The Association Between Summer Reading Programs

and

Academic Success in Children and Adolescents

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This paper/project/exam is entirely my own work.

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Date: March 05, 2011
Introduction and Scope

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the relationship between student academic success and summer reading programs. It is a common assumption that student academic ability declines during the summer months without some form of reading intervention. The articles in this bibliography examine summer academic regression, the causes leading to this setback, and the means by which summer reading programs attempt to reduce summer reading and academic loss experienced by so many students.

In addition to investigating summer reading programs, some studies provide information regarding the connection between year-round public library programs and academic success. Studies also include insight into summer reading programs that do not take place in the public library but within the school setting. Although groundbreaking studies on this topic, such as the 1970s and 80s studies by Barbara Heyns, were evaluated within the context of the articles read, the time frame of investigation ranges from the mid1990s to today. Examining articles within this time period coincided with the changing nature of library service due to the introduction of the general public to computer technology.

Description

Summer programs have been an integral part of public libraries since the first program was established one hundred years ago in Hartford, Connecticut (Fiore, 2007, p.85). Today, children can access these programs almost everywhere since 95.2% of public libraries have summer library reading programs (SLRPS) to varying degrees (pg.85). The purposes of SLRPS include the promotion of summer reading, creating awareness of the joy in reading as a life-long activity, and exposing children to the vast resources available to them at public libraries (pg. 89). A common form of SLRPS focuses on a particular theme and encourages children to read through the use of prize-based motivation (Lehnen and Cairo, 2006, pg. 30).

The frequent participation of public libraries in SLRPS is attributed to the reality that fifty to sixty percent of all individuals who utilize public library resources are children under the age of eighteen (Walter, 2003, pg. 574). Within this large patron demographic, a recognized academic regression occurs each summer between the spring and fall months. Academic setback
and success occur at different intervals within the course of each successive year. As educational opportunities and access increase during the school months between fall and spring, student academic gains also increase equally across all demographic spectrums (Kim, 2004, pg. 169). Research demonstrates that the opposite happens during the summer months when school is out of session and reading ceases (pg. 169).

**Summary of Findings**

Within the literature, there are discrepancies as to how representative summer reading frequency and instruction are in accordance with academic success in students. With the recent budget crisis, representatives are beginning to question the success and correlation between summer reading programs and reading achievement (Roman and Fiore, 2010, pg. 27). These doubts held by public representatives derive from standardized test reading scores and the lack of student improvement following participation in SLRPS (pg. 27). According to a 2003 study by Richard L. Luftig, the amount of time spent engaged in a summer reading and instruction program is not a factor of academic success. Luftig argues that for students to maintain reading achievement during the summer, they do not need to participate in summer-long summer reading programs provided by public libraries. Instead, Luftig determines that students just need to engage in some amount of summer reading, whether that be a summer-long program or a shorter, month-long program that promotes reading and reading instruction. Luftig claims that some reading is better than none; but an intense and long summer-reading program will not provide students with academic benefits that outweigh the benefits correlating with shorter, more budget-friendly programs.

According to the literature reviewed, scholarly opposition to SLRPS is outweighed by studies in support of a correlation between SLRPS and academic achievement. In a study aimed at finding out the answer to the question of whether SLRPS have an impact on academic success in students, Susan Roman and Carole D. Fiore found a positive relationship between the two. According to their study, students who took part in summer public library reading programs experienced an improvement in reading ability or a lack of reading regression during the summer months. Fiore and Roman also determined that SLRPS prepared student participants for fall classes in terms of reading preparation and learning motivation. Other studies in agreement with
the findings of Fiore and Roman conclude that summer reading programs, regardless of type or form, improve student reading ability and reading comprehension (Malin, Iacullo, and Drapatsky, 2007, pg. 58).

Contrary to disagreement over the success of SLRPS, there is widespread acknowledgement within the literature that certain factors significantly affect summer reading and consequently academic success in students. The promotion of finding joy in reading and viewing summer reading as a positive activity and not a negative academic chore (Malin, Iacullo, and Drapatsky, 2007, pg. 61) is universally supported and discussed. Summer reading programs that introduce and encourage reading through interesting titles and subject topics have proven to be successful at encouraging a high frequency of summer reading in students (Lin, Shin, and Krashen, 2007, pg. 54). This enjoyment of voluntary reading is most successful when coupled with literary instruction from teachers (Kim, 2007, pg. 512). A combination of voluntary reading and teacher instruction can be achieved if public libraries and schools work together through SLRPS to encourage voluntary reading while teaching students literacy practices (Fiore, 2007, pg. 91).

