

## Motivating Students to Reading over the Holidays

It's been a challenging few months for all of us, but teachers and students have been working diligently to overcome the uncertainty of this unusual school year. Many of our teachers sent along great tips to engage students in reading over the break.

Here are a few of the best tips we received:

- 1. Offer a variety of genres:** Comics and graphic novels create excitement in non-readers and can become stepping-stones to broader reading. There are many amazing graphic novels, manga and comic books that are available to stimulate interest in reading.
- 2. Let students choose:** Get them started before the break, either by browsing the school library or with parents at a local or online bookstore. Ask students to research a few options and select a book that they can realistically read over the holidays.
- 3. Create a class "book club."** A book-swap with friends and classmates is a great way to motivate struggling readers to try a story that a friend or peer has enjoyed. When students return to class in January, they can share their impressions and pass it on to the next student.
- 4. Cultivate critics:** After finishing a reading assignment – whether it's online reading, a graphic novel, or the latest book series – ask students to rate the selection and write down their reflections on the content, format and writing style. You can develop a scoring system with students to rate their reading.



- 5. Bribery works, too:** Even the most avid readers can use a little motivation sometimes. Teachers can offer a holiday reading contest for online materials or home assignments. Make it specific – time, stories completed, activities finished – and create special prizes or raffles. For parents, a favorite activity, food or movie reward can be a great way to maintain interest in finishing a winter-break book.

6. **Suggest great pairings:** When Jack London wrote *The Call of the Wild* in 1903, he couldn't possibly have imagined his canine protagonist in CGI animation (below left). Watching a current series or movie is a great way to encourage interest in the source material. Here are a few more fine adaptations of great reads:

- *His Dark Materials* (below right) is a trilogy of fantasy novels by Philip Pullman, getting an excellent treatment in the streaming series now in its second season on HBO.
- *The Baby-Sitters Club* follows a group of 13-year-old friends who live in fictional Stoneybrook and run a local babysitting service. The first season runs on Netflix and offers a faithful adaptation.
- *Artemis Fowl*: Disney+ has a new series based on Eoin Colfer's tale of a 12-year-old millionaire mastermind who travels to a fairy underworld in search of his father. Another bonus is that it's an 8-book series, encouraging even more reading!



*Call of the Wild, 2020*



*His Dark Materials, Netflix*

7. **Unwrap even more reading:** Reading practice is valuable regardless of the format: Game manuals, recipes, how-to guides. Parents can reinforce the connection between reading and the real world by tapping into their children's interests, whether it's caring for a pet, assembling a craft or learning a new skill.

If you're looking for ideas to engage students using BrightFish Reading over the break, check out our Motivation resources here: <https://www.brightfishlearning.com/brightfish-teachers-guides/>