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SUNCOAST The Campaign for GRADE-LEVEL READING

3rd Grade Reading Success Matters

Summer has arrived full speed ahead. Sometimes the transition can feel a little sticky and tricky as you sort out plans, new schedules, have tos, want tos, and all the in betweens. Here are some ideas on how to set things in motion for a smooth summer.

Create some structure.

Whether you have kids at camp or kids at home, make a schedule for yourselves. You can loosen the reins on early mornings and later evenings so it feels like summer and create a schedule that is both fitting and fun—and then stick with it! Structure helps to calm the crazies for the whole family, leaving a lot more room for fun family experiences.

Carve time for summer learning opportunities (it's easier than it sounds!).

Our secret? Learning happens everywhere. Remember Suncoast Remake Learning Days?! For 15 days, we watched the entire Suncoast region transform into a classroom. Hold onto that spirit of curiosity and keep your learning antennas up as you seek brain-building moments each and every day.

The summer slide is a real concern, but with a few simple shifts, success is within reach. What if some of the best opportunities to help children learn and grow are hiding in plain sight? Brain-building moments are all around us, waiting to be discovered. When caring adults embrace these everyday opportunities, learning continues all summer long!

Try some of these ideas:

1. Lean into the resources that already exist.

If you didn't sign up for THIS BOOK IS COOL!, don't sweat it. Registration is closed, but all of our resources are still available for you to use.

– Here is our TBIC! book guide by grade. (You can borrow all of these books from the library!)

– Here is a list with links to our webisode library for a deeper dive into the stories.

– Need some structured activities? When you click on any book in this webisode library, the corresponding activity is linked under each video.

For families with children 0-5, try Vroom – an app that shares daily tips for turning ordinary moments into brain-building moments. They also share the "brainy background" behind the tip to help families understand why these suggestions make a difference.

Visit your local library – libraries have all sorts of ongoing programming and special summer events, and many have summer reading challenges with prizes, too!

2. Going grocery shopping? Try some grocery store math!

Kids can work on reading labels, counting fruits or vegetables, practicing conversions with nutritional labels, learning about weight using the scales, practicing sorting by color or other differences, trying budgeting, comparing prices, creating equations to find the best price, and so much more!

At a self-checkout station, they can scan and check prices or learn about bagging groceries by considering the weight of an item, so things don't get smushed.

This doesn't have to feel like additional work. You are likely processing many of these things on autopilot in your mind, but we invite you to say it all out loud! Bring your children into the grocery conversation and create an ongoing brain-building experience. Plus, it makes shopping so much more fun for everyone!

3. Explore nature together. Science is all around us.

– Backyard scavenger hunts – it's a sensory sensation out there!

– **Gardening/yard work chores** – dirt, worms, plant anatomy, life cycles, and more!
– **Beach trips** – marine science!
– **Hurricane season** – hello climate science!
– **Bonus**: Check out this very cool resource from NASA for kids interested in science!
– **Cleaning the house?** Great lessons in responsibility and independence!
– **Cooking?** We're talking science, math, skill building, and more!

Simply involving children in chores, errands, cooking, and daily tasks invites them into a world of possibilities. With every conversation and experience, their world expands. Talk out loud about each task (this builds literacy skills and grows their knowledge base about different subjects), let them play freely inside and outside (curiosity is at the crux of all learning), and use resources like the internet, libraries, museums, and more to support where their curiosities lead them.

Ben Tollefson sat in the hot seat on this month's episode of Connecting Communities, a Beyond The Blog podcast by The Patterson Foundation, to share about SCGLR's THIS BOOK IS COOL! program. As we mentioned earlier, the summer slide is a real concern, most particularly for our asset-limited families. Research spanning 100 years has proven that students experience academic learning loss when they are out of school for the summer and do not engage in educational activities.

We hope you'll tune in to this episode to learn more about how the Suncoast Campaign is focused on creating opportunities to stop the "summer slide" and help close the achievement gap.

Voter Education: Tip of the Month!

Our Voter Education initiative is helping support the spirit of civic responsibility in our Suncoast region and wants to ensure you have all the information you need to vote when the time comes. Check out their Tip of the Month!

Check Your Registration
As election season approaches, it is important to stay informed about voter registration deadlines and Florida's updated vote-by-mail requirements. Taking a

few minutes now to confirm your registration and voting plan can ensure your voice is heard on Election Day. Check Your Voter Registration.

Voting By Mail in Florida
Florida's voting laws regarding vote-by-mail ballots have changed. All vote-by-mail requests expired in 2024. All voters who wish to vote by mail must renew their request after every general election cycle.

Upcoming Election Deadlines

– **Voter Registration Deadline:** Primary 7/2/26 | Midterm 10/5/26
– **Vote-By-Mail Request Deadline:** 5:00 PM on the 12th day before the election
– **Election Day:** Tuesday, August 18, 2026, 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM

Visit your county Supervisor of Elections website for information and to submit your request: Charlotte, DeSoto, Manatee, and Sarasota.

For more detailed election information, download our fliers in English or Spanish.

Voting is one way to make your voice heard, but civic engagement extends far beyond Election Day. Learn why The Patterson Foundation (TPF) believes investing in civic responsibility strengthens communities in this episode of Civic Sparks, featuring host Leah Verier-Dunn and TPF President and CEO Debra Jacobs.

Let's Keep Connecting

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