

Using Choice to Influence Reading Motivation

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Abstract

This study focused on the impact of choice in regards to reading motivation in a rural Wisconsin middle school classroom. As the research suggests, choice in reading material is one way to increase student reading motivation. Data for this study was collected using the mixed method approach including parent surveys to identify the development of reading habits outside of classroom, teacher conferences with students, anonymous surveys to gauge motivation for choice novels and non-choice material, and other trackers to indicate student reading habits. One of the main findings of this study was that there are benefits to both choice and non-choice materials in a Language Arts classroom. The reality of having both of these selections supports the students who lack confidence in selecting books for themselves and who most benefit from the scaffolding allowed by a class text. Both selections also benefit the confident readers who have the opportunity to be exposed to new genres they may not have considered on their own which can be motivating in its own way. In addition, the independence that the choice books create allows both kinds of readers to discover their own abilities and practice the skills that are set in place with a mentor text or class novel. When students are given choice for reading material, they do find that it is motivating and more rewarding in regards to independence. The non-choice reading material offers a different kind of motivation that focuses on the social and community building aspect of reading. Both are beneficial and useful to the variety of readers in a particular classroom setting.

Introduction

The importance of reading is apparent throughout the 5th-8th grade building hallways and classrooms. The value of reading is seen through the varied book displays in the school library, the bi-annual book fair, and reading posters that showcase important figures in our community. In fact, Ellsworth Middle School has continued to focus on the importance of literacy through its course structure by requiring 90 minutes of Language Arts divided between two classes, Reading and Language Arts. The Reading 7 course focuses on reading skills, whereas the Language Arts course focuses on composition skills. Both classes are interlinked with the English Language Arts Common Core standards and are designed with the idea that the instructors may coordinate the lessons to complement each other. A visitor to the school would assume that reading and literacy skills are of the utmost value. However, sometimes I wonder how much of this display is actually working to get students to read. Many things have changed over the four years I have been a teacher at Ellsworth Middle School, but one thing has been constant—our inadequate state testing scores in reading. The lower than average scores have instigated a pressure amongst teachers and staff to improve reading scores with the blame for the low scores seemingly pointed at the Language Arts instructors.

By 7th grade it can be observed that some students have already labeled themselves as “readers” or “non-readers”, which is obvious on the Reader Interest Survey that I give on the first day of school every year. Generally speaking, “readers” are regarded as students who find that they enjoy reading for pleasure, are comfortable during independent reading time, and have confidence in their own reading skills. However, “non-readers” are students who do not feel comfortable reading for an extended amount of time, do not enjoy reading for pleasure, and feel their reading skills are underdeveloped.

On the first day of class I start a discussion focused on the honest feelings my students hold towards reading. The intention of this discussion is to send the message that reading is valued in every walk of life. Over my years as a Language Arts teacher, I have tried a variety of approaches to help students become more interested in reading. However, I want to demonstrate to the students that my views on the value of reading go beyond lip service. Every year I increase my classroom library to make sure I have current and high interest books available. In fact, my classroom library is the largest classroom library in the building, excluding the common school library. Students make requests as to what type of books they would like to see in the library and I use our book orders to help fill those requests when available. Because the ever-growing classroom library sits in front of the students on a daily basis, they have a front row seat to a constant reminder of the importance of reading and its value in our classroom.

One common trend I have noticed in the last few years is that student independent reading has been on a downward trend, especially at the secondary level. Independent reading motivation continues to be on a downward trend even with special attention to reading environment within the school building. Students receive book recommendations from both peers and teachers, in addition to being participants in various activities that require students to be reading a book. From conversations with colleagues at various secondary levels, it is obvious that this is an issue that is observed informally throughout the middle and high school buildings. It probably does not help that there is no common sustained silent reading time or any other program that puts value on reading outside of the Language Arts classroom. In fact, many times the students that struggle with reading are put in an intervention group with the sole purpose to make them do more of the task they dread the most, read. The intervention strategy usually has very little teacher guidance and is likely computer based.

