

Amira Reading Competition Guide

A six-step planning flow for building reading competitions that motivate students, strengthen literacy habits, and celebrate progress every week.

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Set goals. Track progress. Celebrate wins.

Amira reading competitions motivate students, build strong literacy habits, and celebrate progress. They can be simple or schoolwide, short-term or ongoing, competitive or collaborative. The strongest competitions share three qualities:

Follow the six steps below to build your competition. Use the planning template at the end to capture your decisions.

1

Pick a Purpose

What are we trying to encourage — weekly habits, engagement, assessment completion, or growth?

2

Define Teams

Will students participate by class, grade, individual, small group, or whole school?

3

Choose a Metric

What will you measure to show progress?

4

Choose a Theme

Which display will make progress visible and exciting for students?

5

Monitor Progress

When will data be checked, posted, and announced?

6

Keep the Momentum Going

How will you keep energy high and recognize progress from start to finish?

1

STEP ONE

Pick Your Purpose

Choose one main purpose before making any other decisions. Everything else — what to track, team structure, and theme — flows from this choice.

GUIDING QUESTION	PURPOSE	POTENTIAL METRICS	TEAM STRUCTURE
Do you want students to build a weekly Amira routine?	Usage consistency	Students, classes, or grades meeting weekly usage goals	Class, grade, or whole school
Do you want students to spend more time practicing in Amira?	Engagement	Tutor stories, Tutor minutes, reading time, Instruct activities, Instruct minutes, or a combined practice goal	Class, grade, individual, or whole school
Do you need students to complete assessments by a deadline?	Assessment completion	Students assessed, classes complete, on-time completion, or make-up completion	Class, grade, or whole school
Do you want to celebrate progress from a starting point?	Growth & improvement	Literacy growth, average growth by class or grade, or improvement from a prior baseline	Class, grade, or whole school

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STEP TWO

Define Your Teams

The team structure should match the school size, competition purpose, and what you plan to track.

TEAM STRUCTURE	BEST FOR	EXAMPLE
By class	Friendly classroom competition and easy teacher ownership	Each class earns a milestone when 80% of students meet the weekly Tutor or Instruct goal.
By grade	Larger competitions with fewer teams to track	Each grade earns a milestone when 75% of students meet the weekly usage goal.
Individual students	Personal motivation, Bingo-style challenges, or student ownership	Students complete a Bingo board or track their own stories, minutes, or activities.
Small groups	Intervention, tutoring, or targeted support groups	Each group earns a milestone when all students complete their weekly goal.
Whole school	Building collective momentum	The school earns a celebration when 90% of classes complete assessments.

Tip — keep tracking manageable

If teachers update the display, class teams are easiest. For fewer teams to track, use grade-level teams. For a unified push, try a whole-school goal.

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STEP THREE

Choose a Metric

“Metric” simply means what you will track. Keep the student-facing rule easy: “Here is what we track, here is how we earn progress, and here is how we win or celebrate.”

Choose one of the four following options:

OPTION 1 OF 4

Usage consistency — build weekly Amira habits

Rewards broad participation. A team earns a milestone each week it meets the usage target, not just the team with the most minutes.

TEAMS	WHAT TO TRACK	EXAMPLE MILESTONES	WINNING GOAL OR CELEBRATION
Classes	Whether a target % of students met the weekly usage goal	Earn one milestone each week the target is met (e.g., 80% of students met the goal)	Class with the most weekly milestones wins.
Grades	% of students in the grade meeting the weekly usage goal	Earn a weekly milestone (Week 1, Week 2...) when the target is met	Grade with the most weekly milestones wins.
Whole school	Whether a target % of students or classes met the weekly goal	Earn one schoolwide milestone each week the target is met	School celebration after 4 milestones.

Engagement — increase active practice

Tracks volume of practice in Tutor, Instruct, or both. Teams can work toward one combined goal or earn separate milestones for each product.

