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Engaging and motivating young readers

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Abstract

It is well accepted in the teaching world that a student's success in reading is greatly influenced by the student's own motivation. A student needs to be engaged in a subject to be successful. An engaged and motivated reader chooses to read for a variety of purposes including reading for enjoyment and seeking information. A student may find this motivation within himself/herself or they may need the help of the teacher and learning environment to do so. This paper will look at the various aspects of motivation and engagement including self-determination theory, social contexts, and classroom strategies.

ENGAGING AND MOTIVATING YOUNG READERS

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Alisha Briggs

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Abstract

It is well accepted in the teaching world that a student's success in reading is greatly influenced by the student's own motivation. A student needs to be engaged in a subject to be successful. An engaged and motivated reader chooses to read for a variety of purposes including reading for enjoyment and seeking information. A student may find this motivation within himself/herself or they may need the help of the teacher and learning environment to do so. This paper will look at the various aspects of motivation and engagement including self-determination theory, social contexts, and classroom strategies.

Introduction

Motivation, the desire to engage in an activity or work toward a goal, influences all aspects of one's life. Motivation is the key component to success in work, play, and academics. Motivation can be both intrinsic and extrinsic. The main incentive of intrinsic motivation is internal, leading to becoming involved in an activity for enjoyment (Carlton, 1998). Extrinsic motivation is compelled by outside sources resulting in behaviors that are driven by outcomes (Carlton, 1998). A person may need both at times or need to find a way to channel his/her untapped intrinsic motivation. A person needs to feel motivated to complete tasks, specifically those which may require one to participate in less than desirable activities. Motivational aspects of self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation may predict a student's success in different areas. Some of these academic areas are: reading ability and language arts (Taboada, Stephen, Allan & Guthrie, 2008). It is not uncommon to hear a person talk about a "lack of motivation" to get things done. Many factors may contribute to this; lack of understanding of the importance of the task, other needs and wants, and external factors relating to conditions surrounding the activities.

Teachers play an instrumental role in a child's ability to be a motivated learner. Perhaps students need help in learning what motivation is or need to understand how to apply themselves to the task at hand when motivation is low. This can be an underlying reason for low achievement in classrooms and can be particularly difficult to overcome. One area that requires a student to be highly motivated is literacy. Students need to be motivated in literacy to become successful life-long learners. Teachers can help students achieve this motivation by providing learning experiences that are maintained through strategies that value intrinsic motivation (Taboada, Stephen, Allan & Guthrie, 2008). In the primary grades, teachers are faced with the

overwhelming task of teaching all students to read and comprehend written materials. Johnson (2005) explained the challenging tasks as follows:

> Brains, like engines, don't operate at peak efficiency if they are low on fuel, clogged, or missing small but critical parts. If your students are all well fed, adequately parented, emotionally well-adjusted, and well educated, you probably won't face any serious problems when you try to motivate them to learn. But if they are hungry, tired, suffering from emotional stress, or poorly educated, you have a challenge on your hands." The purpose of this literature review is to understand different types of motivation and how it can affect student success in reading in primary grade levels. (p.138)

In the area of reading motivation, Taboada, Stephen, Allan & Guthrie, (2008) studied the relationships between motivation and literacy. They found a relationship between a student's reading self-concept, word recognition, and reading comprehension skills. Comprehension is improved when students are engaged in reading. Students have improved reading achievement in this situation than when they are not engaged. Guthrie, Wigfield, Metsala, & Cox (1999) also presented evidence that reading motivation accounts for the amount of time a child spends reading and consequently has an effect on reading comprehension. Reading motivation plays an essential role in reading comprehension

Reading is a lifelong skill needed to be successful in all academic areas. Literacy and motivation go hand in hand by exposing students to rich classroom environments and materials. According to Gambrell (1996), students will develop into mature effective readers if they possess both the skill and will to read. Students need motivation and interest in literacy, but must also have a base of skills to rely on and improve on throughout their life-long journey in literacy. An engaged reader is more likely to be motivated to continue to read or want to read for enjoyment. The purpose of this literature review is to examine different theories and evaluate how motivation can affect student success in reading in primary grade levels.