One of the primary contributing components to summer reading success is parental involvement. The more children see their own parents read during the summer months, the more likely they will read themselves and understand the importance of reading (Miles and Sweetland, 2001, pg. 476). In homes where English as a second language parents lack their own assurance of adequate reading skills, children often get over-looked in terms of reading ability and improvement (Mraz and Rasinski, 2007, pg. 784). Parents that implement literacy into their families through personal library use encourage their children to read more during the summer and visit the library more (Roman and Fiore, 2010, pg. 30). As a whole, the literature stresses the important role parents have in their children’s lives as models for life-long reading and as a result, academic success.

In addition to parental involvement and its association with summer reading and thus academic success, the literature points toward the importance of the access children have to books during the summer months. The more books children own or have access to, the more they will read and the higher their reading scores will be (Fiore, 2007, pg. 85). Public libraries, through their purpose of providing book access to all demographics, are important providers of books to children (pg. 87). Access to books is directly related to a child’s socioeconomic status.
in many instances (Roman and Fiore, 2010, pg. 28). The wealthier a child’s family is, the more books he or she is likely to have access to and the opposite is true for children of poorer families (pg. 28).

Book access and its relationship to summer reading and reading scores is a key component in the existence of an academic achievement gap that occurs between children of high and low socioeconomic status during the summer months (Mraz and Rasinki, 2007, pg. 785). As poorer children have diminished access to reading material over the summer, their reading scores subsequently decline. As a consequence, the achievement gap between rich and poor students increases (pg. 785). Summer reading losses within this particular demographic of students can be lessened or eliminated if these students and their families take advantage of the book access through public library summer reading programs. This is why so many SLRPS specifically aim to attract students from this demographic background in an attempt to increase book access to poor children and therefore lessen or eliminate the achievement gap that increases each summer (Lehnen and Cairo, 2006, pg. 30).

**Bibliography**

**Entry One:**

**Abstract:** “Much research has established the contribution of summer reading setback to the reading achievement gap that is present between children from more and less economically advantaged families. Likewise, summer reading activity, or the lack of it, has been linked to summer setback. Finally, family socioeconomic status has been linked to the access children have to books in their homes and neighborhoods. Thus, in this longitudinal experimental study we tested the hypothesis that providing elementary school students from low-income families with a supply of self-selected trade books would ameliorate summer reading setback. Thus, 852 students from 17 high-poverty schools were randomly selected to receive a supply of self-selected trade books on the final day of school over a 3-year period, and 478 randomly selected students from these same schools received no books and served as the control group. No further effort was provided in this intervention study. Outcomes on the state reading assessment indicated a statistically significant effect (p = .015) for providing access to books for summer reading along with a significant (d = .14) effect size. Slightly larger effects (d = .21) were found when comparing the achievement of the most economically disadvantaged students in the treatment and control groups”.
Annotation: Written on research backed by a grant from the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, this report examines the issue of summer reading loss experienced by children from low socioeconomic backgrounds. The two senior authors, Richard L. Allington and Anne McGill Franzen, were professors from the University of Tennessee at the time of publication. This paper provides a detailed evaluation of the existence of the achievement gap between poor and rich students and adds to the research by documenting the government’s concern and action regarding this gap. Unlike most other articles in this bibliography, this resource directly aims to change government policy and response to the summer reading loss of students that adds to the achievement gap.

Search Strategy: I searched Academic Search Premier at Soka University because I am very familiar with this particular database and its interface. I started by looking up subject terms for summer reading program. I found “summer reading programs” as the subject term. I searched “summer reading programs” as the SU subject term, selected peer reviewed option to limit results. I selected this result plus another additional result from thirteen total search results.

Database: Academic Search Premier (Soka University of America)

Method of Searching: Controlled Vocabulary searching

Search String: “summer reading programs” in the SU subject term search field

Entry Two:

Abstract: “Virtually all public libraries in the United States provide some type of summer library reading program during the traditional summer vacation period. Summer library reading programs provide opportunities for students of many ages and abilities to practice their reading skills and maintain skills that are developed during the school year. Fiore summarizes some of the research in the field and relates it to library programs and usage by students. Several traditional and innovative programs from U.S. and Canadian libraries are described. She concludes with a call for further research related to summer library reading programs”.

