Summer reading challenge for kids 2027: 1 June to 31 August, free

Peabody blog · Reading · updated 2026-10-30

A free summer reading challenge for kids, 1 June to 31 August 2027: 20, 12 or 8 books by age, a shelf that fills, a chart to print and a certificate.

Peabody's summer reading challenge runs from Tuesday 1 June to Tuesday 31 August 2027, thirteen weeks, and the finish line depends on the reader's age: 20 books for ages 5 to 7 (read-alouds count), 12 books for ages 8 to 10, and 8 longer books from 11 up. Every book puts a spine on a summer shelf on the screen, the chart prints for the fridge, and the certificate prints when the shelf is full. It is free, like the rest of Peabody through the end of 2026, and nothing a child logs leaves the device.

I wrote this in October, months early, on purpose: families start looking for a summer challenge in May, and a page has to be found before it can be used. The summer challenge can be started any time; logging opens on 1 June.

The numbers, and why they are smaller than you might expect

- Age: 5 to 7 · About: kindergarten to 2nd grade · Books by 31 August: 20, and a book read aloud to them counts
- Age: 8 to 10 · About: 3rd to 5th grade · Books by 31 August: 12
- Age: 11 and up · About: 6th grade and up · Books by 31 August: 8

Twenty books in thirteen weeks is one or two a week for a five-year-old, which is what a summer of trips, visitors and late evenings allows. Eight is one every eleven or twelve days for a middle schooler reading real novels. A child who finishes early can start 100 Books, which has no end date, or set their own bigger number on paper.

Summer counts books, not minutes. A book is something a child can see on a shelf; a minute is not, and a timer needs a grown-up to trust it. If a library programme near you counts hours, keep its log beside this one: they do not compete.

How a child logs a book

Nothing is typed by a child. The tracker asks who is reading (an animal face, never a name; brothers and sisters pick their own, up to six on one device) and how old they are, once, with three big boxes. Then Log a book opens a shelf of choices:

- Peabody's own free stories at the reader's level, from the library: a tap to log.
- A book from one of Peabody's kids' lists, for the library haul.
- A book from a series, in order.

- A book from somewhere else: a grown-up presses and holds for two seconds and types the title, which stays on the device.

A favourite read again on another day counts again, and the Log sheet offers the last three books as "Read one again?" so a re-read is one tap.

What prints

Any time: the chart (the shelf with numbered spines to colour, a table of the books so far, and a line for anyone keeping records), the log with a grown-up's signature column, and a bookmark whose squares count to the summer finish line. At the finish, and only there, the certificate.

Ideas for the thirteen weeks

- A library trip in the first week of June sets up the first month.
- A book in the car turns a long drive into two spines.
- Read-aloud evenings count for the youngest, and are good for everyone listening.
- Try a kind of book a week with the Book Bingo squares.
- Stuck? What should I read next asks three tap-to-answer questions and picks one book.

Questions parents ask

Can we start before 1 June?

You can start the challenge, pick your animals and print the chart before then. Books logged before 1 June are kept but do not count toward the summer shelf.

Does it work alongside our library's summer programme?

Yes. Peabody keeps nothing on a server and asks for no account, so a child can do both; many library programmes count minutes or hours, and this one counts books.

What does Peabody see?

That a book was logged in the summer challenge, and whether it was a reader's first there or a later one. Never the book, a title, the face or the age.

Free at peabody.kids/blog/summer-reading-challenge-for-kids