Reading Motivation Techniques

I. Motivation tools when Kids don’t want to read because it’s not COOL

a) Utilize programs which promote reading, literacy and libraries.

- Hang up “Get Caught Reading” posters in your school.
- Create your OWN “Get Caught Reading” posters with YOUR students, parents, and teachers.
- Bring local celebrities in to read to let the kids think “reading is hip!”
- Incorporate goal-based programs such as the Heifer Project’s Read to Feed (which donated animals to Third World countries) to motivate students to read more.
- Go all-out for annual reading events like “Teen Read Week” and “Book Week.”

b) Know your students—they are your “customers.”

- Market the books with movie, game, and TV tie-ins.
- Keep a stock of popular “urban” fiction for teens.
- Get them to read magazines—sports, popular culture, etc.
  Magazines articles are less intimidating because they’re quicker to read and more info-packed than novels.
- Display provocative titles which pique students’ interests.
- Capstone general non-fiction for reluctant readers.
• Take advantage of the YUCKY factor in gory non-fiction.
• Share self-help books to help students deal with real-life issues. If you put some in the guidance office, they will come to the library for more.
• Utilize the attractiveness of graphic novels—both fiction AND nonfiction.

c) Involve the older, more popular students.
• Have the popular students (“the cool ones”) advertise their favorite books.
• Have the older students read to the younger students.
• Create book clubs—recognize student participation (ex. Senior Book Club).

d) Integrate newer and cooler technology.
• Create a library blog and/or website to keep them connected.
• Have a listening section. Purchase audio books and upload them to iPods and other portable MP3 devices.
• Convert your video collection into a DVD collection, which takes up less space.

II. Motivation tools when Kids don't read because they don't see themselves reflected in the story.

a) Know your kids and their problems and reflect those concerns in your collection.
• Introduce students to appropriate “urban” fiction books.

• Book-talk with courage and diversity (ex. gay titles, abuse, etc.) in mind.

• Post thematic lists (hot topics, embarrassing topics).

• Make sure all everyone is represented in your collection (e.g. Special needs students).

• Survey students’ interests/needs and then highlight/display these titles. (go to the eLibrary website and click on the Student Survey form for starters: http://schoolnet.cmsdnet.net/outreach/csd/library/educators/librarianinfo/cmsdlibrariandocuments/)

• Weed the collection—fiction from the 1950s does not speak to today’s children.

• Know that students do judge books by their covers—play to that by doing displays, etc.

b.) Go beyond the scope of fiction.

• Maximize the popularity of the “Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About...” series.

• Stock up on “how-to” books which grab some students like nothing else.

• Display the non-fiction graphic novels (but don’t tell them that)!

• Don’t be afraid of non-fiction—autobiographies, career guides, “exportable knowledge;” there’s life beyond the narrative...

• Subscribe to and display your magazine titles.
III. Motivation tools when Kids don’t read because they don’t know what to choose and are overwhelmed by choices.

a) Maximize your current skills.

- WEED so you can highlight the good stuff.
- Collaborate with your teachers on the curriculum. Pull out special collections for these specific purposes (e.g. biographies on explorers).
- Take advantage of NoveList (via the public library databases: go to http://www.oplin.lib.oh.us/ and click on “research databases;” you will need your library card number to access NoveList).
- Use your OPAC (online public access catalog) to narrow choices, present special groupings, etc.
- Give students choices via other online catalogs—public libraries, colleges, etc.
- Make your space inviting; signage helps. Separate the collection with genre shelves.

b.) Promote students’ interests by channeling them to a particular area to give them an idea of what they might like to read.

- Create an “Author of the Month” program.
- Highlight a series by an author to get them started.
- Have orientations that help students use resources they don’t know about.
• Meet the students’ interests—draw them in with R.L. Stine, Sponge Bob Squarepants, etc.
• READ the books and be familiar with the titles.
• Have books ready to suggest to them.
• Make connections between similar books—“If you like this, then you’ll like that…”
• Leave books in special, “random” places like shelving carts, computer desks, etc.
• Help kids to understand that it’s OK to ASK for help; give them words to use to express their needs/interests; librarians must be approachable.
• Make sure kids know that they don’t HAVE to finish a book.

c.) Encourage and harness students’ equity in the learning environment.

• Have students’ create book reviews and recommendations.
• Encourage students to write book review to be posted on the library’s website; go to http://schoolnet.cmsdnet.net/outreach/csd/library/students/bookreviewform/
• Implement a bulletin board with index cards so student can fill in their suggestions and post their favorite titles.
• Use student word-of-mouth (bulletin boards, blogs, reviews, etc.) to build interest.
• Survey the students to find what kinds of authors they want and invite them to your school for a talk.
• Create a poetry circle.
• Support students’ interest in a particular author by buying lots of that author’s books.
• Create a bulletin board maintained by the students where they can post their favorite titles.

IV. Motivation tools when *Kids don’t read because there’s not enough adventure.*

   a.) **Appeal to Today’s Children**

   • Highlight books that are tied-in with movies and TV shows.
   • Display titles with flashy covers.
   • Market your biography, non-fiction, and adventure sections. Survival stories are very popular.
   • Create excitement/demand by displaying titles but not allowing them to circulate immediately.
   • Display the classic titles which are now in graphic novel form.
   • Create a blog where kids can post their suggestions and book reviews.

   b.) **Use High-Impact Motivation Techniques**

   • Do “fly-by” book-talks to grab students’ attention.
   • Do read-alouds to get students interested.
• Make a book theme chart so that kids can contribute their suggestions and peer book reviews.

• Have a “Character Day,” in which everyone comes to school dressed as their favorite character from a book.

• Expose kids to field trips and tie-in the experience with books.

• Create displays that pique interest (astronomy, medicine, etc.)—titles at different levels and genres.