



PAID TO SUCCEED

It's not always easy for children from less well-off backgrounds to understand why they should study hard at school. A child from a middle-class background can see the benefits of a good education when they look at their parents' lives – a satisfying job, a nice house, an expensive car. But for a child from a background, the pay-off is not so obvious. For this reason, some sociologists have suggested rewarding children financially if they do well at school so that they can see an immediate return for their efforts. Professor Stephen Gorard of Durham University in the UK is one of these.

Professor Gorard recommends that schools set up a fund of approximately US 200 for each poor student. The school then sets targets for students' attendance, homework and reading time. Each time a student fails to achieve these targets, they lose a part of this money.

Gorard's conclusions are based on research carried out by various institutions in Australia, Britain and the US. The research also looked at whether offering money in return for passing exams was a good idea but concluded that it wasn't. One high school in Chicago offered first year students up to \$2,000 in exchange for good test results, but the incentive did not work: test results did not greatly improve. The reason for this, according to Professor Gorard, was that, although the children wanted the cash, they did not know the right steps to take to succeed in their exams.

In contrast, Gorard's own experiments showed that when schools rewarded students for attendance, good behaviour, reading and completing their homework, their reading and maths scores improved. In other words, results were improved by rewarding good study habits.

But others think that paying students is wrong. David Day, a UK school principal, said that the results did not justify the cost. He believes that praising students for good performance is a better way to motivate than by financial reward. He found that when teachers told students they were happy with their work, the students naturally became more self-motivated.



02 |

a. Choose the best option to complete the sentences. Look at the article again if you are not sure.

1. We reward / motivate people who work hard.
2. It is normal to give financial incentives / money to sales people, but not to school children.
3. The best way to pay / motivate people is to tell them that they did a good job.
4. I always praise / offer my children when they do something good.
5. I failed my driving test the first time, but I passed / achieved it the second time.
6. They offered / set a target of 90% attendance, and he achieved 95%.
7. She passed / succeeded in her goal of becoming a lawyer.
8. I failed to achieve / succeed everything I wanted to, but I am not unhappy.

b. Complete the text with words from the box.

motivates - succeed - praise - fail - reward - incentives - achieve - pass



In 2014 a newspaper asked readers this question: 'Is it a good idea to _____ your child with money if they _____ their exams?' These were some of the answers.

'I don't see any problem with it. Anything that _____ them to do well is a good thing.'

'I think it sends the wrong message. It's like saying, we'll only love you if you _____.'

'I think it's a good idea. Children don't really understand that doing well at school will help them to _____ their other goals in life.'

'No, it isn't. You have to _____ your children for trying even if they _____ to achieve their target.'

'Financial _____ are a bad idea. It makes people think that money is the only important thing in life.'

03 |

Complete the compound nouns in the sentences with words in the box.

achievement – cash – ceremony – machine – pay – prize –
success – test



- a. His business was a _____ story, because he started with nothing but created a very popular product.
- b. The graduation _____ lasted an hour and included several speeches.
- c. I usually take money from the cash _____ near my office.
- d. The university gave her a place after they saw her excellent _____ results.
- e. Workers receive a _____ bonus after a month with no accidents.
- f. I try to save half of every _____ cheque.
- g. Our main product is a _____ winner, and it sells very well.
- h. I passed the _____ test and moved up to the next class.

a. Match the phrases with their meanings.

be in a hurry		have a holiday
be on a call		have no time to do things
be out of practice		have a day when you don't perform well
have a day off		be speaking to someone on the telephone
have an off day		feel you haven't something you haven't done for a long time