



Running an Amira Reading Competition



This guide is intended to help you implement a school or district-wide Amira reading competition. Some of the steps included take more time or effort so we recommend reading the entire guide and using the checklist at the end to ensure success. If at any point you need more support please contact us at: champions@amiralearning.com. You can find all [Amira Champion resources here](#).

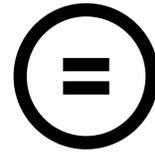
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Why an Amira Reading Competition?

Schools have been doing reading competitions forever. Everyone remembers assemblies with minutes and points. Schools invest in reading competitions because we all know: **reading is a habit**. If we can convince students to read daily for a week, or a month- we can possibly stack enough habits to make them a reader for life. Reading competitions are a great way to excite your school community, but a reading competition with Amira ensures the event translates to real reading growth for every student. What makes an Amira reading competition better?

1. **Equitable Access:** No matter how well a student reads or their access to books, they can read with Amira any time, day or night, at their zone of proximal development. Amira eliminates some of the barriers children might experience with a reading competition.
2. **No Stigma:** Sometimes older students reading below grade level feel embarrassed by the books they read and avoid public reading or competitions. In Amira, reading looks the same even though actual abilities and stories might be very different.
3. **True Tracking:** Amira counts the minutes and stories read, making it clear and fair for everyone. Just check the Tracking Report to tally students' reading.
4. **Amira Support:** Our team is here to support all of your Amira needs, and can provide you with posters and trackers to make it easy and fun to host your Amira competition.



In addition, reading competitions are fun! Bring some joy, energy, and celebration to reading at your school!



Reading Competition Resources

We've created some ideas for reading competitions that you can host with your school! Choose a competition that seems like the right fit for your school; will there be 1 winner or multiple winners each week? Will grade levels or classes compete against each other, or work together to achieve the goal? Will it be school-wide, or just with some classes or grade levels? There are so many ways to get kids excited and motivated to read, and you can use our ready-to-go posters or implement your own ideas.

[This poster](#) describes each of the five reading competitions we have created resources for.

Competition Poster	Description	Details
1 Thousand or 1 Million Minutes	Work as a whole school to read 1 thousand minutes or 1 million minutes all together. Celebrate when your school achieves the milestone. (Choose a goal based on how long you want your competition to last.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative effort • Everyone wins!
10 Stories	Celebrate when 100% of students in a class read 10 stories with Amira each week during the competition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class-based or school-wide • Can have multiple winners per week • Can run for any period of time
100% Challenge	100% of each class/our school will finish the Benchmark Assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class-based or school-wide • Can have multiple winners
Grade Level Competition	Grade levels compete to read the highest number of minutes each week during the competition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition between grade levels • Different grade levels might win each week • Can run for any period of time
Race to 100	Work as a class to read 100 stories total	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class-based instead of school-wide • Collaborative effort • Everyone wins!



Timeline

When to conduct your Amira Reading Competition:

	Notes	Amira's Recommendation
When?	An early year competition (September) promotes good habits. A mid-year (December) or late-year competition (May) helps engage students when they might be struggling to stay focused.	Your first competition of the year could happen in September but it should be after your BOY Benchmark Assessment window is complete.
How Long?	The goal with a reading competition is to excite students and build good habits. As such, reading competitions are most effective when they last 2-4 weeks. This is enough time to let students practice and feel excited and motivated to continue.	Teachers have a lot of competing priorities. Try to plan your competition with enough time for them to prepare.
Preparation	Coordinating a reading competition takes about 2 weeks of prep before the event. As coordinator, make sure all school staff have a clear understanding of the who, what, when, how, and why of your reading competition.	Do as much of the prep work for your teachers as possible! Provide classroom posters and trackers for teachers to take those tasks off their plates.

An Example of an Amira Reading Competition Timeline:

Competition for Students: [Grade Level Weekly Competition](#), October 2 - October 20 (3 weeks)

Event	Dates	Notes
Coordinator presents competition to school leadership	Monday September 11th (3 weeks before start)	Present the who, what, when, how, and why of your competition to school leadership and get approval as needed.
Coordinator presents competition to teachers & school staff	Monday September 18th (2 weeks before start)	Present the who, what, when, how, and why of your competition to school staff - get teachers excited!
Coordinator advertises the competition to students	Week of September 25th (1 week before start)	Hang posters in the hallways and classrooms, make announcements at lunch, etc.
Coordinator provides materials for teachers	Week of September 25th (1 week before start)	Provide any posters, trackers, or additional materials for

		teachers.
Letters home to parents	September 29th (Friday before start)	Provide the letter and printed copies for teachers.
Launch competition	Monday October 2nd	Make it big! Get teachers and students excited!
Track progress	Daily throughout the competition	Make frequent announcements to keep motivation and excitement high.
Announce week 1 grade level winners	Friday October 6th	Announce the grade level that read the most number of minutes during week 1 of the competition, and provide their reward!
Announce week 2 grade level winners	Friday October 13th	Announce the grade level that read the most number of minutes during week 2 of the competition, and provide their reward!
Announce week 3 grade level winners	Friday October 20th	Announce the grade level that read the most number of minutes during week 3 of the competition, and provide their reward!
Culmination	Friday October 20th	School assembly to celebrate all grade levels' reading time, and story book character dress up day.