TEAMS	WHAT TO TRACK	EXAMPLE MILESTONES	WINNING GOAL OR CELEBRATION
Classes — Tutor	Total stories read, Tutor minutes, or reading time	Add one milestone for every 50 stories or 100 Tutor minutes	First class to the goal, or class with the highest total wins.
Classes — Instruct	Activities completed or Instruct minutes	Add one milestone for every 50 activities or 100 Instruct minutes	Class with the most activities or minutes wins.
Grades — Tutor + Instruct	Combined Tutor + Instruct practice, or separate targets for each	Earn one milestone for hitting the Tutor target and one for Instruct each week	Grade with the most total milestones wins.
Individual students	Stories, minutes, or activities per student	Mark a Bingo space or personal tracker when a goal is met	Students complete a board, row, or personal goal.

OPTION 3 OF 4
Assessment completion — meet the deadline

Best for Assess-only implementations, benchmark windows, or any time the school needs students to complete assigned assessments on time.

TEAMS	WHAT TO TRACK	EXAMPLE MILESTONES	WINNING GOAL OR CELEBRATION
Classes	% of students who complete the assigned assessment	Add milestones at 25%, 50%, 75%, and 100% completion	Class reaches 100% completion by the deadline.
Grades	% of classes in the grade that complete assessment requirements	Grade earns a milestone for each class that reaches completion	Grade with the highest on-time completion wins.
Whole school	% of schoolwide assessment completion	Add a milestone for every 10% increase toward completion	School earns a celebration at 90% or 100% completion.

OPTION 4 OF 4
Growth & improvement — celebrate progress

Works well when teams start in different places, because it rewards improvement rather than only the highest total.

TEAMS	WHAT TO TRACK	EXAMPLE MILESTONES	WINNING GOAL OR CELEBRATION
Classes	% of students showing growth or improvement from the prior window	Add a milestone for each growth or improvement target met	Class with the highest growth/improvement rate wins.
Grades	Average growth or improvement by grade	Earn milestones for meeting growth bands or improvement targets	Grade with strongest growth or improvement wins.
Whole school	Schoolwide improvement from baseline	Add a milestone each time the school reaches a growth/improvement target	Schoolwide celebration when the target is met.

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STEP FOUR

Choose Your Theme

Choose a theme after you know the purpose, teams, and what you will track. The theme is the visual wrapper that makes progress exciting for students.

THEME	BEST TIMING
Ready, Set, Read!	September–October or any launch window
Reading Blizzard	November–December
Read Your Heart Out!	January–February
Slam Dunk Stories	March–April
Amira Bingo	May–June or year-round

What each theme looks like, by purpose

Use this matrix to see how your chosen purpose translates into each theme’s display.

PURPOSE	READY, SET, READ!	READING BLIZZARD	READ YOUR HEART OUT!	SLAM DUNK STORIES	AMIRA BINGO
Usage consistency	Class car moves one space each week the target % meets the goal.	Each class adds one snowflake each week the target % meets the goal.	A class fills one READometer section each week it hits the target %.	Classes face off weekly; the class with the higher % advances.	A class marks a Bingo space each week the target % meets the goal.
Engagement	Teams move forward every 50 stories, 50 activities, or 100 minutes.	Teams add snowflakes for stories, activities, or practice minutes.	The READometer fills by total stories, minutes, or activities.	Teams advance on most stories, activities, or minutes that week.	Students mark spaces for stories, activities, or minutes practiced.
Assessment completion	Teams move forward at 25%, 50%, 75%, and 100% completion.	Teams add snowflakes at 25%, 50%, 75%, and 100% completion.	The READometer fills as teams reach completion benchmarks.	Teams advance on on-time or highest completion percentage.	Students mark spaces for completing assigned or make-up assessments.
Growth & improvement	Teams move forward when they meet an improvement target vs. prior.	Teams add a special snowflake for a growth or improvement milestone.	Teams fill a section when they reach growth or improvement targets.	Teams advance on strongest improvement from the prior window.	Students mark special spaces for growth or personal goals met.

