

Summer reading: So much to discover, so little time

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FULL TEXT

Right now is the perfect time to head down to your public library and register for their Summer Reading Program.

Summer is when children and young adults discover reading for pleasure instead of reading at the direction of their teachers.

George R. R. Martin, the author of "A Game of Thrones," famously said, "A reader lives a thousand lives before he dies. The man who never reads lives only one."

Now is the time for your child to find some of those other lives out there waiting to be discovered.

Once children are hooked on reading, their grades and test scores improve, they find that there are many more careers out there to consider after high school, and they have a broader vocabulary to express exactly what they are thinking.

Reading comprehension is a big part of taking placement and college entrance tests. Inhabiting others' lives in our imagination as we read helps us discover our place in the real world. And we all appreciate complete sentences.

The best part is that your child can achieve all that by having fun. Your public library has a Summer Reading Program designed for fun. There are Summer Reading Programs for toddlers, children, young adults and adults with incentives for reading that include small weekly prizes and chances at winning substantial prizes by reading enough to be entered into drawings. Some libraries even waive overdue fines for those who register.

Fox Cities public libraries have events planned throughout the summer that are designed to bring you and your family regularly back to the library so that you can catch up on Summer Reading Program milestones, collect your prizes and check out more books. This year, libraries in the Fox Cities are offering awesome events: magic shows, juggling acts, presenters with live animals, craft programs, family movie showings and Minecraft competitions. Check with your public library for specific events, dates and times.

You may be wondering why the libraries have reading incentive programs for adults. First, it's always more fun to participate in a Summer Reading Program as a family. And, if your child sees you reading, she will want to follow that example. If your child sees you enjoying a book, he will realize that reading is fun.

So, head in to your public library and register for the Summer Reading Program. Find out the rules for winning prizes.

Ask a librarian for book suggestions -- they're well-read and know age-appropriate books that will grab your child's

attention. Be sure to get that list of special events. And then stand back and watch your child blossom this summer.

Vicki Lenz is the director of Elisha D. Smith Public Library in Menasha. Officials from public libraries in the Fox Cities write monthly on library offerings and opportunities.

Illustration

Caption: Lenz

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