Annotation: Carole D. Fiore comes from the professional viewpoint of a nonaligned library consultant as well as the president of Training and Library Consulting. The purpose of this article is to promote summer reading programs and their positive impact on reading skills and turning
children into life-long readers. This article proved to be a valuable source as it stressed the importance of public libraries and details their influence on the reading skills of young people during the summer months. Although this article did not bring any new research from data collection to the table, it does advocate the need for more research on the topic of public library roles in the lives of children during the summer.

**Search Strategy:** In one of my first Dialog searches, I decided to start with a very basic title search in ERIC that included all of the search terms in the phrase “summer library reading programs”. I chose to conduct a title search initially because I felt as though the articles I was looking for would need to have the phrase “summer library reading programs” in the title.

**Database:** Academic Search Premier (Soka University of America) [Dialog]

**Method of Searching:** Title searching

**Search String:** s summer(w)library(w)reading(w)programs/ti t/full/1-2

**Entry Three:**

**Abstract:** “According to the 2006 Kids Countieport, in the United States, 59 percent of ‘children under six have all available parents in the labor force.’ While flexible work hours have gained in prominence, much of the American labor force continues to follow the traditional Monday-through-Friday, nine-to-five workday. As children's librarians know, when children participate in preschool storytimes and other literacy programs, ‘language development increases, print and phonological awareness grows, and comprehension develops.’ By offering library storytimes and other literacy programs in traditional off-work hours (evenings and weekends), working parents can attend these programs with their children. But just how common is that practice? We undertook this study to determine just that”.

**Annotation:** Hughes-Hassell, an Associate Professor at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Agosto, an Associate Professor at Drexel University; and Sun, a doctorate student at Drexel University, examine the need for libraries to accommodate patron requirements in regards to library services for children. This paper successfully brings attention to the reality that many working parents cannot involve their children in library services due to the nature of their work
schedule. It also stresses the necessity for libraries to provide services for children of working parents. Although not exactly pertinent to the research topic, this article brings the concept of creating library services that meet all patron needs to the table. It provides a foundation for summer reading programs at public libraries to serve children of working parents so that these children can also benefit from the academic rewards of summer library programs.

**Search Strategy:** After searching for the aforementioned article by C.D. Fiore in Academic Search Premier I opted to search by using the Academic Search Premier “Find Similar Results Using SmartText Searching” icon on the left hand side of the detail record page of the Fiore article. Although not footnote chasing, this option did lead me directly to articles similar to the Fiore article and ultimately to the Hughes-Hassell, Agosto, and Xiaoning resource.

**Database:** Academic Search Premier (Soka University of America Website)

**Method of Searching:** SmartText searching

**Search String:** N/A

**Entry Four:**


**Abstract:** “A number of studies have shown that low-income and minority students undergo larger summer reading losses than their middle-class and White classmates, and that reading is the only activity that is consistently related to summer learning. The purpose of this study was to explore whether reading books during summer vacation improved fall reading proficiency, and whether access to books increased the volume of summer reading. The results from the multivariate regression analyses suggest that the effect of reading 4 to 5 books on fall reading scores is potentially large enough to prevent a decline in reading achievement scores from the spring to the fall. Furthermore, children who reported easy access to books also read more books. The findings have implications for designing school-based summer reading programs and for conducting future experiments that confirm the correlational findings from this study”.

**Annotation:** Jimmy Kim of the Center for Evaluation, American Academy of Arts and Sciences, presents a detailed study on the achievement gap between rich and poor students that grows each summer due to a difference in summer reading intervention and frequency. This study expertly examines the “faucet theory” regarding summer reading loss in context with the achievement gap. Unlike any other study reviewed for this bibliography, Kim implements multiple bar graphs
and tables to evaluate the achievement gap and its relationship with access to books and frequency of summer reading in students.

**Search Strategy:** I located this resource on Dialog after reading about the achievement gap theme that is discussed in many other articles in this bibliography. Since the achievement gap theme is discussed in context with summer reading programs, I decided to conduct a search in Dialog that contained these terms in the title and descriptor fields. Although there were very few results, this particular resource proved to be very useful in my research. After locating this article in Dialog, I then went to the Hagerty website and searched for the PDF version by searching for the author in the search field.

