



A ReadTheory Story

Using Station Activities and Rewards to Increase Student Engagement



Caitlyn Herron

📖 Hays Middle School / Grade Level: Middle School

📍 Prosper ISD / Frisco, TX

👤 User since 2020



The Challenge



uring her first years teaching, Caitlyn Herron found herself making lots of copies in order to differentiate her instruction. This method was time consuming and difficult to work into her schedule each day.

She also had some students who did not perform well on standardized tests. She needed a way to collect data from students over a long period of time to get a better understanding of their strengths and weaknesses.

She started to look for a powerful reading comprehension tool that would consistently meet the needs of all students in her classroom. She researched several digital literacy tools and spoke to other teachers to learn more about them.

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I have students that get so excited about their new badges earned on ReadTheory. It allows me, as a teacher, to focus on growth and is a means of positive reinforcement in my classroom. I am incredibly thankful for ReadTheory and its benefits to not only my students but to me as an educator.



The Solution

When Caitlyn transferred to Prosper ISD in 2020, she asked her colleagues if they were using any programs for reading comprehension data tracking. Several teachers were using ReadTheory. She noticed that their students were engaged with it, and couldn't wait to show their teachers the badges they were earning. She liked that it continuously tracked everyone's progress, and knew that she had found the right tool for her students.



When Caitlyn began using ReadTheory with her own classes, she appreciated the fact that everyone was working at a different level, but each student's level was kept confidential. The privacy aspect protected student self-esteem and raised confidence.

Caitlyn felt relieved that she could easily differentiate instruction in her classroom since each student was paired with a Chromebook. She says, "ReadTheory helped me to hit the needs of every single student without making a whole bunch more work for myself." She no longer had to make lots of physical copies of differentiated assignments each day.



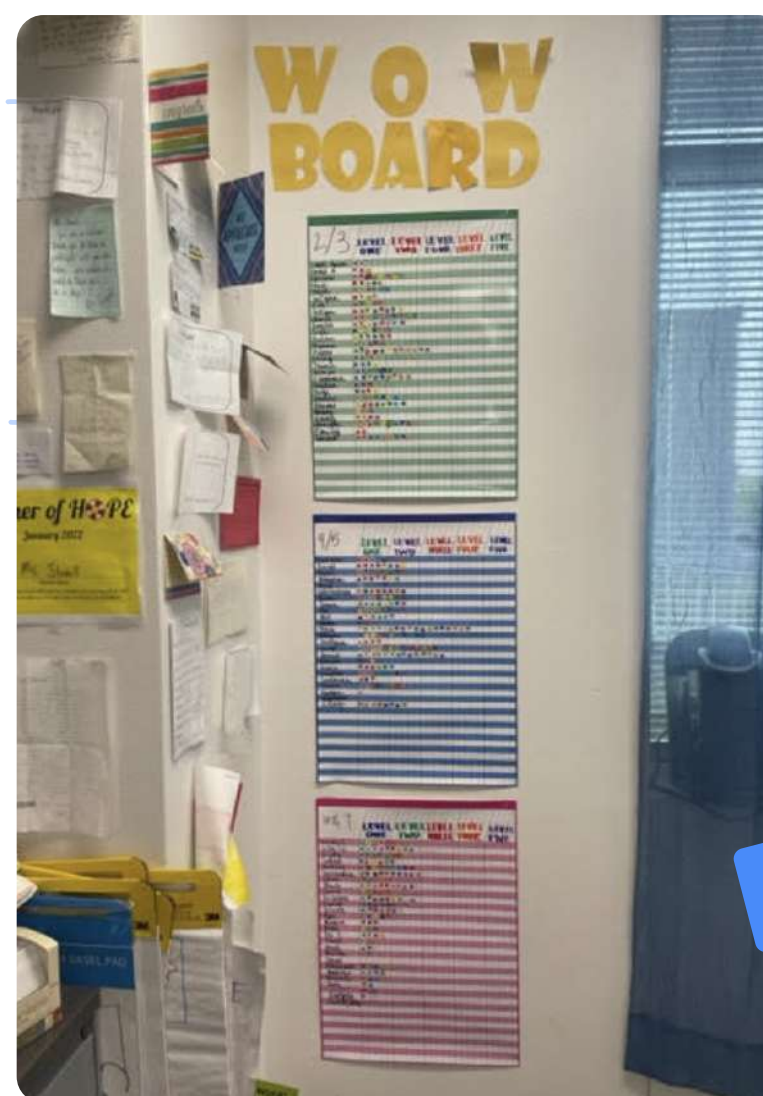
The Impact

Caitlyn has her students complete online reading work with ReadTheory at least 2–3 times per week during small group intervention time. Since her classroom is Harry Potter themed, she calls the ReadTheory practice “wizard time,” and assigns it as one of the classroom station activities. For example, if some students are in the “Gryffindor” station on a certain day, that station can be dedicated to “wizard time” on ReadTheory, while students work on other activity types at “Ravenclaw,” “Hufflepuff,” or “Slytherin.”



Caitlyn gives her students her own rewards when they receive badges on ReadTheory. She created a “WOW” board, which is an incentive chart with student names for each class. They get to sign the board every time they get a ReadTheory badge. When students reach five signatures, they reach a new level on the “WOW” board and get to pick a prize from a classroom treasure box. If they finish all levels, they get a special reward from Caitlyn, such as a personalized gift card. It’s a way to focus on positive work happening in the classroom.

If parents reach out for guidance with preparing their children for the STAAR test, which is Texas’ standardized testing program, she can share current ReadTheory data with them. For this reason, it has been especially helpful for Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings for accommodations and placement of special education students. She says, “ReadTheory gives me a better snapshot of what they are understanding since it tracks everything and I use it so often throughout the year.” If students perform poorly on a periodic standardized MAP test, she can use ReadTheory’s long term data to show parents the learning that has taken place all year, which is something that a one-day standardized test does not show.



She often refers to the ReadTheory “Curriculum Standards” Progress Report tab that tells in-depth information about student progress in regard to specific standards. She uses this extensive collection of student data to drive classroom instruction and set goals with the students.

Caitlyn plans on continuing to use ReadTheory with her classes, and is interested in trying more features such as setting recurring weekly activities and facilitating competitions. She says, “ReadTheory is my #1 most recommended resource. From data tracking to positive reinforcement, ReadTheory is a true one-stop shop for ensuring student growth and success.”