

My Books Summer Program Overview

- Colored Pencils – New to *My Books Summer*, colored pencils inspire creativity and imagination in the student journal.
- Summer Reading Challenge – Scholastic provides a website where students can engage in fun activities related to books and reading, track the number of minutes read, chat with fellow readers, and more!

My Books Summer reading program supports state standards in many areas, including:

- Analyze theme and genre in different cultural and historical contexts
- Write about personal experiences
- Promote close reading and cite text evidence
- Comprehend a variety of text types and genres
- Understand new vocabulary and use it when reading and writing
- Practice beginning reading skills
- Read independently for sustained periods
- Provide critical content and build knowledge

Instructional Design

My Books Summer includes an administrator’s online Program Guide that provides everything needed to plan and implement a summer take-home reading program. This guide includes implementation plans, summer reading research, parental outreach tools, student engagement ideas, informal assessment tools, and thematic book distribution and resources.



In addition to ready-made book packs, Scholastic offers custom book selection. With this option, Scholastic works with the district to create book packs that meet the district’s needs. Scholastic can accommodate those districts that would like to allow students to choose all or some of the books for their book packs. This self-selection process can be accomplished by using either online or on-site student selection. Students can choose from over 300 titles. Teachers or Reading Program Coordinators can help students choose books, too, if needed.

My Books Summer offers other customization options to help meet the unique requirements of the school district, program, or community. Scholastic can partner with a group to publish a personal message to include in every student’s book pack. An example is a family letter from the superintendent, available in English or Spanish. Another option includes summer reading backpacks. Scholastic can make backpacks with custom packaging and messaging with the district’s, school’s, or organization’s logo.

Two technology programs provide additional support and reinforcement. The Scholastic *Summer Reading Challenge* website is where students find additional fun reading activities and chat with other readers. Scholastic *TrackIt!* is an optional website that helps everyone—administrators, teachers, students, and parents—be accountable for student success.

Assessment & Progress Monitoring

The Program Guide for *My Books Summer* contains some informal assessment tools; schools also request students to return their Journal to their new teacher on the first day of school. In addition, the *Summer Reading Challenge* website allows students to record minutes read and track their progress throughout the summer.



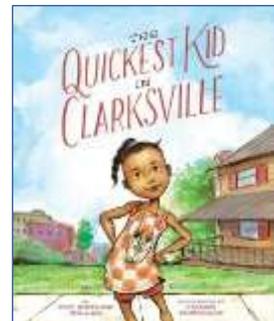
Scaffolded Instruction

The amount of reading done out of school is consistently related to gains in reading achievement. Scholastic *My Books Summer* can help close the achievement gap between high-performing children and low-performing, minority, and disadvantaged students through a variety of strategies, including:

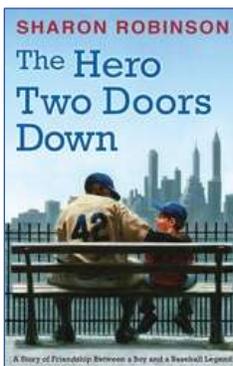
- Using research-based strategies in the areas of summer reading, student choice, parental involvement, and motivation
- Providing disadvantaged students, who often do not have books in their home, access to a print-rich environment and high-quality books in a wide range of topics/genres
- Offering motivational Spanish book packs to Spanish-speaking English Language Learners to help them gain strong literacy skills in their native language—and become better prepared to acquire a second language
- Affording reading practice to remedy the summer learning shortfall, which has lifelong consequences
- Offering the *TrackIt!* online reporting tool, which provides data that can help teachers differentiate instruction in the new school year and to share with parents and caregivers
- Providing engaging online activities through the *Summer Reading Challenge* website, such as blogging and sharing book ratings with other students

Cultural Responsiveness

Scholastic is the world's largest publisher and distributor of children's books. Since 1920, Scholastic has been **committed to diversity and multiculturalism** and this commitment is seeded in the company mission statement and Scholastic Credo. This commitment can also be seen in our selection of diverse texts. We work with a **broad range of authors and illustrators** to develop authentic texts by and about diverse cultural populations, and we borrow from the theory of “**windows and mirrors**” popularized by Rudine Sims Bishop (2015) to help us shape these texts. Sims Bishop suggests that all children need access to books that serve as both mirrors of their own world and windows into the world of others.



Scholastic knows that our educational materials will reach thousands of schools and tens of millions of homes worldwide. The company goal is to *Open a World of Possible* for all students by providing access to books and materials that show the expansive nature of our world and the infinite possibilities of humanity. To that end, Scholastic is becoming more deliberate in its mission to publish and acquire more authentic and diverse texts, and the company is establishing partnerships with organizations like We Need Diverse Books to achieve that goal.



