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## How and Why Students are Motivated to Read in the Upper Elementary Grades

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HOW AND WHY STUDENTS ARE MOTIVATED TO READ IN THE UPPER ELEMENTARY  
GRADES

A MASTER'S THESIS  
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY  
OF BETHEL UNIVERSITY

BY  
EMILY A. ANDERSON

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE OF  
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January 2020

BETHEL UNIVERSITY

HOW AND WHY STUDENTS ARE MOTIVATED TO READ IN THE UPPER ELEMENTARY  
GRADES

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January 2020

APPROVED

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## Abstract

Research indicates that students in the upper elementary grades students show a decline in their motivation to read. Students that struggle in reading have less motivation than those that are more successful while it has been found that boys are also less motivated to read than girls. These are important years in a child's development and it's key that educators and parents support and encourage their students to find a deep love of reading. Giving students opportunities and exposure to text that links with activities and experiences they have in their life can help influence their motivation to read. Providing choices also gives students a chance to become more engaged with what they are reading and has been shown to increase their motivation to read. It is important to recognize who is already motivated to read in order to support them in their journey as learners and to know how to motivate others so that they can learn and grow in their educational journey as well. Motivation to read is complex and unique to individuals, so it is important to recognize the many different ways people experience the motivation to read.

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## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Throughout this journey so much has been discovered about what is important in improving motivation to read in upper elementary age students. The rationale is an important part because it shares why this topic is important to me and why it may be important for others as well. The history of studying motivation to read has many different facets and can be challenging to study but provides great insight into who is already motivated to read and how we can influence others to be more motivated to read.

### **Rationale**

It wasn't until recently that I discovered my own love for reading. It happened when I began teaching full time in second grade and was working hard to instill a deep love of reading within my students because I believe that will help them to become successful and lifelong learners. People that read for their own purpose gain perspective by gaining knowledge and seeing things from differing points of view. Reading contributes to a person's knowledge of the world and helps them become a better citizen in it. In my work, I became hooked on finding good books and figuring out what got my students reading, and it got me reading too! From my own experience and what I frequently hear from parents and other teachers, I often hear about how students dislike the time they are made to read and how it has become like a chore for many of them. With my own children, I have worked hard to find books that they love and spaces where they love to read. It hasn't always been easy, but I have two out of three kids that LOVE to read and one that is on her way there. I have tried to use my



experience to share with other parents and teachers so that more children are able to find this love too.

I have taken this opportunity to become an expert on this topic so that I can make a bigger difference in my school and community by finding out who is already motivated to read on a bigger scale. I also want to know how this information can be applied so that more children are able to discover the world beyond their own. I have looked carefully at the different dimensions of motivation, different styles, techniques, or interventions that work toward creating this love of reading or killing it. This question matters deeply to me and to the school and community that I live and work in, and I look forward to sharing with you what I have found.

### **Background**

Most of the research in reading has focused on how children acquire skills and abilities as they go through their most crucial years of learning in elementary school. However, it's not just important to focus on a student's phonemic awareness, fluency, and comprehension because there is so much more that goes into making reading meaningful than the cognitive processes it requires. If a student is not motivated to read, teaching them to read, practice reading, and gaining information from it seems nearly impossible. Many researchers have seen the value of students that are motivated to read and have worked hard over the last 50 years or so to gain more understanding in who is motivated to read and how we can influence all to be more motivated to read.

The work that has been done has focused on students' attitude or enjoyment in reading that fall under the umbrella of motivation which are determining factors of

when students are choosing what activity to do, how long they will do it, and how much effort they will put into it. Identifying the dimensions of motivation in reading that have been examined over the years include a students' value of reading and self-concept as a reader as measured by the Motivation to Read Profile from Gambrell, Palmer, Codling, and Mazzoni (1996). Another measure of the dimensions of motivation from Wigfield and Guthrie (1997) was called the Motivation for Reading Questionnaire and looked at self-efficacy, challenge, work avoidance, curiosity, involvement, recognition, competition, social, importance, compliance, and grades as different pieces to the motivation puzzle. These are the most common assessments used to gain understanding into how our students are motivated but lacks insight into the causal relationships between the dimensions and who is successful in reading and why.

The research gave great insight into many aspects of motivation to read to understand more about who is already motivated to read. A look into the work that has been done shows who is motivated to read based on their achievement, gender, age, reading behavior and attitude. There is not as vast an amount of information on the different ways motivation can be increased, but there are definite instructional approaches, environments, and variations in text that have shown improvement for many students. When looking into the future, it would be valuable for researchers to focus their attention here.

## Key Terminology

It is important to know, understand, and recognize several key terms found throughout the information provided in this thesis. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is important to know and understand in order to grasp the full meaning and intentions of the work that is shared. A description is also given for what the motivation to read means to be clear about the desired outcome in reading along with several other terms that may be unfamiliar.

Motivation is a drive that comes from inside of a person to do something. There are many various reasons for the action, but the motivation itself is a choice. Throughout the research, much attention is given to the different types of motivation, intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation to read focuses on reading for the individual's personal enjoyment and satisfaction. These students believe that what they are reading is interesting and valuable. Extrinsic motivation to read is when the reader is doing so because there are external forces requiring or encouraging them to do so. This also includes trying to meet other's expectations, to get some kind of reward, or even reading to avoid punishment.

Achievement in reading references the ability to read text fluently and accurately while understanding the meaning of the text. Self-efficacy is the belief that the student has the ability and confidence to carry out the task in relation to the goal they are hoping to achieve.

## **CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Literature Search Procedures**

To locate the literature for this thesis, searches of Education Journals, ERIC, Academic Search Premier, and EBSCO MegaFILE were conducted for publications from 1980-2011. This list was narrowed by only reviewing published empirical studies from peer-reviewed journals that focused and addressed the guiding question of how and why students in their upper elementary years are motivated to read. The key words that were used in these searches included “motivation to read” and “attitude toward reading.” Further review of the articles’ references provided a comprehensive list of research articles that gave insight into a student’s motivation to read.

### **Who is Motivated to Read?**

The focus of this section is to provide insight into who is highly motivated to read. A closer look will be given to students’ achievement, gender, age, reading behavior, and attitude toward reading.

### **Achievement in Reading**

Students that have shown achievement in reading, or high skills and abilities in this area, are proving to be more motivated to read than those who are not experiencing as much success. Applegate and Applegate (2010) based their study on previous research that suggests that when students have positive expectations for success, and when they place value on the task at hand, they are usually the engaged and intrinsically motivated students that read often and for a variety of purposes. With this information in mind, the researchers in this study set out to find out more about

two different groups of elementary school children: those that remember what they read and are inclined to respond thoughtfully, and those that remember what they read but are not responding thoughtfully to what they have read. In looking at these two groups of students, they wanted to know if the inclination to thoughtfully respond to a narrative text was related to the students' motivation and the value they placed on reading.

The participants consisted of 443 children, 202 boys and 241 girls from grades 2-6. Comprehension assessments were given to students at their coordinating grade level and needed to score at least 81% to on this test to be part of the study and then were assigned a group based on their inclination to respond thoughtfully to the text. To assess motivation in reading using the expectancy-value theory, these students were given a 20-item survey from the Motivation to Read Profile.

The results of the study showed that students who had a high inclination to respond thoughtfully to text were also more motivated in every area (value in reading and self-efficacy as a reader) to read than those in the group that only did well on the text-based comprehension test and were not inclined to respond thoughtfully to the text.

Applegate and Applegate (2010) concluded that students who are inclined to think deeply about text will likely find what they read more engaging and valuable. One aspect of this study to think about when looking at the different factors that were examined, is that they could not prove that the relationship was causal.

The purpose of McGeown, Norgate, and Warhurst's (2012) work was to look at the relationships between children that are excellent or very poor readers, their levels of reading, and intrinsic and extrinsic reading motivation. Their work is valuable because it is important to find out how struggling readers are motivated so that teachers and families can help them improve, but also to help understand what motivates good readers in order to understand how they are motivated.

There were 1,811 students from a large shire county in the south of England that participated in this study ranging from seven to thirteen years of age. Of this sample, the top and bottom 10% were used for the purpose of the study. The size of the groups differed significantly due to the inclusion of everyone with the very high and very low scores on the NFER-Nelson Group Reading Test II. There were 194 students in the good readers category, which was comprised of 84 males and 100 females. There were 25 students in Year 3 (age 7-8), 23 in Year 4, 100 in Year 5, 18 in Year 6, 7 in Year 7, and 17 in Year 8. The poor readers group was made up of 188 students, which was comprised of 106 males and 82 females. There were 37 students in Year 3, 12 in Year 4, 77 in Year 5, 18 in Year 6, 17 in Year 7, and 16 in Year 8.

To measure the students' intrinsic and extrinsic reading motivation, McGeown et al. used the Motivation for Reading Questionnaire. The intrinsic dimensions measured were challenge, curiosity, and involvement. Competition, recognition, grades, compliance, and social reasons made up the extrinsic dimensions measured. Reading efficacy was also measured to look at how students' felt about their own reading skills.

The results showed that the intrinsic reading motivation, especially in the dimension of challenge, was significantly different between the very good and very poor readers. There was also no significant difference when looking at extrinsic motivation as a whole, but there were some differences found in the dimension of recognition. The authors point out that the differences found in reading motivation between the two groups were relatively small in comparison to the differences in their reading abilities. When looking at students with a range of reading abilities, intrinsic motivation was significantly associated with reading skills, but extrinsic motivation was not. When looking at the group of good readers, extrinsic reading motivation did associate with reading skill, but overall intrinsic motivation did not. When looking at the group of poor readers, neither intrinsic or extrinsic motivation were associated with reading skill. The authors suggest that the very good readers are more externally motivated by outperforming their peers and getting higher grades when it comes to students that are performing at such a high level of reading ability and skill. This study contradicts some other findings because the evidence suggests that extrinsic motivators such as rewards and reinforcements may not be all bad. If the student also has a good level of intrinsic motivation while being motivated extrinsically, this may not be as harmful either. One point that the authors make is that the difference of curiosity as an intrinsic motivator showed a small difference between the good and poor readers. This shows that both groups were interested in learning new things from books, which could be a key factor when working to increase reading motivation in poor readers. Overall, the results of this study show that the relationships between students' skills and abilities as readers and

how they are motivated as being very complex and difficult to examine all the factors that are involved.

The study completed by Sweet, Guthrie, and Ng (1998) focused on the beliefs of the teacher surrounding how intrinsic motivation for reading was associated with reading achievement. The six aspects to the study looked closely at individual motivation, topical motivation, autonomy support, activity-based support, social support, and writing activities.

The quantitative research came from 68 teachers that ranged in teaching grades 3-6 from 14 different public elementary schools in Maryland, near the Washington, DC area. Of these teachers, their average range of experience was 11-20 years. The median level of education was a bachelor's degree plus 30-45 course credit hours toward a master's degree. There were 21 third-grade teachers, 17 fourth-grade teachers, 14 fifth-grade teachers, and 16 sixth-grade teachers that agreed to participate. Each teacher completed a questionnaire regarding the students in his or her classroom, which in total was 112 third-graders, 92 fourth-graders, 87 fifth-graders, and 83 sixth-graders (374 all together). A second part of the study included qualitative research with six of the teachers. For this, each teacher chose one student of average achievement as a subject for a teacher interview.

Sweet et al. (1998) used a focus group of teachers to help create a questionnaire to use for the study that contained 31 questions to address the six areas. Four or five items on the questionnaire was used to create each subscale that measured the six areas. Individual motivation referred to students' intrinsic desire to read. Topical



motivation referred to being interested in reading about specific topics for reading enjoyment. Autonomy support referred how a student is motivated by opportunities for choice. Activity-based support was based on how confident a student is in reading when they have actively participated in related events. Social support referred to interpersonal and social contexts that increased students' motivation to read. Finally, writing activities referred to books, texts, or literature that students read because they were motivated to write about it. Teachers were asked to rate 2 children who demonstrated overall high achievement, 2 who demonstrated overall average achievement, and 2 students who demonstrated overall low achievement in their class in each of these areas using a 4-point scale; 1-rarely, 2-seldom, 3-sometimes, and 4-often.

