

## Increasing Reading Motivation in Young Struggling Readers: Tips for Teachers

“It is clear that future attempts to remediate early reading difficulties need to attend to students’ reading motivational needs in addition to their reading skill needs” (Quirk et al., 2009).

Q: What is motivation?

A: Motivation is the reasons a person has for behaving or acting in a certain way. Children have motivation for all of their daily activities – including reading! Motivation can be intrinsic or extrinsic.

*Intrinsic motivation:* b

Q: What is the relationship between motivation and reading?

A: Current research suggests that there is a strong relationship between a child's motivation to read and their reading abilities. Further, student engagement in a subject is a predictor of their academic performance. Despite these findings, reading motivation is an overlooked factor in the discussion of building children's reading skills. Research has shown that children who are intrinsically motivated spend 300% more time reading than students who have low intrinsic motivation. Children become better readers by reading often

## Tips and Tricks for Building Reading Motivation in the Classroom

The tips provided will focus on four areas that foster reading motivation in struggling readers:

4. Pick books that connect to real-life experiences  
Pick books to read that children will have real life experiences with. For example, if you are reading the book "If You Take a Mouse to School" by Laura Joffe Numeroff, remind your students that just like the mouse, there was a time when they were coming to school for the very first time. You can ask your students questions like, "What did you do on your first day of school?" "What did you think school was going to be like?", "Did you have fun on the first day of school?". Use a UDL approach to specifically tailor questions to every child in the class in order to ensure they are given a chance to make a connection to a real-life experience. To tie these experiences back to the book, remind the children that reading the story will reveal if the mouse's first day of school activities were like your students. Children will be more motivated to read when they see connections between their own lives and the text at hand.
5. Incorporate hands on experiences related to book themes  
If you are reading a book with a theme that children will not have personal experiences with, incorporate a hands-on experience related to the book before reading it. For example, if you are completing a unit on owls and reading a book on the survival mechanisms of the owl, you might plan for a dissection experiment where the children look for animal bones, skulls and hairs in the owl pellet. After completing this hands-on activity, the children will have had a personal experience with the formerly unfamiliar topic. The connection the students have now made with the topic may increase their motivation to learn more about it.
6. Offer book choices that are culturally relevant  
Ensure that texts related to the various cultures represented in your classroom are available for selection. This may be especially motivating for struggling readers who are not used to seeing their backgrounds reflected in classroom materials.
7. Find high interest, low vocabulary books for children  
Look for books that have controlled vocabulary and reading difficulty levels, but plots and topics that are age appropriate. This is critical for older children who are struggling with reading.

#### OWNERSHIP:

The inquiry based approach to education places the child at the center of the learning experience. Children develop a sense of ownership when they are given the opportunity to guide their learning. Children are more likely to remain engaged in the reading material when they have a sense of ownership over their reading.

1. Offer book choice during independent reading time  
During independent reading, allow students to choose their own book. At first, provide limited choices (e.g. provide two texts from which the child can select one to read). Ensure the available choices are relevant to the child and at an appropriate reading level. Provide feedback to the child about their choice and, when necessary, help the child make an appropriate choice. As the child begins to demonstrate an ability to manage choice, introduce more texts into the array. Offering children choice provides the child with a sense of responsibility over their reading, and may therefore increase their motivation. Further, offering choice aligns with the UDL principle of multiple means of engagement.

*Choosing inspires me to read more because I get to pick something  
I enjoy to read of myself each day*





