Summer Reading?

by Gail Sheldon
APLS Youth Services Library Consultant

I called my daughter Cassie from the time she was born. When she was about high school age, she informed me that her name was not Cassie, it was Cassandra. It was a difficult change to make. But I made it nonetheless. It was important to her, and by extension, to me.

Is the term “Summer Reading” coming to an end? It seems to have outlived its useful purpose; the reasons for which I’ll delve into shortly. And change is hard. But think about it. We want children, teens, and even adults to keep reading over the summer months. But is that our only goal? Many organizations, collaboratives and libraries included are making the jump from Summer Reading to Summer Learning. Here’s why:

1. It’s More Inclusive: What if kids don’t like to read? Are they put off by the term “reading”? Such a “learning” program might appeal to non-readers, those who don’t like to read, those who may be English language learners, or those who associate the library only with reading. The National Summer Learning Association says that Summer Learning is a way to offer enriching programs to those who can’t afford summer camps or other formal activities. Public libraries are always “leveling the playing field.”

2. It’s Educational: A report from the Wallace Foundation shows that all that “fun” kids are having at summer programs in the library is contributing to their future academic achievement and mitigating the summer slide.

3. It’s Fun: The thought that learning in the summer can be fun, even for the adults who plan the programs. Think about all the ways that you explore your own interests and those of your partners (who help with the programs, costs, etc.) and the ability to share

Inclusive summer programs that don’t necessarily focus on reading are a safe bet for public libraries.
those passions with these kids.  

As a general FYI, the collaborative program that APLS participates in, CSLP, is the Collaborative Summer Library Program.

Learning opportunities in libraries, including those that are carried out throughout the summer months, need to expand beyond just reading, because today's young people learn from a variety of ways other than reading text. More successful learning comes through doing. While the concept of learning by doing, is not new, adopting a connected learning approach, which focuses on interest-driven and hands-on learning, helps maximize learning for young people.

Public libraries have a strong history of providing communities with summer classes and events. Youth and their families think of the library as a place for summer opportunities, which perfectly position libraries to help mitigate the learning loss and other issues youth face, particularly over the summer months.

So think, what do your programs during the summer look like? Do you just sit and read with the kids? Do you have performers? Other special programs where you bring in local people with related hobbies and interests? When you do these other activities, do you put related titles on display to encourage further interest?

It is not all about reading is it? The kids (including teens) are having fun, socializing, doing some hands on activities, etc. What is interesting is that these activities have just as much to do with reading, learning and literacy than reading alone. Kids need these other activities to be literate. Just reading will not increase their literacy. The engagement is what brings it all together. It is the difference between knowledge and wisdom. Just because you know a fact, does not mean you know how to apply it. It is the same with reading; it is only part of the whole.

What's my opinion? Children have "learned" to associate learning with conventional school. Many children hear the word learning and think of boring work. So I am not entirely on the summer learning bandwagon. But since it is about more than reading, we are trying to make the move from Summer Reading Program to Summer Library Program. So now you will hear me (and us) refer to summer activities in the library and the Summer Library Program. Let's equate that to fun experiences that help our kids to learn without realizing that they are doing it. And, you know, I am sure they will be checking out plenty of books and reading about all the fun stuff that they are interested in.

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1 Bressler, Amanda; 3 Reasons to Move From Summer Reading to Summer Learning; https://ideas.demco.com/blog/summer-reading-to-summer-learning/; 2/2018

Think about how you are going to keep your statistics. That means circulation for each age group, how many programs, how many people at each program, etc. Really – do it now – don’t think about it after the fact.

Here is what you need to know:

☞ **Circulation** – total circulation for each age group. For the children’s program you are counting board books, easy/picture books, juvenile fiction and non-fiction, audio books in the same category, AND if you use an e-book/downloadable audio book service for books in the same categories. Teens would be the same type of thing for ALL YA books, audios, etc. And if you have an adult program, well, you get it.