Sweet et al. (1998) carefully examined the results to determine the importance teachers put on the six areas of student motivation for reading within the classroom. The results showed that activity-based, autonomy, social, and topic motivation all had higher means than the individual category. The only category that was ranked lower than the individual area was the writing motivation category. This shows that teachers perceive individual motivation not to be as important as the other categories. They also looked at what teachers said about how their highly motivated students differed from the less motivated students and found that the highest group was perceived to have the highest of individual motivation and lowest of autonomy, while the low group was perceived to be motivated the most by autonomy. When looking across the grade levels and in relation to reading achievement, Sweet et al. (1998) found that over all the areas,

A students were perceived as being significantly more motivated than B students. The B students were perceived as being more motivated than C students, and C students were perceived as being more motivated than D/F students. When looking at each area of motivation separately, they found significant patterns that emerged throughout the grades showing that students at different achievement levels were perceived to be motivated differently. "A" students were perceived to be motivated most by individual, writing, and topic factors, while significantly less were motivated by autonomy. "B", "C", and "D/F" students were perceived as being strongly motivated by activity and autonomy, and less motivated by individual or writing factors. Sweet, Guthrie, and Ng also looked carefully at the teacher's perceptions of student reading motivation across the grade levels. They found significant correlations between the grade and motivational areas. Topic increased as a strong factor in perceived motivation as the grades increased, while activity and autonomy were high across all grade levels. Individual and writing factors were relatively low across all of the grade levels.

The qualitative part of the study looked at student reading motivation from a different perspective to see if it would have the same results as the questionnaire. They developed open-ended questions to explore the same areas with a specific student and referenced a videotape of the student in a regular instructional setting. The results from this part of the study were analyzed specifically to look at topical interest, autonomy support, activity-based literacy, and social support. They showed that teachers perceived students were less motivated by social factors than what they had been rated in the questionnaire. This may mean that they don't see social support as a strong factor

in motivation for reading. The interviews also showed a high attribution to motivation in the categories of activity, autonomy and topical interest. When comparing results of the questionnaire and the interview, the strongest perceptions of motivation were found in topical interests, autonomy, and activity-based connections to reading.

In a study from Sainsbury and Schagen (2004), there were some interesting notes that help show the relationship between a students' motivation to read and their achievement. They found that when looking at a students' achievement in relation to their attitude, those with a more positive attitude had higher attainment and those that had shown lower achievement gave more responses that showed a negative attitude toward reading. Further discussion of this study is included in other sections.

### **Boys vs. Girls**

There has been a lot of research done in recent years to compare the differences of boys' and girls' motivation to read. In the previously mentioned study from Applegate and Applegate (2010), they also wanted to know if motivation to read and respond thoughtfully to text differed from boys to girls and if the value that students placed on reading diminished across different grade levels and in relation to those that were inclined to respond thoughtfully to text. When looking at gender in the two groups of students that were compared, girls were overall more motivated to read. The girls also showed a higher value in reading, but not in their self-efficacy as a reader. When looking at the group of children that were inclined to respond thoughtfully to text, there were no significant differences found between boys and girls. In the group that was not inclined to respond thoughtfully, there was a significant decrease in the value of reading

that was greater for the girls than the boys. In the group that was inclined to respond thoughtfully, there was still a decrease in motivation to read as students got older, but there was only 42% of the decrease that was seen in the other group for boys and 21% of the decrease for girls.

In a study from Logan and Medford (2011), children's skills in reading were examined to see how they correlated with their own competency beliefs and motivation based on their gender. There have been many past studies that have shown an influential relationship between reading motivation and reading skill, but this study aimed to look specifically at boys' motivation in association with their reading skill level.

The participants in this study were 492 children, 240 boys and 252 girls, that ranged from Year 3 (age 7-8) to Year 6 (age 10-11) in England. Students completed a questionnaire about their perceived level of skills and abilities to gain information for the competency beliefs part of the study. They were measured on their reading motivation using a revised version of The Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ) from Wang and Guthrie (2004). Some questions were adapted to fit the age of the children. The eight dimensions of motivation that the questionnaire measured were curiosity, involvement, challenge, recognition, grades, social, competition, and compliance. This allowed them to see if the students were intrinsically or extrinsically motivated. All children were also given a reading comprehension assessment called the Group Reading Test II for ages 6-14 but were given different forms based on their year in school.

The results looked at the correlations between the genders and how closely their reading skill, competency beliefs, and motivation were related to one another. In the younger group of children, the results showed that their competency beliefs in reading made a significant correlation to their reading skill and that the boys showed a much stronger connection between their reading skill and competency beliefs in reading. It also showed the intrinsic reading motivation and intrinsic school motivation of boys correlated closely with their level of reading skill. In the older group, the study showed a correlation between the children's reading skills and their competency beliefs for reading and school. It showed a correlation between their reading skills and their intrinsic motivation for reading and school. Lastly, their reading skills also showed a correlation with their extrinsic school motivation. In taking a closer look at gender, girls' and boys' competency beliefs correlated with their reading skill, but only motivation correlated with their reading skill for the boys. In both age groups, no correlation was found between reading skill and extrinsic motivation. The study states that there may be a number of explanations for why the intrinsic motivation and competency beliefs of boys have a stronger correlation to their actual abilities and suggests that increasing boys' intrinsic motivation may be beneficial to their success in reading and in school.

One of the weaknesses of this study is that they used a different questionnaire for the younger and older group of students. Because of this difference, they could not make comparisons between the results of the two age groups. Another limitation of the study, as pointed out by the authors, was that the study only looked at the connections

of competency beliefs, reading skill, and motivation and did not give information how one may lead to another or if it is a reciprocal relationship.

A longitudinal study done by Kush and Watkins (1996) of children's attitudes toward reading focused on the many dimensions of reading attitudes based on recreational and academic experiences, gender differences, and how this changed over time. They initially surveyed 319 students in grades 1-4, which eventually ended in 190 students in grades 3-6 that remained enrolled in the school throughout the three years of the study. Of these 190 students, 83 were boys and 107 were girls. Students took the survey when the study first began while in grades 1-4 and then a second time three years later while in grades 3-6. Students rated their own attitudes toward reading using the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey.

Kush and Watkins (1996) found that in both academic and recreational reading and across all grade levels, students began with positive attitudes toward reading, but that this diminished over the three years of the study. They also found that specific attitudes of boys and girls are affected differently over time. More positive attitudes toward recreational reading were more consistently expressed by girls than boys which focuses more on reading activities that occur outside of the classroom. However, one of the cohorts was an exception to this trend where girls and boys showed similar recreational reading attitudes over the 3-year study. Authors Kush and Watkins suggest that future research should be done to examine the impact of specific interventions that can occur in the classroom and at home.

Marinak and Gambrell (2010) also looked at the motivation to read in third grade students while paying attention to the differences in genders. Because of the differences noted in previous studies, they wanted to learn more about the self-concept of preadolescent students and how they valued reading.

Two hundred eighty-eight third-grade students (145 girls and 143 boys) of average reading ability participated in this study. They were from three different elementary schools in a large suburban school district. Students were given a self-reported survey from the Motivation to Read Profile in the fall of their third-grade year. They responded to 20 items that addressed two areas of reading motivation. Questions about the students' self-perceived competence in reading and how that relates to their peers were used to assess the students' self-concept as a reader. The second dimension, value of reading, focused on questions about the value students give to reading tasks, how often they are reading, and participating in reading-related activities.

The results of the study reveal that there were statistically significant differences between the scores of boys and girls on the Motivation to Read Profile. Specifically, in boys' and girls' self-concept as readers, there were no significant differences, but when looking at the value of reading, there were statistically significant differences that showed up in 9 out of the 10 items. Overall, the study showed that girls were more motivated to read than the boys, but were equally as self-confident about their reading abilities as the girls when looking at this group of average readers. The authors conclude that the focus wasn't just that boys have a lower motivation to read, but that it was closely related to how they value reading. The other conclusion that the authors drew

from their work was that it wasn't just boys that were struggling as readers that weren't motivated to read, average achieving boys were also less motivated when compared to girls of the same reading ability.

The study from Sainsbury and Schagen (2004) also gave insight to the relationship of reading motivation and the students' gender. They found that that generally, the responses of girls were more positive toward reading than the responses of the boys in children at ages nine and eleven.

### **Age and Grade**

A student's age or grade has long been an area of interest in the research of motivation to read. Applegate and Applegate (2010) looked at the age of students and their responses while examining their inclination to respond thoughtfully to text. The results showed that as students got older, there was a decrease in their motivation to read. In a study from Baker and Wigfield (1999), the results showed that fifth graders were more motivated to read than sixth graders when looking at the dimensions of motivation. This study will be mentioned more in detail in a later section. When Kush and Watkins (1996) looked at the long-term stability of children's attitudes toward reading they found that they began with positive attitudes in grades 1-4 but that it diminished over the three years of the study when it ended in grades 3-6.

The purpose of a study completed by Parsons et al. (2018) was study to look at the motivation of students in grades 3-6 to read fiction and nonfiction text. The study surveyed 1,104 students to look closely at the motivation to read in relation to grade level, gender, and the differences for fiction and nonfiction texts. The expectancy-value



theory of motivation (Eccles et al., 1983) was used to create the items for the survey. This gave participants an opportunity to think about if they expect themselves to succeed in reading and how much they valued reading tasks. The instrument that was created to gather information was the Motivation to Read Profile-Fiction (MRP-F) and the Motivation to Read Profile- Nonfiction (MRP-NF) and included a 20-item profile. A 4-point rating scale was used on each question where 1 was the least motivated and 4 was the most motivated.

The results for the MRP-F showed that students' motivation improved slightly from third to fourth grade, but then fell from fourth to fifth and from fifth to sixth grade. In all grades, the self-concept and value for reading fiction was significantly greater for girls than boys.

The results for the MRP-NF showed that there was no statistically significant data to show a difference in gender for self-concept or value for reading in non-fiction. However, there were differences among students in the different grade levels. The data showed that students' in grades 3-6 steadily declined in their motivation to read nonfiction, their self-concept for reading nonfiction, and their value in reading nonfiction with the greatest drops in all three areas going from fifth to sixth grade. The authors point out that this study has been a valuable contribution to the research that has been done to look at motivation in reading and offers implications for teachers to use motivation as part of their practice.

One of the strengths of this study is the way that it used the expectancy-value theory to measure a student's motivation to read fiction and nonfiction. This gives the

reader opportunities to see what they think they can do and whether or not they want to do it. The different measures were clear and easy to see and understand the results in relation to gender and grade level. One of the limitations of the study, as noted by the authors, is that no data was collected about students' ethnicity, socioeconomic information, or student achievement. Because this information was not gathered, we do not get to see other factors that could have contributed to the student's self-concept, value, or motivation in reading fiction and nonfiction.

Sainsbury and Schagen (2004) completed a study to specifically focus on the attitude students have towards reading at ages nine and eleven. It looks at attitude as being one of the pieces that affect how motivated a student is to read. There were some notes from this study in relation to students' achievement and their gender. Specific results related to their age and grade are worth noting here. The results focused on the attitude of the students will be discussed later. The results of this study showed that the main sample (the 74 schools) in 2003 had positive attitudes toward reading with students in Year 4 more positive than Year 6. Children that found reading difficult went down from Year 4 to Year 6. It also showed that there was less support in the home for students in Year 6 than those in Year 4. When looking at the same group of schools that were surveyed in 1998 and 2003, there was a significant decline in reading enjoyment shown mostly among boys in Year 6 and least among girls in Year 4. This comparison also showed that there was also a decline in the confidence students had in their own reading ability. There have been more questions raised by this study as to what may have caused the changes over time, if in fact it was the National Literacy Strategy that

improved students' ability and confidence, but left them not wanting to read for enjoyment. One of the weaknesses of this study was that the initial sample group that was used was not selected randomly and did not represent students nationally. This makes it difficult to apply the results to what most students feel or experience at these ages in England.

### **Reading Behavior**

The reading behavior of students can be closely related to their motivation to read because the amount of time spent doing the activity shows that it is what they want to do. Baker and Wigfield (1999) explored the dimensions of children's motivating while looking at their reading activity. There were four main purposes of this study. First, Baker and Wigfield wanted to do a better job than other studies in this area of systematically assessing the many dimensions of motivation to read by using a larger sample size and confirmatory factor analyses (CFA). The second goal of this study was to look closely at the relationships between reading motivation, behavior, achievement, and amount. The third goal was to see if motivation in reading is different based on gender, grade, ethnicity, and family income. The final goal was to look at the different groups of students to see if any patterns emerged throughout the different dimensions. This quantitative research study was based on a lot of previous research and past studies. They took careful consideration and thought to use the work that had previously been done, and their own experience and knowledge so that this study would be valid and useful.

