



MOTIVATIONAL GUIDE - VIRTUAL

Tips for Motivating Students in a Virtual Learning Environment

For many students, this is the first time they will be working "on their own" without teacher supervision. Motivation is critical; it inspires students to put more effort into their work. Teachers can have a positive impact on motivation in virtual learning environments and create an environment for students to take ownership of their learning.

Here are a few strategies and tips to help you promote a positive experience in a virtual learning setting:

- 1. Set up a "Home Classroom":** guide students to create a productive learning environment.
 - Provide a "learning tools" list: computer/tablet, notebook and pen/pencil
 - Encourage students to minimize distractions (cell phones, music, TV)
 - Suggest that students share a picture of their new learning space
- 2. Set Expectations:** Tell students what they will be learning and why. Communicate how their progress will be monitored (frequency, metrics, feedback).
- 3. Create a Community:** Foster a virtual community where teachers and students can listen and acknowledge others' points of view. Be interactive and visible to the students through online chats and video sessions.
- 4. Plan for Individual Needs:** Acknowledge and address the unique learning profiles of your students. Identify your students' strengths and weaknesses and plan for those individual needs. Here are some examples:
 - Students who have developed an attitude of learned helplessness and dependence are the students who are waiting for teacher direction and praise.
 - Students are worried about failing. They avoid stress through withdrawal and apathetic behavior.
 - Students cannot accept personal responsibility for learning, even when they are successful. Students attribute their success and failure to the teacher, not themselves.
- 5. Motivate and Reward:** Students need to be encouraged to take a risk and learn that a certain amount of failure is an unavoidable and acceptable part of learning. Anxious students need reassurance that they can learn.
 - Use both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators
 - Have students monitor and evaluate their performance - provide students with the BrightFish "student story tracker" to track and monitor their performance
 - Reward students for their accomplishments (see a few ideas below)





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6. **Connect and Share:** Encourage students to try these new ways of interacting and learning.
 - Share their new experiences through reading logs.
 - Moderate an online chat with other students and teachers.

Ideas for Rewarding/Acknowledging Students

- Praise students one-on-one (or in front of the class) virtually
- Write a positive note to the student's parent/guardian
- Award extra points for gameplay in BrightFish Reading
- Print and save student certificates to hang when back in the classroom
- Create mystery e-prizes with different contents each week. Names will be placed in a draw reflecting those who have met specific criteria (such as the highest time on task or activity scores.) At the end of the week, draw a winner and post the results on a shared forum.

