

Inside: BEST FOR FAMILIES Readers' Survey

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Sneak in Summer Learning

At Home or on the Go | BY AMY CARNEY BEVINS |

School's out for the summer. At this point both you and the kids are ready for a break from academics. No homework, no research projects, no tests, no papers and not another diorama for at least two months. Whew!!

But wait. Before you take a summer learning hiatus remember - research shows that, on average, over the summer months, students lose approximately 2.6 months of grade-level equivalency in mathematical computation skills and often one month or more in other subject areas.

So how do you avoid summer learning loss while still keeping summer relaxing and fun? Try out some of these great toys and games. Each one slips learning into a fun package, reinforcing or teaching skills in a way that appeals to kids. Whether you are at home this summer, or on the road, these toys and games will help keep your kids' brains engaged all summer long.

Science on a Tracking Expedition

Can you tell a raccoon track from that of an opossum? How about a coyote from a grey wolf? With Science on a Tracking Expedition, kids can identify, cast, paint and print animal tracks, play games, learn about animals and explore the world around them. A nature walk becomes a tracking adventure as kids unlock the secrets of animal tracks.

Ages - 4+

Approximate Cost - \$29.99

www.kidsciencekits.com

Magic School Bus Diving into Slime, Gel, and Goop

Slime, goop and ooblek . . . gooeey, gloppy words kids love! Now, with the help of Ms. Frizzle and the Magic School Bus crew, kids can "get messy" while they learn about polymers in a series of hands-on experiments. Make glue from milk, grow jiggle marbles, create slime and more. With well-written, easy to follow instructions and extension activities, your kids will have a blast with The Magic School Bus Diving into Slime, Gel, and Goop.

Ages - 6+

Approximate Cost - \$19.99

www.kidsciencekits.com