The participants in this study were fifth and sixth grade students in schools that agreed to the project that would last three years. They also needed to use complete data to get accurate results, so some students were excluded from the study that did not answer all of the questions in the Motivation for Reading Questionnaire, which made the total number of students, 576, drop down to 371 that were able to be included in the study. This excluded many students from participating and could be eliminating “less motivated” students because they may not have been motivated to finish the questionnaire. That may have left the data skewed by only looking at students who are more motivated to finish their work within the allotted time frame. To measure the different dimensions of reading motivation students used The Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ). This looked at 11 different aspects of reading motivation that can be divided into three categories: Competence and efficacy beliefs, Goals for reading, and Social purposes of reading. Competence and efficacy beliefs looked at the following dimensions: Self efficacy, Challenge, and Work avoidance. The following dimensions were part of the goals for reading category: Curiosity, Involvement, Importance, Recognition, Grades, and Competition. Lastly, the dimensions of Social purposes of reading are the following: Social and Compliance. They also asked students to self-report their own reading activity by answering two questions about when they had last read a book for fun and how often they read for fun. The Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test was given to represent each student’s reading achievement. A performance assessment scored by a rubric was also designed for this project to allow students to show how they have achieved the goals of the curriculum through open-

ended questions about stories from children's literature anthologies. Lastly, the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills was a standardized test that students were already taking as part of their state standards and was used in combination with the Gates-MacGinitie Test to give an overall score for each student's reading achievement.

Due to the vast amount of work that was done to complete this study, there was a lot of information presented that showed the results of the confirmatory factor analyses from the Motivation for Reading Questionnaire, analysis of students that formed different cluster groups, and data about the different dimensions of reading motivation and its relationship to gender, grade, ethnicity, level of income, reading activity, and reading achievement. The dimensions of reading motivation with the highest scores were in the goals for reading category, and it was also noted that students thought of themselves as motivated in most of the dimensions due to the mean score being above the midpoint of 2.5 in most of each of the dimensions. Direct correlations were found between a student's reading motivation and their self-reported reading activity. The students that were more motivated to read reported that they read more often, and students that were less motivated to read did not read as often.

The study also looked at these results and compared them to a third and fourth factor to determine a number of different correlations within the subgroups. The cluster analyses used nearest centroid sorting to create seven cluster groups based on similar scoring in the dimensions of reading motivation. The results from these groupings showed that the clusters with low to very low reading motivation were motivated to read for Work Avoidance, which has more negative connotations, as the rest of the

dimensions are reflected in a more positive light. The largest cluster was the one with the highest reading motivation where they showed high motivation over all dimensions except Work Avoidance. When looking at each cluster's relationship to reading activity, the two clusters with the lowest motivation had substantially lower scores for reading activity, and alternately, the cluster of the highly motivated students showed significantly higher scores in reading activity than any of the other groups. The clusters in the middle showed a range of scores in their reading activity. The performance assessment showed that the group of students that were second in being most motivated to read scored higher than the two least motivated groups and the highest group of motivated students. This group showed results that were low in Competition and Work Avoidance, but High in Importance and Compliance dimensions. When looking at students in the classroom, this study suggests looking deeper into each student's different set of motivational characteristics to help them find success in reading. A strong part of this study is that the data represented shows students' dimensions of reading motivation over a long period of time and shows a large amount of data that was looked at throughout the study. Reading motivation and reading amount are important predictors of literacy.

In a longitudinal study from Becker et al. (2010), the focus was on the amount a student was reading in relation to their intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The study began in grade 3 for 740 students in Berlin and continued on in grade 4 and 6. One hundred and four of these students also participated in a family-based reading intervention program while in between grades 3 and 4. The study was made up of 53%

boys and came from a variety of social backgrounds. 63% of the families spoke only German at home, while 37% used either German and another language or spoke only another language at home. Reading literacy was measured by looking closer at the factors of text comprehension, vocabulary, and decoding. From each grade level, the assessments changed slightly to match the level of students' abilities as well as tasks that ranged from simple comprehension questions to questions that required using inferential comprehension. Basic and conversational vocabulary was measured in grade 3, so no special knowledge was needed. While in grade 6, the vocabulary was focused more on comparisons. Decoding was measured by a student's ability to match pictures to a given word as quickly as they could. Intrinsic reading motivation was measured for students in grade 4 using a questionnaire that looked closely at the intrinsic value students placed on reading. Similarly, extrinsic reading motivation was measured through a questionnaire where students rated how they felt about certain statements. Finally, reading amount was assessed in this study through self-reports and parent questionnaires. Some assessments were only listed as being given in certain grades without any information about what was done in other grades, if anything at all. The study also reported that data was collected at the end of grade 3, in the middle of grade 4, and at the end of grade 6. Another challenge of this study was that some data is incomplete due to the longitudinal nature of the study. It is inevitable that students are absent or will move within the 3 years of the study, which is one of the reasons they used a large sample size to reduce the chance that this factor would skew the data.

In this study, that data showed that when students had intrinsic motivation to read in grade 4, they were more successful in reading literacy in grade 6. When looking at the longitudinal data, the discovery was that students who are good readers in grade 3 are usually still good readers in grade 6, and students in grade 3 that are poor readers are usually still poor readers in grade 6. When comparing these results to the effect of intrinsic motivation and reading amount, the authors state that it is difficult to know the exact cause of variation in students that break this mold. Based on the results that grade 3 literacy achievement strongly predicted a student's intrinsic reading motivation in grade 4, the authors conclude that students often enjoy what they are good at doing and are more motivated to participate in those same activities in the future. They also concluded that a student's intrinsic motivation to read, and to a certain extent, their prior reading literacy, determines their reading amount. Students who are intrinsically motivated commit more time and effort to fully understanding what they read.

What is most interesting about this study is the negative correlation between students in grade 4 that read because they were extrinsically motivated and their reading literacy in grade 6. Grade 3 reading literacy negatively predicted the extrinsic reading motivation in grade 4 and was also negatively related to reading literacy in grade 6, which implies that struggling to read early on leads to extrinsic motivation being a bigger factor (only reading when they have to) and poorer reading skills as they get older. The authors note that you could also infer that students who are extrinsically motivated are not interacting with the text at a deeper level of thinking and therefore do not have very high achievement. The results even showed that extrinsically



motivated students reading skills were worse than those that had a lower extrinsic motivation to read.

The difference in these two types of motivation show very different implications for reading behavior and achievement of students in the upper elementary grades. The findings clearly show that parents and educators should avoid supporting extrinsic measures to motivate students to read, and should focus more on ways that will support intrinsic reading motivation. With results showing that reading literacy is “highly stable over time”, it is unclear if previous motivation was a factor in initial reading achievement in grade 3 or if the reading competence is a strong factor in being motivated to read (p.782). More research would need to be done at earlier ages to find out the causality of each of these factors.

Authors Cox and Guthrie believe that students who are motivated to read are curious to learn about the world around them. They show in their study that a student who has the skill and ability to read is able to do so for a longer amount of time based on their study that looked at motivational and cognitive contributions to the amount a student reads. The study consisted of 113 third-graders and 138 fifth-graders from a diverse school with mixed socioeconomic backgrounds. The students participated in an abbreviated version of the Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ) (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997) that looked at the aspects of motivation through challenge, curiosity, involvement, recognition, and competition. The study also looked at students’ use of strategies in reading by using a Strategy Self-Report Measure. It looked closely at a student’s ability to use background knowledge, self-questioning, integrating multiple

texts, and self-regulation. The Reading Activity Inventory (RAI) (Guthrie et al., 1994) was used to measure the amount of reading done in school and the amount of reading done for enjoyment. Standardized reading achievement tests were used to measure the students' performance in reading. The study found that for third-graders there was a high correlation between motivation and reading enjoyment. There was also a correlation between the amount of reading in school and motivation. In fifth-grade, there was a high correlation between motivation and reading enjoyment. The authors took an even closer look at the extent to which motivation predicted the amount of reading for enjoyment and found that when strategy use and previous achievement were controlled, students in the third and fifth grade both showed that motivation was a strong predictor that students would read for enjoyment. The authors concluded from these results that motivation is a determining factor in the amount a student reads for enjoyment. They also concluded that even if a student's achievement or strategy use may be low to moderate, they will still read for enjoyment if they are highly motivated. When looking at the relationship between motivation and the amount of reading for school, the authors found that motivation did not significantly predict the amount of reading for school when strategy use and achievement were controlled. Overall, these findings of Cox and Guthrie show that reading motivation contributes more to the amount of leisure-time reading than to the amount of reading for school.

### **Attitude and Self-Concept**

One of the areas that have been closely examined in reading motivation is a student's attitude toward reading and what they think of themselves as a reader. In one

of the experiments that Chapman and Tunmer (1995) completed they looked closely at the relationship between a student's perception of competence, perception of difficulty, and attitude in reading. This specific experiment was made up of 771 children students ages 5-10 years old in New Zealand. Of this group, 150 were in Year 4 and 159 were in Year 5, equivalent to third and fourth graders in the United States. Reading performance was measured using the Progressive Achievement Tests of Reading Comprehension, which is standardized in New Zealand, but schools are not required to use them, so only 10 of the 16 schools used this assessment. A 30-item reading Self-Concept Scale was given to students and the correlations between competence, difficulty, and attitude were measured. Over the years that were measured in this part of the study, it was found that students in Year 4 and 5 had less positive attitudes towards reading while their competence and difficulty perceptions remained more consistent for students in the first five years of school. The study suggests that the decrease in positive attitudes in Year 4 and 5 could be happening because they are better able to distinguish the feelings of being competent in reading and the enjoyment in it. The authors also point out that it would be beneficial to take a closer look at students who experience persistent and early reading difficulties to see if we can find the point at which they begin to lose their positive attitude toward reading (Chapman & Tunmer, 1995).

Sainsbury and Schagen (2004) also looked closely at the attitudes toward reading of children at ages nine and eleven. As previously mentioned, some of the differences they found were in relation to a student's gender. Other details of the study focus on attitude and how it can affect a student's motivation to read. The study was done in

England during a time when a new framework was introduced for teaching as part of the National Literacy Strategy, which was an initiative from the government. The national test results showed that England had reached its highest performance in literacy during this time. However, the initiative did not value how students felt about literacy, which is the focus of the survey used to conduct this study. The purpose of this study was to find out the attitudes of students in England because even though their reading skills were above most other countries, they were concerned that their attitudes toward reading were not as positive.

In 1998 and in 2003, a large sample of students in Year 4 (age 8-9) and Year 6 (age 10-11) filled out a reading attitudes questionnaire with 18 items (two of these were only included in the questionnaire that was given in 2003). It consisted of 13 questions where students mark that they either agree, disagree, or that they are not sure in regards to a statement that expressed an attitude toward reading. In the next two questions, students answered how often they read at home and what type of reading material they usually read at home. The final three questions asked about the support they received in reading at home. In 2003, all participating students were also given an assessment of the National Curriculum level for reading. The results used in the study included more schools in 2003 than what was used in 1998, and the only some of the students were the same in 1998 as in 2003, but the authors point out that they were comparable. Twenty-eight schools with 1,137 Year 4 students and 1,170 students in Year 6 were surveyed in 1998. In 2003, 74 schools participated with 2,459 students in Year 4 and 2,617 students in Year 6.

The results of this study showed that the main sample (the 74 schools) in 2003 had positive attitudes toward reading with students in Year 4 more positive than Year 6. Children that found reading difficult went down from Year 4 to Year 6. It also showed that there was less support in the home for students in Year 6 than those in Year 4. When looking at students' achievement in relation to their attitude, those with a more positive attitude had higher attainment and those that had shown lower achievement gave more responses that showed a negative attitude toward reading. When looking at the same group of schools that were surveyed in 1998 and 2003, there was a significant decline in reading enjoyment shown mostly among boys in Year 6 and least among girls in Year 4. This comparison also showed that there was also a decline in the confidence students had in their own reading ability. There have been more questions raised by this study as to what may have caused the changes over time, if in fact it was the National Literacy Strategy that improved students' ability and confidence, but left them not wanting to read for enjoyment. One of the weaknesses of this study was that the initial sample group that was used was not selected randomly and did not represent students nationally. This makes it difficult to apply the results to what most students feel or experience at these ages in England.

