**PALEKASTRO SCHOOL**

**25 Reading Motivation Ideas**

1. Musical Books. Chairs are placed back-to-back in a straight line, and the teacher places a book under each chair. Every child then sits on a chair. The children march around the chairs when the teacher starts the music. When the music stops the children sit down and begin to read the book under their chair. After a few minutes, the teacher starts the music again. After the game, the teacher puts the books in a special box marked "Musical Books" so that the children may later read the rest of the story.

2. Scavenger Hunt. Have a "scavenger hunt" by dividing the class into teams and giving each team a copy of the same book. Have them find the page numbers of particular objects, events, or people in the book. Give a reward to the winning team.

3. Name That Book! Explain to your students how important the cover and title are to a story. Then read a book to your students without telling them the title or showing them the cover. After reading the book, give the children a piece of paper to draw what they think the cover and the title of this book should be. Finally, display the storybook surrounded by the children's covers.

4. Readers for Tomorrow. We hope to make "Readers for Tomorrow" by creating picture books, laminating them, and giving them as gifts to newborns at the local hospital. We will include a letter to the parents telling them the importance of reading to their young children in order to instill a love for books early. The books will be stories written by the students with very colorful illustrations to catch babies' attention.

5. Mystery Reader. Every year I choose two or three weeks for my "Mystery Reader" project. I send home a secret flyer to the parents to see if they would like to come in and read to us during story time. It can be parents, grandparents, aunts, or uncles. They pick out their own story (usually their child's favorite) and give me a first and second choice of dates. I then make up a schedule after the slips are in. This usually takes a week, and then I send back another secret note to those who responded informing them of their date. The kiddos are surprised and love it. I take a picture of each Mystery Reader reading and send it home with the child in a thank you note.

6. Where in the World? Give each student a United States or a world map. (Let students select the one they would prefer.) Each time a student reads a book that relates in some way to a state or country, he/she may color that state or country on the map. The relationship may be based on the following: (1) the author was born there; (2) the setting for the book is there; (3) the story began there; (4) it is a book telling about the state or country. The student who colors the most states or countries is the winner and receives a reward, such as an inexpensive atlas or map.

7. Story Webs. All you need for this game is a ball of string and a story to share. Have your students sit in a circle on the floor. One of the students gives the beginning sentence of a familiar story. Then the student holds onto the end of a ball of string and rolls the ball to another student, who will give the next part of the story in sentence form. This is repeated until the story has been told. Soon you'll have a spider's web in your students' circle. Any story can be used for variation, or new stories can be created with each student adding a new idea!

8. Two Characters Meet. Pick a favorite character from each of two books and write a new story or play in which they meet. Have the members of your class act out the new story.

9. Readers' BINGO. Brainstorm 25 to 30 words that deal with books and write them on the board. Give your students 9" x 12" newsprint and have them fold it into nine squares. Then have the students write nine of the words from the board into each of the squares on their sheet. Give them corn or candy for markers. Randomly call off words from the board. When a student has filled in a vertical, horizontal, or diagonal row, he/she should call out "BOOKS!" I give the winner a paperback book. For variety, the teacher can play Readers' BINGO by giving the definition of words rather than the words themselves.

10. Book-Word Search. Children love to do puzzles. To help generate an interest in book reports, my students make a "word search" on graph paper using for the words a book title, author's name, main characters, setting, and any key words for events in the book. The puzzles are mounted on construction paper and illustrated with pencil sketches or markers. They can be exchanged with class members. If the "word search" puzzles are laminated, they can then be exchanged many times and kept from year to year. These make excellent at-seat activities and motivators to check out a variety of books.

11. Please Stand Up! A fun game our class came up with is "Will the Real BOOK IT! Reader Please Stand Up." We choose a judge, a lawyer, three jurors, and three defendants for each round. Each defendant takes turns coming up to the witness stand, while the other two defendants wait outside the classroom or where they cannot hear the others' testimony. The lawyer asks questions from a questionnaire that one of the defendants has filled out on a book he/she has read. After each defendant has been questioned, the three jurors vote on whom they feel really read the book and give their answer to the judge. The defendants are then asked to come back in and sit down. The judge counts the jurors' votes and reads aloud the tally, and then asks, "Will the real BOOK IT! Reader Please Stand Up?" This has been a great incentive in my classroom.

12. Kid Quiz. I let children take turns reading one of their BOOK IT! book choices orally to the rest of their classmates. Prior to this oral reading, I ask the reader to prepare two or three comprehension questions about the book. After the oral reading, the reader gives a "quiz" to the class. The reader then has the responsibility for grading the papers. (Kids love to play teacher and check papers!) They could do the grading in class in lieu of another assignment or at home.