Prior to 7th grade, students use Accelerated Reader (A.R.) to earn a grade and to be motivated to read independently. Accelerated Reader is a program that is used in various schools that is meant to help motivate students to read books. As part of our district progress monitoring procedure, we utilize the Renaissance Learning Progress monitoring tool, STAR Reading. This progress monitor is given to all students three times a year and is an assessment of reading comprehension and skills for independent readers through grade 12. Specifically, the STAR Reading test tracks development in five domains: Word Knowledge and Skills; Comprehension Strategies and Constructing Meaning; Analyzing Literary Text; Understanding Author's Craft; Analyzing Argument and Evaluating Text. The A.R Program is based on a student's STAR screener score in which students are each given a point value they use as a goal to accomplish through reading books. The books are assigned point values depending on length, sentence complexity, and vocabulary. In order to earn the points labeled on the book, the student must complete a multiple choice comprehension test on the book. Points are then accumulated accordingly. The teacher then gives the students a designated time to have their points completed. In the 6th grade, students are given a grade based on their completion of their point goal. That means that if a student does not reach his/her point goal by the assigned deadline, his/her grade is impacted negatively. However, several students explained (via anonymous survey) that A.R. was motivating to them because they could receive prizes if they met their goal. The idea of a grade and a material prize being tied to reading has motivated some students to read books. In addition, students are allowed to select their own books which might also motivate students to read. However, most of the students commented that they were more concerned with the point value needed to meet their goal and thus, did not read for enjoyment but rather to "answer the questions" correctly.

The extrinsic motivation tactics of A.R. works well for some students. For students who have already “cracked the code” and enjoy reading, A.R. is an easy grade. However, the students who are left behind and have not found *that* book that makes them identify as a reader, they continue to struggle and sometimes fall even further behind their peers. Even the choice aspect of A.R. is limiting. When teachers allow students to choose their books they are mostly interested in the point value and interest of the topic becomes a second priority to picking something they may truly enjoy reading. This may lead to students feeling as if they have to stick with a book that is not interesting to them, which may result in negative attitudes towards reading in general.

When I was first hired, A.R. was not part of the previous teacher’s curriculum so I did not think too much about the program. Students entering 7th grade are overjoyed to hear that they will not be using A.R., but then realized they would still be required to read independent novels. Students that enjoyed A.R. are likely the same students who enjoy reading and have thus found a genre or series that they rely on and rarely move away from. Therefore, it is not just a lack of motivation of independent reading, but also a lack of the courage to read outside of their comfort zone and to discover new opportunities for their reading skill to continue to expand and grow.

Based on the results from student and parent surveys and my own observations, my specific research question is: **What changes emerge in reading motivation when students have choice in reading material?**

Literature Review

The motivation for independent reading seems to go down a predictable path as it students advance in grades. As small children who have just learned to read, the enthusiasm for this newly acquired skill is at a high point in kindergarten. As these children continue their exposure to reading within a school setting, a mixed response about that excitement starts to

surface around the fourth grade. A secondary teacher's may have a different story about their students' enthusiasm for independent reading since the excitement for reading seems to dissipate in the middle and high school grades. This development and deterioration of reading motivation is clearly mentioned in Gallagher's (2009) *Readicide: How Schools are Killing Reading and What You Can Do About It*. As teachers, we strive to give students many exposures to reading material in our established curriculum. It has been shown that students who are immersed in wide and varied reading have a meaningful context not only for developing a lifetime reading habit, but also for learning vocabulary, grammar, comprehension, and other literacy skills (Sanacore and Palumbo, 2010, p. 180). However, the problem arises as students get older and the curriculum focus becomes more reliant on testing skills. When this focus changes and the skills that are meant to teach students to become independent readers are lost, the problems emerge. When this happens, we deny students the "opportunity to read long, complex works, we are starving a part of their brains, and we start producing kids like the students ... who can read but who cannot get below the surface of what they read" (Gallagher, 2009, p. 40). In addition, we owe it to our students to help them to become independent readers. As students get older, they are pulled in so many directions that they have less time to dedicate to reading or even develop the skill to become independent readers outside of the classroom. As Gallagher (2009) notes, students will leave high school lacking several higher order critical thinking skills that are promoted through independent reading.

The value of reading goes beyond simply creating stories in one's mind and making connections between the print and meaning. According to the National Endowment for Arts (2007), less than one-third of thirteen year olds are daily readers, which is a 14 percent decline from twenty years earlier. This data supports the idea that reading motivation is a real problem in our culture. Reading as a leisure activity is the best predictor of comprehension, vocabulary,

and reading speed. The value of reading is evident when looking at the 38 out of 41 studies where students who were given free voluntary reading time did as well or better in reading comprehension tests than students given traditional skill-based reading instruction (Gallagher, 2009, p. 19).