One way to relate to a student's attitude is to take a closer look at their personality and the characteristics they possess in relation to their motivation to read. In a study done by Medford and McGeown (2012), they focused on understanding the factors that influence a student's intrinsic motivation to read. Understanding these factors, specifically, personality characteristics, will allow educators to support students'

improvement of reading skills and reading motivation, which in the end, has been proven to be linked to an overall improved reading performance. After accounting for students' reading skill and reading self-concept, Medford and McGeown (2012) predicted that the variations in personality characteristics would correlate with three dimensions of reading motivation: curiosity, challenge, and involvement.

Two hundred ninety-five children from four different primary schools in the U.K. participated in the study. One hundred and thirty-five children were in Year Five (average age of 10 years and one month, 63 boys, 72 girls) and 160 children were in Year Six (average age of 11 years and one month, 80 boys, 80 girls). A group-administered and standardized test consisting of 45-items that used sentence completion measured the students' reading skills. To measure personality, students completed a group administered and standardized questionnaire that assessed three of the five personality characteristics: agreeableness, openness to experiences, and conscientiousness. Students also completed a 10-item questionnaire to measure their reading self-concept. These scores were added together to give an overall score of the student's self-concept. Reading motivation was measured using the Motivation for Reading Questionnaire- Revised Version (Wang & Guthrie, 2004) to look at three specific dimensions of intrinsic reading motivation; challenge, curiosity, and involvement. All children completed the assessments in the fourth or fifth month of their fifth or sixth school year.

Medford and McGeown (2012) took careful attention when examining results by looking at the extent to which associations were made between each of the measured

variables. They wanted to know if their motivation could be predicted by their reading experiences or if personality characteristics could explain the differences in motivation. Reading skill was shown to be significantly correlated with reading involvement, preference for challenge, and their overall intrinsic motivation, but reading curiosity did not. Results also showed that the personality factors did not correlate significantly with reading skill when examining personality. However, positive and significant correlations were found with all personality factors and overall intrinsic motivation, especially with openness to experiences. The personality sub-components of conscientiousness and openness to experiences correlated with children's reading self-concept, but agreeableness did not. These points showed the authors that personality factors resulted in making just as big of a difference in students' reading curiosity and reading involvement as did their skill and self-concept. Lastly, there were significant correlations between the students' reading self-concept, their reading skill, and to each of the sub-components of intrinsic motivation. This means that the reading had a role in the variation of overall intrinsic motivation, with the biggest differences being their preference for challenge. In conclusion, Medford and McGeown (2012) determined that personality characteristics played an important role in the students' intrinsic reading motivation and this factor requires as much attention as the self-concept and reading skill in young learners. The authors note that this information can be carried out in classrooms by using and developing programs and interventions that are enjoyable, fun, and engaging for the students involved. They also suggest that teachers do their best to

provide learning opportunities that raise the levels of motivation in the classroom to meet the needs of each individual learner due to the complexity of this construct.

### **Factors to Increase Motivation to Read**

The factors that influence a student's motivation to read can include a variety of different approaches within the classroom context which include instruction and the environment. Other important factors that can influence their motivation stem from the different types of text that students come in contact with. Research on both the classroom context and variations in text have proven that there are different ways to increase a student's motivation to read.

#### **Classroom Context**

There are many factors that have been examined to motivate students within a classroom. The teacher's instruction, intervention, or specific needs of individuals have all shown to make up a student's motivation to read.

In a study previously mentioned from Baker and Wigfield (1999), some specific dimensions of motivation were looked at closely and provide answers for why a student may or may not be motivated in the classroom. Their results showed that students with a low motivation to read were motivated by Work Avoidance, which is seen as a negative reason. The students who were the most motivated to read showed high scores in all the dimensions except Work Avoidance. The students that did the best on the performance assessment were in the second-highest motivation cluster group and showed that they were motivated for Importance and Compliance. When looking at



students in the classroom setting, this study suggested to look deeper at each student's different set of motivation characteristics to help them find success in reading.

Guthrie, Wigfield, and VonSecker (2000) completed a study that focused on how motivation to read can be improved through the use of different pedagogy. Due to the research they had conducted, the authors of this study designed a reading instructional program to influence children's intrinsic motivation positively using multiple strategies. They aimed to provide "autonomy support (through self-directed learning), competence support (via strategy instruction), relatedness support (from collaborative activities), learning goals (in the form of conceptual themes), and real-world interaction (in the form of hands-on science activities)" that focuses mainly on enhancing the students' intrinsic motivation (2000, p.331). The authors of the study have worked previously with this program, which is called CORI, but for the current study, they are including a comparison group of students that are receiving traditional reading instruction.

The participants in the study included three schools that were nominated because they would likely benefit from the integration of the program. The four classrooms included in the study, two in grade 3 and two in grade 5 were similar in students, teachers, and school settings. Teachers that implemented CORI were given instruction during a summer workshop and one day per month during the school year to collaborate with each other. There were 74 total third graders that participated in the study. Thirty-eight (18 girls, 20 boys) were in two different classrooms that implemented CORI, and 36 (16 girls, 20 boys) were in two traditional classrooms used for comparison. There were 88 total fifth-graders that participated in the study. Forty-

one (18 girls, 23 boys) were in two classrooms that implemented CORI, and 47 (24 girls, 23 boys) were in the traditional classrooms. Each school that had a classroom implementing CORI also had a classroom that was monitored as being traditional. The California Test of Basic Skills was used to measure students' past achievement at the beginning of the study. Near the end of the school year, students were given an assessment to measure their curiosity, involvement, preference for challenge, recognition, competition, and strategy use as a measure of their intrinsic motivation using the Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ). They were not able to do a pretest that measured motivation at the beginning of the study, so it is disappointing that we are unable to see how their motivation may have changed from the beginning to the end of the CORI program. We can only rely on the differences seen from the CORI classrooms to the traditional classrooms. At the end of the school year, students were also given the conceptual knowledge assessment to test their reading and science achievement. There was a lot of work done by Guthrie et al. (2000) to be sure there was integrity in the study through instructional questionnaires, intervention checks, and teacher interviews.

In both classrooms, teachers worked toward the same instructional goals in literacy and science. The CORI classrooms focused on its four phases: observe and personalize, search and retrieve, comprehend and integrate, and communicate to others. Students were able to ask and answer their own questions, participate in hands-on activities, collaborate with one another, and find ways to share their new understanding with others. Teachers also used trade books rather than a basal text

series. In the traditional classroom used for comparison, teachers followed the teacher's guide and activities provided by the curriculum. They did not participate in hands-on science inquiry and did not collaborate the work in literacy and science.

The results of the study showed that students that had been in the CORI classrooms scored significantly higher in curiosity as a motivational factor and higher in self-reported strategy use than those in the traditional classroom. Another finding from the study was that students in the CORI classroom were not significantly different on recognition or competition extrinsic motivational factors, which is also what the authors hypothesized because their goal was to impact students' intrinsic motivation. When comparing the differences in the different grades, they found that there were changes in recognition and competition, but not in curiosity, involvement, or strategy use. Guthrie et al. (2000) decided that more research is needed to determine the strengths of age differences in reading motivation. Specific results of the study show that students who perceived the classroom as supportive autonomically were more likely to be intrinsically motivated. Because the CORI classrooms focused on enhancing students' learning, the results also show that this mastery orientation in a classroom fosters students' intrinsic motivation. One limitation to the study is that each of the variables were not measured separately to determine their individual effects. Also, if the sample sizes were larger, they would have been able to measure effects on different genders or ethnic groups.

In another study where CORI was used, Guthrie et al. (2006) looked closely at how these stimulating tasks in a classroom can influence a student's interest in reading

about the specific subject. The authors purposed that students (with prior comprehension and quality of task performance being the control) that were given many stimulating tasks related to reading would have a higher reading comprehension score than students that were given a lower number of stimulating tasks related to reading. They also hypothesized that students that were given many stimulating tasks related to reading would have higher reading motivation scores and the effect of the stimulating tasks on reading comprehension would be dependent on the students' reading motivation.

Ninety-eight students from four different third grade classrooms in a mid-Atlantic state participated in the 12-week study of integrated reading and science instruction. They were from two Title 1 schools, and included 53% boys and 47% girls, 18% qualified for special education, 53% Caucasian, 24% African American, 6% Asian, 6% Hispanic, and 11% other. Two intervention groups, of two classes each, were part of the study. One group provided many stimulating reading activities in the classroom, and the other had a low number of stimulating reading activities in the classroom.

The intervention used to provide stimulating tasks with the intention of increasing reading comprehension was Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction, or CORI. This looked like science investigations and experiments where students participated in hands-on activities and observations which were then connected with related fiction and nonfiction books and reading opportunities. Other than the number of stimulating tasks each intervention group received, the goals, text materials, strategy instruction, professional development for teachers, and support for reading motivation and

engagement were the same in both groups. However, the teacher's practices were rated on providing high quality and quantity of instructional support while students engaged in the stimulating tasks. The scale used was 1-4, with 1 being low and 4 being high. The low-stimulating task group had a mean of 2.5 and the high group had a mean of 4.0, which shows how much more support the students received in the high-stimulating task group. The total mean of stimulating tasks that the high group performed was 34.2 while the total mean for the low group was 20.44. This means the group with a high number of stimulating tasks "performed more science observations, asked more questions, drew more graphic representations of their data, and more actively used their sensory systems of seeing, touching, and manipulating the science object or the science event (2006, p. 236-237). All students also completed portfolios to provide evidence of their work throughout their involvement in the stimulating tasks. To analyze the portfolios, researchers coded them using rubrics for quantity and quality of observations, questions, hypotheses, table and graphic representation, and conclusions. To measure reading comprehension, Guthrie, Wigfield, Humenick, Perencevich, Taboada, and Barbosa (2006) used a comprehension measure developed for the project and the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Comprehension Test, which was administered in September and December. Reading motivation was measured with a student self-report measure, teachers' rating of student motivation, and a pre- and post-assessment of the Motivation for Reading Questionnaire. This looked closely at intrinsic reading motivation, extrinsic reading motivation, and reading self-efficacy. Teachers also rated

the each of the students in December on their intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and self-efficacy for reading.

The results showed that each of the groups, high and low number of stimulating tasks, correlated with each of the outcome variables that it was expected to. First, the instruction group with the high number of stimulating tasks showed higher reading comprehension. When analyzing the reading comprehension pretest, science process quality, and instructional group variable, the mean on the posttest for the low-stimulating tasks group was 467.51, and the mean was 495.75 for the high-stimulating tasks group. Secondly, the high-stimulating task group showed a higher motivation in reading than the other group. After looking at students' self-reported motivation, science process quality, and the group, the biggest statistically significant result was in science process quality. The mean for the high-stimulating tasks group was 8.72, while the mean for the low group was 7.17. Lastly, significant correlation was found between students' motivation for reading and their reading comprehension, but the instructional group they were a part of did not show significance in this part of the analysis. This shows that the stimulating tasks did not increase reading comprehension directly after accounting for student motivation. Overall, the results of the study show that the more stimulating tasks the students participated in, their motivation increased at the end of the 12 weeks, and that the motivation variable predicted students' reading comprehension on the Gates-MacGinitie test at the conclusion of the study.

One point the authors made was that while motivation was increased, it was based on situational interest and on the text available at the time the interest level was

peaked. While teachers can provide and create these opportunities, the motivation to read cannot be generalized to other books and topics. They also suggest that engagement in the stimulating tasks is what helped students develop competence, autonomy, and positive relationships with others, which in turn supports the development of intrinsic motivation. It is also noted that students should have multiple experiences of situational interest to gain long-term effects in intrinsic reading motivation.

Marinak's (2013) quantitative and qualitative research studied the effects of a motivation intervention designed to intrinsically motivate students to read in the fifth grade. She used an action research design where educators worked in collaboration with academic researchers to help solve a problem that they were having. In this case, the educators were looking for a way to increase student motivation to read while maintaining high quality standards-based instruction. The team worked to develop a motivation intervention that would allow each student to engage with literacy through choice, collaboration, challenge, and authenticity.