Methodology

Motivation in the area of education, specifically literacy, is ongoing and necessary. Consequently the resources available were abundant. The books used in this study were provided through Central College library. The majority of my resources were found using the Rod Library's access to a variety of professional journals relevant to my research topic. The majority of the resources used are peer-reviewed journals. I analyzed these articles according to significance of information they provided, subtopics of this study, and accuracy. This variety of resources provided information that assisted in presenting a full view of many aspects that encompass engaging and motivating young readers.

Literature Review

Importance of Engaging and Motivating Young Readers

Literacy has become a main focus of recent federal and state policies resulting in more instructional influences. Early education has focused on phonemic awareness, phonics, and word recognition and lacking in emphasis in the area of comprehension. Content areas, such as science and social studies, have been pushed aside to accommodate this focus on literacy. Teale, Zolt, Yokota, Glasswell, and Gambrell (2007) state that "If children are to excel in reading, writing, and critical thinking, they need to learn how to read different types of texts deeply and critically... " (p.499). It is important that students engage in authentic literacy activities within the content areas in order to increase motivation and develop skills that can be carried over into real life.

As children enter school they are faced with a multitude of factors that may help them succeed or cause them to struggle to read. Some of those hurdles are cognitive, physical, educational, language, personality, and family factors. (Schumm, 2006) There are many aspects for an educator to consider when teaching young students to read. According to Gambrell, Palmer,

Codling, and Mazzoni (1996) "Motivation is the heart of many of the pervasive problems we face in teaching young children to read" (p. 518).

Motivation is difficult to measure resulting in the doubt of its influence on achievement. Reading engagement contributes to reading achievement, specifically in the area of comprehension. According to Guthrie and Wigfield (1999) reading motivation predicts how much a student will read and consequently predicts reading comprehension (Guthrie, Wigfield, Metsala, & Cox 1999). An engaged student will use cognitive strategies to seek out information, understanding, and improve his/her reading skills. Through reading more and improving their skills students improve their comprehension. Even when students are motivated to read they need skills like being able to interact with the text, make connections. A teacher should assist students through setting goals, providing interesting and relevant texts, and providing time for students to collaborate.

Most kindergarten and first grade students are confident in their learning ability even after failure. As students progress through school, confidence in ability for some students decreases. For some students, learning to read is easy and can be done with just a little guidance. For others reading is a struggle. Motivation and engagement are among the multiple factors that could cause this struggle. When faced with educating such a variety of learners, teachers should look to find stimulating tasks. Stimulating tasks assist teachers in adapting literacy activities to fit all students' individual needs. Even students with low motivation or interest will eagerly participate in certain stimulating tasks, fostering reading interest and increasing motivation. Engaged readers become decision makers whose language and cognition play a role in their reading practices and become life-long learners. Studies have shown students that are more motivated do better in school and are more likely to stay in school than those that weren't.

Theories of Motivation

Self-determination. When approaching learning, educators are presented with a variety of

challenges. Some of those challenges include promoting interest, building confidences in

learners, and teaching students to value their education (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, & Ryan).

When students have an enthusiasm for learning, they are more likely to take responsibility and

value their educational experiences. The self-determination theory suggests that all actions are

made by choice but are controlled by different factors. When the locus of control is perceived as

internal, a person believes that he/she has the opportunity to choose, make decisions and act on

his/her environment. The theory of self-determination looks at human motivation, focusing on

the development and functioning of personality within social contexts.

There are varying degrees of self-determination including intrinsic motivation, extrinsic

motivation, and amotivation. Intrinsic motivation requires the most self-determination;

behaviors are completed without external rewards. Extrinsic motivation requires less self-

determination. Behaviors are completed with choice but not necessarily for enjoyment.

Amotivation behaviors require the least amount of self-determination. Amotivation lacks both

intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, & Ryan, R. 1991).

