Read your way to the ballpark

Suncoast Credit Union

RaysBaseball.com/Reading
The goal of summer reading programs is to encourage elementary-aged children to keep reading during summer vacation to avoid what is known as the “summer slide.” Public libraries are the perfect place for children of all ages to access free educational and enrichment activities and programs.

Throughout the summer of 2024, many libraries across the country will celebrate summer reading focusing on the theme of Adventure Begins. An adventure is defined as an unusual and exciting experience or activity. Children, by nature, are explorers, whether participating in hands-on experiences or using their imaginations.

The Tampa Bay Rays, Suncoast Credit Union and the Tampa Bay Times Newspaper in Education program are excited to celebrate the theme of adventure in the 17th annual Read Your Way to the Ballpark summer reading program!

The crack of the bat, the smell of hot dogs and popcorn and the sound of children reading mark the beginning of summer reading season!

Summer is here, and it is time to sit down with a good book, graphic novel, magazine or newspaper and enjoy watching our Tampa Bay Rays in action. Once again, the Rays, Tampa Bay-area libraries, Suncoast Credit Union and the Tampa Bay Times Newspaper in Education program have teamed up to create a lineup of free summer reading adventures to encourage and reward students for reading.

Everyone’s commitment to education in our community makes this an exciting matchup, especially with this year’s special theme: Adventure Begins. By reading books, graphic novels and newspaper articles this summer, all students in grades pre-k through 12 in Charlotte, Citrus, Hernando, Hillsborough, Osceola, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk and Sarasota counties can participate.

On the pages of this publication, you can get some great book suggestions to exercise your imagination throughout summer vacation. Visit your local library or RaysBaseball.com/Reading for your game card. Once you read for 24 hours, you can win two tickets to see the Tampa Bay Rays at Tropicana Field.

The importance of literacy

Keeping a reading journal is a great way to keep track of what you have read and learn more about yourself. A journal can serve as a reminder of the adventures you read. While you are reading books and newspaper articles this summer, write down questions, thoughts and opinions about what you have read. Through your reading, you can explore new concepts and ideas. While you are keeping your journal, read the Tampa Bay Times at least twice a week, along with your books. You can read news, sports, comic strips or even advertisements. What are your thoughts about the things you read in the newspaper? To begin your journal, write about something that you have read in the Times that directly affects your life. Share some of your journal entries and thoughts with your peers and family. Submit a book or newspaper article review to Jodi Pushkin at ordernie@tampabay.com.
Exploring new worlds

Throughout the pages of this Tampa Bay Times Newspaper in Education publication, you will see suggested reading for students in grades pre-k through fifth grade. There are additional reading suggestions for students in grades pre-k through 12, broken down by grade level and genre, on the Summer Learning page of the Tampa Bay Times Newspaper in Education website. Go to tampabay.com/nie, and click on Summer Learning under the Resources tab.

Whether you are reading a printed book or the digital version, action, adventure, comedy, history, fantasy and new worlds are inside for you to explore. Your adventure into new worlds is endless.

You can find these exciting tales of adventure and more on the virtual shelves of your local library. You can choose to read any books and graphic novels that interest you. The book lists provided are just suggestions.

Suggested Reading

for grades Pre-K through 2

A Mouthful of Minnows by John Hare
A Spoonful of Frogs by Casey Lyall
A Very Big Fall by Emmy Kastner
Beak & Ally by Norm Feuti
Bibbidi Bobbidi Academy Rory and the Magical Mix-Ups by Kallie George
Big Truck, Little Island by Chris Van Dusen
Bug on the Rug by Sophia Gholz
Chickadee Criminal Mastermind by Monica Silvie
Cornbread & Poppy by Matthew Cordell
Cranky Chicken by Katherine Battersby
Dear Dragon by Josh Funk
Doggo and Pupper by Katherine Applegate
Federico and the Wolf by Rebecca J. Gomez
Five Hiding Ostriches by Barbara Barbieri McGrath
Fluffy McWhiskers Cuteness Explosion by Stephen W. Martin
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Fussy Flamingo by Shelley Vaughan James
Good Rosie! by Kate DiCamillo
Grumpy Monkey by Suzanne Lang
Ice Cream Face by Heidi Woodward Sheffield

