Motivation Strategies for Secondary Students

At the heart of every successful Reading Plus implementation are dedicated educators who develop creative strategies to engage and motivate their students. Here are a few examples of the kinds of motivation strategies that secondary school teachers are using to ignite enthusiasm for Reading Plus.

Strategy: Take A Pass

After completing a major milestone for weekly assignments (for example, three weeks of weekly assignments completed on time with 80% or higher comprehension on all assignments), a student is awarded one Homework Pass. The student can use the pass to skip one regular homework assignment of his or her choosing.

**What do you need to do?**
- Monitor weekly assignment status by using either the Assignments Panel on the Teacher Dashboard or the Class Assignments Report.
- Create colorful Homework Passes. Consider laminating them so they can be reused after students turn them in.

**Why do this?**
This motivation strategy is a great way to encourage students to stay on task. They will work hard and try their best on each lesson for an opportunity to earn a pass for a homework assignment.

**Take it to the next level!**
If every student in your class completes all assignments with 80% or higher, take your celebration to the next level and give the whole class a Homework Pass bonus. Let students take a night off from regular homework (suggest they read a book for pleasure with all their free time!). Students will have the extra incentive of knowing all class members are working toward a common goal, which encourages each student to be diligent about completing his or her own lessons.

Strategy: And the Award Goes To...

On a daily, weekly, or monthly basis, put the spotlight on specific students who have done great work in Reading Plus. To mark the accomplishment of earning a Combo, present students with the Gold, Silver, Bronze, or Generic Combo Awards in a grand style. Presentation of the award could include music and a round of applause. Make the student feel special!

**What do you need to do?**
- As Combo Awards are earned, print them from the Learn Site at learn.readingplus.com
- Select upbeat music to play at your Combo celebration.

**Why do this?**
Successful students will feel recognized for all of their hard work. Other students will see their classmates being honored and may be inspired to do the work required to experience the same kind of reward.

**Take it to the next level!**
For students who struggle to earn Combo Awards, refer to our Giving Extra Points for Awards and Achievements document. You can create your own awards, or use the Leaderboard Report to track reading statistics you would like to reward. You can distribute as many awards as you like, so be creative with the categories. Set up a "Reading Plus Wall of Fame" in your classroom. Your students can post the awards they have won over the course of the year.
Strategy: “Ticket to Ride” (or Read!)

Schools that utilize PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) can incorporate their incentive program into their Reading Plus plan. For example, if the school rewards behaviors with “Tiger Tickets,” educators can use the tickets to reward Reading Plus achievements as well! Students collect these tickets toward school-wide incentives.

**What do you need to do?**

- Every time students score 80% or higher on SeeReader, they raise their hands and the teacher awards them each with a ticket. Not only does this bring them recognition, but it alerts the teacher in real time to how students are doing.
- Students can earn a ticket when they submit interesting things they learned from SeeReader. These interesting facts are added to a bulletin board (see photo).
- Students can earn a ticket when they level up. They can also take two small treats (lollipops, small candy bars, trinkets, key chains, Chapstick out of a bucket.
- If students level up in SeeReader to within 2 content levels of their grade (e.g. a eighth-grader levels up to F), they can win coupons from various restaurants. (Restaurants are often more than happy to donate these.) They can also select larger prizes such as posters, t-shirts, big candy bars, sunglasses, necklaces, etc.

**Why do this?**

Using a popular school-wide incentive program to recognize achievement in Reading Plus communicates that reading is valued by the whole school community.

**Take it to the next level!**

Work with the principal to come up with a larger incentive such as a party or field trip that students can pool all of their tickets to claim. They will be the envy of the school!

Strategy: Reward Wheel

Students spin the wheel whenever they earn a Combo or a place on the Leaderboard to win low- or no-cost motivational prizes.

**What do you need to do?**

- Teachers create a prize wheel at wheeldecide.com. Complete the wheel with low- or no-cost motivational prizes and privileges.

**Why do this?**

- Create an exciting way to celebrate an individual student achievement. Students will be eager to earn Combos of their own to join in on the fun!

**Take it to the next level!**

- Ask students to brainstorm bigger prizes, like a party theme or class privilege. Then set a class wide goal (500,000 words read, everyone levels up, etc.). When the goal is reached, spin the wheel for the class prize!
Strategy: Reach the Top of SeeReader Mountain

To help students reach the goal of 100 SeeReader lessons, create a mountain to climb as a visual motivator. To reach the top of the mountain, the goal for the first half of the year is to complete 50 SeeReader lessons each. For the second half of the year, the goal is to complete 100 lessons. Celebrate progress with periodic “Move up the Mountain Days” where students tabulate their number of lessons and can fill out a card with their name and lesson count if they have reached designated milestones as they climb up the mountain. Other individual and class incentives can be added to this contest to provide additional motivation.

