

Dear Parents and Boys

In my opinion, the most important thing to do this summer is to relax, read and play with family and friends. There are so many benefits associated with all three:

1. Relaxation is good for the mind and body, and we all know that from boredom stems creativity, see extract from a recent article, below (link supplied).

Rather than constantly providing external stimulation to children, it is far better to allow children to experience boredom, to learn to tolerate it and find their own solutions to escape it, as they will be required to do this in adult life.

The experience of boredom, though aversive, can have a positive flip side: it can be a motivator for people to find something goal-focused to do for themselves (scientists like to call this behavioural activation).

Parents shouldn't present a fully-formed solution; children should be encouraged to generate ideas of their own and coping mechanisms of their own to kill time. This will be a lifelong skill, as many aspects of life can be remarkably dull.

Extract taken from a Telegraph article: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/family-holidays/why-being-bored-on-holiday-benefits-your-children/>

2. Reading is one area of child development which does not require structured intervention, coaching, or specialist materials, in order to improve; just a book. Positive results can be measured within just a few weeks or months of extra time spent doing it. As teachers, often the key to improvement within an academic subject area such as Science, History or Maths is not extra subject 'facts', but greater comprehension skills. Listen to your child read sometimes, no matter what age they are in the Prep School, and discuss the text. This way you can determine if they are noting the details, understanding inference as well as following the bigger picture; all of these are vital components of reading comprehension. Use the Accelerated Reader book finder [here](#) to find suitable books to read.

3. Playing has so many benefits which translate directly into the classroom. We feel that boys learn when they can organise themselves, are resilient, can compromise with others, take turns, make mistakes and most importantly of all, lose (with good grace). All of these essential skills are practised and reinforced during play. If your son finds one or more of these areas difficult, take the time over the summer to talk about it, and provide more opportunities for him to develop these hugely important social skills. These skills will maximise your son's potential, both at school, and probably in later life too.

Free Online Resources

Finally, we would encourage parents to embrace the use of technology for sensible amounts of time.

echalk.co.uk is one of the UK's leading collective resource banks. We have purchased a whole-school licence for it, and it can be accessed via Firefly (follow Prep School – Supporting learning), or via the link below. Many of the resources are tablet-enabled too.

The Day is an exciting, bright and up to date online Current Affairs, Education and News website. It is outstanding, please do take a look, it is jam-packed with topical and interesting information.

The Day Explorer is the same but aimed at boys in Year 6 and below.

Dangerous Games eBooks is a digital collection of graphic novels, supplied in multiple formats for optimum use on *any* device including iPads, iPod Touches, Kindles and PCs.

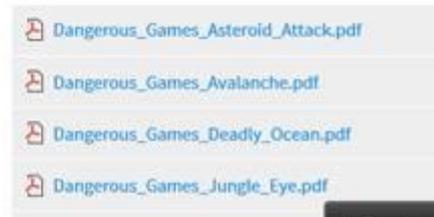
All of the above are available via the link below or through Firefly (follow Prep School – Supporting learning) <http://elearning.bedfordschool.org.uk/pssupportinglearning>



Free eBooks for all pupils of Bedford
Prep School.

Can be downloaded onto your
kindle, iPad or other devices.

**This exciting range of adventure stories features a
trio of computer games designers testing out their
work for real, entering new virtual worlds and
encountering exciting and sometimes deadly
situations ...**



In addition

In summary, perhaps find time for all of the above mentioned. To support this, and add a few extra resources, here are just a few ideas:

- Read books, newspapers, magazines, The Week Junior (weekly subscription magazine), First News (weekly subscription newspaper)
- Keep on top of Maths (particularly in the latter part of the holiday). Number bonds, times tables, and quick recall are especially important. On echalk, go to 'Primary' then 'Numeracy' or 'Literacy' for games for younger boys.
- Play games: use Apps, games in the car, quiz books, Sudoku
- Encourage listening and encourage skills in following instructions, independence and doing jobs for the family!
- Write post-cards, letters and longer emails to family and friends
- Maybe keep a diary for a week or two – or the whole summer
- For further enrichment, visit places of interest eg castles, museums
- Play-dates, for fun and to encourage good social skills

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