☞ **Programs** – how many programs do you have for each age group? Each program should be counted. For example, if you have story times, each story time is a separate program. If you are doing two consecutive programs which are “different” but may attract the exact same individuals those are 2 programs and you count those individuals again. An example of this would be an SLP program in conjunction with a “Summer Feeding Program.” Even though the same 25 people might attend each, that is two programs with each having an attendance of 25.

☞ **How many attend your programs** – count every person at the program with the exception of library staff and volunteers no matter what age. Parents are enjoying and learning when they bring their children and are watching the program.

☞ This next one is very IMPORTANT: **Tell us a story about how your summer library program affected someone’s life.** Please don’t just say, “It was a great year,” or something like that. What you do changes people’s lives. Be on the lookout, listen to people, keep a notebook around for observations, and don’t be afraid to ask if you can use a story or something someone said. You don’t have to use their name, just tell their story.

Things you don’t have to worry about anymore for APLS:

- **Registration** – if you keep track, this is only for your benefit
- **Books read, pages read, or minutes read** – while this is important for your kids and/or parents, and how you award incentives, APLS can’t lump these figures together into one statistic.

We love to see pictures of your programs! For children’s and teen programs send them to me (gsheldon@apls.state.al.us) or Ryan Godfrey (rgodfrey@apls.state.al.us) with “YAK” in the email subject line. Not everyone receives APLSeeds, and we want our youth library staff to see the photos, too. We even like to see pictures of your decorations for SLP! Can’t wait!
Hello Summer, Sunshine & Ocean! Hello June!

**May**
- May 1-8 — National Pet Week
- May 3 — International Space Day
- May 4 — Star Wars Day / World Password Day
- May 5 — Cinco de Mayo / National Cartoonists Day / National Hoagie Day
- May 6-12 — National Teacher Appreciation Week
- May 7 — National Teacher’s Day / World Asthma Day
- May 8 — National Sleepover Day
- May 9 — Lost Sock Memorial Day
- May 10 — National Clean Your Room Day
- May 11 — World Migratory Bird Day / National Eat What You Want Day
- May 12 — Mother’s Day / National Limerick Day
- May 13 — National Apple Pie Day / National Frog Jumping Day
- May 14 — National Dance Like a Chicken Day
- May 15 — International Day of Families / National Chocolate Chip Day
- May 16 — National Love a Tree Day
- May 17 — National Pizza Party Day / Endangered Species Day
- May 18 — International Museum Day
- May 19 — National Devil’s Food Cake Day
- May 20 — National Pick Strawberries Day
- May 22 — International Biodiversity Day
- May 24 — National Scavenger Hunt Day / National Sunscreen Day
- May 27 — Memorial Day
- May 29 — National Learn About Composting Day / National Creativity Day

**June**
- June 1 — Say Something Nice Day / National Prairie Day / National Trails Day
- June 2 — National Repeat Day / National Cancer Survivor’s Day
- June 3 — National Egg Day
- June 5 — National Gingerbread Day / Global Running Day
- June 6 — National Yo-Yo Day / National Drive-In Movie Day
- June 7 — National Doughnut Day
- June 8 — National Best Friends Day
- June 9 — National Triangle Day / Strawberry Rhubarb Pie Day
- June 10 — National Ballpoint Pen Day
- June 12 — National Red Rose Day / National Peanut Butter Cookie Day
- June 13 — National Weed Your Garden Day
- June 14 — Flag Day
- June 15 — National Smile Power Day / Nature Photography Day
- June 16 — Father’s Day
- June 18 — National Go Fishing Day
- June 19 — Juneteenth
- June 20 — National Ice Cream Day / World Refugee Day
- June 21 — National Selfie Day / Go Skateboarding Day / Take Back the Lunch Break Day / Summer Solstice
- June 23 — National Pink Day / Pink Flamingo Day
- June 27 — National PTSD Awareness Day / National Sunglasses Day
- June 28 — Paul Bunyan Day
- June 29 — National Waffle Iron Day / National Camera Day
Meet Miss Fancy written by Irene Latham; illustrated by John Holyfield
Release date: Jan. 8, 2019

Frank loves elephants, so when he finds out Birmingham’s Avondale Park will soon have one, he’s thrilled! He went to the train station and cheered with the crowds when she arrived and followed her to her new home where he wasn’t allowed in to see her up close. It said so right there on the sign: No Coloreds Allowed.