Time constraints in the teaching day have limited the students' exposure to the lessons that promote independent reading. As the years have passed, the overwhelming pressure to teach test preparation skills has increased and challenged the value put upon teaching independent reading skills. Sometimes teaching with a whole class common text, instead of an independent student selected text, can be seen as going against the concept of student choice as a motivator. However, Ivey (1999) also states that common texts can be "beneficial, especially when teachers set purposes and support reading by showing them ways to become active strategic readers" (p. 378). Using a common text as a scaffolding opportunity may help to model reading skills to developing and struggling readers in a way to support them as they continue to develop into independent readers. On the other hand, after a survey of reading experiences, whole class reading activities ranked in the middle of being both students' best and worst reading experiences. Of those who found it negative, they claimed the material was boring or they did not understand the purpose of the text (Ivey & Broaddus, 2001, p. 363-364). Even with skills being taught, it is hard to combat the negative attitudes expressed from students about reading when teachers are facing the lacking of control over the selection of the reading material that can offer differentiation to all levels of readers..

A common trend among the literature explains the presence of a disconnect between what students are taught to read (textbooks, common class texts, etc.) and what they read outside of school (Ivey & Broaddus, 2001, p. 353; Moley, Bandre & George, 2011, p. 248). Ivey (1999) states that many secondary students "do not lose interest in reading but instead lose

interest in the *kinds* of reading they are typically required to do in school” (p. 373). When students have no choice in a material to read they may develop a negative attitude toward reading or develop the notion that because their choice reading does not reflect that of the academic material it must not be the same. The research continues to express the importance of authentic tasks to create successful environments and experiences for all readers (Ivey, 1999, p. 374; Moley, Bradre & George, 2011, p. 252; Schussler, 2009, p. 119). According to Schussler (2009), “authentic tasks include opportunities to solve situations that mirror the kind of ambiguity students’ face in real life” (p. 119). Due to the disconnect between reading materials and required tasks, negative attitudes are developed, not only toward the specific text but also toward reading in general; these negative attitudes only seem to increase even as students continue through the education system. The reading motivation of students ultimately decreases as they endure reading tasks that lack real life application (Schussler, 2009, p. 119). Meanwhile, educators continue to become frustrated with the lack of motivation for students to become independent readers. This endless cycle is evidence of a broken system that continues to expect new and positive results.

Reading motivation at the middle school level generally revolves around a few specific elements to help develop successful readers. Student choice in materials, authentic tasks, and time to read are all valuable strategies to encourage independent reading. Studies involving both struggling readers (Ivey, 1999) in addition to the average outlook of middle school students (Ivey & Broaddus, 2001) indicate that self-selection is a strong motivator for reading. However, the influence of choice extends beyond the reading materials. Encompassing choice to the selection of partners, input on classroom/reading topics, and options for demonstrating learning “enables students to feel invested and commit a large effort to reading (Guthrie, Klauda, & Ho, 2013, p. 14). In addition, simply supplying a list of books students can select from is not

considered to be enough to count as student choice because the students are still limited by their selection in some way (Moley, Bandre & George, 2011, p. 250-251). The previous idea of what “choice” means impacts how students respond to the nature of the task.

The impact of choice for adolescent readers can have some powerful and positive results. When given choice, “students will choose to conquer and enjoy texts that are challenging by any measure (sentence length, complexity, frequency or unfamiliar words, assumed background knowledge, etc.) when they have background knowledge, vocabulary and interest” (Morgan & Wagner, 2013, p. 660). It is important at any level that students are allowed authentic outlets that support reading skills. In combination with such authentic tasks, such as conversational elements, students are able to foster their developing reading and comprehension skills. By allowing students to have a choice in their reading selection, students gain more control over reading and, as a result, they become more engaged in the reading tasks (Hall, Hedrick & Williams, 2014, p. 92; Morgan & Wagner, 2013, p. 665). The importance of student choice has been identified time and time again as one of the most notable contributors to the motivation to read. If students are allowed to select their own reading materials they are more interested in reading. However, the motivation should be combined with some form of cognitive competence and social interaction in order to fulfill and create a bond with a topic and establish a “deeper connection” (Moley, Bandre & George, 2011). This process and combination of elements will lead students to become more motivated, independent, and successful in reading abilities. By allowing students to read a book and have opportunities to converse and work in an engaging learning environment, students are set up to ultimately experience the value of reading and perhaps establish the motivation needed to become invested independent readers. This ability to make decisions is a crucial part of being involved in independent reading. This decision making aspect is more difficult to accomplish than the