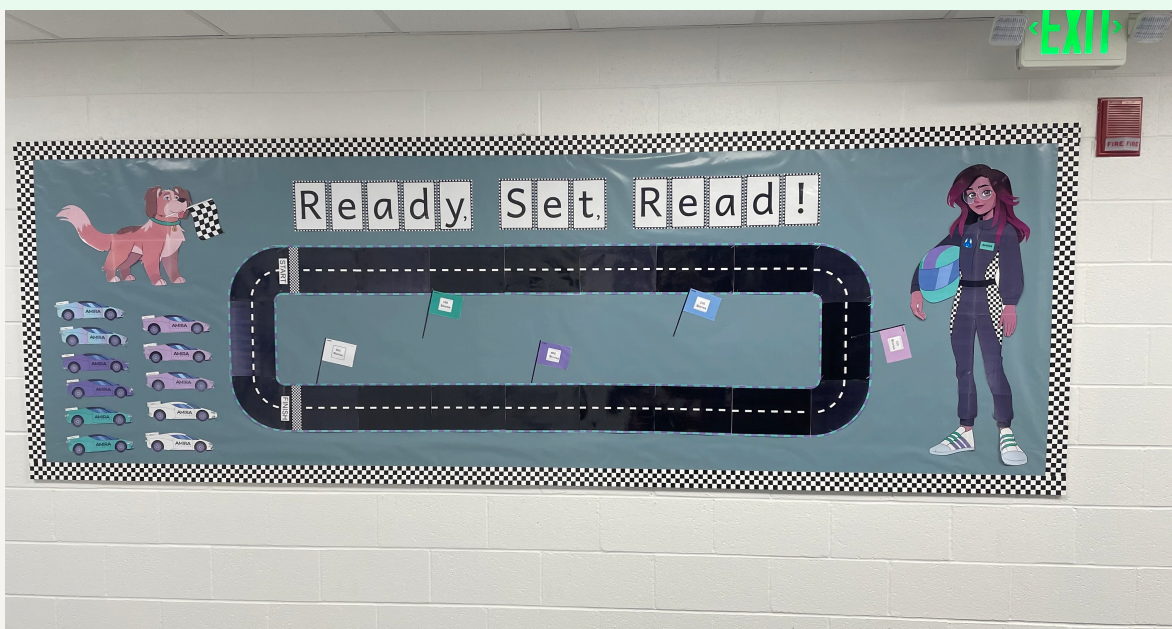
Five Themes, Seen in Real Schools

Each theme shown on a real classroom or hallway wall.



Ready, Set, Read!

SEP-OCT · LAUNCH WINDOW · A RACETRACK TO THE FINISH LINE



Reading Blizzard

NOV-DEC · A WALL OF SNOWFLAKES THAT GROWS EVERY WEEK





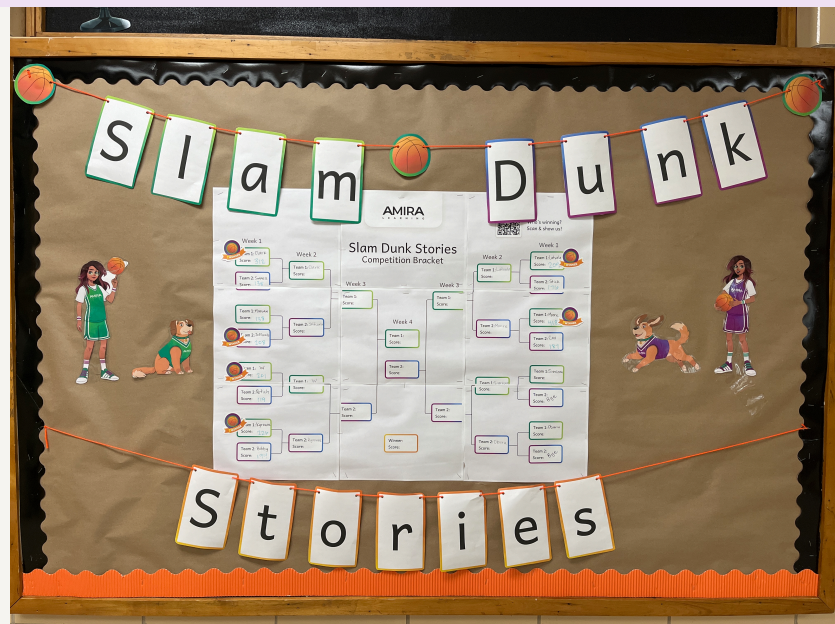
Read Your Heart Out!