The self-determination theory is based on three needs of competence, relatedness, and

autonomy. Competence is seen as understanding how to efficiently achieve outcomes.

Relatedness refers to a student's social environment and the social connections he/she make.

Autonomy refers to being self-regulating of one's behavior (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, & Ryan,

1991). As in most motivational theories, self-determination is based on human and

psychological needs. When those needs are met motivation, performance, and development will

be optimized and support the student's increased motivation.

Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Motivation comes in a variety of forms, the main two being intrinsic or extrinsic. Intrinsically motivated students are those who engage in an activity for enjoyment and not for a reward (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997). According to Guthrie and Knowles this is evident when students like to be challenged and show curiosity (Verheven & Snow, 2001). Extrinsic motivation is engaged by rewards for completing certain activities or exhibiting certain behaviors.

Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are seen as complete opposites when they are in fact correlated. It is often those extrinsic motivators that lead to intrinsic behaviors. Behaviorists have found connections in the performance of a behavior to the nature of the behavior itself (intrinsic motivation) or to the external consequences of the behavior (extrinsic motivation). It is important to foster intrinsic motivation through giving positive feedback and praise. It is also important that students do not see their learning as working towards a reward at all times. Extrinsic motivators should be used sparingly and appropriately. Some examples of extrinsic motivators are a prize from the classroom treasure chest after reaching their reading goal, bookmarks, stickers, candy and much more. These external or extrinsic motivators should not be used regularly. Motivators like these, when used alone, do not allow students to internalize the pleasure of their learning. According to Stockdale & Williams (2004) "giving external rewards for a behavior that has high intrinsic value may cause the student's valuing to be diverted from the behavior itself to the external payoff for the behavior. Subsequently, the child may be disinclined to exhibit that behavior without the promise of external rewards"(p.2). Intrinsic motivation can help students persevere through tough work but it will not make up for lack of ability or quality instruction. Intrinsically motivated students engage in reading for their own

sake and for their own enjoyment as extrinsically motivated students will tend to engage in reading for the materialistic item they will receive after completing the task. Although it may seem that intrinsic motivation is the better choice research shows that, many behaviors persist through both intrinsic and extrinsic consequences (Stockdale & Williams, 2004).

Extrinsic motivation can move students to exhibit certain behaviors but is often seen as less effective. None the less educators still use extrinsic motivators to move students towards goals. Most educators aim for their students to become intrinsically motivated. I believe that it is important to understand extrinsic motivators in order to move towards intrinsically motivated students. Students regulate their behaviors for certain reasons or regulations. One of which is for external reasons that provide students with the least amount of self-determination. An example of this may be a reward for reaching a reading goal or a punishment for not. Another example is the interjected regulation in which student does something by choice but because they feel like they have to. An example given by Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, & Ryan (1991) is that a student comes to school on time because he/she would feel like a bad person if they didn't. An identified regulation is when students begin to do an activity more willingly because they see it as part of themselves. The last form of regulation and the closest to intrinsic motivation is integrated regulation in which students value an activity because it is important to them and they want a good outcome.

Self-efficacy The idea of believing in oneself goes by many names, including self-efficacy, self-esteem, or self-concept. A student's self-efficacy is a students' belief in his/her own ability to use the skills the student has. Parents have the first influence on a child's belief through the environment that they raise the child in and their own efficacy beliefs. Students with positive self-efficacy beliefs in a particular area are more likely to engage in behaviors related to

that area. This means that students are more or less likely to avoid that area and consequently have more opportunities to practice and receive corrective feedback (Valentine et al., 2004). If a student has confidence in his/her reading ability he/she will persist and accomplish difficult tasks. Students can build confidence through successful experiences. It may begin by reading a story that the student has memorized and then transfer into a more difficult task that is similar to the previous. Some behaviors need to be modeled to nurture this motivation to read. Students need to feel comfortable and successful to have the motivation to continue their learning. The teacher must guide, support and praise the students during activities so they can be intrinsically motivated to complete tasks.