Goals and Rewards

While we always hope students will feel intrinsically motivated, learning to read can be *hard*. Students may need external motivation and support to build strong reading habits, especially when reading can be a challenge for them. In addition, setting goals and earning rewards can be fun, and brings joy and energy to your classroom and school.

Setting Goals

When setting a goal for your Amira reading competition, set a SMART goal:



- **Specific:** make sure your goal is specific; what are students trying to do? Reach a certain number of minutes or stories? Read more minutes/stories than all the other grade levels? Etc.
- **Measurable:** make it easy to track progress and know when you've reached your goal or who has won the competition.
- **Achievable:** make sure the goal is achievable. It may not be feasible for students to read 100 stories in a week; but it's definitely challenging and feasible for them to read 15 stories in a week.
- **Relevant:** make sure students and teachers know the *why* behind your goal. Why is this important for them? What will they get out of it?
- **Time-Bound:** set a clear timeline for your goal. We recommend setting your competition over the course of 2-4 weeks.

Rewards & Celebrations

Celebrating achievements is an important way to reflect on the hard work students have demonstrated and the growth they have achieved. Use rewards to help motivate students and help them more tangibly see their achievements. Some examples of celebrations and rewards you could use for your reading competition are:



- Extra recess time
- Afternoon indoor choice time
- A board game party
- A dance party
- A pizza lunch
- An afternoon treat (popsicles, hot chocolate, popcorn, etc.)
- A field trip to the library
- A homework pass
- A certificate
- School assembly
- Dress up day (pajama day, dress as your favorite book character, etc.)

Reading Competition Checklist & Timeline

Once teachers have been trained, students have been introduced to Amira, and students have completed the Benchmark Assessment, you can start your first competition! Follow these steps to get your reading competition set up:



	Task	Timeline
<input type="checkbox"/>	Get access to your school's admin dashboard. If you don't have access, send this quick email .	3 weeks before competition
<input type="checkbox"/>	Present the who, what, when, how, and why of your competition to school leadership and get approval as needed.	3 weeks before competition
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fill out this form to let Amira know what type of competition you are planning - we'll do what we can to help!	2-3 weeks before competition
<input type="checkbox"/>	Order prizes if needed	2 weeks before competition
<input type="checkbox"/>	Present the who, what, when, how, and why of your competition - get teachers excited!	2 weeks before competition
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hang posters in the hallways and classrooms, make announcements at lunch, etc.	1 week before competition
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provide teachers with any printed copies of posters, trackers, or additional materials needed for the competition.	1 week before competition
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provide teachers with printed copies of a letter to send home to families informing them of the competition.	1 week before competition
<input type="checkbox"/>	Launch your competition! Get teachers and students excited on the first day.	First day of competition
<input type="checkbox"/>	Track progress daily or every other day. Make announcements to promote excitement and celebrate reading.	Ongoing during the competition
<input type="checkbox"/>	At the end of the competition, announce and celebrate winners, award prizes, or celebrate with a culminating event.	At the end of the competition
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fill out this form to let Amira know how it went and provide feedback.	After the competition

Checking Data

During your reading competition, check the reading data daily or every other day to keep close tabs on how the competition is going. You can celebrate classes who are crushing their goals, and provide encouragement and support to classes who need it.



Check school-wide data using the **Admin Dashboard**. Remember, if you don't have access send this [quick email](#).

- See these [step-by-step directions](#) for checking class usage
- Watch these videos ([option 1](#), [option 2](#)) for checking minutes and stories read

Reporting to Amira



We want to know when you're starting a competition with your school, and how it went! We'll do whatever we can to support you. At Amira, we take feedback from teachers and schools seriously - we make most changes to our program based on the direct feedback from *you*. Please let us know how your competition went and provide feedback.

1. [Fill out this form](#) to let us know what type of competition you are planning - we'll do what we can to help!
2. [Fill out this form](#) to let us know how it went and provide feedback - we take your feedback seriously and want to make Amira better for all schools.

Getting Help

You are not in this alone! Our support team at Amira is here to help you, and we want to help in any way we can.

1. Email champions@amiralearning.com - this is probably the easiest and fastest way to get help!
2. Use the **Get Help Now** button on the bottom right corner of your dashboard
3. Use the resources provided in the [Champions Resource Hub](#) and all of our [student resources](#).
4. Not finding a resource you're looking for? Let us know by [filling out this form](#)!

