Mike

MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES That Work!

This is a collaborative column by K-16 library media specialists and academic librarians who write about the motivational strategies that have worked for them in teaching IL skills.

K-12

Reading Motivation: 10 Elements for Success

Reported by Kori M. Gerbig, Assistant Editor

Introduction

Motivational processes are the foundation for coordinating cognitive goals and strategies in reading. For example, if a person is intrinsically motivated to read and believes she is a capable reader, the person will persist in reading difficult texts and exert effort to resolve conflicts and integrate text with prior knowledge. A learner with high motivation will seek books known to provide satisfaction. The cognitive abilities needed to find books, avoid distraction while reading, and assimilate new ideas are activated if the text is fulfilling internal goals . . . In sum, becoming an excellent, active reader involves attunement of motivational processes with cognitive and language processes in reading.

-Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000, p. 408

Current Research in Reading Motivation

In a 2008 review of current literature on student motivations for reading, McClure offers some interesting insights provided by recent research on the subject. For example, did you know that…

- How often a child reads is explained by 3 factors: sufficient resources, early success and motivation.
- Two indicators of young children's reading motivation are competency beliefs (beliefs about
- own abilities) and goal orientation (whether and why a child wants to be a good reader).
- Reading skills and motivation correlate with and influence one another over time.
- Motivation to read declines as students enter middle school.
- A 2004 study of 5 popular remedial programs indicated that the impact of motivation on struggling readers seemed to be largely ignored by the program developers.

Motivation is an important element in reading engagement, which ultimately results in reading achievement. In a 2001 review of research, Guthrie* identified 10 instructional elements that form the foundation for engagement and motivation in reading:

- Conceptual orientation
- Real-world instruction
- Autonomy support
- Collaborative learning
- Praise and rewards
- Interesting texts
- Strategy instruction
- Evaluation
- Teacher involvement
- Cohesion

Conceptual orientation is the identification and announcement of knowledge and learning goals and expectations early in instruction. These goals and expectations are best met when co-developed by the teacher and students in conjunction with external school requirements, and provide a natural context for teaching students to understand

conceptually. In concept orientated instruction, the focus for the student is on content understanding, not on getting the grade.

Real-world instruction involves reading education that is supported by relevant (personal) and/or hands-on (sensory) experiences that stimulate intrinsic motivation.

Autonomy support refers to instructor guidance and support in student selection of meaningful texts and tasks to attain the established knowledge and learning goals. Instruction that provides autonomy support includes and encourages student choice of both reading materials and project formats.

Collaborative learning involves a level of discourse, especially among students, in a learning community that allows for a sharing of perspectives and the construction of knowledge socially from text.

Praise and Rewards can have a positive affect on student reading motivation, especially when the rewards are relevant to the learning goals and the praise is specific and sincere. Wlodkowski suggests a "3S-3P" approach to awarding praise that is sincere, specific, sufficient and properly given for praiseworthy efforts in a manner preferred by the learner (1985).

Interesting texts refers to an "ample" supply of resources and materials relevant to the learning and knowledge goals being studied. These texts need to be both matched to student reading abilities and provided in abundance through collections in school and public libraries as well as in the classroom.

Strategy instruction is defined by Guthrie as "the explicit teaching of behaviors that enable students to acquire relevant knowledge from text" (2000). Specific reading strategies include modeling, scaffolding and coaching. These strategies are enhanced by direct explanation of why they are valuable and how and when to use them.

Evaluation of student achievement should support identified learning and knowledge goals and include a combination of student-centered and personalized activities (portfolios, etc) and objective evaluation (standardized testing). Some portion of evaluation should be directed toward student effort.

Teacher Involvement concerns the level at which the instructor is aware of student personal knowledge and interests, cares about student learning, and sets realistic goals for student effort and achievement.

Cohesion occurs when the above instructional elements are used in combination during instruction. Coherent instruction increases student engagement (Guthrie et al., 1998), facilitates conceptual learning from text (Anderson, 1998), fosters reading achievement (Romance & Vitale, 1992), and helps sustain curricular integration of reading within content areas (Gaskins, et al., 1994).

Practical Applications

A review of lesson plans and teaching strategies included in the *S.O.S for Information Literacy* database demonstrates how today's school library media specialist is attuned to the instructional elements that support student reading motivation and engagement. These lessons show how SLMSs are implementing Guthrie's instructional overlay in coherent, cohesive, motivating and engaging reading instruction. Here are just a few examples:

Talk That Book! by Nanette Dougherty

This lesson, designed for 7-8th grade students, takes a new look at the traditional "booktalk." It begins with a *real-world experience,* followed by a discussion of the relation of that experience to the knowledge and learning goals required by students. Instruction begins with the viewing of a particularly enticing movie trailer, then follows with a discussion of the relationship in purpose of this particular marketing format (to get you to see the movie) with the purpose of booktalks (to get you to read the book). After *strategy instruction* (modeling of the booktalk format), the instructor provides opportunities for *collaboration* by allowing students to work together to create their own booktalk scripts. Booktalks are then shared with classmates, providing an opportunity for the communication of perspectives and sharing of accomplishments with peers.

Welcome to Seussville! by Beatrice Laga

This lesson also utilizes *collaboration* to enhance motivation. 5th grade students are paired with 2nd grade partners as "reading buddies." Student pairs work together to navigate through Seussville, and educational resource concerning the lives and works of

Dr. Seuss. Older students demonstrate reading *strategies* to their younger partners as both share understandings and perspectives. At the completion of the lesson, students are encouraged to demonstrate navigational skills by locating the 'playground' section of the website, and are *rewarded* for their efforts by an additional period of free time to explore this fun-filled section of activities.

Creating a Personal Database by Virginia Halprin (rubric)

This 8-session lesson for 5-6th grade students also incorporates many of Guthrie's motivational elements. It begins with a series of instruction *strategies* to demonstrate the uses and elements of various databases, then incorporates *autonomy* and *collaboration* as students create and populate their own personalized databases of book titles read, and share their creations, perspectives and accomplishments with classmates. The lesson plan includes a rubric which can be shared with students in advance to support *concept orientation,* and/or used as a final tool for student *evaluation.*

These examples demonstrate how school library media specialists incorporate some of the more tangible elements necessary to achieve student motivation and engagement in reading activities during instruction. Although not specifically addressed, these lessons can be further enhanced through the availability of large amounts of relevant, *interesting texts* and a high level of *teacher involvement.*

College Level

Simplifying the Research Process Using A Web Guide

Reported by Brandy Whitlock, Instruction Librarian, Truxal Library, Anne Arundel Community College, MD

Anne Arundel Community College (AACC) has created a set of web pages using Springshare's LibGuides to guide students through the research process. In only two semesters online, "The Research Process" web pages have drawn over 4,000 hits! Most students are daunted by the research expected of them at the college level, and those who go undaunted tend to be, rather than fully aware of the research process, blissfully ignorant of it. In order to motivate and inform those who are underprepared, intimidated, or both, we at AACC have created Research Process worksheets and corresponding web pages that delineate the research process as a set of discrete (though, of course, sometimes recursive) events. We've been able to use these worksheets and web pages in a variety of academic situations because the content isn't subject-specific. Though it's really the instructor's job to create research assignments that are engaging and meaningful, we can help motivate students by making the research process more transparent and more manageable.

See the new S.O.S. teaching idea, "The Research Process: Worksheets and Online Guide" (http://informationliteracy.org/ideas/view/844) and the original web guide at http://libguides.aacc.edu/researchprocess

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Please share your "motivational strategies that work" with your colleagues by sending them to the editor at mparnone@syr.edu