A different approach to teaching is the method of not focusing our instruction on students' actual ability but on their belief in their ability (Alderman, 2008). It is still important to remember that self-efficacy, strategy, and skill development are all important. Self-efficacy is related to task completion. Giving feedback, setting goals, and modeling are all ways to improve self-efficacy. Goals should be specific and monitored.

Bandura (1997) acknowledged that negative self-efficacy has undesirable consequences. A student will show less intrinsic motivation and give less effort if he/she doesn't believe in his/her abilities. Extrinsic motivators seem to have more of an influence on those students who doubt their abilities. In a school setting students' levels of engagement clearly have an influence on the decisions they make. Their choices, struggles, and discussions show who they think they are and are capable of becoming. Those personal and social identities influence how emotionally and physically involved a student is when engaging in schoolwork (Kaplan & Flum, 2009).

An interesting aspect of self-efficacy in a classroom setting that may influence student motivation is a teacher's own confidence and trust their students' ability to perform well. A

teacher with high self-efficacy is more likely to have more confidence in his/her capabilities as a teacher and in the capabilities of students that are in the classrooms (Alderman, 2008). A teacher with low self-efficacy will see his/her attempts to teach as ineffective because he/she believes the students have lower abilities. Ideal teachers would have higher self-efficacy. According to Alderman (2008) high-efficacy teachers hold their students accountable for their performances, spend more time on academic learning, set and work towards high goals, develop trusting and supporting relationships, make fewer negative predictions, and are innovated. It is crucial for teachers and students to be engaged, motivated, and learning in a supportive environment for all to experience success.

Autonomous motivation. The need for autonomy refers to the human need to feel in control of what they learn. According to Wigfield, Guthrie, Tonks, & Perencevich (2004), "The development of autonomy is an important part of children's development. As they grow older, children desire and need more opportunities to control their own actions and to make their own decisions" (p.303). A teacher can guide students in making meaningful choices in texts and tasks to acquire knowledge and meet learning goals. Although at school some limits are set, it is important to support autonomy by providing choices for students within those limitations. Good teachers offer numerous choices throughout instruction that make students feel more independent and in control. Teachers offer options in what texts are read and in the instructional sequence. As students select his/her own text they discover new and interesting information. When students are supported in choosing from a wide selection of texts sustained reading and measured achievement increase. Students like to be in control of their environments, rather than being controlled by someone else.

Teachers are geared with many valuable strategies to motivate students. Many of those strategies are consistent with the theory of self-determination. Students' need for autonomy is attended to through support for self-directed learning. A specific example of this is to provide meaningful choices to students, such as choice among an assortment of different texts or among many topics within a theme to support autonomy (Wigfield, Guthrie, Tonks, & Perencevich, 2004). Choices must be significant and meaningful to a student in order to stimulate motivation. Students can use self-expression by communicating his/her ideas with their peer. Most importantly teachers much recognize each student is unique and has different needs.

Attribution theory. The attribution theory of motivation is a cognitive theory that looks at what beliefs a person has about what caused success or failure. Five factors have been identified as factors in the academic setting; ability, effort, task difficulty, strategy, and luck. These attributions are classified as being internal or external. They also can be classified as controllable, effort, uncontrollable, or luck (Alderman, 2008).

Students don't always know what caused their success or failure. Many direct and indirect cues can explain why. Direct cues may include the outcome of a particular task. The feedback that a student receives may act as an indirect cue. An attribution consequence of success is that students learn to seek help. Help seeking is an adaptive cognitive strategy that shows a student is striving for mastery or achievement. Those students that don't seek for help are often the ones that need it most. Teachers can establish an environment for help seeking by encouraging question asking. Another consequence of attribution is learned helplessness. Learned helplessness occurs when a student experiences failure, believes that he/she will always fail, and does not feel like he/she can do anything about it. Students that develop a learned

helplessness give up and lack motivation. These students do not see a connection between their actions and achievement (Alderman, 2008).

Younger students believe that increased effort leads to increased ability. As students develop cognitively they begin distinguishing between effort and ability. Older students also begin to notice what causes their success or failure. Teachers' beliefs about students' ability and effort affect student motivation (Alderman, 2008).

