

# Ideas to support your child's learning over the summer

## Phonics

- Display letter sounds or 3/4 letter words (such as cat, sat, mat, pin, pig or tent, camp, melt or tilt) somewhere obvious – maybe in your child's bedroom or on the fridge.
- Use magnetic fridge letters to make words together.
- Match letter sounds and pictures together and play pairs.
- Mark making outside: give your child some water and different sizes of paint brushes and encourage your child to participate in a mark making activity outside. They can write their names or draw pictures. Maybe you can write some CVC words and your child can read them? You can also write on sand.
- Encourage your child to spot letter sounds and simple CVC words they recognise in the books you read at bedtime.
- Encourage your child to sign their name on any postcards you send on holiday.
- Play a game of 'phonics' musical statues. Write some decodable words (or individual sounds) on pieces of paper (you could use words, such as cup, pen, tap). Put some music on and have a dance around. Once the music stops, run to one of the words and sound it out.
- Have a go at making word jigsaw puzzles. Write a word on a piece of paper and carefully cut it into pieces so that each letter sound is on a separate piece. Can you arrange the pieces and read the word.
- Introduce your child to a soft toy that can only speak in 'sound talk'. Place the toy on the floor or on a table with a selection of pictures or objects. Then the toy says: "I spy with my little eye a b-ed." Then invite your child to say the name of the object and hold it up. Repeat with other CVC word examples such as: mat, cup, map, pin, top, cat, dog, cap, pin, bin.

### **Some helpful educational website suggestions:**

- <https://scratch.mit.edu/>
- <http://www.natgeokids.com/uk/>
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/games/alphablocks-games>
- [www.busythings.com](http://www.busythings.com)
- <https://www.topmarks.co.uk/maths-games/3-5-years/counting>

### **Some helpful educational apps:**

- Reading Eggs
- Lingumi
- Phonics Hero
- Cbeebies Playtime Island
- Elma loves 123's
- Busy Things

## Maths

- Symmetry - find some natural objects such as twigs, shells or stones and encourage your child to make a symmetrical picture.
- Play mathematical games such as snakes and ladders and any game involving a dice
- Collect 20 leaves from the park and use a thick marker pen to number them 1-20. Use a hole punch to make a hole and thread them in order onto a piece of wool.
- Use your child's favourite toys to motivate them to count, sort and group objects and solve simple calculations.
- Look at some recipes with your child. Make a shopping list together and go and buy the required ingredients. Support your child to help prepare simple recipes by counting amounts e.g. 'Can you put 2 cups of flour into the bowl?'
- Count coins: Look at some coins with your child. What different coins can you find? What shapes and colours are they? What pictures and numbers can you see on them?

## Creativity

- For an ongoing activity, invite children to set up their own gardening project. Allow them to have a small section of the garden or a planting area or they can plant a pot of their own. They should be responsible for digging, weeding, lifting soil, planting seeds, watering, weeding and pruning (unconsciously working on gross and fine motor skills as they go!) Why not start off with some sunflower seeds or a small strawberry plant to get them going.
- Support and enjoy fine motor activities. You could try putting cereal hoops onto spaghetti or adding food colouring to pipettes for squeezing paint onto paper towels and watching the colours mix together.
- Throw out usual painting activity plans and go large and bring out the water shooters in this case! Load up some water shooters with fun water paints and let the fun begin! Let the children squirt the shooters at some blank paper and see what colourful creations they can come up with.
- Why not try flower arranging with your little one? Embrace the colours of the season with a cheery fine motor activity as children can arrange flowers in an upside-down colander, making beautiful floral creations.
- This fun game is another way to let children practise cutting and develop their fine motor skills. Tape some plastic animals into a muffin tin and let the kids try to free them. You can also use string and have kids release the animals with their fingers through the complicated web.
- Art projects take on a greater magnitude outside. With chunky chalk and paint, help your child to create hopscotch tracks, a road for their toy cars or even a beautiful large-scale picture. Practise tracing one another and then draw faces and clothing on the empty forms. Without the worry of a mess to clean up, let them paint, colour and create to their heart's content.

## Reception Readiness

If your little one is moving up to Reception in September. Why not try the following activities to support them:

- Build concentration and resilience by enjoying a building kit together.
- Build independence by giving a few responsibilities over the summer, such as looking after a pet, laying the table, helping with supper or watering the plants.
- Classroom instructions often contain several parts for children to remember. A simple game of 'Simon Says' or use a different name during long car journeys this summer could really help. Give your child an instruction to do, like 'Simon says put your finger on your nose' and see if they can follow your instruction.
- At school, children will be expected to start extending their vocabulary, so it is a good idea to encourage your child to learn and use new words. You could play sorting games when packing a suitcase as this is a great way to help word categorisation which is important for learning vocabulary.
- Your child will be given many spoken instructions throughout the school day and will need to be able to shift their attention from what they are doing to listening to what the teacher is saying. A lovely activity to promote this is to go on a 'listening walk' where your child listens for all the sounds around them in the park or town centre.