JAN-FEB · A READOMETER THAT FILLS TOWARD THE GOAL



Slam Dunk Stories

MAR-APR · A TOURNAMENT BRACKET WITH WEEKLY WINNERS





Amira Bingo

MAY-JUN OR YEAR-ROUND · A BOARD OF CHALLENGES TO COMPLETE



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STEP FIVE

Monitor Progress

Weekly tracking is enough for most competitions. Consistency matters more than complexity.

WHEN	WHAT TO DO	WHY IT MATTERS
Start of competition	Share the purpose, what we track, team structure, milestone rules, and how progress will be tracked.	Everyone starts with the same understanding and knows what they are working toward.
Each week	Check usage, engagement, completion, or growth data. Update the display, tracker, or leaderboard.	Keeps the competition visible and helps students and teachers stay connected to the goal.
Look for patterns	Notice which teams are leading, which classes are gaining momentum, and where participation may be slowing down.	Helps leaders know where to encourage, support, or re-engage teams before momentum drops.
Weekly announcement	Share progress updates, milestone reminders, and encouraging trends. Include leading teams, but also name effort, growth, and participation.	Reinforces the behaviors the school wants to build, not just who is currently ahead.

Keep the Momentum Going

Competitions are most successful when students and teachers feel the energy throughout — not just at the beginning or end. Use progress updates, creative encouragement, and small celebrations to keep everyone motivated. The goal is not only to name a winner, but to build excitement, recognize effort, and help reading routines stick.

Momentum ideas

PROGRESS CELEBRATIONS

Celebrate milestones along the way, not just final results. Recognize classes, teams, or students when they reach a goal, improve from one week to the next, or show consistent effort.

Tips • Use morning announcements, hallway displays, certificates, classroom shoutouts, or quick milestone moments. Keep celebrations simple enough that they can happen often.

ONGOING MOTIVATION

Keep the competition visible and exciting with regular updates. Share reminders, leaderboard movement, weekly challenges, and encouraging messages that help everyone stay connected to the goal.

Tips • Try themed updates, staff shoutouts, mini-challenges, surprise bonus days, or quick “team of the week” highlights. Look for ways to make progress feel fresh each week.

SPOTLIGHT MOMENTS

Highlight more than the leading team. Recognize individual learners, teachers building strong routines, classes showing extra enthusiasm, and teams making meaningful progress.

Tips • Spotlight effort, growth, teamwork, participation, and persistence. This helps everyone feel included, even if they are not currently in first place.

END-OF-COMPETITION RECOGNITION

Finish with a moment that honors the winner and celebrates everyone who participated. The final celebration should reinforce the reading habits students built along the way.

Tips • Consider trophies, certificates, classroom celebrations, schoolwide recognition, or a final announcement that names both winners and standout efforts across the school.

Keep it creative

A strong competition does not need to be complicated. Find simple, creative ways to keep energy high and make progress feel visible. Celebrate effort, spotlight enthusiasm, and honor all participants so students and teachers stay motivated from start to finish.

PUT IT TOGETHER

Competition Planning Template

Capture your decisions before launch. Print this page and fill it in with your team.

Competition purpose What are we trying to encourage?	
What we will track One clear metric	
Team structure Classes, grades, individuals, small groups, or whole school?	
Goal or target What does meeting the goal look like?	
Milestones What earns a visual update?	
Theme Which display will we use?	
Tracking schedule When will data be checked and posted?	
Celebration plan How will progress and winners be celebrated?	