

Summer Camps Are Here.

This is the first week of Summer vacation. The first couple of days seemed a bit unreal; my two youngest kept on asking if they had school the next day. "Nope," I would reply, "it's the Summer, remember?" Thankfully, we are getting used to a slower pace. I don't have to drive as much, which is a relief. There are a few things that I have arranged for the children this Summer to keep them occupied and learning new things. My first and third sons have been attending a basketball Summer camp. It is only for three days, and is taught by seasoned coaches. It is held in the High School, which is exciting for them, because that is where the 'big boys' go. It's a place they don't go to very much, so there is a certain appeal about it. The turn out for the camp has been quite substantial. The morning session, for the younger kids, has about thirty five all together. They turn up at eight thirty, and finish at noon. Then it's home, lunch, and dropping off Hudson for his four and a half hours. The afternoon session has even more participants. There are High School students helping the coaches, and giving demonstrations, so the little ones can get a clear idea of what they need to do. The aim is to teach fundamentals in a fun, mixed age environment. My children know some of the kids there from school, and from having played with them on basketball teams. It's a good opportunity to 'mix it up' as they say here. That means, to mix with people of different ages and abilities, and to do something that is either interesting, or that stretches you. The verb 'to stretch' is used to mean that the people involved have to grow, or learn, apply effort, and improve. It's a good visual image for what it means. The last day of the Summer camp is today; they will be finishing their time together with an awards ceremony. They'll be given some sort of memento so they remember the camp, and hopefully what they have learned. In a couple of weeks, my children will be going to other camps in the mornings. There is a mathematics camp planned for the older boys, and cooking and art for the youngest. What with the camps, swimming, a *little* bit of school work at home, and lots of play dates, the Summer will probably fly by.

Grammar notes.

Related vocabulary and expressions: seasoned, a turn out, to turn up, to stretch a person.

1. He is a seasoned golfer; you can always get good advice from him about the sport.
2. There was a really good turn out for the first Farmer's Market; I think about three thousand people came.
3. In the middle of a snow storm, a little, black puppy turned up on my doorstep.
4. This computer class is really stretching me; I haven't had to focus like this for years!

