

Letter to Editor

Summer reading lists: The importance of reading

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It is the beginning of summer and the media websites are out with their book recommendations for summer reading [1,2]. Let's take time to pause and look at the importance of having a lifelong reading habit.

Children benefit from having books at home. A more learned home environment supports a child's cognitive development and later wellbeing as adults [3,4,5,6,7,8]. Reading bolsters cortical growth in children [9]. Thus the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that, during health visits, providers advocate daily caregiver-child reading [10]. Public health entrepreneurs are finding innovative approaches to help children from low-income families gain better access to books [11].

Reading a wide-range of literature is a career booster [12]. Reading about a variety of topics increases creativity and builds knowledge about the world. Innovative leaders – including: Steve Jobs and Dr. Carson – are avid readers [12,13]. It is not just informative non-fiction reading that is worthy; reading fiction builds emotional intelligence [14]. Reading fiction strengthens the same neuronal pathways used to understand real human emotion, thus enhancing social acumen. Healthcare students benefit from reading medical memoirs – books that put a human face on disease [15].

Reading, as a lifelong leisure activity, may also help to preserve the cognitive capacities of middle aged and older adults [16,17,18,19,20]. Animal models indicate that cognitively enriched environments may reduce some of the molecular pathological changes associated with Alzheimer's disease [21,22,23]. The worldwide monetary cost of dementia is rapidly escalating and is expected to be more than \$1 trillion dollars next year and continue to grow [24]. The human cost is even greater. Delaying the average age of onset of Alzheimer's disease by just five years will greatly stem the trajectory of the prevalence this disease [25,26]. Health professionals recommend lifestyle measures to help reach this goal, including cognitive activity (such as reading), a Mediterranean diet, exercise, and stress management [27,28,29,30,19].

As healthcare professionals, let's make promoting a lifelong habit of reading a priority!

Conflicts of Interest Statement

Dr. Ross, PhD, MS is the Founder of the Delaware Gerontology

Institute, LLC (www.DEGerontology.com), which develops Activities products for elders, including extra-large print books, as well as doing scholarly work.

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The importance of reading cannot be emphasised enough in young children, and we as parents need to make every day reading a high priority. Many studies show that toddlers and pre-schoolers who are read to every day have a larger vocabulary than those who aren't read to at all. It turns out that reading there are many advantages and benefits of reading. Not only does reading enhance a child's vocabulary, and to help them understand how to read and write, but reading aloud to children also helps them to understand different topics about the world and every day life. Recommended: 5 stages of Read... Research supports the importance of summer reading and learning as a means to support academic progress and narrow the achievement gap. The National Center for Summer Learning at Johns Hopkins University cites a study by Dr. Harris Cooper finding that while all kids lose some math skills over the summer, "(l)ow-income students also lose more than two months in reading achievement, despite the fact that their middle-class peers make slight gains (Cooper, 1996)." While the lists may not fit other districts' curriculum guidelines, they offer some great recommendations of books. Check the hot links for a great example of an ELL summer reading list. Parents and families. Just as ELLs may not know what the library has in store, their families may not as well. 100 Reasons Why Reading is Important, Reading Habit, If you're curious about the importance of reading you'll find out many reasons why it is important to read. Plus, why reading is important for kids, reading challenges, and Great Books to Read #read #reading. More information. Parent Tip Sheet for Reading at Home. This is a really helpful list for parents to make read aloud time an interactive experience. Research shows that kids get the most out of reading when a parent helps them interact with the text. These prompts include most of the reading comprehension strategies. Shannon Hittson. Kindergarten. Read Between the Lines: Developing a Culture of Reading.