

# THE GREAT SUMMER LIBRARY CHALLENGE

Visit <https://whatdowedoallday.com/summer-library-challenge> to learn more

## Pre-challenge:

Head over to your local library and sign up for their summer reading program.

### Fiction Challenge #1: Introduce Your Kids to a Classic

**Tell your kids the names of 3 favorite books from your childhood. Show them how to use the library catalog to find the books. Read them together and check them out.**

Advanced: Find 3 books written by one or more of your favorite childhood authors that you haven't read before. Here's a short list of authors to help you get started if you need a bit of extra inspiration (*but don't feel limited to these*): Robert McCloskey, Beatrix Potter, Arnold Lobel, Ezra Jack Keats, Virginia Lee Burton, Ruth Krauss, Maurice Sendak, Don Freeman

Advanced: Find an audiobook of a childhood classic, check it out and listen to it.

### Fiction Challenge #2: Find new fiction books on a favorite topic

**The non-fiction section isn't the only place to read about a favorite topic. Pick a keyword that will interest your kids (for example, "dinosaur" or "digger"). Using the library catalog (ask your librarian if you need assistance), find several fiction books on that topic.**

Advanced: Check out several picture books on a particular topic and compare and contrast the illustrations and style of writing. Talk with your kids about how different authors and illustrators portray the same subject.

Advanced: Check out your library's summer programs for kids and pick a keyword that matches the theme of one of the programs. Find and read a few books on that topic and then attend a program, if possible.

### Fiction Challenge #3: Explore different reading levels of the children's fiction section

The children's section is usually divided into several areas: picture books, early readers, and chapter books/middle grade novels. Check out at least one book from each leveled area of the fiction section to read with your kids. You may be surprised that your young child loves listening to chapter books and your older children still enjoys picture books.

Advanced: Explain the different areas of the fiction sections to your child. Compare the structure and layouts of the books and discuss what the differences are in the different levels (for example, chapter length, font size, density of illustrations).

Advanced: Ask your librarian to identify at least one popular author in each level of children's fiction books and find a book by each of those authors to check out.

#### **Fiction Challenge #4: Utilize your librarian's recommendations**

Find the display section for fiction books, and check out several books that are new to you that the librarians have placed there.

Advanced: Talk to your children's librarian and ask what new fiction picture books or children's novels have recently arrived at the library that the librarian would recommend. Reserve or check out some of those books.

#### **Fiction Challenge #5: Find a popular book**

Browse your library fiction shelves until you find sets of books that have at least two to three copies of the same book on the shelf. Check out one of the books from several of the sets. (Be sure to look for books that you have not read yet.)

Advanced: Find several books on the Caldecott Medal or Newberry Awards list that you have never read, and reserve or check them out at the library.

Advanced: Check out Kirkus Reviews top children's books from last year. Find a couple of the books in your library's catalog and check them out.

#### **Fiction Challenge #6: Find a popular author**

Scan your library fiction shelves and look for multiple books by the same author. Look for an author that you either have never read or have only read one book from and check out several new books by that author. You might notice some authors have written so many books, they fill an entire shelf!

Advanced: Pick several authors that you have read recently and use the library catalog to discover books that you have not read by that author. Check out or reserve several of those books.

Advanced: Pick a favorite author and search online for a blog, Twitter account, or Facebook page. Don't be shy. Leave a message! Or, go old school and write a letter and mail it!

## **NonFiction Challenge #1: World Geography and Culture**

Ask a librarian to help you find an atlas. Find and locate a country you've never visited. Using the library catalog, locate and check out three books about that country and its culture.

Advanced: Using the books you chose, find 5 ways the country's culture is different from your own.

Advanced: Does the country have a special holiday? How would you plan a party to celebrate that holiday?

## **Nonfiction Challenge #2: Plants**

In your library's catalog, type in the subject word, "plants." What is the general call number for most of the books? Browse that section of the children's nonfiction shelves. Find and check out 2 books: one about identifying flowers and trees and one about how to grow a home garden. Compare the call numbers.

Advanced: Take your first book to the park, identify 3 different flowers and 3 different trees.

Advanced: Design and draw your dream garden! Make sure to identify the plants in your layout.

## **Nonfiction Challenge #3: Poetry**

The nonfiction section contains more than just factual books! Find the poetry section and check out three types of poetry books: an anthology of works by different poets, a collection by a single author and a book of themed poetry.

Advanced: Find the definitions (using books from the poetry section, not the internet!) of three kinds of poetry (such as haiku, limericks, sonnets, concrete, acrostic, etc.)

Advanced: Use books in the library to write a "spine poem" (here's a how-to link: <http://www.whatdowedoallday.com/spine-poetry-activity-for-kids>), or write your own poem!

## **Nonfiction Challenge #4: Fairy and Folk Tales**

Nonfiction is not all about dry facts and data! Find and check out a fairy or folk tale anthology and read at least three different stories from it.

Advanced: Choose your favorite fairy or folk tale and locate three versions of the tale from three different cultures.