Meet Miss Fancy is a picture book based on real historical events, even if Frank is a fictionalized character. Holyfield’s illustrations are colorful, pretty, and soft. He also did a wonderful job portraying the characters’ expressions to support and enhance Latham’s well-written story. My favorite moments are when Frank talks about elephants. It’s a little lengthier than I typically prefer when choosing books for storytime, especially for our 2-4 year-olds. That said, I feel the book’s length is suited to the story it tells and its intended audience. It’s a good introduction for children to some of the uglier sides of Alabama history, and a starting point for talks centering on race and society. In the end, Frank does get to ride Miss Fancy, and there’s also a page talking about the history the book is based on to answer further questions. It’s a good book to add to your picture book collection, especially with our upcoming bicentennial. It’s important to talk about the darker parts of our history as it is the better ones. Definitely check it out!

Recommended for: Children who are old enough to sit through a bit of a longer story that doesn’t rely on humor to capture their attention.

A Place for Pluto written by Stef Wade; illustrated by Melanie Demmer
Release date: July 1, 2019

Pluto’s proud to be among of the nine planets of the solar system! At least… until he’s told that humans on Earth no longer consider him a planet. Dejected, he goes off to find where he really belongs. He meets other things in space, but he’s not a comet, a meteoroid, or an asteroid either! Will he ever find out what he really is?

I know children’s books often have pretty silly premises, but for some reason Pluto basing his self-worth on what people on Earth decide to classify him as seems a bit much—like too much realism blended with a heaping dose of anthropomorphism. It’s a cute enough tale with Pluto taking a tour of self-discovery to find out what he is actually is. It also serves as a brief introduction to other things found in our solar system. Unsurprisingly, Pluto discovers other dwarf planets and learns that even though he isn’t a planet, his friends won’t leave him behind.

Though the fun illustrations are paired to a good-themed story, Pluto’s fate was decided in 2006. This would have been a great choice then, but I think now it confuses the matter for kids. Ones who complain are those who were raised having nine planets. A Place for Pluto is cute, but I wouldn’t consider it a must-buy.

Recommended for: Ages 2 to 4.
01 Gather Supplies
Plastic pop-top drink bottle cap
Old CD/DVD (will not be playable after activity)
Medium-sized balloon
Craft glue or super glue
Stopwatch or timer

02 Get Carried Away
Remove a plastic pop-top drink bottle cap and glue the base of the lid to the CD or DVD so that it covers the hole of the disc. If you use super glue, have an adult help, use caution, and follow all of the instructions and safety warnings on the packaging. Allow the glue to dry completely. With the pop-top closed, inflate the balloon as large as you safely can, pinch the neck, and stretch it to fit over the pop top lid. Your hovercraft is now ready to do some hovering, so find a flat surface and use a stopwatch to time how long it hovers before the balloon runs out of air. Test different amounts of air and see how it affects the time the hovercraft operates.

Paper Pinwheels

01 Gather Supplies
Cardstock, construction paper, or scrapbook paper
Ball tip straight pins
Unsharpened pencils
Ruler and scissors
Mini hot glue sticks (cut into chunks — adults only)
Pencil to mark paper

02 Get Classic
We often forget about the simple things that are fun, but you can find STEAM principles to incorporate into this age-old classic. First, measure the paper you will be cutting to ensure it is square. Next, have kids color the paper, or use paper that is already printed with designs. Then, take a ruler and draw two lines diagonally from corner to corner to find the middle. Cut along the lines towards the center, stopping about 3/4 of an inch before reaching the center. Next, poke a pin through each of the corners (around in sequence) from the colored side, and poke it through the center of the paper. Stick the pin through a pencil eraser and push a glue stick piece over the sharp pin tip to protect fingers. Blow on the pinwheel to make it spin, or take it outside and let the wind do it for you.

