



"We've Got Reading Covered"



**Summer Reading
Loss Prevention
Program**





The Importance of Summer Reading

In a 2009 government web cast, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan described summer learning loss as “devastating.” This is what researchers have often referred to as the “summer slide.” It is estimated that school summer breaks will cause the average student to lose up to one month of instruction, with disadvantaged students being disproportionately affected (Cooper, 1996). Researchers conclude that two-thirds of the 9th grade reading achievement gap can be explained by unequal access to summer learning opportunities during the elementary school years, with nearly one-third of the gap present when children begin school (Alexander, Entwistle & Olsen, 2007). The body of existing research demonstrates the critical importance that the early development of summer reading habits can play in providing the foundation for later success. Summer learning research can be broadly categorized under the following themes:

1. The impact of summer learning loss on disadvantaged youth
2. Access to books and time devoted to reading
3. The importance of successful reading experiences
4. The impact of innovative summer reading programs

This synopsis of research on summer reading and learning provides a brief overview of these themes.

The Impact of Summer Learning Loss on Disadvantaged Youth

An in-depth study of Baltimore area students, Alexander et al. (2007), concluded that students from both better-off and disadvantaged backgrounds made similar achievement gains during the school year. However, during the summer the disadvantaged youth fell significantly behind in reading. This finding validates the importance of education but also indicates the disparities evident between students from different socioeconomic backgrounds. Dr. Beth Miller (2007) posits, “Other factors, nearly all of them related to the opportunities and experiences children have outside of the school, in the community and their families, result in gaps in achievement scores.”

Preeminent reading and education researchers, Anne E. Cunningham and Keith E. Stanovich (1998), note the “Matthew effects,” in academic achievement; a reference to the Biblical passage of the rich-get-richer and the poor-get-poorer phenomenon. Differences in out-of-school access to books, positive reading practices, and connections with institutions supportive of self-discovery and reading, account for much of the disparity in student academic success. This has a cascading effect as children grow and develop.

Access to Books

According to Mc-Gill Franzen and Allington (2004), “Too many children spend their summer with no books to read.” Their research cites the necessity of finding novel ways to get books into the hands of children during summer breaks. This idea is supported by research from Barbara Heyn (1978), who found that reading was the most influential factor related to summer learning. Further studies by Krashen (2004) simply state, “More access to books results in more reading.” These and other studies find that when schools close their doors, the opportunity to read is often closed with them, especially for those children without access to books. McQuillan (1998) found that, “There is now considerable evidence that the amount and quality of student’s access to reading materials is substantively related to the amount of reading they engage in, which in turn is the most important determinant of reading achievement.” The studies show that students’ who read more, read better; they also write better, spell better, have larger vocabularies, and have better control of complex grammatical constructions (Krashen, 2009).

The Importance of Successful Reading Experiences

In their studies of children’s reading development, McGill-Franzen and Allington (2003), cite the importance of extensive, successful reading experiences in the development of reading proficiency. **If children have the opportunity to listen to, discuss, and read books on topics that they select, they will develop extensive background information which can serve as a platform from which to engage in their own independent reading.** Additional studies by Guthrie and Anderson (1999), found that “A history of less-successful reading experiences produces a lessened interest in voluntary reading than a history of successful reading experiences.” According to Cunningham and Stanovich (1998), the key predictors of positive reading development are success when learning to read and numerous opportunities and experiences with reading. Children who enjoy reading will read more and become proficient at the same time. A report from the National Institute of Education (1988) concluded that, “...the amount of reading done out of school is consistently related to gains in reading achievement.”





