

Oh, the Thinks You Can Think

Summer Reading - Why it Matters



About this time of year, my colleagues and I begin to ponder just why it was we chose careers that see us at our busiest in the summer months -- at a time when it seems the rest of the world is looking to kick back and relax. Along with other public libraries around the country, we spend months planning and preparing a Summer Reading Program, we spend weeks visiting area schools and encouraging students in grades K-6 to participate in our Summer Reading Program, and then we have thousands of kids come through our doors eager to pick up a Summer Reading game board and attend special events. Why? Why do we do this? Couldn't we just quietly go about our business and slip away to the lake more easily in June? And then we remind ourselves. We do it because it matters. We invite kids to take part in our Summer Reading Program because studies have shown that "students who participated in public library summer reading programs scored higher on reading achievement tests at the beginning of the next school year." (Public Library Summer Reading Programs Close the Reading Gap, 2010)

We know that developing and improving reading skills takes practice. The more you read, the better you get. And we know that when kids get to choose what they want to read, they are more likely to read for fun. Yet, when schools close for the summer, many students no longer have access to reading materials that appeal to their interests and suit their reading ability. Your public library fills that gap. Our free Summer Reading Program is all about encouraging kids to read for fun so that they sustain and build a reading habit over the summer. They can choose books, magazines, graphic novels, audiobooks, ebooks, fiction, nonfiction -- they're all included in our summer reading program.

Visit our Summer Reading website for details about our program, or give us a call at 349-3100. But most of all -- we hope to see you here at the library this summer. As we've been reminding kids recently: We're open 7 days a week, including evenings and weekends. In between the other fun things you have going on this summer, we encourage you to stop in to the library and choose something fun to read. We won't even be jealous if you tell us you're going to read it at the lake.

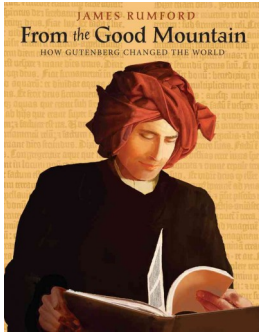
*For more information about the benefits of library Summer Reading Programs, see our **Get Reading, Get Moving** page. And to see how much fun we have with our Summer Reading Program, watch our video: **Dig Into Reading!***

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Posted by Lisa C. on May 22, 2013 [Lisa C.'s blog](#) [Add new comment](#)



How Gutenberg Changed the World



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While some predict the imminent demise of the printed book, some profess that the printed book will continue on in perpetuity. I stand with the second group. As much as I enjoy the convenience of ebooks, there is a majesty to a beautifully illustrated and bound printed book that not even the most colorfully animated ebooks can equal. There is so much ephemeral electronic correspondence today that a printed book, by its sheer mass and substance commands a certain amount of respect. Or, perhaps it's simply the history of the printed book that I revere.

From the Good Mountain: How Gutenberg Changed the World lavishly presents the early history of the printed book as pioneered by Johannes Gutenberg in 1450. Categorized as a biography, this new picturebook by James Rumford focuses more on Gutenberg's revolutionary invention of the printing press, than on the life of Gutenberg himself. Each richly illustrated double-page spread describes the process of creating a book as a mystery of sorts, asking the reader to guess the elements that formed the finished product: "What was this thing made of rags and bones?" and answering on the next page: "It was paper, and it was ready."

The epilogue to this book notes that Gutenberg's invention remains a bit of a mystery, as no one knows for sure how he was able to produce such beautifully crisp and clear letters in the 1400s. But some of the books he produced more than 500 years ago endure to this day. In fact a copy of one of those books resides in Bloomington at the [Lily Library](#) on the campus of Indiana University. [The Gutenberg Bible](#) rests in a glass case on display in the Lily Library, open for anyone to visit.

From the Good Mountain concludes with an illustration of computer circuitry, suggesting that as hand copied books gave way to printed ones, and printed books give way to ebooks, perhaps it doesn't matter at all what books look like -- what form they take -- as long as people keep writing and reading them. [What are you reading today?](#)

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Posted by Lisa C. on May 10, 2013 [Lisa C.'s blog](#) [Add new comment](#)