Pictorial directions:
http://www.leslietryon.com/3dcolorcutout/makepinw/makepinwheel.html

DVD Hovercraft Science
The air coming from the balloon travels through the pop-top lid to go under the hovercraft. Even though you test balloons of various sizes, the opening that allows air to go beneath the hovercraft is always the same size because the pop-top lid stays the same. When the balloon is inflated to the largest size, it holds the greatest amount of air (greatest amount of potential energy) and should allow the hovercraft to hover for the longest amount of time. Likewise, when the balloon is inflated to its smallest size, it holds the least amount of air (least amount of potential energy), and the hovercraft should hover for the least amount of time. There may have be some variation (of just a few seconds) between the trials because it is nearly impossible to fill a balloon with exactly the same amount of air each time.

Paper Pinwheel Science
Pinwheels spin because wind hits the curved surfaces of the pinwheel blades. The air hits those curved surfaces, which are arranged almost like cogs and the force of the wind against the pinwheel adds up in those curves and causes the pin wheel to spin which is simply Newton’s 3rd Law of Motion - action (or force) in one direction causes an equal and opposite reaction. The faster the wind, the faster the pinwheel spins.

STEAM reads
The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind
Kamkwamba, William; 978-0803735118

Energy Island: How One Community Harnessed the Wind and Changed Their World
Drummond, Allan; 978-0374321840

Fun Experiments with Forces and Motion: Hovercrafts, Rockets, and More
Ives, Rob; 978-1512432176

Wind Power: Sailboats, Windmills, and Wind Turbines
Ziem, Matthew; 978-0531236888
Spanish Fort Library: Teens serve up fun at an ice cream social night with frozen treats donated by Publix of Eastern Shore

Homewood Public Library recently held a Computer Creatures event for fourth through seventh graders. Tweens were able to use old spare parts to build new creations

Green screen fun at Pell City

Pell City tweens and teens testing out their bridge building skills with straws and masking tape

“School is Cool” is the message Homewood Library sends with their Countdown to Kindergarten Popsicle Party
May 7

Reading Life Between the Lines: Using Children’s & Young Adult Literature to Have Tough Conversations about Diversity

This workshop will teach teachers, librarians, school boards, administrators and youth leaders strategies for using Children’s & Young Adult Literature with readers of any age to engage with questions of identity and difference and will help participants increase their cultural competence for working with young people in educational or recreational settings. (Washington State Library) https://www.sos.wa.gov/library/libraries/firsttuesdays/default.aspx

All Things YA

Whether you’re looking to add more books to your summer reading list or your tbr pile is getting a little thin, Booklist has you covered for all things YA this season! Hear from Page Street Kids and Sourcebooks as they chat about an array of YA titles, including spring and summer highlights and forthcoming books! Panelists will be joined by a young adult librarian to discuss readers’ advisory tips and book talking tricks. (Booklist) https://www.booklistonline.com/webinars

May 8

Fundraise Like Netflix: Engaging Donors in a Subscription-Driven World

Our upcoming event, Fundraise Like Netflix: Engaging Donors in a Subscription-Driven World, will focus on the changing charitable giving environment, how it’s being impacted by technology, and what nonprofits can do to harness these changes. Join us as we bring together nonprofit influencers and leaders looking to scale their organizations through technology, automation, and best practices. (Network for Good) https://www.networkforgood.com/webinars