13. Read to the Principal. Recognize students' accomplishments in reading by selecting one or two children daily to go to the principal's office to read to him/her. Before starting the program, make a computer banner that says "I READ TO THE PRINCIPAL." The children can color the letters. Hang the banner in the principal's office and ask the children to sign the banner with different colored markers after they've read their selections. The principal may want to give the child a bookmark that is signed by him/her that says "I READ TO THE PRINCIPAL."

14. TV vs. Reading. Begin a TV/Reading Chart for each child. It would be a weekly chart to keep a record of time spent reading and time spent watching TV at home. If total reading time exceeds total TV watching time, the child earns a treat. The class with the most winners could have a party.

15.Reading Timeline. Encouraging growth and a sense of accomplishment with intermediate readers can be attained with a personal reading timeline. Students are asked to produce a timeline of their lives by naming their favorite books through the years. Students can include personal pictures, books, book covers, illustrations, etc., to show the history of their reading preferences. The displayed timelines make excellent book advertisements, create impromptu book reports and discussions with classmates, help students understand timelines, and help each child to see how their reading has matured throughout the years.

16. "You're Under Arrest!" My students in the 5th grade "kidnap" or "arrest" one of the teachers whom they had when they were younger and sentence that teacher to so many minutes of reading aloud before they return to their own class. I inform the teachers that they will be "arrested," but the students are not aware of this. I then stay in the room of the "arrested" teacher and read to his/her students.

17. Reading—It's a Piece of Cake! A good activity to do [during Children's Book Week] is to make a "title cake." Have your recipe visible and let your students help add the ingredients. Then, on small pieces of paper have each student write down the title of his/her favorite book. Fold the title strips several times, add to the cake batter, and bake. Each student will enjoy discovering a title in his/her piece of cake. The students might enjoy trying to guess whose favorite book title they had in their piece of cake. I call this activity "Reading—It's a Piece of Cake."

18. Carnival of Books. Our PTA sponsors a Carnival of Books. Food booths offer the following goodies with an appropriate book theme: Popcorn -- Popping for Books, Pickles—Pickled Green Over Books, Cold Drinks—A Toast for Books, and Candy Bags -- I'm Sweet on Books. We also have a Jump-a-Thon booth named "We Jump for Books." Students take up pledges and jump from 4:00 to 5:30. All profit from the booths goes toward purchasing books needed in the school.

19. Books Open Doors. Each classroom will agree on a favorite book. Then students will decorate their doors as giant book covers. The giant book-cover door will open up to find the room decorated as a scene or setting from the book. One day during Children's Book Week, the students will come to school dressed as characters from their chosen book. Judges can select grade-level winners or a hallway winner. A giant "Book Cake" could be served at lunch to reward everyone's hard work.

20. Read-a-Thon. The school could have a day-long Read-a-Thon, with the central office tabulating the number of books or pages read in the whole school, principals and custodian included. Hourly results could be posted on rungs of a ladder reaching to the sky.

21. Books on Tape. Our children will be choosing five simple reading books to tape for children in the hospital who are too young, too tired, or too sick to read on their own. The books will come from the children's hospital library so that they may listen to the tape and follow along with the book. We will deliver the tapes during Children's Book Week.

22. Buddy Books. Each sixth grader will be assigned a first grader to interview, finding out about their family, birthday, friends, pets, and favorite things. Using this information, the sixth graders will write a story, using their first grader as the main character and the information from the interview as the basis for the story. The stories will be published in book form by the sixth graders, complete with cover and a sewn binding. During Children's Book Week, the sixth graders will present the books to their first-grade partners and share some reading time with them.

23. Bead Hangers. I give students a colored bead for each book report they turn in. I also give them a ribbon on which to string these beads. When they have read ten books, I give them a shiny bangle to place between the 10th and 11th book beads. I give them another bangle to place between the 20th and 21st beads, the 30th and 31st beads, etc. These are hung in our window, which adds a festive air to our room. The students take their chains home at the end of the year.

24. Green Light -- Go! Students will read books recommended by their peers. To foster this, have available in the classroom red, yellow, and green index cards. These cards correspond to the colors in a stop light. A student fills out a green card to tell others to "go" for this book; yellow means caution, the book was so-so; and red means "stop," do not read this book. The front side of the card has the following information written on it -- the title and author of the book and the student's name. The back side of the card has the following information written on it and should be filled in according to the color card chosen: A green card should read "I really liked this book because. ..." A yellow card should read, "This book was so-so because." A red card should read, "I did not like this book because. ..." Have hanging in the classroom a burlap banner covered with silly, comical buttons, such as "Who Needs Skool?" After a student fills in an index card and staples it to the bulletin board, he/she can wear a button for the day.

25. "Picture" Books. Take a picture of each student holding his/her favorite book and attach a short summary of the student telling in his/her own words why this book is so special. Laminate and display. Students can read about classmates' selections and expand their knowledge of exciting books to read.