



KATE DICAMILLO'S TOP TEN REASONS TO PARTICIPATE IN YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY SUMMER READING PROGRAM

1. A LIBRARY IS A PLACE FOR BEGINNINGS.

Once upon a time, long ago and far away . . . Everything starts here.

2. A LIBRARY IS A PLACE TO CHART YOUR PROGRESS, MEET YOUR GOALS, AND CONTINUE GROWING.

Every book you check out makes you a stronger reader, capable of great leaps and bounds.
Exercise your reading muscles.

3. YOU COULD WIN A PRIZE.

Reading is its own gift. You learn new words—wonderful words—and experience new things through different characters. But libraries also want you to read as much as you can, and there just might be special tokens to reward you for your hard work.

4. A LIBRARY IS A GOOD PLACE TO HIDE.

Maybe you're trying to get out of helping with the dishes. Maybe you're hoping someone else will walk the dog. Every library I have ever been to has these amazing nooks to curl up in with a book and . . . Just. Get. Lost.

5. LIBRARIANS LIKE THE COMPANY OF READERS.

Librarians are like heroes to me. They are the gatekeepers to stories, and they always seem to know how to pick just the right book for just the right person. I'll bet they would know what you would like. I'll bet they would love the chance to help you figure it out.

6. AIR-CONDITIONING.

Let's face it: it is HOT in the summer. Tree-house reading is great, but what could be better than pulling open a door to a rush of cool air and knowing that you can browse the stacks of fiction, nonfiction, comics, and magazines and linger as long as you like?

7. YOU COULD MAKE SOME REAL FRIENDS.

Some of my best friends are huge readers. We recommend books to one another constantly and talk about what we liked and what we didn't like and what we plan to read next. They are true readers, super readers, and kindred spirits. Stories connect us all.

8. YOU COULD MAKE SOME VIRTUAL FRIENDS.

I have thought many times that I could be friends with Fern and Wilbur and Charlotte. You may have thought the same about Harry, Hermione, and Ron. We meet people in books. Not real people, but sometimes the kind of people we'd like to be or would like to know.

9. IT'S GOOD TO HAVE A LIBRARY CARD.

A library card is like a membership card that says "You are welcome here." You are welcome to pick a book, many books, and read to your heart's content. It says: You belong here.

10. IF YOU WANT TO GO EVERYWHERE, EXPERIENCE EVERYTHING, CLIMB MOUNTAINS, TREK DESERTS, RIDE IN A ROCKET, GO TO THE MOON — OPEN A LIBRARY BOOK.

Not many of us can say we've done these things: traveled widely or had epic adventures, faced down danger or fought bravely against injustice. But you can have those experiences through books—and reading those stories will change you.

Kate DiCamillo is the 2016 CSLP National Summer Reading Champion and a two-time Newbery Medal winner. Follow her on Facebook at www.facebook.com/katedicamillo.