



Dear Parents,

We have begun our **READING COUNTS** motivational reading program for this school year. Reading Counts is a software program that manages and motivates independent reading, and at the same time improves student reading ability. The program allows students to monitor their own progress as they set goals for reading. Students who reach their goals are recognized for their achievements with a celebration.

Each of our students in grades 2-5 will take the Reading Counts software test to determine their independent reading level based on their reading interest and ability. The test involves reading a series of short fiction and nonfiction passages. After each passage, the student is asked to complete a fill-in-the-blank sentence. The test is taken on a computer and lasts about 20 minutes. The test results are reported using a readability measure called the lexile. The student's lexile level is intended to be very close to independent reading level--a level at which reading can be done with ease and independence. As a result, this level is often lower than the guided reading classroom level used for direct reading instruction.

The lexile measure of reading ability is reported in a scale ranging from 0-1700. In every classroom there is a range of reading levels, and this system (like the guided reading letter levels used for focused, direct classroom instruction) allows readers to be matched with texts that allow success. Each student's Reading Counts point goal is determined by their lexile level and can be adjusted higher or lower based on individual needs.

A student with a lexile level is able to do the following:

1. **Select and read a book:** Each student creates a reading lists based on interests and reading level.
2. **Quick Comprehension Check:** After reading a book, each student takes a computer-generated quiz and receives instant feedback. If the score is 80% or above on this quiz, the student earns the point value that is assigned for this book. **NOTE:** Classroom teachers allow other types of assessments to determine comprehension ability depending on individual learning needs (one-one assessment, written assessment, etc.)
3. **Goal Progress:** Each student is able to see the total points earned at anytime. Also, teachers are able to determine if the lexile level should be adjusted to better meet the student's individual needs.

Your child's lexile level and point goal for this Reading Counts Period:

Name:	Lexile Level: Book selection can be 50 above or 100 below this level..	Point Goal:
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September through December

At Georgetown, learning to read accurately and confidently is a school-wide goal. Success in reading makes it more likely for your child to be successful in math, science and social studies. Your child's classroom teacher will be working on the important skills/strategies of text decoding (phonics), fluency (expression while reading) and comprehension across fiction and nonfiction texts. The Reading Counts program is designed to motivate and enrich reading with a focus on earning points by improving comprehension at the independent reading level.

As parents, you can also support reading at home in a variety of ways.

•**20 MINUTE GOAL.** Make sure that the time spent reading (20 minutes per day) is relaxing and enjoyable. If you suspect that your child is bringing home books that are too difficult, please let us know.

•**INDEPENDENT LEVEL.** Help your child find books that are at the independent level. If you know your child's level, our school library and the local public library branches will help you to find the best books based on your child's level.

•**INTEREST.** Help your child to find a book that s/he wants to read!

To honor and celebrate our readers, the following motivational prizes will be offered:

Four Mini-Goal Point Periods and Two Big Drawings

Readers receive a small prize for making their goal. Each time they make their goal, they will enter the drawing for bigger prizes.

- RC Goal #1: 10/23
- RC Goal #2: 12/11

Drawing for Bigger RC Prizes: December 15.

- RC Goal #3: 2/26
- RC Goal #4: 5/7

Drawing for Bigger RC Prizes: May 11.

We also recognize (through student input) that many of our readers want to read NON-RC's books and have these count toward their reading goal. To honor this type of reading, a student simply needs to complete a BOOK BLOG form. This is a simple form that can be done at home or school, and it is done online.

When it is completed, Mrs. VandenBerg will receive an email alert. The reader will receive a ticket to enter in the drawing for each BOOK BLOG form completed. The BOOK BLOGS will then be posted on the class blogs to promote books for other readers. Links to this form can be found on every teacher's blog as well as the school blog.

Finally, a new and exciting goal: A t-shirt will be given to each reader who reads 1,000,000 words this year. This is our Million Word Club, and we are excited to kick this off!

ONE END of THE YEAR CELEBRATION : June 4, 2010

This is for ALL students who have participated in RC's this year!

Thank you for your support. If you are interested in helping to plan for our end of the year celebration, please contact Angie Roon at 669-2883.

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Learn more about the Reading Counts program by visiting:
<http://teacher.scholastic.com/products/readingcounts/overview.htm>

Learn more about lexile levels by visiting:
www.lexile.com.