If You Ever Want to Bring an Alligator to School, Don’t! by Elise Parsley

If You Give a Mouse: Time for School, Mouse! by Laura Joffe Numeroff
Invasion of the Unicorns by David Biedrzycki
Ira Sleeps Over by Bernard Waber
Ivy Lost and Found by Cynthia Lord
 Kamala and Maya’s Big Idea by Meena Harris
Kindergarten, Here I Come! by D.J. Steinberg
Knight Owl by Christopher Denise
Leo the Late Bloomer by Robert Kraus
Lil’ Merl and the Dastardly Dragon by Liam Barrett
Lilly’s Purple Plastic Purse by Kevin Henkes
Little Lovable Lucy’s Big Day and Little Lovable Lucy, You’re So Big by Norma Roth and Shayna Rose Penn
Maybe... by Chris Haughton
Mel Fell by Corey R. Tabor
Miss Nelson Is Missing! by Harry Allard
The Hunger Heroes: Missed Meal Mayhem by Jarrett Lerner
My Papi Has a Motorcycle by Isabel Quintero
Not That Pet by Smriti Prasadam-Halls
Puppy Problems by Paige Braddock
Rot: The Cutest in the World by Ben Clanton
Sir Ladybug by Corey R. Tabor

Splish Splash Barkyard Bash by Norma Roth and Shayne Rose Penn
Sylvester and the Magic Pebble by William Steig
The Cookie Fiasco by Dan Santat and Mo Willems
The Electric Slide and Kai by Kelly Baptist
The Fairy Dogmother by Maribeth Boelts
The Gruffalo by Julia Donaldson
The Littlest Yak by Lu Fraser
The Pout-Pout Fish Goes to School by Deborah Diesen
Strange Planet: The Sneaking, Hiding, Vibrating Creature by Nathan W. Pyle
The Three Billy Goats Gruff by Mac Barnett
The Very Impatient Caterpillar by Ross Burach
Tomatoes In My Lunchbox by Costantia Manoli
We Don’t Eat Our Classmates by Ryan T. Higgins
What if, Pig? by Linzie Hunter
What Pet Should I Get? by Dr. Seuss
What’s the Weather? by Shelley Rotner
Wheels by Sally Sutton
When Glitter Met Glue by Karen Kilpatrick
Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak
Wings by Christopher Myers
Once upon a time, in a land not too far away, there were two fearless mascots living at Tropicana Field. By day, they led typical lives, yet as soon as batting practice began, they changed into their superidentities. These two super mascots were Raymond and DJ Kitty! These two super mascots love meeting new people, saving the world from dangerous wild pitches, evil flying bats and dreaded hot dog shortages. Every day they are on the field, there is a new adventure. After making Tropicana Field a better place, they spend their down time in their underground dugout relaxing and, of course, reading.

Raymond and DJ Kitty love to read and to sing. Did you know songs and poems have rhyming words in them? According to Vocabulary.com, “A rhyme is when the ending sounds of two words sound alike.” Some examples would be cat and hat, mouse and house, bat and rat. Look through the pages of the Tampa Bay Times to find as many rhyming words as you can. Don’t forget to check the comic pages and advertisements. Cut out the rhyming words you find and paste them on a piece of paper. Create a poem or short story with the words. Share your creation with your family and friends.

Established in April 2008, the Rays Employee Community Outreach Team (ECOT) provides voluntary hours to community service agencies that enhance or improve the quality of life in the communities it serves. In total, Rays employees have logged more than 40,000 volunteer hours split between monthly ECOT events and other ongoing projects.
Suggested Reading for Grades 3 through 5