Attribution retraining is a way of changing how students react to failures by assisting them in developing increased persistence and having positive expectations (Alderman, 2008). Students need to focus on effort rather than ability. Pressley (1998) said, "Encourage student to believe that intelligence is not innate and fixed, but rather everchanging."(p.225)

Influence of Parenting on Motivation

Most children's first encounters with print are at home. The significance of parents, caregivers, and siblings in reading development is crucial. Families are an essential part of a student's success in school. Attempts should be made to include students' family in his/her learning whenever possible. Gambrell (1996) suggests that there are positive benefits to encouraging children to take books home from the classroom to share with family members. This is an easy way for teachers to reach out to families. Teachers should also be attentive to various cultures within his/her classroom and provide reading material which is meaningful to individual families. Students should feel his/her family/culture/heritage is represented in what they are reading.

According to Gonzalez-DeHass, Willems, & Holbein (2005) "When parents are involved, students report more effort, concentration, and attention. Students are more inherently interested in learning, and they experience higher perceived competence" (p.117). Some parents may

encourage extrinsic motivation through the use of extrinsic rewards for completion of homework or good grades. It is ideal to give support and praise to encourage intrinsic motivation. Parents who take responsibility for their child's learning are usually more involved in the child's academic life. When parents show a child how important education is by becoming involved, students become more goal orientated, seek challenging tasks, persist through academic challenges, and feel more satisfied in their learning experiences (Gonzalez-DeHass, Willems, & Holbein, 2005). Students develop a greater self-efficacy as readers when parents become involved in students' reading activities, consequently motivating them to read more.

Parental involvement can take many forms including keeping up with students' progress, attending school functions, volunteering, and providing support and encouragement at home. Different types of parenting styles and students' perceptions of their parents' values have an effect on how motivated a child may be. Even though it is great to see parents at school events, those activities may not always be the most important with regards to motivation. Educators should consider a variety of beneficial activities that students can be involved in and those activities aren't always at school.

Different parenting styles also have an influence an individual's involvement in student motivation. According to Gonzalez-DeHass, Willems, & Holbein (2005):

> Benefits of parental involvement may be more beneficial to students' school success when it occurs within an authoritative parenting style which is typified by parental acceptance and warmth and by behavioral supervision that allows for some degree of democracy and autonomy on the part of the child. (p.121)

Keeping parents involved is important but difficult. Ultimately students' family involvement is very rewarding to all involved. When considering ways to keep families involved in extending reading engagement, there are many factors to consider. It is important to be sensitive to family needs, responsibilities, and interests. A few ways to encourage parent

involvement are motivational reading programs, such as book it, book fairs, monthly contests, guest readers, and home learning. It is important to understand that not all families will have the same values, interest, or resources. Teachers need to assume that all parents need some guidance in what activities can be done to support their children's needs at home because they won't always ask. Print is everywhere and with proper support all students can and should read at home. Learning shouldn't stop after school is dismissed.

Motivation in the Classroom

Learning to read and write involves much more than the ability to decode print and transfer written language to oral language. It is because reading requires effort and choice that students must be actively engaged. Students can be more motivated in one subject area and not in another because each subject matter requires a different set of skills. Skills in one subject may be easier for a student to grasp and others may require more effort.

Reading requires language and construction of meaning (comprehension skills). "Classroom cultures that foster reading motivation are characterized by a teacher who is a reading model, a book-rich classroom environment, opportunities for choice, familiarity with books, social interactions about books and literacy-related incentives that reflect the value of reading" (Gambrell, 1996). Teachers also need to provide experiences with all the areas of language to instruct students to read, such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. It is important that students are guided and supported through different activities when learning to read. Listening to read alouds, learning to decode, phonemic awareness activities, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, spelling, and a lot of independent reading where students choose texts are all ways to increase students' motivation to read. Teachers need a balanced approach to teaching reading by using a combination of activities that allows students to use different skills through

teacher modeling that will increase student confidence and motivation to continue and complete tasks.