The study consisted of two fifth-grade classrooms in the treatment group and two comparable classrooms with comparable teachers participated as the control group. The treatment group received the motivation intervention, in which each student participated in varying degrees because it was not imposed upon them. Regular reading instruction was given to students in the control group. In total, 76 fifth-grade students of average reading ability from two different school participated. Thirty-two students

were in the treatment group (15 boys, and 17 girls). Forty-four students were part of the control group (28 boys, 16 girls).

Students were given the Motivation to Read Profile to measure their reading motivation in October and May for both the treatment and control group while teachers' conversations and emails were also analyzed to measure the students' motivation to read in their classrooms. The intervention was implemented from the January- June of the school year. The intervention focused on three practices. The first was where teachers allowed students to choose the teacher read-aloud by browsing different titles, book talks, and a final vote three days later. Each treatment group also used Jigsaw, or experts teaching with three information titles used in reading instruction (Aronson, Blaney, Slepkin, Sikes, & Snapp, 1978). This is when they chunk the text into different portions and different groups in the classroom become experts on their specific part of the book. Students were encouraged to discuss, prioritize content, and decide how to share it with the rest of the class. Lastly, the intervention included facilitating book clubs where students chose their books and discussed the reading in groups.

The results of the study conclude that specific practices could be used to increase intrinsic reading motivation while still providing the standards-based instruction in the classroom. Overall, statistically significant differences in scores showed that the treatment group was more motivated to read after the intervention than the control group. Items that showed the biggest differences in responses from the two groups were: "My best friends think reading is: really fun, fun, OK to do, no fun at



all”, “I tell my friends about good books I read: I never do this; I almost never do this; I do this some of the time; I do this a lot”, “People who read a lot are: very interesting, interesting, not very interesting, boring”, and “Knowing how to read well is: not very important, sort of important, important, very important” (Marinak, 2013, p. 46). The results did not show statistically significant differences in students’ self-concept as a reader. The greatest differences reported were that reading was valued more after the intervention for students in the treatment group. Collaboration and authenticity were associated with the items that had the most significant differences and suggest that how their best friends feel about reading, talking about reading, and feeling positively about others that read contributed to the value they placed on reading and how they were motivated. A second key finding from the study is that the teachers were an important part of students’ motivation to read. They were committed to their students finding value in reading while maintaining to teach their curriculum, and their persistence proved to be beneficial.

Some of the limitations of this study include the small group of students that participated and the limited amount of time that students were part of the intervention. Marinak (2013) suggests that it would be good to know if a longer intervention would have shown changes in the students’ self-confidence. She also notes that the study may be difficult to replicate due different instructional mandates, schedules or resources in other grades and/or school districts. In future research, Marinak (2013) says that the focus should be on how to create environments that develop intrinsic motivation to read and be highly engaging based on the specific needs of all students.

One of the ways that a classroom can also affect a student's motivation is through rewards. In this study, Marinak and Gambrell (2008) look closely at the impact rewards may have on a student's motivation to read. Specifically, they look at the proximity of the reward to the desired behavior. In this case the proximal reward was a book, and the desired behavior was reading. The authors also wanted to know if choosing the reward affected the student's intrinsic motivation to read. Marinak and Gambrell predicted that a reward that was proximal to the desired behavior (literacy reward, book) would have a positive impact on the students' motivation to read. This is contrary to a less proximal reward (non-literacy reward, token) which was predicted to undermine the effects of extrinsic rewards. They also predicted that a choice of their reward would increase a student's intrinsic motivation to read. This was the first study, to date, that looked closely at how giving an extrinsic reward that was proximal to the desired behavior would affect a students' motivation to read.

Before the experiment, the 75 third-grade students that had been given parent permission and those that scored between the 30<sup>th</sup> and 50<sup>th</sup> percentile on the Stanford Achievement Test, Ninth Edition, completed the Motivation to Read Profile, and results were analyzed to look closely at their preexisting motivation. In the first part of the experiment, students participated in an activity to help select a library book by reading and recommending books for the school library. For their participation, they received a reward depending on the treatment group they were a part of. There were 5 treatment groups: choice of book, no choice in a book, a choice of token, no choice in a token, or no reward. In the second part of the experiment, students were allowed to choose an

activity: reading, math game, or jigsaw puzzle, and they could switch between the activities during this time. Marinak and Gambrell (2008) wanted to see if the choice in their reward would affect the reading engagement in the second part of the experiment. To measure a students' motivation during the second part of the experiment, a measure of task persistence, or the time they spent engaged in the activity, was done for each of the 75s students. This was measured by the first activity they selected, the number of seconds spent reading, and the number of words read and analyzed based on the reward, or lack of reward, they received.

When Marinak and Gambrell (2008) analyzed the results of the experiment, they looked first at the first activity students selected as a measure of the task persistence. Whether students were given a choice or not, those that received a book as a reward or those that received no reward at all chose to read significantly more often than students who received a token (whether it was chosen or not). The second measure of task persistence, which was measuring a student's motivation to read, looked at the number of seconds spent reading during the choice activity time. The books given to read were picture books, so students could be reading by spending time looking at the pictures in the book, but not reading the words. This is how this measure differs from the third, where the number of words read is counted. The students that received a book (whether it was their choice or chosen for them) and those that did not get a reward spent significantly more time reading than those that received a token. The results did not show any significance for whether or not the book or token was chosen by them or for them. When analyzing the third measure of task persistence, the number of words

read, Marinak and Gambrell (2008) found that the groups that received a book and those that received no reward read significantly more words than those in either of the token treatment groups.

The results of this study prove that the type of reward given as an extrinsic reward for engaging in an activity or behavior matters. If the reward is proximal to the desired behavior, it will likely not undermine the intrinsic motivation to participate in the activity that is desired, in this case, reading. If the reward is less proximal to the desired activity, it may decrease a student's engagement in that activity because overall, students that received a book or nothing at all, were more motivated to engage in reading than those that received a token. Marinak and Gambrell (2008) also noted that the choice of reward did not affect a students' motivation to read. which shows that it can be beneficial to use rewards to help motivate students, but they need to be carefully chosen and align with the desired behavior, so that the reward does not undermine a student's motivation to read.

Putman and Walker (2010) recognized the important role that motivation to read plays in a child's learning and behavior. Their work in this study was to look closely at how students' motivation changed when participating in an informal literacy-focused tutoring program.

Twenty-two children from ages 7 to 12 years (10 girls, 12 boys) participated in the study voluntarily and were noted as needing assistance in reading, either in word recognition, comprehension, or fluency. Parents requested that their children be part of the study or were referred by reading teachers or specialists from local schools near the

university. The tutors that worked with these students were preservice teachers studying at the university and supervised by a university instructor to provide guidance, support, and resources. Tutors met with the children for an hour, twice a week, for 10 weeks in two different settings. One was at a university building that included an art museum and geology department, and the other was at a regional cultural and nature center that featured a variety of different exhibits. During the sessions, they built a relationship, assessed strengths and weaknesses of the children, and explored exhibits. The tutors created and taught lessons related to the exhibits based on the needs and interests of the children. Their lessons focused on reading, writing, and applying information that they had engaged with in the exhibits.

The students' motivation was measured prior to beginning the program using the Reading Survey portion of the Motivation to Read Profile (Gambrell, Palmer, Codling, & Mazzoni, 1996). The survey measured the students' self-concept and value of reading with a 4-point response for each of the 20 items. Tutors also wrote reflections about their experiences with the children about the students' successes, behaviors during reading, interest and engagement, and areas that needed improvement. After the 10-week program, students were assessed a second time with the Reading Survey.

The results included quantitative and qualitative data where Putman and Walker analyzed the information from the surveys and carefully examined the reflections from the tutors. The survey results showed that there was a statistically significant increase of students' self-concept of reading, but not of students' value of reading. Three themes emerged from the reflections. The first was that the engagement with materials

motivated the students to engage in the literacy activities they were connected to. The second was that students were more motivated to participate in the activities when they were able to select what was interesting to them. Lastly, the students were notably more engaged when they participated in hands-on activities, or if the topic was presented in a nontraditional format.

In conclusion, the authors noted that having an informal instructional context contributed to the increased motivation of the students and could be one way for children to build more confidence in themselves as readers. However, it was surprising to the authors that the real-world experiences provided by the setting of this study did not make a difference in how the students valued reading. Some limitations of the study include the small sample size and the ability for schools to access informal instructional contexts and tutors to work with children.

Wigfield et al. (2004) studied two different models of reading instruction and the effects each of them had on the students' motivation to read. Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction (CORI) is an instructional approach that connects reading and science together to help students gain understanding and spark situational interest and motivation through hands-on activities. In this program, students are also given opportunities for choice and collaboration to develop their curiosity as learners. Many books related to the topics are available so that they can connect these experiences to knowledge. This approach is designed so that students turn situational interest into an intrinsic motivation to read. The second instructional approach was Strategy Instruction (SI) which focused on activating background knowledge, student questioning, searching

for information, summarizing, organizing graphically, and learning story structure. Both of these approaches support the self-efficacy of students in reading by teaching them the skills they need to be good readers. Wigfield et al. (2004) predicted that students in the model using CORI would be more intrinsically motivated to read than students in the Strategy Instruction Model.

Equivalent groups among four different schools implemented CORI and SI for 90-120 minutes daily for 12 weeks in the fall of their third-grade year. Eight classrooms among two different schools implemented CORI while 11 classrooms among two different schools implemented SI. Before and after the interventions, students were assessed on their reading comprehension, reading motivation, and reports of their reading frequency. Reading motivation was measured using portions of the Motivation for Reading Questionnaire to look specifically at self-efficacy in reading, and the intrinsically motivating factors of preference for challenge and curiosity (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997).

The results of the study concluded that the instructional interventions affected the motivation of the students differently. The CORI group showed statistically significant increases in the intrinsic motivational dimensions of challenge and curiosity. No changes were found in these dimensions for the SI group. When looking at reading self-efficacy, results showed that the CORI group significantly increased, and the SI group did not. Reading frequency was also analyzed between the two reading groups, and the results showed that both groups increased over the 12-week period. Wigfield et al. (2004) have shown through this study that the instructional approach in CORI

increases a student's intrinsic motivation to read and their self-efficacy in reading. They do not know specifically which instructional support led to the increase, but that CORI as a whole program can make a difference in developing a student's intrinsic motivation to read.

### **Variation of Text**

One of the ways to examine how students are motivated, is to look specifically at the different types of text and how or if it changes their motivation to read.

The purpose of the study from Parsons, et al. (2018) was to look at the motivation of students in grades 3-6 to read fiction and nonfiction text. The study surveyed 1,104 students to look closely at the motivation to read in relation to grade level, gender, and the differences for fiction and nonfiction texts. The expectancy-value theory of motivation (Eccles et al., 1983) was used to create the items for the survey. This gave participants an opportunity to think about if they expect themselves to succeed in reading and how much they valued reading tasks. The instrument that was created to gather information was the Motivation to Read Profile-Fiction (MRP-F) and the Motivation to Read Profile- Nonfiction (MRP-NF) and included a 20-item profile. A 4-point rating scale was used on each question where 1 was the least motivated and 4 was the most motivated.

The results for the MRP-F showed that students' motivation improved slightly from third to fourth grade, but then fell from fourth to fifth and from fifth to sixth grade. In all grades, the self-concept and value for reading fiction was significantly greater for girls than boys.



The results for the MRP-NF showed that there was no statistically significant data to show a difference in gender for self-concept or value for reading in non-fiction. However, there were differences among students in the different grade levels. The data showed that students' in grades 3-6 steadily declined in their motivation to read nonfiction, their self-concept for reading nonfiction, and their value in reading nonfiction with the greatest drops in all three areas going from fifth to sixth grade. The authors point out that this study has been a valuable contribution to the research that has been done to look at motivation in reading and offers implications for teachers to use motivation as part of their practice.

One of the strengths of this study is the way that it used the expectancy-value theory to measure a student's motivation to read fiction and nonfiction. This gives the reader opportunities to see what they think they can do and whether or not they want to do it. The different measures were clear and easy to see and understand the results in relation to gender and grade level. One of the limitations of the study, as noted by the authors, is that no data was collected about students' ethnicity, socioeconomic information, or student achievement. Because this information was not gathered, we do not get to see other factors that could have contributed to the student's self-concept, value, or motivation in reading fiction and nonfiction.