Allergic by Megan Wagner Lloyd
Amari and the Night Brothers by B.B. Alston
Gamer Squad: Attack of the Not-So-Virtual Monsters by Kim Harrington
Bad Kitty School Daze by Nick Bruel
Bedhead Ted by Scott SanGiacomo
Better with Butter by Victoria Piontek
Caterpillar Summer by Gillian McDunn
Charlotte’s Web by E. B. White
Clean Getaway by Nic Stone
Confessions of a Dork Lord by Mike Johnston
Coraline by Neil Gaiman
Diary of a Wimpy Kid by Jeff Kinney
Distress Signal by Mary E. Lambert
Dog Man by Dav Pilkey
Dragons in a Bag by Zetta Elliott
El Deafo by Cece Bell
Fantastic Mr. Fox by Roald Dahl
Glitch by Laura Martin
Good Dogs on a Bad Day by Rachel Wenitsky
Harriet the Spy by Louise Fitzhugh
Honestly Elliott by Gillian McDunn
Island of the Blue Dolphins by Scott O’Dell
J.D. and the Great Barber Battle by J. Dillard
James and the Giant Peach by Roald Dahl
Julietta and the Diamond Enigma by Luisana Duarte Armendariz
Katie the Catsitter by Colleen AF Venable and Stephanie Yue
Leonard (My Life as a Cat) by Carlie Sorosiak
Malaika and the Wheelchair by Mary Mwangangi
Measuring Up by Lily LaMotte
Mystery on Magnolia Circle by Kate Klise
Night Frights: The Haunted Mustache by Jo McGee
Odder by Katherine Applegate
Olga and the Smelly Thing from Nowhere by Elise Gravel
Planet Earth is Blue by Nicole Panteleakos
Power Forward by Hena Khan
Secondhand Dogs by Carolyn Crimi
Shirley & Jamila Save Their Summer by Gillian Goerz
Simon B. Rhymin’ by Dwayne Reed
Sisters by Raina Telgemeier
Solimar: The Sword of the Monarchs by Pam Muñoz Ryan
Strangeville School is Totally Normal by Darcy Miller
Stuck by Jennifer Swender
Swim Team by Johnnie Christmas
The Area 51 Files by Julie Buxbaum
The City of Ember by Jeanne DuPrau
The Curse on Spectacle Key by Chantel Acevedo
The Fighting Ground by Avi
The First Rule of Punk by Celia C. Pérez
The Graveyard Book by Neil Gaiman
The Incredibly Dead Pets of Rex Dexter by Aaron Reynolds
The Magical Reality of Nadia by Bassem Youssef and Catherine R. Daly
The Million Dollar Race by Matthew Ross Smith
The Mouse with the Question Mark Tail by Richard Peck
The Newspaper Club by Beth Vrabel
The Phantom Tollbooth by Norton Juster
The Raven Heir by Stephanie Burgis
The Sideways Stories From Wayside School by Louis Sachar
The Unicorn Rescue Society Series by Adam Gidwitz
Forge Your Dragon World: A Wings of Fire Creative Guide by Tui T. Sutherland

Lovable Lucy Series
by Norma Roth and Shayna Rose Penn

Lovable Lucy is a fluffy, curious and emotive dog. She loves adventures and exploring her neighborhood with her family, and her nose! Children can relate to Lucy as she faces new, and sometimes challenging, situations. The Lovable Lucy series, written by Tampa Bay resident Norma Roth, engages kids’ imaginations while portraying positive ways to encourage confidence and kindness. The books’ themes focus on self-discovery and confidence; positive emotional expression; teamwork and problem solving; and inclusivity and empathy.

Grades: Pre-k-2
Publisher: Wag Your Tale Pr
Book Summary: Amazon; Lovable Lucy series website

Knight Owl
by Christopher Denise

Since the day he hatched, Owl dreamed of becoming a real knight. He may not be the biggest or the strongest, but his sharp nocturnal instincts can help protect the castle, especially since many knights have recently gone missing. While standing guard during Knight Night Watch, Owl is faced with the ultimate trial — a frightening intruder. It’s a daunting duel by any measure. But what Owl lacks in size, he makes up for in good ideas. Full of wordplay and optimism, this surprising display of bravery proves that cleverness (and friendship) can rule over brawn.

Grades: Pre-k-3
Publisher: Christy Ottaviano Books
Book Summary: Amazon

Pages & Co. Series: The Bookwanderers by Anna James
Get ready to Read Your Way to the Ballpark

Parents, you can encourage your children to participate in the Reading with the Rays program this summer. There are suggested book titles for students on the pages of this Newspaper in Education publication. Visit the Times NIE website for more reading suggestions for students of all ages, as well as some extra activities. Go to tampabay.com/nie and click on Summer Learning under the Resources tab. All students in grades prekindergarten through 12 are eligible to participate in the Reading with the Rays program. Visit your local library or RaysBaseball.com/Reading for your game card. The library systems on the next page are proud partners of the Reading with the Rays program. You can find out more about your library’s summer programs online by going to the main library web page.

Did you know?

Twenty-six years ago, the Tampa Bay Rays adventure began when the team announced it would host Spring Training in St. Petersburg. On May 7, 1998, they became the first team in the “modern era” to host spring training in their home city.

Reading fun

Reading books and exploring adventures and fantasy can be a lot of fun. Did you know that Rays mascot DJ Kitty loves reading books, especially adventure books? He loves exploring fantasy worlds and going where no cat has gone before. DJ Kitty also likes reading about people in the community and imagining those people in different adventurous settings. Choose an animal – it can be one you have heard of or a completely new one – and imagine that animal in your own community. Find an article in the Tampa Bay Times and put your character into the situation described in the article. Write a brief paragraph about what the creature does in the situation presented in the article. Illustrate your story and share it with your classmates and family. You also can share the paragraph and artwork with the Reading with the Rays program coordinators and earn a special Rays prize. You can email your story to Jodi Pushkin at ordernie@tampabay.com.