Teachers who want to promote engaged reading in the classroom need to build a context for it. According to Guthrie (2000) "Instructional context fosters engagement processes and reading outcomes (p.2)" The contexts that Guthrie identifies are coherence, conceptual orientation, real-world instruction, autonomy support, interesting text, strategy instruction, collaboration, teacher involvement, rewards and praise, and evaluation (Figure 1).

The following summarizes the description Chapman and King (2003) give of the roles a teacher plays in motivating a reader including:

1. Teachers have to challenge and stimulate the reader's mind, create anticipation, interweave interests, and challenge students' minds. It is important that students find reading experiences appealing and not boring.

2. Any teacher can make content interesting and relevant to students. A positive atmosphere can be created through jokes, songs, poems, intriguing questions, and a many more strategies. Using content goals for reading instruction expands students' interest and motivation. Interested students focus on gaining meaning, building knowledge, and understanding deeply, rather than on learning skills or gaining rewards.

3. Teachers need to set up an effective working environment. When rules are established and consistent there is no confusion on what is expected of each student or how things are supposed to be done. A reader's environment sets up the scene for optimal engagement. Physical and perceptual factors include the arrangement of furniture, visuals, temperature, a teacher's presence, expectations, and personal interactions. Setting up a respectful and positive environment will increase students' motivation and desire to read.

4. It is important to expose students to and provide access to a variety of literature. One study of first graders found that "book access is a significant factor in literacy development and that greater attention should be devoted to assuring that high-quality classroom libraries are a priority in schools" (Gambrell, 1996 p.21). Students have a range of interests and a classroom library should reflect that. There should be fiction, non-fiction, poetry, readers theaters, and books for students' specific interests. Students' interests show a relationship to the cognitive process and deep-level learning (Taboada, Tonks, Wigfield, & Guthrie, 2008). This choice of text also offers control to students. When students feel in control of his/her experiences they will value them more, which transfers into reading achievement.

5. Teachers need to recognize and reinforce student's accomplishments no matter how big or small. Giving positive corrective feedback and asking challenging questions to challenge their thinking. To work towards intrinsic motivated students teachers should give specific feedback and praise for going beyond what is expected of them (Chapman & King, 2003). Teachers should use new and unique strategies and activities to engage all students and keep them guessing to encourage students to think differently(Chapman & King, 2003).

6. Teachers need to get to know the students that they are teaching. When teachers take notice of students' interests and individual needs they are better equipped to design his/her instruction to result in optimal learning. This interest shows students that the teachers care about students as individuals. It is important for teachers to build positive relationships with students and establish that they believe in them.

7. It is important to encourage interaction among students. By creating a community of learners students can gain knowledge from each other through group work, brainstorming, and cooperative learning activities. Students will develop an understanding of their uniqueness and feel they have an important role in their classroom.

8. Teachers should provide choices. When students are able to make decisions about their own learning they develop independence, confidence, and a sense of responsibility. Choices could be as simple as what to read, where to read, or who to read with.

9. A teacher's passion for reading should be evident to students. Educators are finding ways to demonstrate an enthusiasm for reading. An important aspect of motivating students to read is having a teacher who is enthusiastic about reading and emphasizes its importance (Gambrell, 1996). A teacher must be a role model for her students, not only in reading aloud as example but by her overall attitude towards reading. Students draw on this outward appearance of intrinsic motivation for their personal learning. It should be every teacher's goal to create an internal desire to read in their students. This positive attitude toward reading guides students to be rewarded by their own efforts and successes.

Implementing read alouds. According to Hoffman, Roser, & Battle, (1993) "Reading to children is the single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in learning to read" (p.496). Reading aloud is a planned strategy that leads to increased reading achievement, promotes independent reading, and supports struggling readers. Reading to students books that are above their independent reading levels provides scaffolding that makes the book easier to approach for struggling readers. This is significant for teachers to keep in mind because struggling readers are not interested in the books that they can read independently. Reading aloud is very diverse and offers many advantages. It can be done to start the day,

support different content areas, as mini lessons in guided reading groups, to introduce students to a new genre, or just for enjoyment. This strategy can be used in individually, small groups, or whole group instruction. Through engaging students in texts, fluent and expressive reading is modeled, students see how to make different connections in texts, and hear teachers think aloud as they come to parts of literature.

