

June 1, 2016

Dear Parents,

We hope that all of the families of Sacred Heart are enjoying this first week of summer vacation. Although it is a time of rest, it is also important to remember those skills learned during the school year, especially reading. As summer begins and a new routine sets in, we strongly encourage you to make reading a priority with your child. In addition to stimulating the imagination and providing a great recreational activity, reading over the summer can help minimize summer learning losses. There are no limits to the benefits of reading.

To help you establish a reading culture in your home and to keep your child's reading skills sharp, Sacred Heart is providing reading logs for students going into 1<sup>st</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> grades, as well as recommended minutes per week each child should read. For your convenience, Ms. Lizzie Cossé has also provided a recommended reading list for each grade.

Students in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades will simply turn in their reading log on August 8<sup>th</sup> to their teacher. Students in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades will turn in their log, but will also use their summer reading for an additional activity in their class. To further encourage summer reading, we will have a fun incentive for all of those students who turn in a completed log on August 8<sup>th</sup>. **Be sure to print out the reading log and post it in a prominent place in your home so it can be seen every day!**

Rather than making it a chore or dreaded activity, try to make reading a fun and exciting activity that your child looks forward to *every day*. Here are some strategies or ideas from Ms. Lizzie for making reading fun in your home:

- Establish reading time every day. For example, read a few books together every night before bed. Or establish a “relax and reading hour” every day, perhaps after they come home from camp or from playing outside. Whatever works with your schedule!
- Try to avoid negative language with reading. Reading shouldn't be a chore and DEFINITELY shouldn't be a punishment; it should be a fun and relaxing part of their day!
- Save money on books and visit one of our AMAZING five-star libraries in EBR. Allow your child, with a little bit of guidance, to pick out a good stack of books for themselves.
- Participate in East Baton Rouge Parish Library's Summer Reading Program: Check Meowt... Read Something Groovy! More information can be found here: <http://www.ebrpl.com/summerreading/index.html>
- Create a “Summer Reading Bucket List” with every family member, where each person lists all the books they want to read over the summer! (Be sure the adults participate too!)

- Find fun new places to read! Make a blanket fort, read under the trees outside, visit the park and have a picnic.
- Lead by example! Read to your child, ask them to read to you, or share a book together. Read magazines, books, and newspapers around them.
- Listen to audiobooks on long car rides. These can also be checked out from the public library!
- Encourage siblings to read to one another to strengthen their fluency and speaking skills.
- Have your child make a list of all the books read this summer. They can then rate each book with stickers on a scale from 1 – 5, based on how much they enjoyed them!
- Don't be afraid to read the same favorites over and over again. Don't be worried if your child is reading mostly comic books. Try not to force them to read a book they are resisting. Remember – ANY reading is POSITIVE reading! ☺

We hope your family has a restful and fun-filled summer break. Don't forget: even if you can't get away from Baton Rouge for a vacation, you can always escape in a book!

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