Advanced: Write and illustrate your own version of your favorite fairy or folk tale. What call number would you give it? (Ask your librarian if you need help with the call number.)

### **Nonfiction Challenge #5: Sports**

What is your favorite sport? Find the sport's location in the non-fiction section of the library. Write down the call number. What is the sport that comes right before it on the shelves? Right after?

Advanced: Find and check out three books on your sport: a history book, a biography and a rule-book.

Advanced: Create 10 trivia questions based on the facts you learned about your favorite sport. Quiz your parents or your friends.

### **Challenge #6: Biography**

Find the biography section. Browse the shelves and find 2 books to read and check out: one about a person whose name you've heard, one about someone new to you.

Advanced: Using the library catalog, find more books about one of those people. Discuss with your parents how the books differ in their representation of the biographical subject.

Advanced: Write a biography about someone in your life.

---

### **Resource Challenge #1: Computers**

Ask your librarian what programs and resources are available at the library's computer station for your age child.

Advanced: If your library has an age appropriate computer training session, sign up.

Advanced: Ask your librarian if your library subscribes to any databases or online resources for children that you can access from home.

Many libraries subscribe to online databases and resources that might not be available to the general public. For instance your library might have special search engines designed for kids, online children's encyclopedias, and even online book animations. Many times these databases and resources are available on your library's website, by logging in with your library card account.

## **Resource Challenge #2: Non-Book Collections**

Talk to your librarian to find out what non-print materials are in circulation. All libraries offer resources to check out in addition to print books. You may be familiar with the more common ones such as audiobooks, music CDs, and DVDs but your library may also offer braille, microfiche, ebooks, and even photographs and art work.

Advanced: What topic are you currently interested in? Find and check out (or view in the library if non-circulating) 3 different materials on that subject.

Advanced Challenge: Even small libraries have unique items in their archives. Ask your librarian, or explore your library's website to learn about any unique special collections your library might have. Find out if and when these collections ever go on display. Is there something of interest that you would like to see?

Advanced: Ask your librarian if there are any special sections in the children's area of the library that are designed for parents. For example, a parent's section that covers difficult topics such as grief, puberty, and divorce, or parental guides arranged by topics such as phonetics and potty training.

## **Resource Challenge #3: Events & Exhibitions**

Does your library hold regular or special events and exhibitions? Ask your librarian how you can keep abreast of these events. Sign up for an email or mailing list so you can be notified of the library happenings long after these challenges are over.

Advanced: Explore the calendar of events for children, choose one or more and attend.

Advanced: Go with your kids to a library exhibition. Talk as a family about what you see. Using a subject keyword search in the library catalog check out 1-3 books about the exhibition subject.

## **Resource Challenge #4: Outreach Services and Give Back**

Many libraries take their services and resources to people who cannot physically get to the library. They might have an outreach program to senior centers or provide disaster relief information. Some libraries have services like free after-school tutors for kids or help with filling out government forms. Talk to your librarian and ask them 1) what they think the library's most valuable outreach program is; 2) what the most utilized service is; and 3) what the service is they wish more people knew about.

Advanced: Draw a picture or write a letter of appreciation to your librarian. Tell the librarian about something new you've learned about library services.

Advanced: Find out how you can volunteer at your library and take action in some way, whether it is signing a petition, writing a letter to your local representative showing support for library funding, or volunteering your time helping overworked library staff.

### Bonus Challenge

Free access to information is essential for a free society. Some might argue that the internet can play the role of a library as a source of open, free information. It's easy to look something up at home on the web. Ask your librarian why the internet can never replace the library. Then, open the topic up for discussion at your next family meal.

---

## LIBRARY SCAVENGER HUNT

**Are you a library expert? Try your hand at these 10 clues!**

Clue #1 Listen, look, and read. Can you find an audiobook and its corresponding print copy? (Bonus Point: Find a DVD of the same book too!)

Clue #2 Roll out the red carpet for the book celebrities. Can you find a book with a medal on its cover?

Clue #3 Visiting the library is out of this world. Can you find the call number for nonfiction books about the moon?

Clue #4 Say goodbye to the moon. Return to earth by heading over to the fiction picture books and locating *Goodnight Moon*. (Bonus Point: Can you find the mouse on all the pages showing the green room?)

Clue #5 Take a break. Can you find a favorite magazine?

Clue #6 Did you know that not all poems rhyme? Find a book of haikus.

Clue #7 Time travel. Locate a fiction book about your favorite period of history.

Clue #8 Meet someone new. Find a biography about a person from a different ethnicity or culture. (Bonus Point: Find a biography about a child.)

Clue #9 Learn something useful. Find a DVD or class at the library that teaches you a new skill or about an unfamiliar topic.

Clue #10 Your librarian knows a lot more than just how to check out books. Stop by the librarian's desk and find out your librarian's name. (Bonus Point: Ask your librarian what resources your library has that you might not know about.)

**Score:**

1-5 Points: You show great promise. Check out at least 10 books.

6-9 Points: You know a lot about the library. Pat yourself on the back and check out 10 books.

10+ Points: You're a library expert! Reward yourself by checking out 10 books.