Summer themes for preschool: beach, camping, ocean

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Eight summer themes for preschool and summer care, June to August: beach and sand, camping, ocean, summer, water, boats, zoo animals and jungle, each a full week.

Peabody has eight summer themes for preschool and summer care, June to August: beach and sand, camping, ocean, summer, water, boats, zoo animals and jungle. Each is a full week of circle time, books, a craft, a public-domain song with its words, a Kitchen snack, a letter pack and an outside game, and most of them are built to be run outside. Pick one in the theme planner and the week is filled in. Peabody is free through the end of 2026.

Summer rooms change a lot: new children, older siblings home from school, more time in the yard. A week-long theme with one song and one outside game holds up well when the room keeps changing. Here are the three big ones in detail, then the rest.

Beach and sand (June to August)

The beach and sand week is sand and shells, crabs and waves, and building in the sandbox.

- Circle time question: "What would you find at the beach?"
- Letter: S is for sand.
- Craft: a sand picture. Rub a glue stick where the beach goes, sprinkle on a little play sand, tip off the extra, and glue a paper shell on top.
- Song: "Rub-a-Dub-Dub."
- Snack: Crab Croissant.
- Outside: sandcastle team. Build one big castle together in the sandbox with cups and spoons, and count the towers.
- Books: Kip and the Crab (level 3), Chip and the Shell (level 2), Fish in a Dish (level 2), and a longer read-aloud.

No beach nearby? The sandbox is the beach. The craft needs only a tray of play sand.

Camping (July, August)

The camping week is tents and flashlights, the night sky, and a pretend campfire story with no fire.

- Question: "What would you pack to go camping?"
- Letter: C is for camp.
- Craft: a paper tent. Stand a folded card up, color it, glue on a paper flap door, and draw who is sleeping inside.

- Song: "All Through the Night," from the lullabies list. It doubles as a rest-time song.
- Snack: No-Bake S'mores. Nothing goes near a flame.
- Outside: blanket camp. Drape a blanket over a table or a rope as a tent, and take turns inside with a flashlight and a book.
- Books: Not Yet, Ted (level 3), and three read-alouds: Go, Go, Go, The Little Lantern and The Moon Follows Me.

Camping is read-aloud-heavy, so it's a good week when older siblings are in the room.

Ocean (June to August)

The ocean week is crabs, fish, shells and whales, sinking and floating, and the waves.

- Question: "What lives in the ocean?"
- Letter: O is for ocean.
- Craft: a paper-plate fish: a colored plate, a paper triangle tail, a sticker eye, and a name.
- Song: "Rub-a-Dub-Dub."
- Snack: Kiwi Turtles.
- Outside: waves and crabs. The children are crabs walking sideways; when the grown-up shouts "Wave!" everyone runs to the fence.
- Books: Chip and the Shell (level 2), Kip and the Crab (level 3), Fish in a Dish (level 2), and a read-aloud with whales.

Ocean and beach share books and a song, so they run well back to back: the same rhyme, deeper the second week.

Summer itself (June)

The summer week is long sunny days, shade and water, hats and bare feet in the grass.

- Question: "How do we stay cool when it is hot?"
- Letter: S is for sun.
- Craft: a paper-plate sun with yellow and orange paper strips for rays.
- Song: "Row, Row, Row Your Boat."
- Snack: Ice Cream in a Bag.
- Outside: shade or sun. Call "Sun!" and everyone runs into the sunny part; call "Shade!" and everyone runs to the shade.
- Books: Kip and the Crab (level 3), Fish in a Dish (level 2), and two read-alouds, The Sun Is a Star and Tom and the Big Fish.

The other four summer weeks

- Theme: Water · Months: June, July · Letter: W is for water · Song: Jack and Jill · Snack: Fruit Kabobs · Outside: Paint the fence with a brush and water, and watch it dry

- Theme: Boats · Months: July, August · Letter: B is for boat · Song: Rub-a-Dub-Dub · Snack: Kiwi Turtles · Outside: Sit in pairs, hold hands and row while you sing
- Theme: Zoo animals · Months: May to July · Letter: Z is for zoo · Song: Pop Goes the Weasel · Snack: Frozen Banana Pops · Outside: A zoo parade: stomp, swing, slither
- Theme: Jungle · Months: July · Letter: J is for jungle · Song: Row, Row, Row Your Boat · Snack: Fruit Dip · Outside: An obstacle path: under the vine, over the logs

Water and boats pair well. The water week's craft is a float-or-sink chart; the boats week makes a foil boat and adds little balls of play dough until it sinks.

A summer in order

Using the months each theme lists, one way to run June to August:

1. June: summer, then water, then ocean.
2. July: beach and sand, then boats, then zoo animals, then jungle.
3. August: camping, then all about me for the children starting in the fall.

The month pages for June, July and August list every theme rooms usually run then, including any-time ones like transportation, space and letters and sounds. The all about me post covers that first-week theme in full.

Try this week

1. Look at next week's forecast. Hot all week? Summer or water. A cooler stretch? Camping or zoo animals.
2. Open the planner, pick next Monday and the theme, and pick your room's ages. In a summer room with babies and big kids, pick Mixed ages.
3. Add a day note for a hot-day plan: the shade game, or water play in the morning.
4. Print the wall sheet and the family note. The family note has the song's words.
5. Open the snack's Kitchen page and check the allergens and swaps against your room.

The books are all in Peabody's free stories, ready on a tablet for a shady spot. The snack ideas post has more on how the Kitchen recipes fit a theme.

Three things providers ask

Do the summer themes need a beach or a pool?

No. Every outside game works in a yard with a sandbox, a fence, some shade and a bucket of water.

Is the camping week safe without a campfire?

There's no fire anywhere in it. The campfire story is pretend, the tent is a blanket, and the s'mores are no-bake.

What about the older siblings who come in summer?

Give them the read-alouds and a helper job: running the obstacle path, leading the zoo parade, or reading to the little ones in the blanket tent.

Free at peabody.kids/blog/summer-themes-preschool