

5 Ways to Move Literacy Forward This Summer

Summer learning is more critical than ever. So we asked a group of Savvas authors and literacy experts for ideas to accelerate student learning.



Using Media Literacy in Summer Learning

by Dr. Ernest Morrell

Help students develop their analytical skills by engaging them in deep readings of the media they consume. Some of my favorite activities include students selecting their favorite songs and analyzing them for content and themes. *What do these songs say about you? If you could change any of the lyrics to make them “better,” what would you do?* I also ask students to analyze the video games that they play. *What does it mean to be a hero? Who is cool?* We can ask students to analyze commercials and digital advertisements as well.



Four Key Elements for Reading and Writing Success

by Kelly Gallagher

When planning summer instruction for your ELA students, remember that the ultimate goal is to develop the reading and writing habits needed for success outside of school, either in college and/or in work. Incorporating the following four key elements into your instruction will help students develop those habits, building better readers and writers: 1) Increase the volume of their reading and writing. 2) Build choice into the curriculum. 3) Model the skills employed by excellent readers and writers. 4) Provide meaningful and timely feedback while students are acquiring these skills.



What Can You Learn with a Smartphone?

by Dr. Elfrieda (Freddy) H. Hiebert

Books are often viewed as competing with smartphones, but smartphones can be used to gain knowledge and proficiencies in many domains, such as music, art, cinema, architecture, history, botany, interior design, geography, and so on. Using smartphones to discover and learn about new topics doesn't happen naturally. So by setting the task and structure for learning about something of great interest to students – a passion project – teachers can support their students' learning over the summer.



Encourage Responsibility for Learning Through Choice Reading

by Dr. Ernest Morrell

The summer is an ideal time to let students choose what they would like to read. If there is a summer reading component to your summer learning plan, offer one or two common texts and let students choose the others. I like to have assignments that encourage responsibility for learning, but are also short and fun (e.g., creating a soundtrack of contemporary songs to accompany a text students read or writing a media trailer to promote the book). I would also encourage students to read genres that are new to them (e.g., YA fiction, graphic novels, mysteries, fantasy novels, etc.).



Use Journals to Help Students Understand Themselves and the World

by Dr. Elfrieda (Freddy) H. Hiebert

Encourage students to use a journal to write down what they observe over the summer. This is a great way to document their growing awareness of the world. Observations can include encounters with animals or people, sights glimpsed through a window, or unusual signs or slogans. Additionally, follow-up should be part of any summer learning project. When school starts again, teachers might invite students to pick a snippet from their journals that describes their favorite part of the summer break.

For more ideas, download the free ebook:

Ideas and Strategies to Help Teachers Move Learning Forward This Summer

#movinglearningforward