NCompass Live: Small Libraries Can Run Code

Running a code club at your library can be really intimidating—especially if you don’t know how to code! Prenda has helped hundreds of small libraries start and run thriving code clubs where kids are learning how to make websites, video games, apps, and animations using the resources you probably already have! And as a special treat, we’ll hear from Jeannie Mejstrik who is has been running an incredible club since 2017 at O’Neill Public Library in Nebraska, where their who is has been running an incredible club since 2017 at O’Neill Public Library in Nebraska, where their... https://earlychildhoodwebinars.com/presentations/

May 9

Telling Your Story Through Blogs, Photos and Videos

How do you convey the great work your organization is doing with blogs, photos and videos? These tools are powerful ways to share the difference you’re making in the world. We’ll cover the principles of good storytelling, look at examples and research about what’s working for nonprofits, and then discuss the tools that can help you put them online. (iDealWare) https://www.idealware.org/training-calendar/

How to Cultivate Social and Emotional Learning With Computational Thinking

In this webinar, Jeff Meyer, Director of Education for Learning.com, will: Demystify computational thinking and the mindset it encourages; Illustrate the connections between computational thinking and social and emotional learning; Share ideas to foster the connection between developing social and emotional learners and computational thinking; Provide resources to start teaching computational thinking in ways that support social and emotional learning. (Education Week) https://www.edweek.org/ew/marketplace/webinars/webinars.html

Organizational Evolution: Managing Change When There Are Humans Involved

It’s often very easy to recognize when an organization needs to change, but it’s a lot harder to make it happen! Legacy staff and volunteers, “we’ve always done it this way” perspectives, and plain old inertia can put many frustrating road blocks in your way. There are ways, however, for the persistent and patient to guide the change process and help an organization evolve. Using real world examples, we’ll discuss the stages of organizational growth, personality archetypes you may encounter, and strategies to build momentum toward change. (Bloomerang) https://bloomerangq.co/resources/webinars/

May 10

Live Streaming Event with Veronica Roth

Join Veronica Roth LIVE as she returns to her middle school alma mater to talk with current students about her path to becoming a published author, the process of active brainstorming, and how to tap into the creativity within us all. (School Library Journal) https://www.slj.com/?subpage=Events&eventtype=webcasts

Fake News, Real Talk: Engaging Your Patrons on Fake News and News Literacy

From politics to natural disasters, fake news is rampant and on patrons’ minds. Librarians can capitalize on this phenomenon and use their expertise to make a difference by engaging their patrons around issues of fake news and news literacy. At this webinar attendees will learn about ways they can lead educational outreach on this topic at their library, including pairing up with community partners, empowering patrons with strategies to spot fake news, and facilitating reflection on news consumption habits. I will share examples of ways my colleagues and I have worked to address the issue of fake news at my own institution... (Indiana State Library) https://continuinged.isl.in.gov/find-training/online-training-series/

Computational Thinking in Your Library: Systematic Problem Solving in School & Real Life

Computational thinking is a systematic problem solving process applicable to multiple arenas, including various curricular areas and real life. In this session, learn about the basics of computational thinking, how it applies to school library programs and curriculum, and how it benefits our future ready learners in academia and real life. (American Association of School Librarians) http://www.ala.org/aasl/ecollab/upcoming

Supporting Developing Readers at the Library: Literacy-Based Programs for K-3rd Graders

Part 2 of a 4 part series about services designed for kids K – 3. Learn how the Children’s Librarians at Denver Public Library are expanding their services to developing readers and the grown ups in their lives using the five Grade Level Reading Skills. Using the skills as a framework, we’ll look at strategies for developing programming intentionally created to support developing readers. Program examples will be shared, along with the challenges and successes of each. (Colorado State Library) https://create.coloradovirtuallibrary.org/calendar/

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Computational thinking is a systematic problem solving process applicable to multiple arenas, including various curricular areas and real life. In this session, learn about the basics of computational thinking, how it applies to school library programs and curriculum, and how it benefits our future ready learners in academia and real life. (American Association of School Librarians) http://www.ala.org/aasl/ecollab/upcoming

