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Reading Records

The goal of the reading record is to develop student self interest in regular purposeful reading. The key to success is how reading records are implemented, always remembering the goal is self motivated regular student reading. Modeling, student ownership, variety of reading records, availability of readable books, and a positive atmosphere about reading are essential elements. This handout provides a structure to model, encourage, and help students perceive reading as a fun and purposeful life skill.

Interest is the Reward

The goal of reading records is to create a desire and interest in reading. Students must feel reading has personal value and is a purposeful activity. It must not be internalized as a means to a reward: whether it's a piece of candy or free food at a chain restaurant, the focus becomes the reward and does not connect with reading and learning for understanding. The 'reward' must be reading in itself. Any extrinsic rewards will diminish the goal of reading with desire and purpose.

Purpose

The reading record is a log on which the students (and teacher) record and respond to their reading. It is a vehicle for:

- reading for understanding
- reading regularly
- self-desire to read

Components

Reading records are most successful when:

- the teacher models reading regularly in the classroom
- the teacher and students model the use of reading records in the classroom
- books are readily available for students to check out and read
- students publish books. Self published books are an important element of building a classroom library
- students read regularly in the classrooms, including silent reading time and Readers Workshop (students reading aloud in pairs)
- reading records are used in the classroom in addition to regular homework
- the students regularly share what they have done on their reading records





Reading Records in Action

Ideas for how to use reading records in your classroom.

Modeling

- The teacher and students should both regularly model using the reading record with the whole class. A chart size laminated reading record &/or a reading record on transparency for the overhead allow presentation with the whole class.
- The format of the weekly reading record must be modeled throughout the week whenever a book or chapter from a book is read with the class. This is an excellent opportunity to incorporate other language experiences and skills within the modeled reading record. This includes looking for common phonic elements, writing patterns, art techniques, or whatever the opportunity presents.
- The next week when reading a book in class, occasionally (not always or a pattern will be detected by the students) select a student who has previously forgotten their work to model on the overhead or chart size reading record. These students can also be assisted during Reader's Workshop (not during silent reading as the teacher must be modeling by silently reading as well) or during the regular weekly conference with the student. Students can also be assisted in small groups.
- Never be negative with the students who have forgotten their reading records. It is important to recognize success while constantly modeling and assisting in ways for them to be successful. The majority of the class will also be modeling success.



Routine

- On Friday the whole class sits in a circle with their reading records. Each student and the teacher (it is essential that teachers keep one, too, to share that we value reading!) selects their favorite entry on their reading record to share. Another way to process is 'pair and share' (two students share with each other). In both cases the teachers must model with students how to present. Only students who have brought their reading records share with the whole class in the circle. The students who don't have their reading records return them on the next school day. They can and should be part of any discussion. It is important to be positive for those who have completed their records and not focus on those who have not.
- The reading records are to be completed by the students each night. They should do all the work on the reading record in their own writing and drawing. Initially you may have the students bring the reading records to class each day in a folder they carry regularly.

Responsibility

- Students must be responsible to get their reading records on Monday for the week and on Friday for the weekend. If a student forgets the reading record they are responsible to make one on their own. Additionally the students can keep an extra one at home if they desire.
- Parents should not bring in forgotten work. The student is responsible for his/her own work. If they have a family member do the work for them, we are not modeling responsibility. If the teacher forgets their reading record on Friday, s/he could model returning it on the following school day.

Ownership

- Students will post their own reading records in the room (demonstrating ownership). The location can be a class or individual decision, but decisions must be made by the students. The students could remove the last week's reading records as well. Another option would be devoting a wall to reading records for a couple of months to build community. It is extremely important that students post their own work.
- As the year progresses, on Friday ask the students what they want on their reading records for the following week and incorporate their ideas. This is a transfer of ownership and interest in the reading record. Having students contribute to the reading record form helps the students build on their developing interest in reading.

Materials

Students must have a wide selection of readable materials. If your classroom library is small (or even if it is large) regularly building a student published portion of the library is key. They will always be interested in reading their own and fellow student's books, especially if students are modeled how to write and construct the books themselves.



Communication

Regularly communicate with parents on what we are doing in class, including the importance of reading regularly. This can be effectively done in many ways including as a daily newsletter done as a whole class that all students can read at home. It can also be used as a reading record entry.

Reading Record

Dear Students and Parents,

Each week your child will receive a Reading Record on Monday (Tuesday if there is a holiday on Monday). They are to read a book(s) for at least 20 minutes every night. I would appreciate them reading with someone in the family. They may read the book to a family member or listen to a family member read the story to them. Doing both would be best. When they have finished reading the book they are to fill in the Reading Record.

The student is to do all the writing and drawing on the Reading Record. If additional paper is needed, they may write on another piece of paper (from home or school).



On Friday (Thursday if there is a holiday on Friday) your child is to bring in a completed Reading Record at the beginning of class. We will be sharing our Reading Records at the beginning of class. The students will post their Reading Records in the classroom after sharing them. They are to remember the Reading Records themselves and should not expect their parents to bring it to school for them.

They may read books from home, the public library, the school library, and from the classroom including books created and published by the class. Books from the classroom may be checked out each night. Classroom books must be returned the following morning.

It is very important to practice reading each night. Your child should do the Reading Record every night. There will be other things to do at home during the year as well. Even when there are other things to do at home, the Reading Record is to be completed each night after reading a book. I would encourage them to read on the weekends too. If you have any questions please stop by the classroom or call me. Thank you.