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Young readers use their holiday vacation time wisely

Holiday reading

When school is out for the holidays, librarians notice that libraries fill up with young readers.

Many come to read a favorite book over and over again or to explore new additions to the reading room.

Winter vacation is a great time for children to enjoy quiet reading a pause in the busy whirl of activity.

This quiet pause is a good thing for parents, too. During the two mid-winter weeks, an old family activity might even be revived.

Instead of gathering together in front of the television, it might be fun to choose an exciting book and share it by reading it aloud.

If yours is a family with young children, old classics like "Winnie the Pooh" by A. A. Milne or "Wind in the Willows" by Kenneth Grahame can be a warm experience.

Even families with young teenagers might enjoy reading "The Great Brain Books" by John Fitzgerald. Because holidays mean travel for many families, taking a book along for the ride could make the trip more fun.

The reading could even be continued by grandfather when grandchildren arrive.

One popular book suited for travel is "Portmanteau" by Thomas Rochwell, a collection of

poems, stories, jokes and things to do.

More bright book ideas can be found by glancing at a list prepared by the Tri-county Children's Librarians, called Welcome Gifts the Year Round.

It includes a wide range of fiction and nonfiction popular in several age groups.

A book librarians have found to be "practically the Bible," is Guinness Book of World records. Because it's not a story, children can pick and choose among uncanny facts they find interesting.

And while reading is a fun way to spend a holiday time this year, it also suggests a gift that may last for many holidays to come.

Books don't break like toys, either.

They aren't discarded as quickly and some seem to grow with the child.

Often a treasured story is read and reread, miraculously gaining depth as the child does.

These experiences are the ones that last, so while shopping consider a hard cover book. Most children today are of the paperback generation.

There is special beauty in having a hard cover book, a certain feeling of permanence about seeing a few loved volumes on your own shelf.

—SHELLEY EICHENHORN