

Maintaining Academic and Creative Fitness in the Summer Months

June 2019

Dear Parents and Students,

With the school year behind us, now is the time to give some thought to how to stay mentally engaged as you enjoy the change of pace and downtime that the next three months will bring. In order to return to school in September ready to pick up where things left off, it will be necessary to dedicate some time on a regular basis to keeping math, reading, writing, and thinking skills fresh and sharp.

For all grade levels, summer review in Language Arts, Mathematics, and French have been posted to the school website. Students in lower grades (Montessori - Grade 2) brought home individual summer packets containing instructions, activities, and suggestions for enrichment. All of the information in the packets will be accessible on the GHS website under the Academics tab (click on [Summer 2019 Review Packets](#)).

Summer Reading

Summer reading lists and recommendations for all grade levels are on the [GHS Library homepage](#), provided as a set of grade-specific links. Please be sure to check the list early, and feel free to revisit it over the course of the summer. Enjoy the many wonderful selections that Ms. Matthews has suggested! (This information was also distributed in hard copy to students in Grades 2 - 7 prior to the last day of school.)

Mathematics

In an effort to keep math skills fresh and fluent, each math teacher (Grades 1 - 7) has prepared a letter (included in this packet) outlining the summer math instructions and requirements for their respective students.

Recommendations for Reinforcement and Enrichment:

Writing Activities

There are many ways to incorporate writing into summer activities, and we encourage you to provide as many opportunities as possible to have your child write. Please consider the following suggestions:

- **Scrapbook.** Make a family scrapbook for the summer. Paste brochures and pictures of events and trip memories in there and write details throughout the book. Make it unique for the entire family.
- **Interactive journal.** This is where two friends (or a parent and child) take turns writing to each other. This is especially helpful for children who “never know what to write.” A parent might start the journal entry by asking what activities the child is looking forward to this summer.
- **Create a book.** [Storybird](#) is a great website where children can be authors and write books. The site is free but requires registration. Children write stories based on beautiful artwork available on the website. Books can then be publicly or privately shared online.
- **Email or postcards.** Find a friend or relative who will be a reliable pen pal and return letters quickly. This is a great opportunity to get to know a distant relative. Email correspondence gives writing a purpose and won't seem like a chore. A child may need adult help at the beginning of the summer with the initial contact letter. Send out three or four, to increase the chance that at least one of the pen pals will continue to correspond all summer long.

Word Activities and Games. Summer writing doesn't have to involve long stories or reports. Writing and games involving single words can be just as valuable, especially when they include expanded vocabulary and reinforcement of spelling skills.

- **Lists.** Whenever parents need to write things down during the summer, consider having the child take the pen. It may require some time and patience initially but the benefits are invaluable. Have children make the grocery, packing or cleaning lists. Encourage kids to make a “Things To Do” list for themselves every week. Avoid the urge to correct every single spelling word. Pick only one or two common words on each list and point out the errors.
- **Scrabble, Bananagrams, and Upwards.** Word games can improve a child's word knowledge and spelling skills. Set aside a regular Scrabble night. For younger children, Upwards is fun AND helps solidify a student's understanding of word families. Spell “sit” and ask your child to change the word by changing only one letter. See how many times the original word can be changed, one letter at a time. (Feel free

to customize the rules to suit the child's spelling level. At first, allow them to use all the tiles to spell anything.)

- **Word Searches.** Children love doing Word Searches. With [Puzzlemaker](#), kids can make different puzzles for themselves or their friends. Adults might want to make puzzles that will target particular types of words. Some suggestions are homonyms or words with prefixes and suffixes.

General Sites

[ABCYA](#) is a great site with activities in math, reading, science, social studies, and arts for Grades K-5.

[Thinkport](#) provides a selection of resources in all subjects for Grades K-12.

If you prefer book exercises for your child, the School recommends two series of books.

[Summer Skills](#) offers a grade-level Summer Math Skills Sharpener and as well as a Summer Language Arts Review. Please order the grade that your student just finished. This series is designed for ten weeks, working about twenty minutes three times per week. This is not required, but has proven to be very helpful. (Click on the Parent Info tab.)

For the [Brain Quest Series](#) (Grades K - 6), order the grade that your student just finished also. These interesting and challenging workbooks may need a bit more guidance for what activities to use each day.

Families have found [Parent Education Program \(PEP\)](#) to be a wonderful resource. Among their many resources, we recommend:

- Responsibilities by Age: [Sharing Responsibilities](#)
- [The Art of Encouragement](#)

Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions. Mostly, it's important that children continue to approach their learning, reading, problem solving, and creative endeavors with a sense of curiosity, joy, and growing confidence. They need time to play, relax, imagine, unplug, and get lost in their thoughts; thank you for striking a healthy balance.

May all our students and their families have a healthy and enjoyable summer ahead!

Sincerely,

Lisa Pence

Assistant Head of School

Other apps and websites to reinforce language arts skills:

Montessori/Elementary Students

- Endless Reader
- Endless Alphabet
- Spell Bear
- Lucy and Pogo
- Montessori Letter Sounds
- Grammar Jammers Primary Edition by Reading Street
- National Geographic Kids
- Mad Libs
- Action Words by Innovative Mobile Apps
- A Story Before Bed app
- iTooch Elementary School App by eduPad Inc.
- Kids Writing Pad by Game Maker
- StoryBuilder by Mobile Education World

Upper Elementary-Middle School students

- SAT Vocabulary and Audios by VocabAhead
- Mad Libs
- iTooch Middle School App by eduPad Inc.
- Storia by Scholastic
- MobiLibs by Dropped Pixel Entertainment
- My Grammar Lab by Pearson Education
- Writing Challenge by SCVisuais