Traditionally read alouds are associated with storytelling. When reading aloud to students, a variety of text should be considered. Kletzien and Dreher (2004) suggest that "Reading aloud informational books inspires curiosity in children, and for some struggling readers, informational books may hold the key to learning to read" (p.45). This curiosity sparks intrinsic motivation within students. Students' motivation and knowledge can be extended through reading aloud interesting informational books that are typically too hard for struggling readers (Kletzien & Dreher).

Reading aloud encourages students to be engaged and active in the reading process. Many teachers read aloud to their students without realizing the modeling and enthusiasm that they are presenting to students. With planning a read aloud can focus on specific reading strategies like predicting, making connections, fluency, monitoring understanding, and even evaluating text (Rog, 2001). According to Rog (2001):

> Three keys to an effective classroom read-aloud program are; selecting high-quality literature that extends children's knowledge of literature, language, and the world; active participation by children that constructs knowledge and extends thinking; and rereading familiar text to reinforce children's knowledge of the reading process and how words go together.(p.50)

Reading aloud should not stop when the book or text is finished, it should be extended in order to practice and then share their ideas. Being active and engaged through this process makes learning more meaningful and bridge students to higher levels of thinking and responding.

Kletzien & Dreher state that "There is strong evidence that read-alouds are valuable to children's achievement and motivation" (p.54).

Motivational reading programs. It is crucial for schools to collaborate with parents to help students become motivated to read and write. Motivational reading programs help develop this partnership. A reading program cannot replace good instruction, but will open doors for students to become more enthusiastic about reading. Many classrooms have their own goals and rewards. For a program to be successful, many people need to be involved at all levels. Parents, administrators, teachers, and community members should be involved to establish reading as a priority. Some ideas include a living library where people dress up as characters from books and students interview them, guest readers, a big reward for meeting reading goals, book fairs, book clubs, monthly contests, or older students reading to younger students. Many programs take time to plan but the options are endless and the achievement resulting from this reading engagement is significant. (Schumm, 2006)

Motivating struggling readers. Some students learn to read easily with little help but there are others that reading is a challenge no matter how much support they receive. One of the many ways classrooms are changing is the increase in the number of students with disabilities spending more time in the general education classroom. According to the National Education Association (2006), "Three out of every four students with disabilities spend part or all of their school day in a general education classroom. In turn, nearly every general education classroom across the country includes students with disabilities." With more integration of learners in the general education setting, teachers need to be geared with the knowledge and tools to effectively instruct all students. Unfortunately with all of the push-in or pull out of these students they know that they are different, and not in a good way.

In the primary grades students tend to have an "I can do anything" attitude that persists through failures. With continued failures and struggles students start to give up because trying doesn't seem to help improve achievement. When students are faced with repeated failures in any content area they are turned off from reading. Struggling readers tend to think that it doesn't matter how much effort they put forth, that they just aren't talented in the area of reading. Unfortunately students may think that they are "dumb" instead of the task being difficult.

A struggling reader sees that he/she reads text that is easier, is corrected more, and is generally held to lower expectations. This has a negative effect on students' autonomy. Struggling readers tend to read less text more slowly than a typical student, which means that he/she is not practicing fluency or acquiring as much vocabulary as other students. The best way to help a struggling reader is to use scaffolding. There are several instructional practices that teachers can use to support struggling readers including scaffolding to build their confidence and motivating them. Barone & Morrow (2003) describe Fluency-Oriented Reading Instruction as where teachers has time set aside for reading lessons, choice reading time, and incorporates reading at home. In fluency-oriented reading instruction a teacher will read and discuss a story with children to address comprehension. Then echo-read, partner-read, and send the book home to practice fluency. An important part of this instruction is that students are also provided with time to choose their own books. Another method is reciprocal teaching in which students are reading text that is normally too difficult for them. This method works best for students who have difficulties in the area of comprehension. Students practice prediction, questioning, and summarizing text.

