

## **Suggested Summer Activities for Kindergarteners**

**Tip #1:** Make learning fun! You definitely don't want summer practice to become a battle between you and your child. Keep things fun and light by using games, technology, and educational day trips to engage your child.

**Tip #2:** Use what's free and close by. The library is your best friend! Visit it every week or every two weeks so your child can check out new reading material and use the computers. Many libraries have summer reading programs with incentives (prizes!). Use the internet to search for other opportunities in your area. Local museums, planetariums, and even hardware stores may offer fun (and sometimes free) activities for children, especially during the summer.

**Tip #3:** Motivate your child with technology! Here are some helpful links that you and your child can visit over the summer:

- [ABCya.com](#) (variety of fun math and reading games)
- [11 Free Reading Websites](#) (with real stories for kids to read and listen to)
- [Sheppard Software](#) (reading, math, science, and social studies games)

**Tip #4:** Use apps! Many families have smartphones, iPads, or other tablets. Turn playtime into learning time by downloading educational apps. Check out the links below for some reviews of age-appropriate apps for your rising first grader:

- [A variety of app reviews](#) by teacherswithapps
- [Top apps for kids ages 6-8](#) by Smart Apps for kids
- [10 math apps for little ones](#) by playful learning

Tip #5: Read, read, and read some more! Kids can actually gain (rather than lose) reading proficiency when they have practice during the summer. When choosing books that are just right for your soon-to-be first grader, have your child read aloud the first 2 pages to you. If each page has just a few sentences on it, your child should be able to read all but about 2 of the words. If there are more than 3 tricky words on these two pages, this is a good indication that the book is too hard for your child and will frustrate him/her. You'll want to choose a variety of books, of course – some that are too hard for your child but that you can read aloud to her, and some that are just right for your child to read independently. Here are some fun books that may be appropriate for your child to read independently, or with just a little help:

Titles: *Bath Time* (Lucy Malka); *Bathtime for Biscuit* (Alyssa Capucilli); *Tiny Goes to the Library* (Cari Meister); *Tiny, the Snow Dog* (Cari Meister); *Mrs. Wishy-Washy* (Joy Cowley); *Hi! Fly Guy* (Tedd Arnold); *The New Baby* (Mercer Mayer); *Biscuit Finds a Friend* (Alyssa Capucilli); *My Friend is Sad* (Mo Willems); *I Love My New Toy!* (Mo Willems)

There are, of course, tons more great books out there. Your librarian may have lists or suggestions for you, too! In many libraries, there is an “easy reader” section that you may want to check out.

Tip #6: Integrate learning into everyday activities. For example, your child can easily practice writing by helping you make a grocery list. You can dictate what you want on the list, and your child can write down the words. Don't focus too much on correct spelling, unless your child insists on it. What is most important is having your child practice listening for the sounds in words and then writing them down. Other fun summer writing ideas: have your child keep a daily or weekly journal, write a postcard to a friend or relative, write letters to his/her Kindergarten teacher, or write about a vacation trip.

Tip #7: Play car games! Here are some ideas:

– Play “Find the Alphabet.” Look for the letters (or things that start with each letter) from A to Z, in order. This works best for long car trips. You can start by saying, “I see an airplane; that starts with ‘a.’ Can you find something that starts with ‘b’?” or “I see the letter ‘a’ on that license plate. Can you find the letter ‘b’?”

– Play “Make Ten.” Fluently knowing pairs of numbers that add up to 10 will help your child tremendously in first grade. Find a number less than 10, and then have your child find the number that can be added to it to make 10. For example, you might see the number “3” on a billboard and say, “I see the number 3. What other number would we need to make 10?” (seven) “Let’s look for the number 7!”

– Have a sight word search. Have your child shout out any sight words he/she sees on billboards and recognizes instantly.

Tip #8: Choose board games that can help your child practice math. Here are some classics that will help your child practice counting and identifying numbers:

- Chutes and Ladders
- Candy Land
- Sorry!
- Hi Ho Cherry-O
- Monopoly Junior Party

In addition to helping your child practice math skills, board games are a great way to spend family time together, as well as to help your child learn to be a good sport.

Tip #9: Take out the camera! Kids love working with pictures of themselves! There are lots of learning activities that you and your child can do with photos. Here are a few ideas:

- Take a series of pictures of your child doing a simple activity or chore (i.e. making a peanut butter sandwich). Then, print out the pictures – 1 per page – and have your child write a book to teach someone how to do the activity.
- Have your child make an alphabet book by taking pictures of things in your home / outside that start with each letter of the alphabet.
- After taking a vacation or special trip, print out photos (1 per page). Have your child write captions for the photos and staple them together to create a memory book.

Tip #10: Last but not least...don't forget to take time to relax! Summer camps, vacations, sports games, and summer homework are great, but don't forget to leave your child some "down time." When your child has free time, she'll have the opportunity to use her imagination, be creative, and get to know herself better. Even if your family has a busy schedule, be sure to build in some down time before the new school year begins. Enjoy the summer!!