**Database:** ERIC EBSCOHost (Hagerty Website) [Dialog]

**Method of Searching:** Title/descriptor searching

**Search String:** `s achievement(w)gap/ti AND (reading(w)programs OR summer(w programs)/de`

`t/full/1-6`

**Entry Five:**


**Abstract:** “The causal effects of a voluntary summer reading intervention on children's reading activities and reading achievement were assessed in a randomized experiment involving 331 children in Grades 1-5. Children were pretested in the spring on a standardized test of reading achievement (Stanford Achievement Test, 10th ed.), on the Elementary Reading Attitudes Survey, and on a reading preference survey. At the end of the school year, children were stratified by their grade level and classroom and were randomly assigned to receive 10 books matched to their reading levels and preferences during summer vacation or after the administration of posttests. Children in the treatment group received books through airmail in July and August. In September, children were re-administered the reading test and completed a survey of their summer reading activities. Although the treatment group reported reading more books and participating in more literacy activities than did the control group, there was no significant difference in reading achievement. Recommendations for enhancing the effects of voluntary reading through teacher-directed instruction and for conducting a replication study are discussed”.

**Annotation:** James Kim of the University of California, Irvine, discusses the importance of voluntary summer reading paired with instructive reading intervention programs during the summer months. This article examines a theme not heavily evaluated in other research papers: the two opposing viewpoints on how summer reading programs should be run. These opposing viewpoints include voluntary vs. instructional summer reading programs. In conclusion, Kim
determines an important summer reading program approach that includes both strategies. His conclusions are examined through a series of tables aimed at proving the importance of both voluntary reading and reading instruction.

**Search Strategy:** Like the Allington article, I located this article by looking up the subject terms for summer reading programs in Academic Search Premier. I found “summer reading programs” as the subject term and searched “summer reading programs” as the SU subject term. Like always, I selected the peer reviewed option to limit results. Along with the Allington article, I selected this resource among thirteen total retrieval results.

**Database:** Academic Search Premier (Soka University of America Website)

**Method of Searching:** Controlled vocabulary searching

**Search String:** “summer reading programs” in the SU subject term search field

**Entry Six:**

**Abstract:** “The Indianapolis-Marion County (Ind.) Public Library (IMCPL) has offered a summer reading program for children in Indianapolis since the end of World War I. In 1984, IMCPL began collecting performance data on this program. In 1990, it expanded and integrated this data and reporting activity by creating a system of library indicators to manage and report on the outcomes of its summer program. This quantitative data is viewed in conjunction with thousands of participant evaluations (qualitative data) to identify strengths and isolate weaknesses in the program. Based on this information, new targets for program enhancement are developed and implemented the following year. Using this method, the program continues to grow as unreached audiences are identified and added to the participant base. In this way, IMCPL has established a twenty-year record of achievement serving the families of Indianapolis and successfully targeting special interest audiences. This article describes the summer reading program as it has evolved, the key features of the summer reading program performance indicator system, some notable successes, and several challenges now facing the program”.

**Annotation:** Robert Lehnen, a professor at Indiana University-Purdue University, and Chris Cairo, the Director for Project Development at the Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library (IMCPL), evaluate a summer reading program at the IMCPL and aim to discover the strengths and weaknesses of the program. The article elaborates on a very specific summer reading program and thus provides readers with exact examples and evidence from the program itself.
The importance of advertising these programs at public schools in the spring is introduced and stressed. Additionally, the article brings readers to the attention of the importance of parental involvement and successfully evaluates the need for public libraries and schools to work together in promoting summer reading programs. A pie graph and multiple bar graphs display evaluation results to readers.

**Search Strategy:** I located this article by looking up the subject terms: SU (summer reading programs OR literacy programs OR reading programs OR summer programs) in the LISTA database. I chose the LISTA database because it is specific to library and information science. I then created the search statement: SU (summer reading programs OR literacy programs OR reading programs OR summer programs) AND libraries. I included “libraries” in my search in order to weed out articles regarding summer programs in schools because I specifically wanted articles regarding public libraries.

**Database:** Library & Information Science & Technology Abstracts (LISTA) (Hagerty Webpage)

**Method of Searching:** Controlled vocabulary searching

**Search String:** SU (summer reading programs OR literacy programs OR reading programs OR summer programs) AND libraries