South Carolina Summer Reading Program

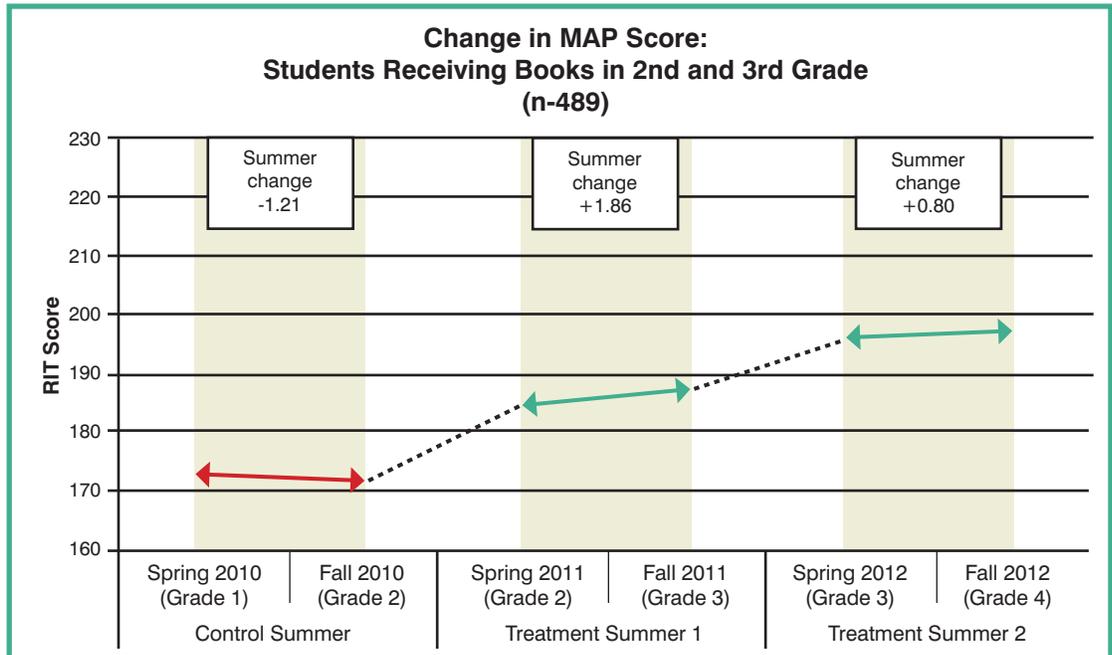
Starting in 2011 The South Carolina Department of Education began providing free books to disadvantaged students in select schools to take home for the summer. **The Reading Warehouse** partnered with the DOE to provide the books in one of the first ever programs of this nature. The results were amazing! A summary of the program and subsequent study is below:

Findings from the Office of Program Evaluation/ South Carolina Educational Policy Center, University of South Carolina

This study conducted by the OPE/SCEPE, investigated the impact on achievement outcomes for twelve schools that assess students on Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments in the fall and spring. Approximately 3,200 students in grades 1-4 (about 800 students per grade level) at these schools self-selected 10 books that were given to them free of charge at the end of the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school years. A variety of text levels and genres were available for the students to choose from. Students were instructed to read these books over the summer and their parents were provided with suggested reading activities for the summer. Parent information letters and a calendar log to record summer reading minutes were also sent home with the children for the summer.

► **Research question:** Was the average summer reading achievement loss for participant students lower after implementation of the summer reading project than in the previous year? Were there differences by grade-level progression (i.e., grade in prior year to grade in next year)?

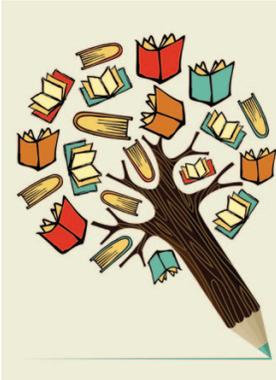
Students experienced a summer loss in reading achievement on MAP during the control summer of 2010 when they did not receive books. Those same students received books in the summers of 2011 and 2012 and not only was the summer loss, prevented, but students showed achievement gains over those summers. The differences between the summer change from 2010 to 2011 and from 2010 to 2012 were statistically significant in the positive direction. Students tracked from third to fifth grade showed similar gains in the summers they received books.



Longitudinally matched MAP scores for students who self-selected books over two summers (2011 and 2012). Students did not receive books over the summer of 2010.

Since this study was conducted the South Carolina DOE along with **The Reading Warehouse** has continued to provide books each summer to students throughout South Carolina – with similar results.





**Why
The Reading
Warehouse?**

1. Experience



As part of the Summer Reading team, **The Reading Warehouse** has handled the procurement and delivery of summer reading programs for years - and we know how to get the job done! We will make sure that your program

is delivered on time and with no disruption to your academic program. With **The Reading Warehouse** on your team you do not have to worry about fulfillment problems.

2. Results

This is the most important aspect of our involvement with the summer reading programs – *results*. **The Reading Warehouse** has provided programs that have allowed students to not only stem reading loss over the summer but to actually improve reading skills. Our team of buyers - consisting of former educators, look over, literally, hundreds of thousand of book offerings each spring to select just the right mix that has allowed the programs to be successful. Since we are distributors of all the major publishers we are able to offer the widest selection of books possible. We pull from Random House, Penguin, Houghton Mifflin, Harper, Simon & Schuster, and Heineman – among others. The programs popularity and success has hinged on the wide variety of titles available. Our selection of high interest/low level informational text material coupled with popular fiction books has worked well with the students – and the study results show it.