It is important to develop a community that students that are classified as struggling readers can feel a part of. One way to do this is by using thematic units. Teachers can provide a

variety of texts on a particular topic at a variety of reading levels. Typically students can read easier books that have similar vocabularies as a more difficult text (Barone & Morrow, 2003). Students can then progress to more difficult text on the same topic as they become more familiar with the topic. By reading the same texts as their peers it helps attempt to break down the perceptions that struggling readers have developed. This results in increased motivation and achievement.

Struggling readers are often praised for completing tasks that are typically below the expectations of the rest of the class, consequently loosing the value of the praise. Struggling readers need to have concrete evidence of his/her progress because he/she does not value praise as much. Keeping charts of new vocabulary or progress on repeated readings are concrete reminders of progress. These graphs and other concrete records are sometimes the best motivators and can be used for conferences. Barone & Morrow (2003) said, "Children with reading problems tend to see themselves as incapable of reading as well as their peers. If we are to help them become good readers, we need to convince them that they can be good readers" (p.207). It is important to keep a struggling reader engaged and that teachers don't emphasis competition. In conclusion keeping it simple is not the answer. To motivate struggling readers effort and becoming part of the reading community is key to success in reading.

<p align="center">Conclusion and Recommendations</p>

After researching and reflecting on the theories of motivation I have found it to be a crucial part of education. Reading motivation is a vital piece of a child's education because achievement in reading can lead to success in other content areas. All subject areas include reading in many forms, whether it's nonfiction, a funny poem, or a classic. Many children enjoy reading, but there are also many who do not. The benefits of reading are limitless, but educators

need to take in to consideration what can be done to motivate students to read more and move towards being more intrinsically motivated.

The problem that educators are seeing is that as students progress through school they become less engaged and motivated. For academic achievement to stay high students need to experience success and perceive that he/she is successful This may be a result of what they attribute their success or failure to. As I have shown, much of students' motivation can lead back to their beliefs and his/her teachers' and parents' beliefs about them. The people around students have a huge impact on his/her engagement and motivation. As I have discussed motivation can come from many sources that are either intrinsically or extrinsically motivated.

Literature suggests that if students are engaged through being given choices of a variety of stimulating tasks they will be more motivated to learn. Motivation and engagement are correlated with cognitive results such reading achievement, which is very important. The success that a student experiences then results in more engagement and more intrinsic motivation. School reading programs have been used in hopes of motivating students. Parental involvement is one of many aspect of reading motivation. Teachers and parents should be aware of the perceptions that students are getting from them and how they influence their own behaviors.

The choices and struggles that a student has can be supported by the experiences that he/she has in classrooms. Those experiences strongly influence motivation for reading and in other subjects. An effective classroom is balanced, provides choices, uses scaffolds, and understands their students. To motivate and engage means to get unrealized potential, ideas, feelings, and ambition in students. Teachers are presented with the challenging task of

motivating and engaging all students. A teacher's motivation is crucial in creating a learning community that all students can engage in the learning process effectively.

Educators should prioritize motivation to implement effective instruction. Motivation, or even long-term motivation, takes time to develop. Teachers first need to get to know the motivational theories in order to effectively understand and implement motivational ideas. It is important to get to know all aspects of students including their interests and abilities. Teachers need to focus students on goals that give direction. A classroom should be prepared for motivation by providing a variety of texts that allow for the crucial component of choice. Teachers have different roles in the ever changing world of education that include giving more responsibility and choice in their learning. Students need to be taught cognitive strategies to become more empowered. For students to experience success It is crucial for students to see their success. Positive feedback is good for some students, but some need concrete evidence of their progress. In conclusion, reading motivation and achievement are heavily correlated and a theory that should be applied in every classroom.

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