**Entry Seven:**

**Abstract:** “This study looks at the effects of a Web-based summer reading program on the reading behaviors and attitudes of high school students. The school librarian and five English teachers based the program content and Web site on reading and Web design research. The study investigates whether the technology-based program had positive effects on student reading, and, if so, which elements of the program emerge as beneficial. The study takes place in a high school of 2,000 students, grades nine through twelve. A purposive random sample of 288 students and 11 teachers ensured representation of students from each of the three homogeneously grouped tracks: high-, average-, and low-achieving students. Data were collected through student surveys and teacher interviews. Findings show that students showed satisfaction with the online summer reading program, although low-achieving students and boys reported lower rates of satisfaction. Most students did not take advantage of the interactive technical aspects of the Web site. The mixed responses of teachers point to the need to establish the purpose of summer reading as a foundational concept for building and revising summer reading programs”.
**Annotation:** Lu, an Assistant Professor at Rutgers University, and Gordon, an Associate Professor at Rutgers University examine the success of an alternative summer reading program for teens via the World Wide Web. The achievement gap is discussed through a statistically based description that accurately portrays the gap as it grows each academic year. Unlike other articles in this bibliography, Lu and Gordon do not just mention the groundbreaking Heyns studies; they outline and describe conclusions in length. Within the Heyns study outline, the authors successfully portray Heyns’ conclusion on the important role public libraries play in academic achievement. Well constructed tables and a bar graph depict summer reading program methods and the success of “free reading programs”, also known as voluntary programs, over traditional summer reading programs.

**Search Strategy:** This article was located in my first Dialog search. The search strategy that led me to my first search for this project began with a topic formulation, keyword determination, and a search for Library of Congress Subject Headings. Below describes this process and strategy:

**Topic:** the importance of summer reading programs in public libraries and their connection to scholastic achievement in young people

**Keywords:** Summer reading programs, public libraries, scholastic achievement, children, teens

**Library of Congress Subject Headings:**

- **summer reading programs**, (reading programs, summer), summer vacation reading programs, (vacation reading programs, summer), BT: libraries--activity programs, reading promotion
- **public libraries**, county libraries, (libraries, county), (libraries, public), BT: libraries, NT: regional libraries
- **academic achievement**, (achievement, academic), educational achievement, scholastic achievement, scholastic success, school achievement, student achievement, BT: performance, success, NT: educational attainment, motivation in education, prediction of scholastic success
- **children**, childhood, kids (children), pedology (child study), youngsters, NT: library orientation for children
- **teenagers**, adolescents, teen-agers, teens, young adults (teenagers), BT: youth NT: libraries and teenagers, libraries--services to teenagers, library services to teenagers, public libraries--services to teenagers, teenagers and libraries

***Examined Descriptors Deemed Relevant to My Topic:** Reading Programs; Young Adults; Adolescents; Public Libraries; Reading Improvement; Reading Achievement; Reading Comprehension; Program Effectiveness; Reading Motivation; Student Motivation; Summer Programs; Library Services; Children; Youth Programs; Reading Aloud to Others; Academic
Achievement; Literacy Education; Recreational Reading; Library Cooperation; Literacy Appreciation; Mentors; Outreach Programs; Vocabulary Development; Workshops;

**Concept 1:** Summer reading programs OR Reading Programs OR Summer Programs OR Library Services OR Youth Programs OR Reading Aloud to Others OR Literacy Education OR Recreational Reading OR Library Cooperation OR Mentors OR Outreach Programs OR Workshops

**Concept 2:** Public libraries OR County libraries OR Regional Libraries

**Concept 3:** Children OR Kids OR Youth OR Youngsters OR Teenagers OR Teens or Adolescents OR Young Adults

**Concept 4:** Academic Achievement OR Educational Achievement OR Scholastic Achievement OR Scholastic Success OR Student Achievement OR School Achievement OR Performance Success OR Educational Attainment OR Reading Improvement OR Reading Achievement OR Reading Comprehension OR Student Motivation OR Vocabulary Development Searching in Dialog

**Database:** ERIC database *Fulltext Link* provided in the resource’s full record [Dialog]

**Method of Searching:** Title/descriptor/abstract searching

**Search String:** s summer()reading()program?/ti.de,abs AND summer program?/de t/full/1-42

**Entry Eight:**

**Abstract:** “The effect of two short-term summer school intervention programs on the reading achievement of elementary school children at-risk for academic failure was investigated. Children entering second through fourth grades in the fall were given short (three week) reading intervention programs in either a school-based program or one designed and implemented by a for-profit company specializing in enhancing student academic achievement. Children entering grade one in the fall did not receive the for-profit condition. For children entering grade one, significant reading improvement was found for the summer based program over a control group which received no intervention. For children in grades two through four, children in both the school based and the for-profit groups made significant reading improvement over the control group. The findings are discussed in terms of the relative costs and contact hours of the two intervention programs and the implications of the power of a short-term relatively inexpensive school based program on the reading achievement of students seriously at-risk for reading failure”.

