



BookTrust

# DEVELOPING A CULTURE OF LITERACY

## This month's focus: Choice

As educators you are aware of the importance of reading and the impact it can have on a child's life. Here at Book Trust, we want to support you in your journey of helping every student **discover the joy and power of reading**. Developing a culture of literacy is something that you have probably heard leads to incredible academic gains but what does that actually mean? Each month we break down different aspects that contribute to the culture of literacy.



## The Research

Research around choice is widely acknowledged as a method for enhancing motivation<sup>1</sup>. Student choice builds agency and confidence, which increases positive feelings toward reading<sup>2</sup>. When students are making the choices about their reading, it is more likely to have a positive effect on their reading comprehension than if a teacher was selecting their books.<sup>3</sup>

## What does that mean?



This means that allowing students to choose their books, even if they are below or above their level, will still result in positive outcomes. When students are in the driver's seat when it comes to their reading, they are developing a positive reading identity and tackling harder texts because they are fully interested and engaged. They are more motivated to continue because they picked it.



## Ideas

- If students are having a hard time choosing what book to read, narrow down the choices.
- Utilize breakout rooms or flip grid to encourage student talk about books of choice.
- Conduct a reading survey, figure out what books students like and use that as a backup if they are having a hard time choosing.
- Connect with families! There may be a skill or hobby that students participate in on the weekends that could be something they want to learn more about.
- Incorporate choices throughout the day. These can be little, but it will create the sense of ownership.
- Students listen to their peers so have students suggest different books and why.



## Questions

- What activities do you like to do? What would a perfect day look like for you?
- What do you want to be when you're an adult? Would you like to learn more about that?
- What challenges you?
- What makes you feel strong?
- After students finish a book, have them tell you whether or not they enjoyed it along with their summary. Prompt them to be specific. Did they like the characters? The setting? The story?
- Is there a place you have always wanted to go to?
- Is there a type of food that you want to learn more about?

1 Worthy and McKool (1996) 2. [Johnson, D., & Blair, A. \(2003\)](#) 3. Guthrie, J. T., Hoa, A. L. W., Wigfield, A., Tonks, S. M., Humenick, N. M., & Littles, E. (2007).

