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SUMMER STAY SHARP TOOLKIT

A practical Friday Focus guide for keeping reading, math, writing, and confidence moving without turning summer into school.



THE BIG IDEA

Keep skills warm. Keep routines light. Return ready.

Stay light.
Stay steady.



LIGHT ROUTINE

15-30 focused minutes can protect momentum when it is done consistently.



SKILL ROTATION

Read, solve, write, create, and reflect across the week.



FALL READY

Use summer to build confidence before the first week back.

USE IT THIS WEEK

One routine. One visible win.

- ☒ Pick 1 reading, math, and writing goal.
- ☒ Choose 3 short learning days each week.
- ☒ Track wins, not just minutes.
- ☒ Celebrate effort before perfection.

ASK YOUR STUDENT

- ◆ What felt easiest today?
- ◆ Where did your brain work hardest?
- ◆ What should we try again tomorrow?
- ◆ What should we celebrate?
- ◆ What support would help?

COACHING MOVE

Name the win before the next step.

QUICK START CARD

Focus:

Time:

Evidence of progress:

Next step:



TRY

10 min
today



TALK

1 quick
question



TRACK

1 visible
win



LIGHT ROUTINES

Small, steady practice.



REAL LEARNING

Read, solve, write, explain.



FALL READY

Confidence before day one.



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WHY SUMMER SKILLS SLIP

Students do not need hours of schoolwork. They need small, repeated chances to use the skills they built all year.



THE BIG IDEA

The goal is not more work. The goal is no long pause.

Stay light.
Stay steady.



WHAT SLIPS FIRST

Reading stamina, math facts, writing fluency, attention span, and school routines usually fade before content knowledge disappears.



WHAT PROTECTS GROWTH

Short practice, choice, conversation, real-world use, and parent check-ins keep pathways active without burnout.



WHAT TO WATCH

Avoidance, frustration, forgetting basic steps, slow starts, unfinished work, and low confidence are early signals.

USE IT THIS WEEK

One routine. One visible win.

- ☒ Do 10 minutes before screens when possible.
- ☒ Keep tasks short enough to finish successfully
- ☒ Use praise that names effort and strategy.
- ☒ Review one old skill before adding a new one.

ASK YOUR STUDENT

- ◆ What skill felt rusty?
- ◆ What helped you remember?
- ◆ Where did you slow down?
- ◆ What can we repeat?
- ◆ What is one small next step?

COACHING MOVE

Keep review shorter than practice.

QUICK START CARD

Focus: _____

Time: _____

Evidence of progress: _____

Next step: _____



TRY

10 min
today



TALK

1 quick
question



TRACK

1 visible
win



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THE STAY SHARP WEEKLY RHYTHM

A simple rhythm keeps summer learning predictable, flexible, and manageable for busy families.



THE BIG IDEA

Consistency beats intensity every time.

Stay light.
Stay steady.



MONDAY: READ

20 minutes of independent or shared reading plus one question.



TUESDAY: MATH

15 minutes of facts, problem solving, or real-world math.



WEDNESDAY: WRITE

10-15 minutes of journaling, opinion writing, summary, or story.



THURSDAY: PROJECT

Cook, build, budget, research, plan, interview, observe, or create.



FRIDAY: REFLECT

Ask: What got easier? What still feels hard? What should we practice next?

USE IT THIS WEEK

One routine. One visible win.

- ☒ Use the same start time 3 days per week.
- ☒ Let students choose the order when possible.
- ☒ End before frustration takes over.
- ☒ Make the last step a quick win.

ASK YOUR STUDENT

- Which day should be our light day?
- What order works best for you?
- What can we repeat next week?
- What should we skip?
- How will we know it worked?

COACHING MOVE

Use the same rhythm for two weeks.

QUICK START CARD

Focus:

Time:

Evidence of progress:

Next step:



TRY

10 min today



TALK

1 quick question



TRACK

1 visible win



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Read, solve, write, explain.



FALL READY

Confidence before day one.



READING THAT KEEPS THE BRAIN MOVING

Reading is the fastest way to protect vocabulary, comprehension, background knowledge, and attention stamina.



THE BIG IDEA

A reader grows when reading becomes active, not passive.

*Stay light.
Stay steady.*



20-MINUTE ROUTINE

5 min: preview. 10 min: read. 3 min: retell. 2 min: choose one word or question.



ASK BETTER QUESTIONS

What changed? What confused you? What evidence supports that? What would you ask the character or author?