**Annotation:** Richard L. Luftig, a professor at Miami University at the time of publication, evaluates two summer intervention programs for children at the bottom end of the achievement gap and comes to the conclusion that more instruction is not necessarily better for students. This
article is extremely beneficial to researchers because it demonstrates that cost and hours put into summer reading programs can be inexpensive and small for reading improvement achievement in at risk students. Luftig suggests shorter summer reading programs that keep students motivated and are less costly for budget conscious libraries.

**Search Strategy:** My search for this article, along with the Miles and Malin articles, was by far the simplest of all searches conducted. In the Proquest database I typed “summer reading programs” without selecting any search field. By using this low-key, natural language search approach, I located this resource along with the Miles and Malin articles. In order to narrow down the large search result, I limited the results to “scholarly/peer reviewed journals” only.

**Database:** Proquest (Soka University of America Website)

**Method of Searching:** Natural Language searching

**Search String:** (summer reading programs) with no search field selected

**Entry Nine:**

**Abstract:** “Summer book groups enhance and sustain student literacy behaviors over the break, making available an enjoyable social forum for critical-thinking and critical-reading practices to occur naturally. Significantly, the book groups grant faculty and students an informal space to connect meaningfully through reflective discussion of texts”.

**Annotation:** Malin, an assistant professor at DePaul University, and Drapatsky, a secondary reading specialist, introduce an alternative summer reading program for teens and discuss its literary benefits for this age group. This article explores the importance of flexible, non-traditional summer reading programs like the teen book group. Unlike previous research for this bibliography, the authors stress the need for teens to discuss literature during the summer as well as read it. Apart from an introduction to alternative summer reading programs, the authors explore the value of teens finding joy in reading and discovering it as a life-long pursuit. The quality of the article is diminished without visual tables and graphs that illustrate the success of an alternative summer reading program.
**Search Strategy:** Just like the Luftig article, the search for this resource was by far the simplest of all searches conducted. In the Proquest database I typed “summer reading programs” without selecting any search field. By using this low-key, natural language search approach, I located this resource. In order to narrow down the large search result, I limited the results to “scholarly/peer reviewed journals” only.

**Database:** Proquest (Soka University of America Website)

**Method of Searching:** Natural Language searching

**Search String:** (summer reading programs) with no search field selected

**Entry Ten:**

**Abstract:** “Librarians have been working with families for years within and outside of libraries, providing access to print, motivating young children to read, and making connections with schools. Through interviews, observations, and an analysis of outreach documents from libraries in urban, suburban, and rural counties, this study sought to investigate what practices librarians were exercising to support children in preparing for school and once in school. The focus of this article is on librarians' outreach efforts to assist young children in school”.

**Annotation:** Gilda Martinez, an Assistant Professor at Towson University, analyzes public library programs that aim to help children academically while simultaneously reaching out to the public in order to make services widely known. A concept of libraries being part of a three piece sphere of influence on student academic success is introduced. Included in this three part sphere of influence are schools, parents, and community establishments like the public library. Interestingly, the article addresses the role of public libraries in the context of the modern family with regards to how important public libraries are in the lives of families with both parents working. The authors include a useful analysis of a particular state’s policy regarding academic success in students. The analysis implicates public library summer reading programs as a factor for academic achievement. An open discussion about potential research biases and the ethical implications of research bias demonstrates that the other articles in this bibliography lack any similar discussion. The authors give readers an overview of attempts and procedures implemented to avoid research biases.
Search Strategy: To locate this article, I went to the ERIC EBSCOhost thesaurus and searched for the following terms: summer programs, reading programs, public libraries, children, and teens. From an evaluation of thesaurus terms I formed my search statement: public libraries and (summer programs OR reading programs OR library services OR outreach programs) and (children OR young adults OR young children OR youth OR adolescents) and then selected the “peer reviewed” option on the left hand side of the interface to refine my search.

Database: ERIC EBSCOhost (Hagerty Website)

Method of Searching: Controlled Vocabulary searching

Search String: public libraries and (summer programs OR reading programs OR library services OR outreach programs) and (children OR young adults OR young children OR youth OR adolescents)

Entry Eleven:

Abstract: “Ten second-language learners (five girls and five boys) and their parents attended a 4-week summer literacy program at a public library in a relatively affluent community on the north shore of Long Island, New York, USA. This community has seen a rapid influx of immigrants from Central and South America in the last 10 years. The children of these immigrants found themselves enrolled in a highly competitive, demanding, academic school district. Often lacking a similar educational background, the English language experiences, and the intense familial resources so common to many of the other children in the school, these children faced an uphill battle in their attempts to adjust to the academic challenges of their school. The "Let's Read Together" program was created in response to the perceived need to continue growth in literacy during the summer months as well as to empower immigrant parents as coteachers for their children and users of community resources”.