In a study previously mentioned by Cox & Guthrie (2001), they shared the results of what contributes to a students' amount of reading. One of the contributing factors was the type of text a student was reading. They looked at the amount of reading done in school and the amount of reading done for enjoyment. The study found that for third-

graders there was a high correlation between motivation and reading enjoyment. There was also a correlation between the amount of reading in school and motivation. In fifth-grade, there was a high correlation between motivation and reading enjoyment. The authors took an even closer look at the extent to which motivation predicted the amount of reading for enjoyment and found that when strategy use and previous achievement were controlled, students in the third and fifth grade both showed that motivation was a strong predictor that students would read for enjoyment. The authors concluded from these results that motivation is a determining factor in the amount a student reads for enjoyment. They also concluded that even if a student's achievement or strategy use may be low to moderate, they will still read for enjoyment if they are highly motivated. When looking at the relationship between motivation and the amount of reading for school, the authors found that motivation did not significantly predict the amount of reading for school when strategy use and achievement were controlled. Overall, these findings of Cox and Guthrie show that reading motivation contributes more to the amount of leisure-time reading than to the amount of reading for school.

The study from De Naeghel et al. (2012) focuses on the self-determination theory, which differentiates between two different types of motivation to read, one for recreation and the other in an academic context. It takes a closer look at the role reading engagement and frequency play in motivation to read and reading comprehension. It was also important to the researchers that they focus on the quality of motivation that was given to students. Autonomous motivation is an intrinsic motivation where students engage because they enjoy the activity or because it is

personally relevant. Controlled motivation includes participating in the activity to meet external demands, get a reward, avoid punishment, or even an internal pressure such as guilt, shame, or pride. This study used measured students' reading motivation through the SRQ-Reading Motivation questionnaire that identified specific types of intrinsic and extrinsic reading motivation, the MRQ (used to validate SRQ-Reading Motivation questionnaire), a questionnaire to measure students' leisure-time reading frequency, and a questionnaire addressing the students' self-concept. The reading performance was measured using two different levels of a comprehension test developed for fifth-graders. Previous reading comprehension results determined the test each student took and results were transposed into comparable scores. Teachers also rated reading engagement for each student in the areas of a student's attention, effort, verbal participation, persistence, and positive emotion during reading related activities. The 1,260 fifth-grade students included in the study were from middle-class and average-achieving elementary schools in Belgium.

The results of this study confirmed that the SRQ-Reading Motivation questionnaire is a good and reliable tool to measure a students' reading motivation in both the recreational and academic contexts. Recreational autonomous and controlled reading motivation along with reading self-concept and the student's perception of competence each contribute positively to a student's reading engagement, frequency, and performance based on the findings of this study. A positive reading self-concept was also shown to correlate with a higher frequency of leisure reading, higher reading engagement, and better reading comprehension. In an academic context, there was a

correlation between academic reading motivation and self-concept on one side and leisure-time reading frequency on the other. An even more prominent correlation was made between reading self-concept and reading comprehension in the academic context. However, this relationship between reading behavior and performance with students' autonomous and controlled reading motivation was stronger in the recreational context. To get more specific, the study also showed that autonomous reading motivation in a recreational context, rather than controlled reading motivation, related strongly to higher leisure-time reading frequency, higher reading engagement, and better reading comprehension. This proved that when students read for their own enjoyment or because it was personally relevant, they spent more of their leisure time reading, were more engaged in reading, and performed better on standardized reading comprehension tests rather than the students that felt pressured (internally or externally) to read in their leisure time. When there was controlled reading motivation (introjected and external) in the recreational context, a negative correlation was shown with reading comprehension. The authors point out that this could be because poor readers are often pressured to read more during their leisure time. The authors concluded that more research is needed when looking at the relationships of academic reading motivation, self-concept, engagement, and comprehension. Another point of emphasis from this study shows that no significant correlations were confirmed between reading motivation and performance while comparing children's leisure-time reading frequency. The relationship between reading frequency and reading comprehension was also insignificant which shows that reading a lot doesn't necessarily

relate good comprehension. When looking closely at reading engagement, the results showed that autonomous reading motivation positively related to the teachers' ratings of students' engagement in the recreational context. It also showed that reading engagement correlated positively to students' reading comprehension, which proves that motivation and engagement are important to a students' reading comprehension. The authors point out that this could also be because teachers may think of students with higher reading comprehension as more engaged and motivated to read, which is why it was important to gather data that showed the perspective of the students.

A limitation discussed by the authors of the study was the challenge of determining causal relationships within the many motivational variables, reading behaviors, and reading performance and suggested using a more longitudinal approach to uncovering more about the direction of the relationships examined in this study.

Kush and Watkins (1996) completed a study discussed earlier that also addresses children's attitudes toward reading and mentions that different types of reading may change the way they feel. One of the aspects of the survey they gave examined reading for fun outside of the school setting and reading for academics within the school environment. Kush and Watkins found that in both academic and recreational reading and across all grade levels, students began with positive attitudes toward reading, but that this diminished over the three years of the study.

### **CHAPTER III: Application**

Research has been brought together to share information and a plan that educators can use to foster motivation to read in their students and within their classrooms so that they have a deep love of reading to carry them through all future learning and guide experiences as they grow. The resources have been created to share with educators, and they include a presentation, simple and effective tips educators can take with them and share with parents, and a process for implementation in the classroom.

Educators will be able to see what the research says based on achievement, gender, age, reading behavior attitude, and self-concept in order to gain understanding about the differences in individuals and the effect different attributes may have on their motivation to read. Factors that have been shown to increase motivation to read is also be a valuable part of the presentation where educators will look at how the classroom context can improve a student's desire to read. This includes instructional approaches, interventions, and the environment in the classroom. Variations in text have also shown that they can influence a student's motivation to read depending on the type of reading students partake in.

#### **Who is Motivated to Read?**

Awareness is given to teachers through the presentation so that teachers will know who is likely coming into their classrooms already motivated to read.

### **Achievement in Reading**

In appendix A, page 2, the presentation shows that it is important for teachers to know that those that think deeply about what they are reading find it valuable and engaging, and have a greater motivation to read based on findings from Applegate and Applegate (2010). Other connections are made so that teachers can see that while the gaps in motivation between very good and very poor readers may be great, their motivation to read isn't as big of a difference, and most good readers are specifically motivated by curiosity and challenge according to research from McGeown et al. (2012).

### **Boys vs. Girls**

When looking at the differences in gender, it is important for teachers to recognize who may come into their classroom already more motivated to read. This is why appendix A, page 3 in the presentation includes the research that shows girls place a higher value in reading than boys, but are equally as self-confident (Applegate & Applegate, 2010; Marinak & Gambrell, 2010). Teachers should also know that boys have shown a greater decrease in motivation to read than girls as they get older (Applegate & Applegate, 2010) and girls' attitude is more positive toward reading than boys (Kush & Watkins, 1996; Sainsbury & Schagen, 2004).

### **Age and Grade**

Included in the appendix A, page 4, the presentation also provides information about who is motivated based on age and grade because this is where teachers need to see that there is a decrease in motivation to read as students get older (Applegate & Applegate, 2010; Baker & Wigfield, 1999). Awareness given to teachers is important

because for students in the upper elementary grades, there was less support at home reading enjoyment declined, and self confidence in their reading ability also declined according to Sainsbury and Schagen (2004).

### **Reading Behavior**

Information in appendix A, page 5 of the presentation was given to show how reading behavior relates to motivation to read so that teachers can see the relationship between students that are motivated to read that read more often while students that are less motivated to read do not read as often (Baker & Wigfield, 1999). It is also important for teachers to see the connection of motivation being a strong predictor of students that read for enjoyment or during their leisure-time while also showing that even if achievement or strategy use was lower, students will still read for enjoyment if they are highly motivated (Cox & Guthrie, 2001).

### **Attitude and Self-Concept**

The presentation also shares insight into how a student's attitude or self-concept can be a determining factor in motivation to read. When teachers better understand who is coming to them already motivated, they can focus in on who needs more encouragement and support. This is why page 6 of appendix A contains research showing that while attitude diminishes with age, students' competence and perceptions of difficulty can remain consistent (Chapman & Tunmer, 1995). It's also important for teachers to understand that a more positive attitude toward reading is connected to higher achievement in the subject, while a more negative attitude toward reading is shown with those lower in achievement (Sainsbury & Schagen, 2004). Teachers can also



use the information about students' individual personalities affecting their motivation to read to help focus on specific strategies or tools that cater to each individual.

### **Factors to Increase Motivation to Read**

Throughout the presentation created for teachers, the tip cards for teachers and parents, and the process to implement in the classroom are directions that allow for improvement in motivation to read within the students based on the research.

#### **Classroom Context**

Included in appendix A, pages 7 and 8 of the presentation, the classroom process on page 10 and the tip cards, appendix B is information that teachers should provide instruction that includes hands-on activities, self-directed learning, collaboration, and learning goals because Guthrie et al. (2000), Guthrie et al. (2006) and Wigfield et al. (2004) showed that students' motivation increased when they participated in the program that included these aspects as their focus. These tools also include directions to implement specific practices that will improve motivation to read while continuing to provide high quality standards-based instruction. These specific practices include giving students opportunities to choose teacher read-aloud books, participate in book clubs where students choose the books and discuss what they are reading, and become experts on what they have read and share what they have learned with the class (Marinak, 2013). The tools also give information to teachers that are giving rewards to their students because findings from Marinak and Gambrell (2008) show that an item given that is proximal to the desired behavior will not undermine the student's motivation to read. Research from Putman and Walker (2010) supported the direction

to encourage students to engage in literacy activities connected to experiences they have had or are having because an informal literacy-based tutoring program showed that these students grew in their self-concept as readers and were more motivated to engage in literacy activities that were connected to the experiences they were having. Their research also supported allowing students to choose their own topics to read about based on what is interesting to them because that can also increase a student's motivation to read (Putman & Walker, 2010).

The presentation, tip cards, and process for reading in the classroom provided in appendix A and B give direction to provide students with opportunities of challenge and curiosity because McGeown et al. (2012) found that good readers were motivated by challenge and that curiosity as an intrinsic motivator worked well for groups of very good and very poor readers. When Wigfield et al. (2004) looked at CORI as an instructional approach, it also showed significant increases in students' intrinsic motivation dimensions of challenge and curiosity and their self-efficacy, proving that this program can make a difference in developing a students' intrinsic motivation to read, which is why these directions are included in the tools.

### **Variation of Text**

Information is included in the tools, found in appendix A on page 9 that direct teachers toward fiction over nonfiction when looking to increase students' motivation to read because Parsons et al. (2018) found that students are more motivated to read fiction over nonfiction. Teachers are also directed on page 9 and 10 of appendix A and on the tip card, appendix B, to provide literacy opportunities that are personally

relevant and for their students' own enjoyment because De Naeghel et al. (2012) found that these students will spend more time reading, be more engaged, and have a better understanding of what they read as opposed to students who feel pressured (internally or externally) to read.

## CHAPTER IV: DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY

### Summary of Literature

A student's motivation to read depends on many facets of their life. Their achievement, gender, age, grade, activities, attitude, and self-concept have all shown relationships with their motivation to read. Connections have also been made with contexts within the classroom and variations in text that work to increase a student's motivation to read. It is important to recognize the students that come to teachers already motivated to read and what they can do to support and encourage those that are less motivated because reading is part of all that we do and is an important skill that students need to become successful in this world.

When looking at students' achievement in reading, Applegate and Applegate (2010) found that students who are inclined to think deeply about text will likely find what they read more engaging, valuable, and have a higher motivation to read. Another study looked closely at groups of very good and very poor readers, and even though they significantly differed in their reading abilities, their differences in motivation were not as great as the gap in their achievement (McGeown et al., 2012). They also found that good readers were motivated by challenge and that curiosity as an intrinsic motivator worked well for both groups of readers (McGeown et al., 2012). Through qualitative and quantitative research from Sweet et al. (1998), teachers perceived that students in their classroom that were higher achievers had a relatively higher intrinsic reading motivation. Teachers also perceived that the lower achieving students in their classrooms were relatively more motivated by extrinsic contextual factors (Sweet et al.,

1998), while McGeown et al.(1998) found that extrinsic factors motivated high achieving students because they wanted to outperform their peers and get higher grades.