MAKE IT VISIBLE

Keep a summer reading shelf, sticky-note questions, a word wall, or a simple reading tracker.

USE IT THIS WEEK

One routine. One visible win.

- ☒ Mix comfort books with challenge books.
- ☒ Let students reread favorites for fluency.
- ☒ Read aloud even with older students.
- ☒ Ask for a 30-second summary after reading.
- ☒ Choose one vocabulary word to use that day.

ASK YOUR STUDENT

- ◆ What did the character want?
- ◆ What evidence helped you know?
- ◆ Which word should we save?
- ◆ What changed in the story?
- ◆ What would you ask next?

COACHING MOVE

Ask for evidence, not just a summary.

QUICK START CARD

Focus: _____

Time: _____

Evidence of progress: _____

Next step: _____



TRY

10 min
today



TALK

1 quick
question



TRACK

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win



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MATH PRACTICE WITHOUT THE BATTLE

Math confidence grows through short practice, real-life use, and enough repetition to make skills feel familiar again.



THE BIG IDEA

Short, calm math beats long, stressful math.

Stay light.
Stay steady.



THE 15-MINUTE MATH ROUTINE

3 min facts. 5 min one skill. 5 min word problem. 2 min check and explain.



USE REAL LIFE

Cook with fractions, compare prices, plan a budget, estimate travel time, measure a room, or track scores.



NORMALIZE MISTAKES

Ask: Where did the thinking change? What step can you explain? What would you try next?

USE IT THIS WEEK

One routine. One visible win.

- ☒ Practice facts in small sets.
- ☒ Use graph paper for organization.
- ☒ Let students explain before correcting.
- ☒ Alternate review and challenge days.
- ☒ Stop on a win, not after a meltdown.

ASK YOUR STUDENT

- ◆ What strategy did you choose?
- ◆ Where did the mistake happen?
- ◆ Can you explain another way?
- ◆ What helped you check?
- ◆ What will you practice next?

COACHING MOVE

Praise the strategy, then correct the step.

QUICK START CARD

Focus: _____

Time: _____

Evidence of progress: _____

Next step: _____

**TRY**

10 min
today

**TALK**

1 quick
question

**TRACK**

1 visible
win



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FALL READY

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WRITING THAT FEELS MANAGEABLE

Summer writing should build fluency, voice, organization, and confidence without requiring long essays every week.



THE BIG IDEA

Write small. Think clearly. Build stamina.

*Stay light.
Stay steady.*



10-MINUTE WRITING MENU

Journal, review, letter, summary, comic caption, recipe, opinion, reflection, or observation.



PARAGRAPH BUILDER

Claim: what I think. Evidence: why. Explain: how it connects. Close: what matters.



MAKE REVISION EASY

Choose one improvement: stronger word, clearer sentence, better detail, or fixed punctuation.

USE IT THIS WEEK

One routine. One visible win.

- ☒ Do not grade every piece.
- ☒ Let students write about real interests.
- ☒ Use voice-to-text for idea capture, then revise by hand.
- ☒ Save one strong piece each week.
- ☒ Read writing aloud to catch gaps.

ASK YOUR STUDENT

- ◆ What is your main idea?
- ◆ What detail makes it stronger?
- ◆ What sentence should we revise?
- ◆ What sounds like your voice?
- ◆ What should we save?

COACHING MOVE

Revise one thing, not everything.

QUICK START CARD

Focus: _____

Time: _____

Evidence of progress: _____

Next step: _____



TRY

10 min
today



TALK

1 quick
question



TRACK

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win



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Read, solve, write, explain.



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REAL-WORLD LEARNING PROJECTS

Projects turn summer experiences into reading, math, writing, research, speaking, and problem-solving practice.



THE BIG IDEA

When learning has a purpose, motivation grows.

*Stay light.
Stay steady.*



PLAN A MEAL

Read a recipe, double ingredients, estimate cost, cook, and write a review.



BUILD OR DESIGN

Sketch a plan, measure materials, test, improve, and explain the final design.



EXPLORE OUTSIDE

Observe, photograph, classify, research, and create a mini field guide.



INTERVIEW SOMEONE

Write questions, listen closely, summarize answers, and share what you learned.

USE IT THIS WEEK

One routine. One visible win.

- ☒ Every project should produce something.
- ☒ Name the skills: read, solve, write, speak, create.
- ☒ Keep supplies simple and low-cost.
- ☒ Use a photo plus a 3-sentence reflection as evidence.