Annotation: Miles, an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher at an elementary school, and Sweetland, a public school psychologist, explore the importance of ESL student participation in summer reading programs as well as the imperative role parents hold regarding summer reading loss. An investigation into a summer reading program geared specifically toward ESL students and their parents demonstrates the importance of investigative articles that focus specifically on one at-risk demographic. The authors include an example of a “letter” given to students before each reading-meeting that is later used to facilitate group discussion and reflection in students.
Search Strategy: As with the Luftig and Malin articles, the search for this resource was the simplest of all searches conducted. In the Proquest database I typed “summer reading programs” without selecting any search field. By using this low-key, natural language search approach, I located this resource. In order to narrow down the large search result, I limited the results to “scholarly/peer reviewed journals” only.

Database: Proquest (Soka University of America Website)

Method of Searching: Natural Language searching

Search String: (summer reading programs) with no search field selected

Entry Twelve:

Abstract: “Summer reading loss is a documented reality for many students. It is often of greatest concern for those who are already at risk, who typically have limited access to reading materials at home and whose parents or caregivers may be reluctant or unsure of how to help. By raising parents' awareness of the importance of supporting their children's reading development during vacation periods and by providing concrete guidelines on how to do so, teachers and students may be better able to pick up instead of starting from scratch when the next school year begins”.

Annotation: Mraz, a professor at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, and Rasinski, a professor at Kent State University and editor of the Issues and Trends in Literacy department, report on the summer reading loss of students already struggling during the normal school year. The concept of an “achievement gap” is discussed as well as necessary measures that educators need to consider to lessen the gap that occurs over the summer months. Also introduced is the family literacy model. The significance of providing parents with summer reading instruction, guidance, and support for their children is argued and stressed as well.

Search Strategy: To locate this article, I conducted an advanced search in Academic OneFile. Within the advanced search, I used the Boolean operators to simultaneously search the many terms regarding summer reading programs that I had recovered through previous research and reading on this topic. Since I began to see a pattern emerge that these programs are not just
called “summer reading programs” but also “reading programs” and “summer reading”, I decided to search these terms together. I included the term “public library” in order to retrieve results on libraries and not public schools.

**Database:** Academic OneFile (Hagerty Website)

**Method of Searching:** Natural Language searching

**Search String:** summer programs OR reading programs OR summer reading AND public libraries

**Entry Thirteen:**


**Abstract:** “For more than a century, public librarians have designed summer reading programs to create and sustain a love of reading in children and to prevent the loss of reading skills over the summer. However, recently, federal and some state, local, and private funding agencies, along with departments of education, have challenged the effectiveness of public library summer reading programs, especially considering the amount of resources, both financial and human, that are invested in developing and marketing summer reading programs. The concern also is exacerbated by the dismal reading scores that surface on standardized tests from students in low-performing schools. This then raises the question as to whether public library summer reading programs in fact reach the stated goals and impact student achievement. A groundbreaking study conducted by Barbara Heyns in the early 1970s concluded that "the single summer activity that is most strongly and consistently related to summer learning is reading.... More than any other public institution, including the schools, the public library contributed to the intellectual growth of children during the summer." For more than thirty years, the library profession has been eager to replicate this study, and thanks to the Institute of Museum and Library Services, Dominican University's Graduate School of Library and Information Science received funding over a three-year period to revisit the question ‘Do public library summer reading programs impact student achievement?’”

**Annotation:** Roman, Dean of the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at Dominican University, and Fiore, a library consultant, determine whether or not federal and state legislatures are valid in their concerns that summer reading programs are not cost effective and do not help improve reading scores. By investigating this question through an evaluation of eleven separate programs, the authors come to the conclusion that summer reading programs are beneficial to students in terms of reading scores and academics. The correlation acknowledged by Roman and Fiore puts to rest the legislative concerns and proves that summer reading programs play an important role in academic achievement.
**Search Strategy:** I decided to conduct a title search in Library Literature & Information Science Full-Text since I had success with title searches in many other databases. I searched “summer reading programs” in the title field as I did in other databases. This proved to be successful once again in this particular database after I weeded out unnecessary results by selecting the “peer reviewed” option.

