



As the school year winds down and summer approaches, many mentors start imagining what their mentees fill their days with during the long break between school years. While the Pen Pal program is a viable option for some, many have encountered mentees who are simply not interested in writing letters over the summer, no matter how connected the match is. Here are some alternate ideas you and your mentee might consider. These are activities that you would both participate in, separately, during the summer. Upon reconnecting in the fall, you would be able to explore your separate experiences. How are they different? How were they similar? Below find some suggested activities.

- **Photo Journal**- Before leaving for the summer, talk with your mentee about keeping a Photo Journal. For young children, make the scrapbook before the end of school. Give your mentee a disposable camera or ask him/her to take pictures or to draw pictures of things they do or places they go during the summer and bring it to share during the first visit next school year. Leave it up to your mentee to decide what to take a picture of or draw. Refrain from using the phrase “exciting things that you do” and remember to keep the photos just between you and your mentee for privacy protection.
- **Puzzle Race**-Mentor gives mentee (2) 100 piece puzzles (Dollar Store). Ask your mentee to finish one puzzle and choose a sibling, friend, etc. to finish the 2<sup>nd</sup> puzzle. Record each person’s time and be ready to share strategy for completing the puzzle at the first visit with your mentee in the fall while the two of you talk and work on a new puzzle! (For younger children-choose less than a 100 pieces puzzles).
- **Up and Moving**- Exercise to music every day! Ask if you can use two cans of food as your weights. Try to increase your minutes each day. Challenge your mentee to do the same! Share successes during the first visit when school resumes in the fall.
- **Home Project Time**-Talk to your mentee about the importance of being organized. Discuss with him/her projects that he/she can do at home this summer. He/she can organize socks, toys, books, various collections. Encourage being a good helper at home by volunteering to organize the silverware or some other shared items at home. Have a follow-up conversation during first visit in the fall.
- **Read Out Loud**- Read an entire book aloud to someone during the summer. An excellent gift for your mentee is a good book! Ask the librarian or classroom teacher for suggestions. Ask your mentee to bring the book and read it aloud to you when you visit in the fall.
- **Keep Moving**-Gift your mentee with a jump rope from the Dollar Store. Teach him/her a rhyme to repeat while jumping rope. This task does wonders for the body and the mind. Practice jumping and chanting a rhyme during the last visit before the summer break begins.
- **Riddle Book**-Gift your mentee with a grade level appropriate Riddles Book. Using construction paper, make a blank Riddles Book for your mentee to write his/her riddles. Encourage him/her to try the riddles out with friends and/or family members during the summer. Have your mentee bring his / her Riddles Book to share when visits continue in the fall.
- **Run and Run Some More**-Keep a chart showing the time that it takes you to run a certain distance. Encourage mentees to try this and ask siblings to join in the race. Discuss how to run safely, where to run, etc. Prepare the chart as a gift for the end of school. Tell your mentee that you would like to see the completed chart when you see each other in the fall.
- **Organize a Scavenger Hunt**-Explain to your mentee how a scavenger hunt works. Discuss who might participate in the hunt. What kinds of things can be hidden? Older mentees may enjoy writing clues!