Many studies have examined the relationship between gender and motivation to read. Applegate and Applegate (2010), found that girls were overall more motivated to read and showed higher value in the activity, but no difference between the genders when looking at their inclination to respond thoughtfully to text. As the students got older, they also found that there was a greater decrease in motivation to read seen in boys (Applegate & Applegate, 2010). The differences between boys' and girls' reading skill and competency beliefs in relation to their motivation to read showed that the boys had the strongest connections suggesting that increasing boys' intrinsic motivation may be beneficial to their success in reading (Logan & Medford, 2011). When looking at how students' attitudes differ between boys and girls, Kush and Watkins found that girls have a more positive attitude toward recreational reading than boys (1996). When Marinak and Gambrell (2010) examined motivation to read in boys and girls, they found that boys were equally as self-confident as girls but were not as motivated to read because they did not as much value in the activity. Work done by Sainsbury and Schagen (2004) also showed that the responses toward reading were more positive from girls than boys.

A student's age has also been an area of focus when looking at their motivation to read. Results from Applegate and Applegate (2010) and Baker and Wigfield (1999) showed that as students got older, there was a decrease in their motivation to read. Kush & Watkins (1996) looked closely at the attitudes students had toward reading and

found that as they got older their positive attitudes diminished over the three years of the study. When Parsons et al. (2018) looked at students in different grade levels, they also found that their motivation to read steadily declined in grades 3-6, specifically with nonfiction text. Sainsbury and Schagen (2004) also found that as students got older, there was less support at home as students, reading enjoyment declined, and self-confidence in their reading ability also declined.

A student's reading behavior is characterized by the amount that they are reading and their level of engagement in the activity. Baker and Wigfield (1999) found that students that were more motivated to read reported that they read more often, and students that were less motivated to read did not read as often. Based on results from Becker et al. (2010) a student's intrinsic motivation to read and partly their reading literacy, determines their reading amount, so the more motivated they are and the better they are at it, the more they will read. Motivation showed to be a strong predictor if students would read for enjoyment, or during their leisure-time, in a study done by Cox and Guthrie (2001). They also found that even if a student's achievement or strategy use was low to moderate, they still read for enjoyment if they were highly motivated.

Attitude and self-concept can also play a role in a student's motivation to read. When Chapman and Tunmer (1995) looked at students in Year 4 and 5, they found that these students had less positive attitudes than younger students, but their competence and perceptions of difficulty remained consistent. Another study examined students' achievement in relation to their attitude and showed that those with higher

achievement had a more positive attitude toward reading, and those with lower achievement showed a more negative attitude toward reading (Sainsbury & Schagen, 2004). An interesting perspective of a student's attitude is how their individual personalities can affect their motivation to read. Medford and McGeown (2012) found that personality characteristics played as big of a role in students' intrinsic reading motivation as the student's self-concept and reading skill.

The context of the classroom, including instruction, rewards, and interventions, can play an important role in increasing a student's motivation to read. Guthrie et al. (2000) found that students who participated in the Concept-oriented reading instruction program (CORI), which focuses on hands-on activities, self-directed learning, collaboration, and learning goals, were more motivated than students in traditional classrooms. CORI was also used in classrooms in a study from Guthrie et al. (2006) where they found that the students that participated in a higher number of stimulating tasks had a higher motivation to read based on the situational interest of the activities. Wigfield et al. (2004) looked at CORI as an instructional approach in a study that showed significant increases in students' intrinsic motivation dimensions of challenge and curiosity and their self-efficacy, proving that this program can make a difference in developing a students' intrinsic motivation to read. In another study, an intervention was administered to classes where teachers allowed students to choose the teacher read-aloud books, used students to teach areas that they became experts in, and facilitated book clubs where students chose the books and had discussions about the reading (Marinak, 2013). The results of Marinak's (2013) research showed that these

specific practices could be used to increase intrinsic reading motivation while still providing a standards-based instruction in the classroom. Rewards within a classroom were examined by Marinak and Gambrell (2008) and found that when students received a book as a reward, it did not undermine the intrinsic motivation to participate in reading. Results also showed that students who received nothing at all were more motivated to read than those that received only a token that was unrelated to reading. Putman and Walker (2010) completed a study where students participated in an informal literacy-focused tutoring program and found that students grew in their self-concept as readers and were more motivated to engage in literacy activities that were connected to the experiences they were having. Students were also more motivated to participate when they were able to select what was interesting to them. The results show that classroom contexts can be used to positively influence students' motivation to read.

Another factor that examines a student's motivation to read is the different types of text that they come across in their reading and whether they are reading for recreation or for school purposes. Parsons et al. (2018) found that students were more motivated to read fiction than nonfiction overall. In a study by Cox and Guthrie (2001), results showed that a student's motivation was a determining factor in the amount of time they read for enjoyment, but did not predict the amount of reading for school. Another study showed that when students read for their own enjoyment or because it was personally relevant, they spent more of their leisure time reading, were more engaged in reading, and performed in reading comprehension than students that felt



pressured (internally or externally) to read in their leisure time (De Naeghel et al., 2012). Kush and Watkins (1996) found that in academic and recreational reading, students began with positive attitudes, but that this diminished over the three years of the study.

### **Limitations of the Research**

The research answers the question of how and why students are motivated to read in the upper elementary grades through the work done in empirical studies from peer-reviewed journals. Limitations to the research were found in part because there are many different facets of motivation that can be examined while it was also difficult for the authors to show causal relationships between who is motivated to read and why. Focusing on factors that can influence motivation for upper elementary students also proved difficult to find.

Limitations of the information was sometimes due to the different dimensions of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation or other different aspects of motivation such as enjoyment in reading or attitude toward reading. It was difficult to know what to focus on at times, and took time to figure out that motivation was where there was the most information and, ultimately, is the root of what makes students want to read.

It was also difficult for the authors to prove causal relationships between who is motivated to read and why. The information presented focuses on who has been proven to be motivated, but is unable to pinpoint if, for example, being a high achiever leads to being motivated or because a student is motivated, they are more likely to be a high achiever. This makes it challenging to know where to start or how best to

encourage and support those that we would like to help increase their motivation to read.

Factors that influence students' motivation were difficult to find, and at times, difficult to measure. This led to a majority of the work focusing more on who is motivated to read and hoping to find answers there. There was also a lot of information found on motivation to read in beginning readers, but this information was different than the focus intended due to the different factors that come into play for students at a younger age.

### **Implications for Future Research**

When looking to the future, researchers should focus more on what can be done to increase a student's motivation to read and understanding causal relationships between who is motivated to read and why. These are the two biggest areas where information was missing and could have the greatest impact for those looking to increase their student or child's motivation to read.

There were limited studies that focused on specific interventions or instructional approaches that could influence this important aspect of reading. Teachers and families need strategies and tools that are proven to increase motivation to read and to help them develop a deep love of reading.

Looking at the causal relationships in who is motivated to read and why would provide insight into how others can also be motivated to read and how the best circumstances could be used or created. In the research, showing the cause, or what came first, in students that were motivated to read was nearly impossible because the

results of being motivated to read were so closely related to the varying factors being measured.

### **Implications for Professional Application**

The research that has been uncovered about how and why students are motivated to read in the upper elementary grades applies to educators because reading is the foundation of how students learn and gain information. When students are motivated to read, they are reading more, gaining more information, discovering new insights and experiences, and using it for enjoyment or figuring out how it applies to them. The text gives them an opportunity to gain different experiences and expand on thoughts and curiosities. This gives way to endless possibilities for students as they grow older, specialize in certain areas, and use their knowledge and abilities to make a difference in the world and be successful in their individual passions.

The information provided allows educators to recognize who likely comes into their classrooms already motivated to read with some ideas of how that came to be. It also allows for opportunities to recognize that our students are all different individuals with varying motivating attributes and factors. Students that come into the classroom as high achievers will likely be motivated to read, but it is important to look at the individual as a whole to find gaps in their desire to read and better know how to motivate them. Focusing on how we can hook our boys into finding a love of reading is another area to examine because girls are likely more motivated to read than boys. As students get older, they are losing their motivation, and it is important, as educators, that the desire to read continues to be an important area of priority. When students are

motivated to read they will gain so much more from their experiences inside and outside of the classroom.

It is most important for educators to know that they can make a difference in their students' motivation to read. The influence they have within the classroom context and variations in text are two ways that motivation to read can be improved. Students should be given opportunities to interact with text that expand and connect with hands-on activities, field trips, or other experiences that are happening in and around the classroom. These activities should stir a curiosity inside them where they want to learn and know more about what they are seeing and doing. This situational interest allows students to develop a purpose for themselves about what they are reading and they will likely be motivated to find out more about the topic. Educators should also offer many opportunities for students to choose what they are reading. They could vote on class read aloud books, facilitate book clubs where students choose the text, and allow students to be experts on sections they have read in order to share with others what they have learned. These can all be part of a classroom focused on motivating students to read while maintaining a high-quality standards-based instruction approach in the classroom. Lastly, students are motivated through curiosity and challenge, and it is important to allow these attributes to flourish in the classroom so that the students develop a motivation to read.

### **Conclusion**

Overall, the results of this study show that the relationships between students' skills and abilities as readers and how they are motivated as being very complex and

difficult to examine all the factors that are involved including achievement, gender, age, reading behavior, attitude. It is difficult to determine which attributes contribute to motivation or if the motivation has contributed to that attribute. We do know that students who have shown higher achievement are also more likely to be motivated to read, girls are more motivated to read than boys, and that as students grow in their elementary years, they are less and less motivated. Attitude, self-concept, and reading behavior are also important factors to consider when looking at who is already motivated to read during these crucial years of learning.

It is important to look at how different factors in and out of the classroom or variation in text could increase a student's motivation to read because of the impact this change could have in their life. The instructional approach, classroom environment, interventions, and specific needs of individuals are part of a student's motivation to read and could be used to improve their desire to participate in the activity. Variations in text and the ability to choose or spark interest in specific topics or stories prove that there are things that can be controlled that have the ability to improve students' motivation to read.

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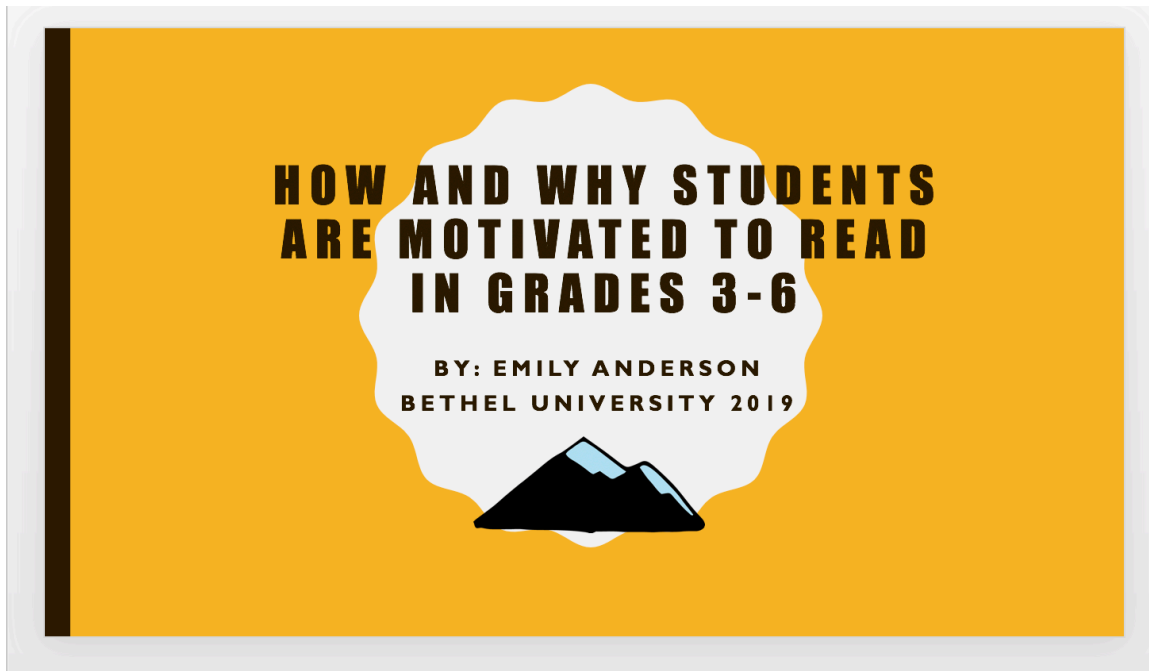
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## Appendix A: Presentation

### Page 1



The purpose of this presentation is to give you a background on who is motivated to read and factors that can increase your students' motivation to read.