The editorial and acquisition staff at Scholastic is committed to making our publication list reflect the values in the Scholastic Credo. In our increasingly diverse nation and interconnected world, students need global awareness, plus a deep understanding and respect for cultural equity and diversity. The titles in *My Books Summer* offer diversity and characters that appeal to a variety of ethnicities; the materials are socially responsible and speak to a multiplicity of experiences. The goal of the editorial and acquisition staff at Scholastic is to portray the various elements of American society and culture in a way that contributes to a mutual understanding and acceptance.

From traditional stories to social media, stereotypes of all forms are found in nearly every country. The editorial and acquisition team at Scholastic believes that when these stereotypes are challenged and consciously changed, it changes the frame of development

communication: we create good practices and break out of stereotypical molds. We humanize, inspire and create respect for diversity. We have a methodical approach to ensure that our publication list avoids stereotypes and prejudice.

Motivation & Engagement

Students are engaged and motivated when they use *My Books Summer*, because they have grade-appropriate, authentic books to keep at home. In many cases, they have selected some or all of the books themselves. Students enjoy reading the engaging titles and blogging with other readers. Students are motivated when they record their reading progress online and can see their accomplishments. Teachers can use *TrackIt!* to communicate with students and build excitement.



Family Engagement

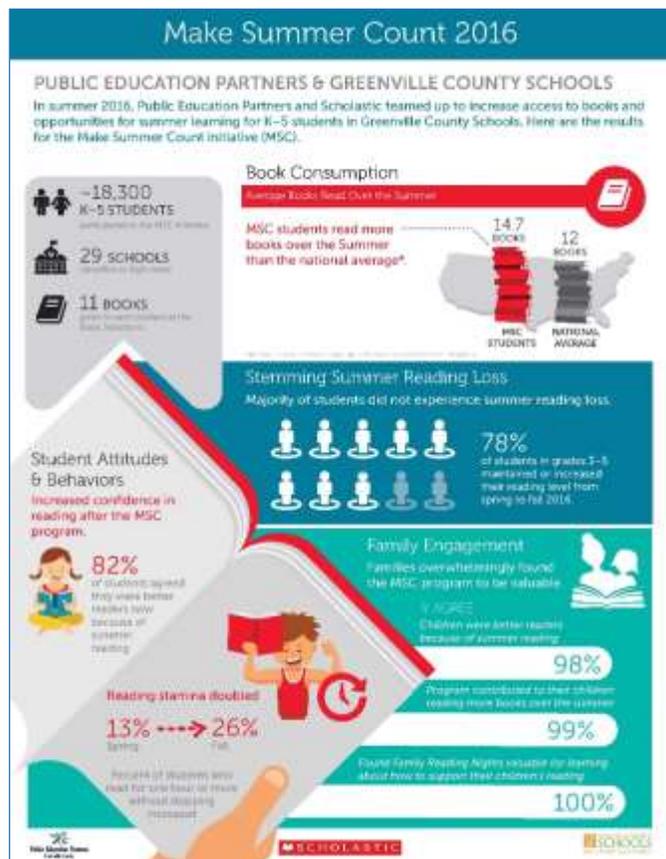
Parents receive easy-to-implement tips for how to support their child’s summer reading. Also, the Summer Reading Journal provides a suggestion on each page on what families can do to support students as they complete the comprehension and writing activities. *TrackIt!* provides a message board for teachers and parents to use during the summer to communicate. The Summer Reading Journal and the online *TrackIt!* program provide tools for reporting student reading progress. Teacher can share these reports with parents. Throughout the summer, *TrackIt!* allows teachers and parents to communicate, and teachers to communicate with students, strengthening the home-school connection.

Case Studies

Greenville County Elementary Schools, South Carolina

Make Summer Count is a summer reading initiative sponsored by Public Education Partners for Greenville County Elementary Schools in Greenville, South Carolina. Public Education Partners provides students and families with resources and opportunities to encourage reading through the summer. Scholastic, the global children’s publishing, education and media company, partnered with PEP to learn more about how summer reading activities contribute to reducing or stemming summer reading loss, the increasing gap between lower- and higher-income students that can occur when literacy resources are not equally available to all students during the summer.

Public Education Partners provides the resources needed for children to be able to read all summer long by addressing the challenge of equal access to books and literacy activities during the summer by providing two targeted, research-based opportunities to engage students with literacy:



- Make Summer Count Book Selection: Students build home libraries by selecting 11 books within their reading levels to take home and read over the summer.

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- **Family Reading Nights:** Families learn techniques and strategies to support their children’s reading over the summer, and children select an additional five books to take home.

The program aims to serve children and families in higher-needs elementary schools, defined in this research as schools with 50% or more of students qualifying for Free and Reduced Price Meals.