What do you need to do?

• Create a mountain and the milestone markers.
• Use the Class Progress Report to track total SeeReader lessons completed by each student.
• Consider providing small prizes or treats for milestones and for reaching the top of the mountain.

Why do this?

Visual motivators and friendly competition to reach the top of the mountain will keep students focused on the goal of 100 lessons even when the going gets tough.

Take it to the next level!

Consider hosting a summit party for the class with special awards and prizes for students who have reached the summit. Another option for the second half of the year is to give out milestone awards for the highest number of lessons at 80% or above to further foster comprehension success and growth.

Strategy: Reading Plus Derby

For this motivation contest, different classes compete in a simulated horse race. At the beginning of each semester, the classes all start in the gate. Each week, the class with the greatest number of Combos and the highest percentage of completed assignments will move their horse forward accordingly. The class with the highest total after nine weeks wins the race and receives a class pizza party. The class in second place wins a chips and dip party and the class in third place wins a snack or treat. Each class’s individual top three students in Combos and assignment completion are also recognized. Keeping with the horse racing theme, these students are the weekly top trainers, grooms, and hot walkers for each class. The top three students each week get to spend their individual reading time in the class “coffee shop” or other special classroom space. Here they also receive a treat and enjoy some recognition.

What do you need to do?

• Create a horse race themed poster to track student and class progress.

Why do this?

The friendly competition and visuals will help keep students focused on the dual goals of completing assignments and earning Combos.

Take it to the next level!

Throw a Derby-themed party with silly hats and kid-friendly Mint Juleps!
Strategy: Laps Around Reading Plus Raceway

Encourage school-wide use with a friendly class competition. Each class selects a car to identify their team. Students are energized by creating car-themed decorations and putting them up around the classroom to show team pride. As students achieve various goals such as completing all weekly assignments, earning Combos, or earning weekly comprehension averages of 80% or higher, the class car completes a lap. The class that earns the most laps within a particular time frame is recognized with a class prize. Additionally, individual students can earn prizes and are appointed to the weekly “Winners Circle” for being the top achievers. Goals and prizes are changed on a weekly basis to keep students focused and interested.

What do you need to do?

• Make a bulletin board and coordinate with other teachers.
• Review the Class Assignments Report for class assignment completion totals.
• Review the Site and Class Leaderboard Reports for totals in other categories.

Why do this?

Classmates working as a team can accomplish individual and school-wide literacy goals.

Take it to the next level!

Consider hosting an awards party for the class with the most times in the Winners Circle.

Strategy: Instant Party

Create weekly goals for students and then host two-minute parties to celebrate the achievement of those goals. Students can play a song of their choice and everyone can dance and sing along. Since the parties are brief, you can have as many as you like, whenever you like.

What do you need to do?

• Establish a variety of weekly goals for your students, such as complete all assigned lessons, or earn two Combos (View the Class Leaderboard Report for more ideas).
• Consider providing small prizes or treats for the winners.

Why do this?

A two-minute party allows the whole class to celebrate together, and it provides a very quick break from work. Students will want these mini-parties to occur often, so they will work hard in Reading Plus to earn these special breaks.

Take it to the next level!

Consider hosting themed parties based on the time of year (holidays or seasons) or current events. You can also set goals and deadlines for individuals and the entire class to work toward a special “supersized” party.
Strategy: Leader of the Pack

Using the Class Leaderboard Report, build an environment of recognition that can be viewed by your entire classroom. Set aside a section of a classroom wall to post impressive student achievement statistics for different categories highlighted on the report (for example, number of words read, Combos earned, etc.). The ultimate goal would be for your students to have their names on the wall in every category.

**What do you need to do?**
- Monitor your Class Leaderboard Report.

**Why do this?**
As students work continuously to improve their statistics, they will be motivated to complete all of their lessons each week. Students feel proud to see their own statistics documented on the wall, and may be inspired to improve their own performance when they see peers’ statistics.

**Take it to the next level!**
Highlight specific goals for students, such as 100,000 words read. When a student reaches the goal, reward him or her with a prize. Have the entire class celebrate the student’s hard work with a round of applause. If some students are struggling to complete work, directly engage them by requiring their written explanation of how they will work to increase their stats. You can also have your highest achievers offer some tips to readers who are trying to improve their stats.