

## Helping children to keep learning over the summer holidays

Everyone welcomes the opportunity the summer break presents to recharge batteries but as parents you will know those few weeks can also present a challenge! That may be because your children soon tire of 'r and r' and want to busy their minds or because you can't get them to focus their minds away from things you would rather they avoided. You may also be aware that a long break can cause an unhelpful break in children's learning (sometimes referred to as 'summer learning loss') so it may be even more important than we thought to occupy bright minds during the long summer break. NACE has some suggestions for summer activities to keep your children learning and their minds active.

### Lazy summer reads

Set aside time for your child to read each day. 15 – 30 minutes a day can make a big difference to their interest and ability in reading. Add to the family calendar of activities and read with your child if you think they need that. Keep a dictionary nearby to check out meanings. Seeing you read can also be a positive influence, hearing you talk about it. Your child could always keep a “spelling blog” to learn and practice new words encountered. Practice understanding of reading too through related activities and questions.

Where to go /what to read:

Check out your local library, reading/book charities or any summer reading groups. Some e-readers also provide free downloadable reading material. Good websites for reading materials and comprehension tasks include:  
[http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/resources/practical\\_resources\\_info](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/resources/practical_resources_info)  
<https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/reading-owl/find-a-book>

The Book Trust <http://www.booktrust.org.uk/> has recommended reading lists for children and young people of all ages as well as a Book Club they can join for free. Check out too <http://www.storymuseum.org.uk/1001stories/>

Get involved in the Summer Reading Challenge, designed to get kids reading at least six books from their local lending library during the summer holidays.

The challenge was set up by a charity called The Reading Agency, and every year has a different theme. It's been set up with 4 to 11 year-olds in mind and is a great way to get them excited about books.

<http://summerreadingchallenge.org.uk/join-in>

### It's Maths and Science – but not as you know them....

Working on maths and science problems during the summer can prevent children's skills in these areas from rusting – and even engage them more in these subjects through motivating and fun activities. NACE recommends the following websites which children can use independently as well as supported by an enthusiastic parent!

Secondary

Thinking Mathematically: <http://nrich.maths.org/mathematically>

Topics in Secondary Mathematics: <http://nrich.maths.org/topics> Wild Maths:

<http://wild.maths.org>

Primary

a collection of activities and articles relating to the more able in maths at KS 1 and 2. Most of the activities do not require advanced subject knowledge but rather good thinking and problem solving skills together with a thirst for asking “I wonder what would happen if I . . .?”

[www.nrich.maths.org/12509](http://www.nrich.maths.org/12509)

[www.nrich.maths.org/12510](http://www.nrich.maths.org/12510)

[www.nrich.maths.org/12511](http://www.nrich.maths.org/12511)

[www.nrich.maths.org/12512](http://www.nrich.maths.org/12512)

[www.nrich.maths.org/12517](http://www.nrich.maths.org/12517)

The UK Maths Trust's Individual Maths Challenges are lively, intriguing multiple choices:

<https://www.ukmt.org.uk/individual-competitions/>

### It's Maths and Science – but not as you know them....

For challenging and fun science linked activities these have been highly recommended:

[http://rigb.org/education/games?gclid=Cly63ajsts0CFUI\\_GwodBt4EnQ](http://rigb.org/education/games?gclid=Cly63ajsts0CFUI_GwodBt4EnQ)

<http://www.sciencekids.co.nz/experiments.html>

<http://www.britishtscienceassociation.org/crest-star>

### **My pet project**

Giving a child or young person free rein to choose something to work on which really enthuses and excites them can be an excellent learning experience. Projects could include creative writing, producing a play or piece of music or art as well as research type projects linked to particular subjects e.g. nature, astronomy, history, geography.

Good prompts for creative writing can be found in the reading websites already mentioned and e.g. [www.pebble.com](http://www.pebble.com) which contains hundreds of images to fire the imagination.

<https://www.tes.com/teaching-resource/prompts-and-ideas-for-story-writing-6120755>

<http://www.creativewritingink.co.uk/resources/writing-prompts/>

Projects can of course be supported by a range of reading, subject books, visits and don't forget museums, cultural and scientific and publishing organisations as a rich source of information (e.g.

Natural History Museum [www.nhm.ac.uk](http://www.nhm.ac.uk); NASA

<https://www.nasa.gov/>; <http://www.ngkids.co.uk/>)

Children and young people benefit from guidance on how to carry our projects. Resources such as My Shout! is a password-protected website, developed by the Open University, to teach young people how to design, plan and carry out their own research. Schools can also offer help with this.

<http://www.open.ac.uk/researchprojects/childrens-research-centre/crc-projects/myshout>

### **Go to places**

Most families plan outings and visits during the summer break but don't forget that museums, theatres, cinemas and galleries often put on special summer events for children and young people as well as having activities especially designed for them. Find out where your local parks and nature spaces are too and create your own 'spring watch' or history trail in your locality. Many activities are free.

Local newspapers and tourist offices will also provide information about activities and events for young people in your region.

**For more information:**

The National Association for Able Children in Education [www.NACE.co.uk](http://www.NACE.co.uk)

and

NACE Essentials Guide: 'Educating More Able Children: A Guide for Parents and Carers'

NACE partner Rising Stars publishers: <https://www.risingstars-uk.com/Subjects/Parents>

<http://www.netmums.com/activities/g/educational-websites-for-children>

AQUILA is a fun educational magazine for children who enjoy challenges, featuring maths, science and English.

<https://www.aquila.co.uk/>

You may also find the following useful in considering your child's safety when using the internet:

<http://www.kidsmart.org.uk/downloads/searchGuide.pdf>

**WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO**

NACE (National Association for Able Children in Education) is a national education charity. Established in 1983, NACE is at the forefront of providing high quality support for teachers, leading to proven impact on outcomes for more able pupils. We annually support over 2,000 primary and secondary schools.

NACE experts have been involved in the writing and production of materials commissioned by the English and Welsh governments and have represented NACE on a number of government advisory bodies. We are a membership led organisation, although schools can access a number of our services without becoming members.

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