Public Education Partners, Greenville County Schools, and Scholastic approached addressing summer reading loss and conducting related research by:

- Providing 11 free books per student to over 18,000 1st–6th grade¹ students across 29 higher-needs elementary schools via the MSC Book Selection; more than 209,000 total books distributed
- Hosting 23 Family Reading Night events to foster family engagement, reaching more than 1,200 participants
- Distributing surveys to over 9,000 3rd–5th grade students
- Distributing over 18,000 book logs to track summer reading in 1st–6th grade students²
- Analyzing assessment data on over 8,000 3rd–5th grade students

KEY FINDINGS

Our preliminary work examined how summer reading activities might contribute to reducing or stemming typical summer reading loss, as well as the role of students’ attitudes and beliefs about reading and their actual summer reading habits. Key findings from this work include:

- Make Summer Count students read more books over the summer than the national average.
 - Make Summer Count students read an average of 14.7 books, compared to the national average of 12 books.
- The majority of students participating in Make Summer Count did not experience the summer reading loss that is typically associated with students in higher-needs schools.
 - More specifically, 78% of 3rd–5th grade students maintained or increased their reading level from spring to fall 2016.
- Students who read more books over the summer were less likely to experience summer reading loss.
 - Students who read 11 or more books were less likely to experience summer reading loss as defined by moving to a lower MAP performance tier at the end of the summer.
- There was a substantial increase in reading stamina, or the time spent reading without taking a break, from spring to fall 2016.
 - The percent of students who read for one hour or more without stopping increased from 13% to 26%.
- Students reported increased confidence in reading after participating in the Make Summer Count program.
 - 82% agreed that they were better readers after the summer.
- Families overwhelmingly found the Make Summer Count program to be valuable. 99% agreed that the program contributed to their children reading more books over the summer.
 - 98% agreed that their children were better readers after the summer.
 - 100% found Family Reading Nights to be valuable for learning about how to support their children’s reading.

Lexington School District One, South Carolina

School districts across the nation struggle to engage children during the summer months. Lexington County School District One found an effective solution. Since 2010, it has implemented the Scholastic *My Books Summer* take-home program. Now all five of their Title I schools provide every child with the resources to own a book (or two) during the summer, and every parent the steps to create quality time through reading. Recognizing that all communities are unique in their own way, many Lexington County School District One schools have customized their summer reading programs to fit the needs, interests, and themes of the students and parents they serve.

BOOK CUSTOMIZATION

Saxe Gotha Elementary School has used the Scholastic customization method to implement its summer reading program for the past several years. Premade packets are designed to match the reading levels of the students, and the media specialist makes sure that they get books that match their interests. The managers of the distribution process implement input from those who know the children's reading habits better than anyone else—their teachers. Because of that diligence, every child received a desirable book at his or her grade level.

SELF-SELECTION

Gilbert Primary School decided to implement their resources in a different way. After trying the customization method, their leadership decided to migrate to the Scholastic self-selection model. This approach allows for the child, with guidance from a specialist, to browse through the books and decide which ones they want for themselves. Both students and parents appreciated this method the most, and as praise for the program spread through the community, the school added self-selection distributions for the winter and spring breaks as well.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Family and community engagement has been the key to the success of Lexington County's outreach. Red Bank Elementary promoted the summer reading program with a family night with books, popcorn, and a pajama party. This event turned out to be a massive success with a huge turnout of parents and their children. Red Bank Elementary is also looking to establish an automated phone call home that would ask questions about the book that the child has taken home for the summer. As a form of incentive, children and their parents can drop off the answers to those questions in order to retrieve another book.



Forts Pond hosted a literacy workshop for grades 3–5. Parents were given tips for promoting literacy at home while their children engaged in literacy activities nearby. At the end of the workshop parents and their children selected a book together, reinforcing the role of the parents as partners in their children's literacy journey. One grateful parent shared at a family literacy session that she hadn't understood the importance of being a reading model because her parents did not have that knowledge when she was younger. Thanks to this workshop, she and her child received the first book that they would have in their home.

The summer reading program has become a social phenomenon in the Lexington community. There have even been book exchanges among children because they want to share the stories they have read with their peers. When the program first started, the schools did not have set parameters; they just wanted their students to read more at home. What makes the Lexington School District One program so effective is that each

school has learned what works for them as principals improve quality across the board and implement feedback from parents. The program has allowed leaders to be flexible in planning and implementation to "FACE" the challenges of their particular community. The ability to build and expand as you go allows staff to raise the level of engagement with parents. The program has been a success for the schools, coordinators, and community.

This program can be purchased from the Scholastic Education Catalog. Please ask your representative for more information: Nicole Kupser, NKupser@scholastic.com, 480-215-1483.