



Keeping students motivated while in the classroom or at home completing homework can be hard enough! But during a time of crisis, such as the pandemic that we are currently facing, the challenge to keep kids motivated enough to do their work has never been greater. Whether you're a teacher or a parent, you might very well be asking yourself how to get your kids to do the work, especially if their online learning won't result in letter grades from the district.

If you're in the thick of keeping your children motivated with schoolwork in the midst of the pandemic, you already know that motivational words or positive quotes aren't enough to keep them engaged. With the harrowing news reports and stringent social distancing guidelines, it can be hard for anyone to concentrate, especially for our children who may not yet be old enough to understand exactly why they aren't able to go to school. So, what can be done about keeping our students' spirits up and their focus on point?

Luckily, we have a few tips for both teachers and parents who are looking to keep engagement high when it comes to finishing out the school year right. Join us as we discuss 8 tips for motivating kids to learn, even as your kids embark on this unfamiliar virtual learning journey.

Tried and True Tips for Teachers



Most educators have a few tricks up their sleeves when it comes to planning instruction in their own classroom. Teachers have set routines, favorite go-to activities that have proven successful, along with a huge amount of experience about what works for different types of learners. But when school suddenly stops and then restarts again in a completely different format, it can understandably tough for any teacher to adapt.

If you're a teacher struggling to motivate kids while they're learning at home, it might help to make a mind shift when it comes to pedagogy and grading. Consider the following tips as you transition your classroom to the cloud:

Shift focus from grades to standards

It's the end of the year, and students will be assessed for the final time regarding grade promotion. For many parents, and sometimes for older kids, the primary motivation for completing schoolwork in many households is earning high grades. However, your

district may have already made the shift to standards-based grading to end the year, and even if they haven't, it might be worth a hefty consideration to place emphasis on the purpose of every assignment and what kids will learn from them.

When it comes to online lessons, motivation for kids should include highly engaging positive content that fulfills the standards your state or district has set out for students. Focus less on number grades and place more emphasis on holistically assessing your students' abilities through fun learning tasks. To make assignments more enjoyable and less stressful, offer more choice and show flexibility when working with parents and kids.

[We know how tough it is to keep kids engaged when school is closed. We're offering 50% off our yearly subscription price to the Talented and Gifted app! Find fun-filled learning games, videos, and worksheets to keep your kids learning!](#)

Keep assignments short and focused

Part of the challenge for many instructors is coming to terms with adjusting their expectations for what students can complete at home. Most teachers know how long an activity would take in the classroom, but when it comes to finishing the same work at home, it can take infinitely longer! That's why it's so important to keep assignments short with instructions as concise as possible to help parents or caregivers who may be assisting children.

If students are expected to complete the same work at home without the help of an instructor in the room, they will quickly become frustrated and lose motivation to complete the task—and perhaps subsequent assignments! Instead, cut down your usual lessons for the online environment, and make directions as clear as possible to keep motivation high.

Assign virtual rewards, like badges or achievement certificates

Sometimes the only way to motivate a kid, especially younger children, is by extrinsic rewards. In the classroom, this is easy, as many teachers have a treasure box, or give out stickers or special privileges for good behavior or helping someone. While tiny toys from the local dollar store may be impossible to give out in the virtual space, many learning apps allow teachers to assign badges, certificates, or a points system to reward kids.

Take full advantage of any app that lets you assign small awards for students, as some children simply need that extra boost of motivation to keep them going from task to task.

Host fun classroom videoconference meetings

It's hard to feel connected when we're all stuck in the house with nowhere to go and nobody to see! To get your class together again, use your preferred videoconferencing app to host meetings once or twice a week.

During your sessions, try to do something fun, or create a them. For example, on one day, tell all students to wear their favorite hat, or host scavenger hunts that instructs students to leave the screen to find an object in their house that is a certain shape, like a cylinder, or a sphere. These activities will help a class feel together again, even if only connected by a screen and the internet.

Helpful Tips for Parents



Keeping kids motivated doing their usual after school homework is tough on its own but keeping them going through a pandemic may seem almost impossible, especially as many parents are still considered essential workers and need to report to their jobs. To keep your children's focus sharp through the end of the school year, try the following activities for parents to keep kids motivated:

Keep kids organized

It might not have occurred to many parents that there is likely a planner already sitting unused in their child's backpack! Some of the same techniques teachers use in the classroom can be employed at home, too. This includes planning goals and keeping tasks organized so children know what to complete and by when.

This might seem obvious when students are going to school each day, but we tend to get out of this routine when we're at home and are more relaxed. That said, dig out the planners and help your child create daily and weekly goals.

Keep routines as similar to regular school as possible

It's easy to get in the habit of sleeping in late, just as many kids do on the weekends or during the long summer break! However, the school year is still in session, and it should feel that way until the semester officially ends. While parents don't need to wake children up as early as they do when they go to school, it is still highly recommended to set an alarm and wake kids up to get the day started.

Try to follow the same routines that you would if school were in session; eat a good breakfast, and start tackling schoolwork in the morning hours, and allow for lunch and a "recess" to get students active and give them a break. Finally, be sure to set firm limits on the time of day you allow children to work on assignments. If campuses usually release students at 3:25, be sure to allow kids to relax after that time at home.

Schedule "brain breaks" regularly throughout the day

Don't attempt to get all the lessons done at once! Kids only have about 3 to 5 minutes of attention per year of their age, according to most studies and researchers. Chances are your child's teachers have scheduled about 15 minutes of learning for them per lesson, but that doesn't mean you should have your kids complete every lesson in one sitting! Create a plan that seems reasonable for your family. Accomplish a lesson or two, take a break, and get another one in during the afternoon.

Teachers have treasure boxes, special treats, and even offer students special class privileges for good behavior and hard work. Why not offer something similar at home? Order small items from Amazon, like cute erasers and small toys to use as rewards.

Create your own treasure box at home and devise a system to receive awards for hard work. For instance, if your child goes above and beyond, completing extra tasks, or simply by getting started without needing to be prompted, he or she can get a sticker on a chart for that day. After so many stickers are earned, they can pick a reward from the box!

Undoubtably, getting through the next month will be difficult for teachers, parents, and students alike. But there are a few tricks to keep kids motivated, even as society battles the pandemic from the safe confines of our homes. Consider the above advice to keep your children focused and their academic skills sharp!

