

SUMMER RHYTHMS

Sowing seeds for a bountiful harvest

Though the specific rhythm of learning changes when school is out, we still want to keep the habit of learning alive! Our Forma program for parents of 5–8-year-olds, will help you maintain a steady routine and rhythm of learning throughout the school year, too.



Here are some fun ways to incorporate rhythm and routine into your family life this summer!

Letter Houses and Letter Neighborhoods

For the youngest students just beginning to get acquainted with the alphabet, a Letter House is a fun and engaging way to begin memorizing letters and sounds through exposure and connection. Ask children to draw a house with four rooms or sections. Label each part with a different letter—maybe letters they know well and a couple they have trouble remembering. Then, whenever they come across a word that starts with that letter, ask them to draw or write it in the house. By the end of the summer, they'll have a full house! Tip: You can also help them create a letter neighborhood with a home or room for all 26 letters. Add rooms for favorite letter combinations like “ch,” “sh,” or silent final e’s.

Trading Cards

Help your children collect and trade number trading cards! Start with a few index cards and label each with a different number. You can choose small numbers, large numbers, consecutive numbers, favorite jersey numbers, or even zero. On one side of each card, have your children draw a picture or use stickers to represent the number. Throughout the summer, whenever your children encounter one of the chosen numbers, encourage them to add it to the back of the corresponding card. If they see five bananas on the counter, they can add a picture or sentence to the five-card. If they buy a lollipop for 79 cents, that can go on the 79-card! You never know when your children will come across the number 19, 24, or 187. They might just start seeing those numbers everywhere!

Family Calendar Games

Activities using the family wall calendar help build routine and rhythm in the summer months. Adding a short daily math challenge brings anticipation and excitement to the morning.

1. Cover a number on the calendar each morning. Ask younger children to figure out which number is hidden. Encourage older children to explain their reasoning. For example, why couldn't the missing number be 19 if it's between 26 and 29?
2. Find the date on the calendar each morning. Then send your children on a scavenger hunt to find representations of that number around the house or yard. It might appear as Roman numerals on a clock, the number of beds in the house, magnets on the fridge, or even the score of last night's baseball game.

Mystery Number

Write down a number from 1-10 or 1-100 (or even higher for older children) and invite 3-7 guesses from your children. Respond to each guess with a clue: "My number is higher/lower than your guess." Sketch out a number line to help visualize the guesses and clues. Display the correctly guessed numbers on the

fridge and charge the children with safekeeping of the previously selected mystery numbers to aid with the next day's guesses!

Summertime Capsule

Capture summer in your backyard. Spend time observing plants, animals, temperatures, clouds, precipitation, and insects. Keep dried flowers, leaves, animal logs, temperature records, and sketches in a folder or journal. After thorough observation, begin making a list of predictions for the fall and winter. Which birds will be gone or newly arrived? Will the flowers be open or closed? Will the old mesquite tree make it through monsoon season? What color will the grass be? Add your predictions to your time capsule and open in autumn or winter.

Family Read-Alouds

Follow the adventures of a well-mannered mouse in *Abel's Island* by William Steig, as Abel is caught in a sudden storm and swept away to a remote island. Or enjoy the memorable characters and personalities in Beatrix Potter's *The Tale of Jemima Puddle-Duck* as a mother duck finds herself in a tricky spot while trying to sit on her eggs.

Jellybean Jar

Fill a clear jar with a different item each week and invite your family to guess how many are inside. Leave the jar out for daily observation, and at the end of the week, collect everyone's official guesses. Canning jars or cleaned-out peanut butter jars work well. Fun fillings include jellybeans, wrapped candies, junk drawer treasures, paper napkins, or game board pieces. **Other ideas:** Encourage older kids to explain their reasoning. Did they estimate based on the jar's size, the size of the objects, or a past week's results? This helps build number sense and estimation skills. Have kids record their guesses each day, adjusting as they gather more information. At the end of the week, compare early guesses to final ones and discuss what changed and why. Let kids count out smaller groups of the object (e.g., 10 jellybeans) and use that to estimate how many could fit in the whole jar.

Lego Drop

Hold a small handful of Legos and drop them! Ask children to estimate the number of Legos without touching them and shout it out when they know it. Invite discussions about groups and patterns that allow us to know the number without counting every Lego. Tip: For children familiar with addition, try dropping two different piles of Legos and ask them to name the numbers and add them together.

Are you looking for more ways to build your 5-8-year-old's skills in reading and math with support from a like-minded community and an expert mentor?

[Visit our website](#) to learn more about joining a Forma cohort.