

Dear Mapleshade Parents,

Summer 2018

Summer is a wonderful time for your children to relax and reflect on their school year. More importantly, it is a good time for family. Attached you will find a recently published article, “12 Weeks of Simple Activities to Support Kids’ Learning All Summer Long,” that promotes family time through activities that simultaneously build listening, speaking, and social language skills (I had to sneak that in somehow)!

So take a peek, recognize some you may have already built into your summer schedule, and try something new! I hope it’s enjoyable.

Best in language,
Amy Binder MA CCC-SLP
Speech-Language Pathologist

12 Weeks of Simple Activities to Support Kids' Learning All Summer Long

written by [Stacey Glasgow](#) April 30, 2018

Help your students and their families go from summer slump to summer triumph with [engaging exercises families can enjoy together](#). Below I share 12 weeks of simple activities parents or caregivers can use to help their child—or entire family—build speech, language and literacy skills.

Week 1: Summer bucket list Ask the child to write a list or draw pictures of the student's top five activities that they want to do over the summer, like go to the pool or zoo. Post the list and check off adventures as you complete them.

Week 2: Library love A trip to the local library is a must. Check out its summer reading program and post the calendar of events at home. Give eBooks and audio books (great for long summer car rides!) a try.

Week 3: What's trending ... kitchen edition Challenge your older children to create "Twitter-like" updates to post on your kitchen bulletin board or refrigerator using only a certain number of characters. Try generating simple hashtags to describe their day. For example, #momisthebest or #swimmingiswinning.

Week 4: Junior book club Promote reading and friendship! Invite four to eight kids to join a [book club](#) that meets a few times over the summer. Include a book-themed snack.

Week 5: Amazing race Divide the family into two or more groups or join with a few neighborhood families in an epic scavenger hunt. Write clues, create maps and design challenges for participants as they complete the race.

Week 6: Family field trip Consider one or more day trips to a nearby museum, zoo or aquarium. Museums offer hands-on learning, lots of new vocabulary, a chance to practice reading the informational signs and an opportunity to visit a different time or place. Many museums and zoos offer [special tours and activities for children with disabilities](#).

Week 7: Pocket games Waiting for one child to finish swim lessons while your other child tries to be patient? Pack a word game in your bag and turn waiting time into fun vocabulary time with Scrabble, Bananagrams, Quiddler, Scattergories, Dabble, Word on the Street, Wordical, Boggle or MadLibs.

Week 8: Get cooking, summer style Summer is a time to [try making messy or new foods with your child](#). Look through a cookbook or online to find a new dish your child wants to try. Make a list of the ingredients, shop together and then follow the recipe.

Week 9: Game night extravaganza We seem to be in a golden age of new board games. Suggestions for older kids from [one speech-language pathologist](#) include Bafflegab, You've Been Sentenced, and Trigger. Options for younger children to encourage turn-taking, rule-following and memory skills include Hoot Owl Hoot, Cranium Hullabaloo, Candyland, Memory, Uno and Chutes and Ladders.

Week 10: Pack a picnic Work with your child to create a menu, make the shopping list, [help pack the lunch](#), find the perfect spot, make notes (or draw a map) about how you got there and take pictures. Afterward, you and your child can look at the pictures and write a short story about the day.

Week 11: Let the school countdown begin... Start the back-to-school countdown 10 days prior to the big day with a special daily line-up of activities:

- **Day 10: Backpack scavenger hunt.** Give your child 10 items from the school supply list to find. Can they mark off the ones they've found?
- **Day 9: Favorite summer book.** Ask your child to select a favorite book. Discuss it together, and then have them draw a picture and write three to five sentences about why they liked it. Is your child able to persuade someone else to read the book with what they write?
- **Day 8: First-day-of-school clothes.** Talk with your child about what they want to wear on the first day of school. Compare/contrast what they wore last year with what they want to wear this year. These are important language skills!

Week 12: Continue with your back-to-school countdown, keeping your language positive as you approach the big day:

- **Day 7: School visit.** Take your child for a visit to school, or drive past it to discuss who might be their teacher, where their classroom will be, and the important places in their school, such as the library, cafeteria and office. Can they explain where these places are in the school?

- **Day 6: Backpack shopping.** Ask your child to describe what they need in a new backpack. Is there a particular character, color and size they want? Can they draw their desired backpack or list special features?
- **Day 5: Favorite summer memory.** Teachers often discussed and/or assign writing activities about this topic during the first few weeks of school. Practice drawing a picture or writing about it at home, so they'll feel confident when doing so at school.
- **Day 4: Back-to-school books.** Read some books together featuring characters going to school. This gives you an opportunity to bring up possible feelings or fears—and help your child work through them.
- **Day 3: Photo archive.** Get out photos or class picture from last year and talk about friends your child might reconnect with this year. Talk about age-appropriate qualities to look for in a good friend and ways to be a good friend to others.
- **Day 2: Pretend school.** With a younger child, you can engage in pretend play about being at school. Let your child be the teacher and give you instructions. With an older child, take turns giving each other tasks like a teacher would.
- **Day 1: Pep talk.** Let your child know that you believe in them and will be by their side to help and encourage them through the school year. Be your child's biggest cheerleader! Give them the tools to start the school year with confidence.

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