Understanding stories

The best way to understand the facts in a story is to identify the who, what, where, when, why and how elements of the story. Read one of the stories or a comic strip in the Tampa Bay Times. Break down the meaning of the story by noting the facts of who is the story about, what happened in the story, where does the story take place, when does the story take place and why.

Mr. Tickety-Toc Clock: Goodnight Mr. Clock

by Davon Miller

The day is ending and Mr. Tickety-Toc Clock is going to bed. When he accidently sets his alarm clock at the wrong time he’ll do anything so he can get some sleep. Kids will love this book as they learn the importance of getting a good night’s sleep in a fun way! Author Davon Miller, a St. Petersburg, Florida, native, is a young, published children’s author and illustrator best known for his children’s book series titled Mr. Tickety-Toc Clock. Read more about Miller at RaysBaseball.com/Reading.

Grades: K-2
Publisher: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform
Book Summary: Amazon

The Area 51 Files

by Julie Buxbaum

When Sky Patel-Baum is sent to live with her mysterious uncle, she didn’t imagine she’d end up here: Area 51. A top-secret military base with a bajillion rules and so classified not even the president knows its secrets. And, it turns out, the place is full of aliens! As Sky sets out to explore her extraordinary new home with her pizza-obsessed pet hedgehog Spike, she meets her otherworldly next-door neighbor Elvis and his fluffy pup, Pickles. But something mysterious is afoot in Area 51. Some of the aliens have gone missing... at the exact same time Sky arrived. New best friends Sky, Elvis, Spike and Pickles try to crack the case, but the clock is ticking

Grades: 3-7
Publisher: Delacorte Press
Book Summary: Amazon
Your Tampa Bay Times
Newspaper in Education team

The Newspaper in Education (NIE) program is a cooperative effort between schools and the Times Publishing Co. to promote the use of newspapers in print and electronic form as educational resources. Our educational resources fall into the category of informational text.

Since the mid-1970s, NIE has provided schools with class sets of the Times, plus our award-winning original curriculum, at no cost to teachers or schools.

With ever-shrinking school budgets, the newspaper has become an invaluable tool to teachers. The Times and our NIE curriculum are rich educational resources, offering teachers an up-to-the-minute, living text and source for countless projects in virtually every content area.

NIE serves teachers in private, public, alternative and home schools. Email ordernie@tampabay.com to become an NIE teacher.

For information about how you can donate to NIE, call 727-893-8138 or visit tampabay.com/nie. Keep in the know about the Tampa Bay Times Newspaper in Education program by following us on X: x.com/TBTimesNIE and liking us on Facebook: facebook.com/TBTNIE.

Teachers, you can order copies of the Tampa Bay Times for your summer school classroom by emailing ordernie@tampabay.com.

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Florida Standards
The materials in this publication correlate to the following Florida Standards for elementary school students:

ELA.
K1.F.1.1; ELA.K1.F.1.2; ELA.K5.F.1.3; ELA.K5.F.1.4; ELA.K5.R.1.1; ELA.K5.C.1.1; ELA.K5.C.1.2; ELA.K5.C.1.4; ELA.15.R.1.2; ELA.15.R.1.3; ELA.K5.R.2.2; ELA.25.R.2.3; ELA.K3.R.3.2; ELA.K4.C.2.1; ELA.5.C.2.1; ELA.K5.V.1.3LAFS.68.RI.4.10; LAFS.68.SL.1.1; LAFS.68.SL.1.2; LAFS.68.SL.1.3; LAFS.68.SL.2.4; LAFS.68.SL.2.5; LAFS.68.SL.2.6; LAFS.68.W.1.1; LAFS.68.W.1.2; LAFS.68.W.2.4; LAFS.68.W.3.7; LAFS.68.W.3.8; LAFS.68.W.3.9; LAFS.68.W.4.10

Your Tampa Bay Times
Newspaper in Education

Tampa Bay Times/NIE
READING WITH THE RAYS MAKES SUMMER READING A HIT!

ATTENTION, KIDS!

Suncoast Credit Union and the Tampa Bay Rays are ready to make reading fun all summer long. Check out our Reading with the Rays program where you can earn prizes just for doing what you love to do - read! It's as easy as A-B-C!

WIN PRIZES!

Use your game card to track hours and collect prizes. If you read 24 hours during the program you can earn exclusive Rays prizes!

HOW IT WORKS:

A. Pick up your game card at your local library or visit raysbaseball.com/reading
B. Pick up your favorite books
C. Start reading!

MAKING A DIFFERENCE THROUGH EDUCATION!

Over the course of the program, more than 500,000 students have combined to read for 3.16 million hours during their summer break! Over 103,000 fans experienced a Rays game for free thanks to the reading program.

LET'S MAKE 2024 A READING HOME RUN!

Suncoast.com