

Motivating Children to Read

Dr. K. A. Korb
University of Jos

Motivation Revision

- **Motivation:** Selection, energization and direction of behavior
 - Selection: **WHAT** you choose to do
 - Energization: **EFFORT** put into the behavior
 - Direction: **HOW** you engage in behavior
- **Intrinsic Motivation:** Do an activity for inherent satisfaction in the activity
- **Extrinsic Motivation:** Do for a reason external to the activity

Motivation to Read

- Learning complex behaviors (like reading) requires lots of motivation
 - Pupils must want to learn something for it to be permanently retained, instead of just being crammed
- Teachers must be motivated readers before they can motivate children to become readers
 - Teachers must model enthusiasm for reading
- The greatest influence on pupils' reading motivation is the teacher's reading habits
- "Nothing we offer children is more important than an adult who reads. Children end up doing what we do, not what we say, and all the admonitions about the importance of reading in their lives fall on deaf ears if they view us as people who do not take our own advice" (Tunnell & Jacobs, 2008, p.215)

Characteristics of Motivated Readers...

- Read for their own purposes (not just for an exam or for others)
- Have likes and dislikes in books
- Feel rewarded during the reading process
- Evaluate the books they read
- Read at their own rate (skip, scan, reread, quit when necessary)
- Do not feel that they have to remember everything they read
- Develop a personal attachment to books they like
- Find time to read regularly

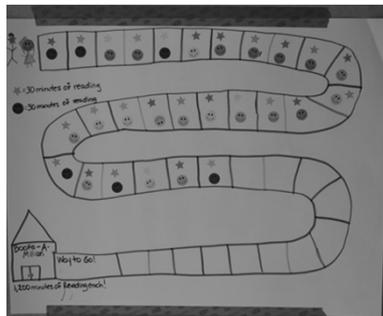
Metaphors for Learning Reading

- Children learn football by being given a football and frequently practicing
 - Children are NOT taught football by instruction in:
 - The history of football
 - How to manufacture the balls
 - Specifications of the football pitch
 - Theory of the rules of the game
 - Frequently practicing reading is just as important and beneficial as frequently practicing football
- Children watch television because it is easily accessible
 - Would children watch television as often if it was stored in a cabinet or not accessible as books currently are?
 - How can books be made as accessible as the TV to increase reading frequency?

Strategies for Motivating Children to Read: Extrinsic Motivation Reading Incentive Programs

- Teacher-Developed Incentive Programs
 - Chart the number of books read
 - Children can have a celebration after reading a specific number of books and/or reading for a specific amount of time
- Commercial Incentive Programs
 - Corporations/Companies offer rewards for children for the number of books read
- Evaluation of Reading Incentive Programs
 - Advantage: Encourages children to find books and practice reading skills
 - Disadvantage: The extrinsic rewards can harm intrinsic motivation for reading
 - Conclusion: External rewards are only helpful to the extent that they encourage children to practice their reading skills and then uncover the joys of reading

Reading Charts



Strategies for Motivating Children to Read: Intrinsic Motivation Principles for Intrinsically Motivating Children to Read

- Be an example of a motivated reader by reading in front of the children
- Provide a variety of books/texts (fiction, non-fiction, and poetry) for children to identify their reading interests
- Make time for reading
 - Set time in the timetable for reading
 - **Read aloud.** The teacher reads aloud so the teacher can model reading
 - **Silent, independent reading.** DEAR: Drop Everything and Read. The teacher should also read during this time. No assignment should be given
 - **Regularly give "trailers" for an interesting book/text to the class**
 - **Take the class to the library** (if available)

Strategies for Motivating Children to Read: Intrinsic Motivation
Principles for Intrinsically Motivating Children to Read

- Create a reading atmosphere
 - Foster a community of readers where reading is encouraged as a way for children to discover the world
 - Post children's drawings of stories
 - Connect children with authors through writing/email
- Engage parents in reading
 - Communicate the class emphasis on personal reading
 - Request parents' support in reading through parents doing the following:
 - Allow children to buy books
 - Encourage child to read at home
 - Talk with kids about books read
 - Read with and to the child
 - Create space in house for books
 - Model reading where the children can see the parent reading