Practicing Self-Care for Librarians (how to avoid burnout)

Libraries are stressful. With patron demands, limited time, programs, tech and more, it can be overwhelming. This webinar will discuss burnout and compassion fatigue and their fatigue. Digital burnout and stress will also be covered. Most importantly, participants of this webinar will leave with practical solutions for individuals and organizations on managing stress and preventing burnout. (Utah State Library) https://www.eventbrite.com/o/usl-training-208844751

Making a Mini Makerspace

Under the staircase, an old study room, an accessible storage closet... anywhere can become a mini makerspace! The North Riverside Public Library, a small library outside Chicago, was able to cobble together funding using our budget and grants to create mini makerspaces in small nooks around our library. We will talk about our process, research on materials and space design, and how we solicited valuable feedback from patrons. (Indiana State Library) https://continuinged.isl.in.gov/find-training/online-training-series/
May 16

Measuring What Matters with Google Analytics

Google Analytics is a free web analytics program for your site that takes less than 30 minutes to install. In roughly the same time it takes to watch an episode of your favorite sitcom, you can be learning the what, where, how, and when of the activities on your site. 
(TechSoup) https://www.techsoup.org/community/events-webinars/default

More Than #MotivationMonday: Motivating Your Team Any Day of the Week

Employees motivated to deliver top-notch service are key to a library’s success. But many in library organizations don’t know how to effectively encourage employee motivation. As a critical management and leadership skill, it’s important to know what motivation is and isn’t, what works and what doesn’t. In this session, we’ll explore factors that influence motivation at work and review strategies for supervisors to keep their teams motivated and productive. No matter the size of your library or your role, you will discover your own motivation and inspire motivation in others. 
(Indiana State Library) https://continuinged.isl.in.gov/find-training/online-training-series/

May 22

NCompass Live: Picture Book City: Reorganizing Our Storybooks by Subject

What do you do to make picture books more browsable? Sort them by subject! Learn how we did it and tips we picked up along the way. (Nebraska Library Commission) http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/scripts/calendar/eventlist.asp?Mode=ALL

Stick Up! New Books for Ages 0-18

Join us on the last Thursday of each month for a review of brand new titles published for ages 0-18. You’ll hear short booktalks of new titles (and new entries in ongoing series) from major and indie publishers and get ideas on how to keep up with the endless tide of what’s new in kidlit and young adult literature. (State Library of Iowa) https://zoom.us/j/626167110

May 23

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What do you do to make picture books more browsable? Sort them by subject! Learn how we did it and tips we picked up along the way. (Nebraska Library Commission) http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/scripts/calendar/eventlist.asp?Mode=ALL

May 29

NCompass Live: Let’s Get Real About Virtual Reality

When Chadron State College began collaborating on virtual reality, they had hardware and software in a space that was small and out of the way, and little idea of what to do with it. We will discuss some of the primary challenges we faced, how we identified areas of our mission to which VR could contribute, and how we connected with our most helpful allies in other staff and faculty. We hope to provide some insight on how smaller libraries can integrate VR, or any newer technology. (Nebraska Library Commission) http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/scripts/calendar/eventlist.asp?Mode=ALL

New Media and Preschool Services - Practical Applications

Three public libraries will share their format, tools, and resources for facilitating digital storytimes, with sample plans and tech suggestions. After this webinar, you will be prepared to plan, promote, and present your own digital storytime for preschool audiences. (Association for Library Service to Children) http://www.ala.org/alsc/elearning/live-webinars

May 30

Check It Out! New Books for Ages 0-18

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**Two Resources, One Goal: Helping Alabama Succeed**

- Online tutoring for grades K-12
- College placement resources
- Help for all ages and skill levels
- Certification testing & GED preparation
- Career resources

LearningExpress Library & HomeworkAlabama

Find both on our Resources & Research Links Page