ASK YOUR STUDENT

- ◆ What skill did this project use?
- ◆ What would you improve?
- ◆ What proof can we save?
- ◆ What did you have to solve?
- ◆ Who could you teach?

COACHING MOVE

Save a photo, note, or sample as proof.

QUICK START CARD

Focus: _____

Time: _____

Evidence of progress: _____

Next step: _____



TRY

10 min
today



TALK

1 quick
question



TRACK

1 visible
win



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Read, solve, write, explain.



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SCREEN TIME WITH PURPOSE

Technology can support summer learning when students use it to create, practice, research, and reflect instead of only consume.



THE BIG IDEA

Screens should support the goal, not become the goal.

*Stay light.
Stay steady.*



GREEN LIGHT

Practice facts, listen to audiobooks, research safely, create, code, or review a skill.



YELLOW LIGHT

Tutorials, videos, games, and AI tools require a clear question and a stopping point.



RED LIGHT

Endless scrolling, copied answers, unverified facts, and private information are not learning.

USE IT THIS WEEK

One routine. One visible win.

- ☒ Set the learning purpose before opening the device.
- ☒ Use a timer and a visible stopping point.
- ☒ Ask students to show what they learned.
- ☒ Balance online practice with paper, talk, or creation.
- ☒ Never share private details in tools or chats.

ASK YOUR STUDENT

- ◆ What was the screen helping you do?
- ◆ What did you create or learn?
- ◆ When should we stop?
- ◆ What needs checking?
- ◆ What can we do offline?

COACHING MOVE

Make the tool serve the task.

QUICK START CARD

Focus:

Time:

Evidence of progress:

Next step:



TRY

10 min
today



TALK

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question



TRACK

1 visible
win



LIGHT ROUTINES

Small, steady practice.



REAL LEARNING

Read, solve, write, explain.



FALL READY

Confidence before day one.



THE FALL READINESS CHECK

A quick readiness check helps families notice gaps early and choose support before the first week of school feels overwhelming.



THE BIG IDEA

Readiness is not perfection. It is knowing what support is...

*Stay light.
Stay steady.*



READING SIGNS

Can the student read for 20 minutes, retell main ideas, and answer questions with evidence?



MATH SIGNS

Can the student remember key facts, set up a problem, and explain at least one strategy?



WRITING SIGNS

Can the student write a complete paragraph, add detail, and revise one thing?



ROUTINE SIGNS

Can the student start work, organize materials, manage frustration, and ask for help?

USE IT THIS WEEK

One routine. One visible win.

- ☒ Check skills two weeks before school starts.
- ☒ Choose one priority skill, not ten.
- ☒ Create a 10-day reset routine.
- ☒ Ask teachers what matters most for the first unit.
- ☒ Get support before confidence drops.

ASK YOUR STUDENT

- ◆ What feels ready?
- ◆ What still needs support?
- ◆ What can we reset this week?
- ◆ What question should we ask?
- ◆ What would make day one easier?

COACHING MOVE

Choose one priority and reset calmly.

QUICK START CARD

Focus: _____

Time: _____

Evidence of progress: _____

Next step: _____



TRY

10 min
today



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question



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YOUR SUMMER STAY SHARP PLAN

Use this final page to choose the routine, support, and weekly focus that will help your student return ready.



THE BIG IDEA

Small actions. Stronger skills. A calmer return to school.

Stay light.
Stay steady.



WEEK 1: RESTART

Build the routine, choose materials, and start with confidence wins.



WEEK 2: STRENGTHEN

Add skill practice and use mistakes as information, not failure.



WEEK 3: STRETCH

Try a project, a longer reading block, or a harder math challenge.



WEEK 4: PREPARE

Review routines, organize materials, and check readiness for fall.

USE IT THIS WEEK

One routine. One visible win.

- ☒ My reading goal: _____
- ☒ My math goal: _____
- ☒ My writing goal: _____
- ☒ My support plan: _____
- ☒ One thing I will celebrate: _____

ASK YOUR STUDENT

- ◆ What routine will we keep?
- ◆ What support do I need?
- ◆ How will I know I improved?
- ◆ What will I do first?
- ◆ What win will I celebrate?

COACHING MOVE

Turn the plan into a visible checklist.

QUICK START CARD

Best routine day: _____

Skill I want to grow: _____

Help I may need: _____

How I will celebrate: _____



TRY

10 min
today



TALK

1 quick
question



TRACK

1 visible
win



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