Motivation Strategies for Elementary 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 motivational strategies that elementary school teachers are using to ignite enthusiasm for Reading Plus.

Strategy: The Six-Week Challenge

Students set their own six-week goals in Reading Plus. Every student who meets his or her goal is rewarded at the end of the six-week period.

What do you need to do?
- Help your students establish realistic personal goals. For example, they can specify the number of Combos they will achieve, the number of words they will read, or the number of SeeReader lessons they will complete with 80% or higher comprehension.
- Use the Class Leaderboard Report to help track student progress each week.

Why do this?
Your students will work toward long-term goals, rather than focus only on specific weekly expectations. This strategy helps students maintain a high level of motivation from week to week.

Take it to the next level!
Your students can use a visual component to help track their progress, such as the Achievements Tracking Sheet, the SeeReader Comprehension Score Tracker, or the Awards Tracking Sheet. Some students may prefer to track their work in a self-designed visual component to personalize the experience. Students can post their trackers on classroom walls and update them weekly, allowing everyone to share and celebrate class progress.

Strategy: Deck the Walls

Students are celebrated when the SeeReader Level Awards they have earned are posted on a classroom’s Reading Plus Wall of Fame.

What do you need to do?
- Monitor the Actions Panel of your Teacher Dashboard for award notifications and print out Level Awards as they are earned.
- Present awards in fun, inspiring ways. Consider playing music or leading a classroom cheer as the award is presented and added to the Wall of Fame.

Why do this?
An easily visible Wall of Fame reminds students of their own Reading Plus accomplishments as well as those of their classmates.

Take it to the next level!
Whenever a student earns a Level Award, give the student the opportunity to discuss a favorite SeeReader text selection from the level he or she just completed. Or, ask the student to share his or her Reading Plus experience so far. Students can use the SeeReader Reflection Worksheet as a guide for these exercises.
Strategy: The 80% and Higher Club

To keep struggling students engaged and feeling positive about the work they are doing each day, celebrate every SeeReader comprehension score of 80% or higher.

**What do you need to do?**
- Create a chart for students to mark with a sticker for every lesson completed with a score of 80% or higher. Students can track their own progress using the SeeReader Comprehension Score Tracker.
- Celebrate scores of 100% with an added special prize.

**Why do this?**
Struggling students often lose confidence and interest in reading. By celebrating incremental successes, you can build student confidence and motivation. When presenting this challenge, let your students know that 80% is an excellent score, 90% is superb, and 100% is outstanding! Encourage your students to achieve 80% or higher every lesson.

**Take it to the next level!**
Try using a theme for the stickers you use. For example, stickers could be different types of sports equipment. When the class reaches a certain number of stickers, celebrate with a break to play a sport outside. You can have a countdown on the board to let students know many stickers they have earned collectively and how many more are needed to reach the goal.

Strategy: The Breakfast Club

Set a lesson completion goal for the end of the term (or year) for each of your students. For example, the goal could be 50 SeeReader lessons completed by mid-year, or 100 SeeReader lessons completed by the end of the school year. Students who reach the goal earn a special celebratory breakfast with the school principal, and can invite a parent or guardian to join the celebration.

**What do you need to do?**
- Set a realistic but challenging goal for your students.
- Coordinate with your principal, or another lead staff member, so they are aware of the challenge and can help build excitement.

**Why do this?**
Setting an end-of-semester or end-of-year goal helps keep students engaged for the long run. By including your principal or other lead staff in your motivation strategy, you are keeping administrators informed about the work you and your students are doing (and the success you are achieving) in Reading Plus.

**Take it to the next level!**
When students reach their goal, encourage them to prepare for their breakfast celebration by writing an essay about their reading experience over the course of the year. They can talk about their achievements with the principal and their parent or guardian. Suggest to students that they use the SeeReader Reflection Worksheet to prepare their thoughts.
Strategy: Friday Fun!

Students who have successfully completed all of their assigned Reading Plus lessons spend the last 30 minutes of the school week participating in fun activities such as board games, listening to music, or reading a book for pleasure. This is a delightful way to celebrate the end of a week of hard work, and the successful completion of all Reading Plus lessons.

What do you need to do?
- Build up the excitement for Friday Fun by previewing the activity of the week. Offer new activities every week.
- Coordinate with other Reading Plus teachers and have each of your classrooms set up as a different “Friday Fun Station.”

Why do this?
We all need to find some time to put aside work and focus on fun activities. By offering enjoyable, educational activities during Friday Fun, you can help students end their school week on a high note. Consider expanding Friday Fun to include other Reading Plus classrooms so your students can interact with a wider circle of friends.

Take it to the next level!
If some students are struggling to complete their weekly Reading Plus assignments, set aside some classroom space during Friday Fun for those students to catch up. The students will have an incentive to do better during the next week so they can participate in Friday Fun rather than do catch-up lessons.

Strategy: Share the Love of Reading!

Recognize your students’ Reading Plus achievements in a way that builds confidence and the love of reading. Whenever a student earns a Level Up in SeeReader, he or she earns a certificate to host one reading session as a reading mentor with a young reader in the K-2 age range.

What do you need to do?
- Coordinate with K-2 teachers to determine appropriate reading buddy match-ups.
- Monitor the Actions Panel on your Teacher Dashboard for Level Award notifications, and print out them out as they are earned.
- Help your students understand their important role as mentors.

Why do this?
By mentoring younger readers, your students build confidence in their own reading ability and develop an appreciation for reading. This mentoring strategy also fosters a sense of community within a school.

Take it to the next level!
Coordinate with other teachers to make it possible for reading buddies to meet regularly. The younger readers can select what the older ones will read. Have the reading buddy duo present a book report to both of their classes.
Strategy: Watch Them Grow!

Brighten your classroom and recognize Reading Plus success with colorful bulletin board displays. Use a flower to represent each student in the class. Whenever a student earns a Combo, add to his or her flower stem. Every Level Award adds a leaf to the stem.

What do you need to do?
- Gather materials needed (construction paper, scissors) to decorate your bulletin board.

Why do this?
This motivation strategy brightly decorates your classroom environment while giving students an opportunity to see how their own hard work and the hard work of their classmates contributes to an artistic classroom display.

Take it to the next level!
Encourage the class to work toward collective goals that add visual interest to the display. For example, add a bird, a ladybug, or a worm to the picture to represent each week when all students in the class successfully completed weekly assignments.