

Borrowing and returning.

Every now and then, I make a trip to the local library, sometimes by myself, and sometimes with my children. I love the quiet that you can experience there. It also reminds me of the fact that there is always something that you can learn; there is always something to read about. I've heard it said that it's good for children to become 'library rats'. That means that they should get used to going there; it should be familiar to them, as if they were rats who lived in its walls. Our local library has an upstairs children's section that has recently been renovated. It's a good idea to keep the kids separate from the rest of the place, so noise can be controlled. In their area, they have a castle-style entrance, all kinds of floor toys for youngsters, Legos and puzzles, puppets, and a fish tank. It's a really cozy place where kids can explore and do the things they enjoy. I also use another library that is in the part-time school that my two homeschooled children go to. It has some amazing resources. I was there today, and found that I didn't have enough time to see all that they have to offer. You can choose whichever book, video, game, or manipulative, and check it out for the whole year. You don't even have to show your identity card to a librarian. Most of the time there is nobody in charge. Everything works by an 'honor' system. That means, that once your children are registered, you have a right to use the library, and you simply have to write down the number of each item on a piece of paper, and sign. They trust that you will bring everything back when you are supposed to. I left the place with armfuls of items. They even have interactive writing systems that you can borrow, which you would normally have to buy for about fifty dollars. All of this borrowing and returning is great, because I can keep my house full of great educational materials that are specifically targeted to what my children need. As I write this, I have in front of me, a pile of books that need to go back. I've got books in the kitchen, books in the lounge and in the bedrooms. Ahh! There are too many of them, but they're all so good. Another good thing that we are encouraged to do during the summer, is the summer reading program. You sign your kids up, and every two weeks you visit the library, get books for them to read in two weeks, and then keep coming back. The children get a small toy when they have read a month's worth of books. The summer holidays are so long here, that kids need an incentive to keep reading and not fall behind!

Grammar notes.

Related vocabulary: puppets, registered, to borrow, an incentive.

1. There was a puppet show in town that taught children not to bully.
2. You have to be registered as a resident before you can use the local library.
3. If you can't find the book in the shop, maybe you can borrow it from the library.
4. We all need incentives to get our work done; sometimes a treat or a break will work.

