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For Immediate Release

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Packing for Vacation? Don't Forget the Kids' Summer Reading Books

It's the last month of summer, the traditional time for vacations near and far. If you've packed the sunscreen and the beach towels, there's just one more stop before heading out of town. Hit the local library for armloads of summer reading.

Studies show the value of summer reading for improving literacy levels and achievement when school starts in the fall. What many parents don't know is that any voluntary reading can have a positive effect.

So you don't necessarily have to load up on the classics when you're thinking about your child's vacation reads.

But how can parents help? Easy, says the New York State Library. Ask the experts.

There's a fine art to getting your kids interested in choosing books for summer and vacation reading. And your local librarians are artists at matching books to your child's age, personality and interests—suggestions that go way beyond the usual generic summer reading lists. Your library is also *the* place for guidebooks, atlases, reference materials, how-to books, as well as the better-known picture books, teen and adult novels, and non-fiction classics.

When you pack *lots* of reading options for kids, it encourages *lots* of reading. And with your good example, the family that reads together will grow together.

New York State libraries know that voluntary recreational reading also improves vocabulary and comprehension down the road.

Research has shown that reading over the summer improves fall school performance for students of all ages. "The road to academic success begins early, which is why early childhood learning and reading are so important," says U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan. "When we read to our kids, it helps them become better readers and develop a love of reading on their own."

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This Vacation, Don't Forget the Summer Reading

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Your public library is not only about the books, but is also about summer fun and creative activities. The New York Statewide Summer Reading Program—"Be Creative @ Your Library"—brings lots of vacation-time delights for kids of all ages. You can find summer fun activities, games, mysteries to solve, all that can be taken along on vacation for those rainy days and lying-in-the-cool-shade leisurely hours.

And what if your family has chosen a "staycation" this year, like 40 percent of all Americans? Even more reason to remember the local library! You can research local and regional day and weekend trips, check out how-to books and where-to-go guides, and start planning a fabulous staycation itinerary. Your local library will help you launch a thousand ideas, so you can get down to planning regional explorations and local adventures that won't break the bank.

This summer, across New York, history is the theme. The celebration of the New York State Hudson-Fulton-Champlain Quadricentennial offers events and activities across the State that can inspire your kids to become explorers. Your young ones and teens can become history detectives by heading down to the library and gathering a summer collection of books related to the cultural and historical diversity of your neck of the New York woods. So if you're staying close this summer, let your kids really delve into stories about local heroes and villains, lore and history.

Resources for parents, including lots of summer fun activities, can be found on the Summer Reading program's "Be Creative @ Your Library" website, www.summerreadingnys.org.

Last year more than 1.5 million young people participated in the New York Statewide Summer Reading Program, a program of the New York State Library in the Office of Cultural Education in the New York State Education Department funded through the Federal Library Services and Technology Act, with funds awarded to the New York State Library by the Federal Institute of Museum and Library Services.

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more at: <http://www.summerreadingnys.org/media>