### Page 2

## WHO IS MOTIVATED TO READ?

### HIGH ACHIEVERS


- Those that think deeply about what they are reading find what they're reading valuable and engaging, and they likely have a greater motivation to read (Applegate & Applegate, 2010).
- Gaps in motivation between very good and very poor readers may be great, but their motivation isn't as big of a gap (McGeown et al., 2012).
- Good readers are specifically motivated by curiosity and challenge (McGeown et al., 2012).

An area that is highly researched in connection with those who are motivated to read is achievement. It has been found that those that are doing well in reading are more motivated to read than those who are struggling. This is where it is difficult to see the causality of what came first. Are students doing well in reading because they are motivated to read? Or, are students motivated to read because they do well in reading? This is an area future research could help provide more answers.

## Page 3

## WHO IS MOTIVATED TO READ?

### BOYS VS. GIRLS




- Girls show a higher value in reading than boys, but are equally as self-confident (Applegate & Applegate, 2010, [Marinak & Gambrell, 2010](#)),
- Greater decrease in motivation seen in boys as students get older (Applegate & Applegate, 2010).
- Girls have a more positive attitude toward reading than boys (Kush & Watkins, 1996, Sainsbury & Schagen, 2004).

When looking at a student's gender, usually girls are more motivated to read than boys. This research is important because, as teachers, we need to make sure we are providing opportunities for our boys to engage with text and get excited about what they are reading. The awareness, here, can be powerful.

## Page 4

## WHO IS MOTIVATED TO READ?

### AGE AND GRADE




- There is a decrease in their motivation to read as students get older (Applegate & Applegate, 2010, Baker & Wigfield, 1999).
- For students in the upper elementary grades, there was less support at home, reading enjoyment declined, and self-confidence in their reading ability also declined (Sainsbury & Schagen, 2004).

One of the areas that drew me to this research was that I have personally seen a decrease in motivation to read as students get older. It is good to be aware that this is really happening so that those of us that work with these upper elementary students can work to support and encourage them using strategies that are proven to help influence their motivation to read positively.

## WHO IS MOTIVATED TO READ?

### READING BEHAVIOR




- Students who are motivated read more often while students that are less motivated do not read as often (Baker & Wigfield, 1999).
- Motivation is a strong predictor of students' reading for enjoyment or during their leisure-time (Cox & Guthrie, 2001).
- Even if achievement or strategy use was lower, students will still read for enjoyment if they are highly motivated (Cox & Guthrie, 2001).

It is easy to see that if a student is motivated to read, they will likely spend more time reading while students that are less motivated to read will not spend as much time reading. What's important to note on this slide is that even if students struggle in reading, they will still read for enjoyment if they are highly motivated. This provides hope that we can influence a student's motivation to read even if they struggle in reading.

## WHO IS MOTIVATED TO READ?

### ATTITUDE AND SELF-CONCEPT



- While attitude diminishes with age, their competence and perceptions of difficulty can remain consistent (Chapman & Tunmer, 1995).
- A more positive attitude toward reading is connected to higher achievement in the subject, while a more negative attitude toward reading is shown with those lower in achievement (Sainsbury & Schagen, 2004).
- Individual personalities can affect a student's motivation to read (Medford & McGeown, 2012).

Attitude is closely related to motivation to read, and again, it is important that we recognize the power we have as teachers to influence these students. What students believe about themselves as readers is also an important piece to the puzzle that influences motivation to read.



## FACTORS TO INCREASE MOTIVATION TO READ

### CLASSROOM CONTEXT

- Instruction that includes hands-on activities, self-directed learning, collaboration, and learning goals improves students' motivation to read (Guthrie et al., 2000, Guthrie et al., 2006, Wigfield et al., 2004).
- Specific practices that improve motivation to read while continuing to provide high quality standards-based instruction (Marinak, 2013):
  - Students choose teacher read-aloud books.
  - Students participate in book clubs where students choose the books and discuss what they are reading.
  - Students become experts on what they have read and share what they have learned with the class.

This is the most valuable information I have found throughout the research. It shows that there are strategies we can implement to improve a student's motivation to read. Giving our students hands-on activities and experiences in and out of the classroom need to also be given with opportunities to engage in meaningful text where they are choosing what is interesting and valuable to them. Giving choice is also key when looking at motivation. Creating excitement around different books and allowing students to vote on what the class wants to read gets them excited about what was chosen and they may even pick up a book they wanted to read that wasn't chosen. Book clubs can facilitate the same kind of excitement when students choose their own books. Another way to develop motivation is to divide text into chunks where students become experts on the different sections and then teach what they read and learned to the class. This gives them an opportunity to create ownership in what they are learning.



## FACTORS TO INCREASE MOTIVATION TO READ

### CLASSROOM CONTEXT (CONT.)

- If you're going to use rewards to improve motivation to read in the classroom, choose an item that is proximal to the desired behavior (Marinak & Gambrell, 2008). A book would work great!
- Encourage students to engage in literacy activities connected to experiences they have had or are having (Putman & Walker, 2010).
- Allow students to choose topics to read about based on what is interesting to them (Putman & Walker, 2010).

Rewards did not necessarily increase the motivation in the research, but when a book was given as a reward it did not undermine the students' motivation to read, which did happen when students were given a token unrelated to the desired behavior. So, if you're going to give a reward, make sure that is proximal to what you're wanting your students to do. Other ways that we can increase a student's motivation to read is to encourage students to engage in literacy activities that are connected to experiences that are part of their life, in home or at school. It's also worth emphasizing again that it's important to allow students choice to read about topics that are interesting to them. If it's a topic that must be covered, find other ways to offer choice to your students, whether through choosing what to become expert teachers on, choosing a perspective for how to view the information, or choosing different texts that provide the same kind of information.



## FACTORS TO INCREASE MOTIVATION TO READ

### VARIATIONS IN TEXT

- Students are more motivated to read fiction over nonfiction (Parsons et al., 2018).
- Students spend more time reading, are more engaged, and have a better understanding of what they read when the text is personally relevant and for their own enjoyment rather than when they feel pressured (internally or externally) to read (De Naeghel et al., 2012).
- In both academic and recreational reading, students positive attitudes toward reading decrease as they get older (Kush & Watkins, 1996).

It is important to recognize the variations in text and how that can influence a student's motivation to read. Nonfiction has its place, but when working to increase motivation, it is important to note that fiction is usually a bigger motivator for students. It's also important to provide text that is personally relevant and what students are interested in because it will be more beneficial to them as readers to be motivated to read on their own, rather than when they are pressured to read. No matter the type of reading, positive attitudes are decreasing as students get older, so it is especially important that we do all that we can to support our readers as they get older.



## A NEW CLASSROOM PROCESS FOR READING: CAMP READ-A-LOT

The following strategies can be used to create “Camp Read-a-lot” in your classroom. Challenge and exploration are highly encouraged, much like a true camping adventure!

- Make motivating students to read a priority. Teachers have an influence and can play a positive role in supporting and encouraging upper elementary age students to develop a deep love of reading.
- Ask your students questions that challenge them to get curious about what they want to learn more about. Provide a variety of texts and opportunities to read about these curiosities.
- Provide hands-on activities and opportunities for collaboration to facilitate experiences for students to get curious in all subject areas and even outside the classroom.
- Allow students to sample different books and ultimately choose the class read-aloud.
- Provide a space for students to collaborate and share they are reading through book clubs, presentations, and sharing what they are reading.



The biggest take-aways that will be important to implement in your own classroom are what I’m calling “Camp Read-a-lot”. It reminds me of the challenge, exploration, and adventure that comes from a camping experience or a hike through the woods. It’s worth the work that is put in and we *can* positively influence students which will make a difference in their lives for many years to come. Providing challenge and curiosity stirs up excitement in our students, and whatever it is that gets them really excited, make sure you have books, magazines, articles, or other text that covers those topics and interests. Hands-on activities and opportunities for collaboration in all subject areas with connected literacy opportunities are another way to increase the motivation to read in your classroom. Sampling different books with the ultimate choice of the class read aloud being up to the class can create a buzz among all students in your classroom. Find a way to tap into interests and topics that you know are valuable to what they may be going through as a young person, things that are going on in the world around them, or a history lesson they got excited about. Pay attention to who your students are so that you can provide the best literacy opportunities that will support them each individually and as a whole class. Find ways for your students to collaborate and share with one another what they are reading. This could be allowing space on a whiteboard where students write down a book when they finish reading it. It could be a post-it note bulletin board where they write the book they just finished and the book they are currently reading. Maybe your students will do book talks or share presentations about their favorite books, or maybe you can facilitate journal entries or class conversations around books that motivate them to read. Motivation can be a fire that spreads throughout your classroom where even those that struggle in reading are being motivated to pick up a book and go on a new adventure.



### LET'S READ S'MORE!

**INCREASING YOUR STUDENTS' MOTIVATION TO READ**

---

- Give your students opportunities with text that expand on what you're doing in science and social studies.
- Provide hands-on activities or field trips alongside reading opportunities where they are curious to learn more about what they are doing and seeing.
- Provide many opportunities for your students to choose what they are reading!
  - Vote on class read aloud books.
  - Facilitate book clubs where students choose what they read.
  - Let students be experts on what they have read and provide opportunities to share what they have learned.
- Be curious about the world around you and challenge your students to do the same!



*The books are calling and I must go...*

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### LET'S READ S'MORE!

**INCREASING YOUR CHILD'S MOTIVATION TO READ**

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- Give your child opportunities with text that expand on your family's experiences, activities, or your family history.
- Provide hands-on activities or field trips alongside reading opportunities where they are curious to learn more about what they are doing and seeing.
- Provide many opportunities for your child to choose what they are reading!
  - Vote on a family book to read together.
  - Facilitate a book club with your child's friends or neighbors allowing them to choose what they read.
  - Let your child become an expert on what they have read and provide opportunities to share what they have learned.
- Be curious about the world around you and challenge your child to do the same!



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## TOOLS TO SHARE

- Simple and effective tips to easily implement and remember in the classroom.
- Share a similar version with parents and families.

These are tools for you, the teachers, to take back to your classroom as an easy reference for simple and easy tips to incorporate into what you do on a daily basis that won't take away from the rich standard-based instruction you're already doing. The second card is something that can be shared with parents to help them encourage and support their child's motivation to read. It provides the same kind of tips as the teacher card but puts a twist on them so that they can be applied to a setting at home rather than at school.

The most important thing to remember is that you can make a difference to improve your students' motivation to read, so be an example to them of what it means to be curious about the world around you. Providing choice and opportunities for your students to make meaningful connections with literacy experiences are the best ways to get them excited about reading.



## Appendix B: Teacher and Family Tip Cards



## LET'S READ S'MORE!

### INCREASING YOUR STUDENTS' MOTIVATION TO READ

- Give your students opportunities with text that expand on what you're doing in science and social studies.
- Provide hands-on activities or field trips alongside reading opportunities where they are curious to learn more about what they are doing and seeing.
- Provide many opportunities for your students to choose what they are reading!
  - Vote on class read aloud books.
  - Facilitate book clubs where students choose what they read.
  - Let students be experts on what they have read and provide opportunities to share what they have learned.
- Be curious about the world around you and challenge your students to do the same!



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## LET'S READ S'MORE!

### INCREASING YOUR CHILD'S MOTIVATION TO READ

- Give your child opportunities with text that expand on your family's experiences, activities, or your family history.
- Provide hands-on activities or field trips alongside reading opportunities where they are curious to learn more about what they are doing and seeing.
- Provide many opportunities for your child to choose what they are reading!
  - Vote on a family book to read together.
  - Facilitate a book club with your child's friends or neighbors allowing them to choose what they read.
  - Let your child become an expert on what they have read and provide opportunities to share what they have learned.
- Be curious about the world around you and challenge your child to do the same!



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