extra information and insights into animal behavior.

Animal Superstars: and more true stories of amazing animal talents by Aline Alexander Newman. High interest, easy-to-read text filled with amusing anecdotes traces the animals’ paths from obscurity to performing fame.

Baseball Hour by Carol Nevius. All baseball players will enjoy the rhythmic rhyming of this story and photo-like illustrations of children practicing baseball in an effort to build a winning team and, ultimately, a circle of friends.

Biblioburro: A True Story From Colombia by Jeanette Winter. Luis has so many books in his house in Colombia that he buys two donkeys and travels throughout the land bringing books to children.

Brothers at Bat: The True Story of an All-Brother Baseball Team by Audrey Vernick. A true tale of the Acerra family who in the 1930’s had sixteen children, twelve of them being baseball playing boys.