## 25 quick activity ideas- Why not try them all!

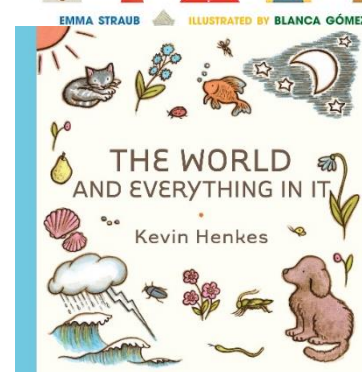
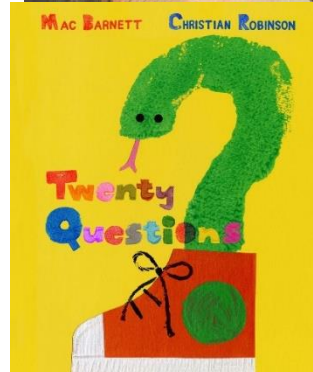
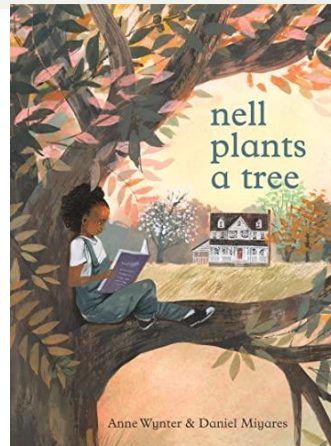
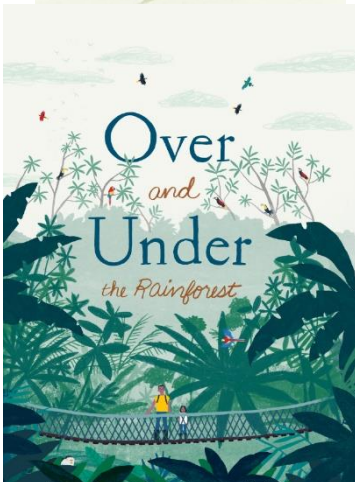
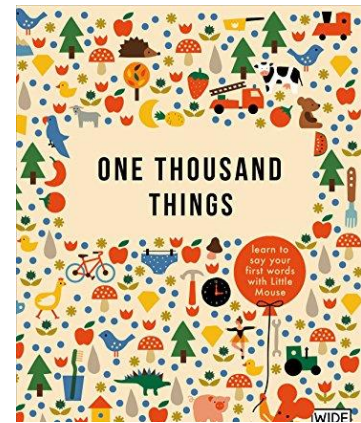
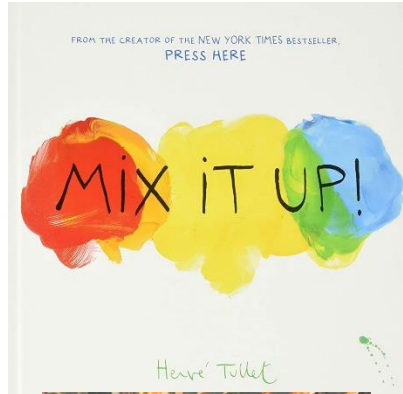
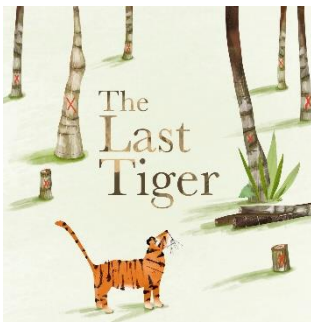
- Make a den
- Go on a wildflower hunt
- Climb a tree
- Use string or wool to create an indoor or outdoor laser grid
- Write someone a postcard
- Go on a minibeast hunt
- Make a daisy chain
- Make a bug hotel
- Read a book by an author you've never tried before
- Fly a paper plane
- Lay a trail for someone to follow
- Colour a set of story stones
- Learn a card game
- Identify different types of trees from their leaves



- Make a bookmark
- Create a model from recycled materials
- Go on a butterfly hunt
- Go fruit-picking
- Plant flowers or vegetables
- Learn about a different country
- Make a mini book with illustrations
- Make a collage out of natural objects
- Learn how to say hello in five different languages
- Make your own playdough
- Build a dried spaghetti and marshmallow tower



**Some recommended books to borrow from the library:**





## Reading Support for the Holidays

**In the first five years neurological pathways develop faster than any other time in your child's life. The Early Years are crucial for fostering a lifelong love of reading. The more you read to your child, the better and more varied their vocabulary will become.**

**Reading to your child is just as important as reading with your child to help support their enthusiasm for reading.**

**Be consistent.** Whether it's one book per day or 5, try to make reading a part of your routine.

**Take your time.** Leave enough time to read. After the bath or bedtime is the perfect opportunity to spend some time relaxing and enjoying a book together.

**Make it fun.** Why not try using different voices for characters or songs to make the story come to life. Reading with expression and enthusiasm will help your child better understand the story. It also provides a good model of expressive and fluent reading.

**Point out connections.** Children love applying stories to their own lives. It not only makes the text meaningful, but it also may help your child cope with situations they may encounter in their everyday experience.

**Don't stop with books.** Any exchange of words is beneficial. So if you're feeling inspired why not try looking at the pictures and making up your own version of the story?



**Here are some top tips to support your child's reading development whilst reading with to your child:**

- What is happening? Talk about the pictures before you read the text. What can you see?
- Discuss the meaning of words that are unfamiliar.
- Track the words with your finger as you read. This will encourage your child to look at the words as you read them.
- Discuss alternative 'juicy' (adjectives) words. For example 'small'. Ask your child to think of another word that means the same, e.g. 'tiny'. You could even introduce them to a thesaurus!
- Make predictions. What do you think might happen next?
- Where is the story set? Can you draw comparisons to other stories? e.g. The Gruffalo and Little Red Riding hood are both set in the woods.
- Is the book fiction or non-fiction? How do you know? What have you learnt?
- Pretend that you are unable to read particular words within your child's phonic knowledge and ask them to read them to you.