**Database:** Library Literature & Information Science Full-Text (Hagerty Website)

**Method of Searching:** Title searching

**Search String:** “summer reading programs” in quotations with the title search field selected

**Entry Fourteen:**

**Abstract:** “Research reveals that although students from low- and middle-incomes make similar reading gains during the academic year, greater access to books and reading during the summer months among higher-income students eventually leads to a very large gap between the reading skills of these two groups. A case study of how summer reading and a public library summer reading program greatly improved the reading skills of one immigrant student is presented”.

**Annotation:** Lin, a professor at Idaho State University, Shin, a professor at California State University, Long Beach, and Krashen, a professor at the University of Southern California offer a unique perspective of an English as a second language student’s experiences with summer reading and summer reading programs. The research determines that summer reading loss builds up over the years and causes serious academic detriment. Additionally, the authors explore the importance of allowing children to read for pleasure over the summer. Due to the nature of the article and its evaluation of one student’s experience, the research gives specific conclusions regarding the student, Sophia, but cannot conclude for any other student population. This major weakness of the article permits researchers from drawing any verifiable conclusions regarding summer reading programs and academic achievement.

**Search Strategy:** Just like the Hughes-Hassell article, I located this article after searching for the C.D. Fiore resource in Academic Search Premier. I chose to continue my search by using the Academic Search Premier “Find Similar Results Using SmartText Searching” icon on the left
hand side of the detail record page of the Fiore article. Again, although not footnote chasing, this option did lead me directly to articles similar to the Fiore article and ultimately to the Hughes-Hassell, Agosto, and Xiaoning and Shu-Yuan resources pertinent to my research.

**Database:** Academic Search Premier (Soka University of America Website)

**Method of Searching:** SmartText searching

**Search String:** N/A

**Entry Fifteen:**


**Abstract:** “This paper deals with four significant unanswered questions related to children’s and young adult services in public libraries: 1. How have public library services to children and young adults developed over time? 2. How and why do young people use public libraries? 3. How can we evaluate the effectiveness of public library service for young people? 4. Why should policymakers fund public library services for children and young adults? After reviewing the existing knowledge base that can serve as scaffolding for the needed research, the author suggests strategies for refining and implementing this research agenda”.

**Annotation:** Virginia A. Walter, an Associate Professor at UCLA, evaluates children and adolescent use of public library services and explores gaps in the research with intention of filling these research gaps. This article is an excellent introduction to the real need of public library services to children and teens and the necessity of services learning to adapt to patron needs. Additional highlights include statistical proof that reading programs are important to patrons and a discussion of policy briefs outline the public library’s role in early literacy.

**Search Strategy:** During this particular round in Dialog searching, I returned to title searching because descriptor and abstract searching returned too many irrelevant results according to my topic. So, I conducted a title search that included terms I had seen repeated frequently in the other articles I had read. Once again a title search brought me to a very specific article that gave me a lot of significant information on children and youth services in general.

**Database:** Academic Search Premier (Soka University of America Website) [Dialog]

**Method of Searching:** Title searching
Concluding Remarks

Although this research investigation confirmed my assumption that SLRPS positively affect academic achievement in students, I discovered multiple research findings that surprised me. The most valuable research lesson I learned exploring this topic is that my personal experiences at the public library as a child do not account for all children, past or present. Prior to this assignment, I only understood summer reading programs as I had encountered them. I incorrectly drew the conclusion that the majority of successful summer reading programs must be like the program I participated in as a child. I hope to incorporate this lesson into future research and policy decisions I may make as a professional in this field. My personal experiences, whether they are positive or negative, cannot dictate the decisions I make for patrons.

Before I began to read the literature on this topic, I did not expect to discover so much detailed information covering the factors that lead to summer reading frequency. All of these factors, such as parental involvement, access to books, and socioeconomic status, were determinants I never considered before investigating the literature. I now realize that I was never aware of the environment needed for a high frequency of summer reading because I was blessed with extremely involved parents, great access to books, and a middle-class socioeconomic status. This research encounter makes me conscious of the multitude of children who do not fail to read because they are lazy and just choose not to, but because they are growing up in an environment that does not support the act of reading. The articles teach the importance of reaching out to the community to involve children who otherwise would not participate in a summer reading program. Since there are children in every community who do not have a reading-supportive home life, it will be my responsibility as a librarian to seek those patrons out and provide them with a reading-supportive environment away from home.