simplicity of what many perceive as the simply allowing students to read without a specific purpose in place other than to read quietly. Because of this hands-off approach, students may not be as invested in the reading tasks. When deprived of input in decision making, students feel powerless and demotivated, making their investment in the task of independent reading less of an interest which can cause even more of a rift in the student perception of reading.

Authenticity is one way to demonstrate relevance to students. Authentic Tasks, such as intellectual engagement, are the ultimate goal of motivation. When tasks are authentic the results promote positive change, provide support, and demonstrate relevance (Moley, Bandre & George, 2011, p. 251). The point that students want teachers to challenge them academically proves that students may become more invested in the task of independent reading, especially with literature that is textually complex (Schlusser, 2009, p. 116), In addition, Schlusser (2009) claims that students possess “the desire for a challenge” which is ultimately “mirrored with authentic conversation” (p.116). The want and need for students to be challenged also requires that the tasks be aligned with instructional support, which may be difficult to attain (Moley, Bandre & George, 2011, p. 251). The real-ness of the conversation that is fostered on reading is enough to take the pressure off of students who have any form of anxiety that may relate to the pressure of reading with a task such a book report . Even more so, this approach helps to create an environment that opens up the book-talk atmosphere.

The benefit of giving students choice when it comes to reading materials proves to be an example of differentiation in the classroom. A classroom of readers has to support multiple abilities in order to be successful. The fact that in many schools the poorest readers read the least, often as much as three times less than their peers, supports the fact that independent reading can reach students at varied levels (Miller, 2012, p. 89). Even more so, because developing, or struggling, readers often lack the experience and confidence to choose books for

themselves, they need sustained reading for extended periods of time to be able to consistently apply reading strategies to a variety of texts (Miller, 2012, p. 89). As students get older they are getting less time outside of school to read, but students that struggle to read voluntarily engage in less reading than good readers (Gallagher, 2013, p. 516). As teachers, there comes a point where we expect students to become independent readers. As a whole, students get limited opportunities to explore their own interest in reading, to read at their own pace, or to make their own decisions about whether or not to read a book (Ivey & Broaddus, 2001). Understanding that if the goal is to get students to read more, we, as teachers, should go beyond the point value in a grade book. By doing so, we might encourage the students to be able to practice the skills needed to become independent and critical thinkers.

To help combat the struggle of reading outside of school, many schools have employed the use of a Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) model. However, there are several issues with why SSR does not have the same effect on all students. One of the common themes pointed out in the research is the effect that the overall classroom environment has on the success of this model of independent reading time (Ivey, 1999, p.374) . Independent reading time is more effective “when students observed their teachers demonstrating excitement about their own books and when teachers encourage students to share their reading experiences during individual conferences and small-group peer discussions” (Sanacore and Palumbo, 2010, p. 180). Unfortunately, the integrity of the program is lost as several teachers do not use this as a way to model the value of reading, but instead may use this as a work time. Even more important is the display of reading as a value in the classroom arrangement. It is clear that teachers send a powerful message when they intentionally fill their classroom with books that match their students’ interests, provide support to develop concentration skills, and schedule time to read and discuss books (Hall, Hedrick & Williams, 2014, p. 96). When students are

exposed to such an environment, they begin to feel that reading is valued and that it is more than just a “time filler”. One of the most valuable messages we can send to students about reading is through literacy-rich exposures. Giving students, especially young adolescents, “opportunities to browse an organized and appealing library” in addition to helping them to develop “scaffolding strategies for selecting materials...they are more inclined to select and read appropriate materials” (Sanacore and Palumbo, 2010, p. 180). It is important to recognize the power that we set forth in demonstrating the value of reading. Once we are able to show that independent reading is an attainable skill, students may begin to change their own perspectives and ultimately result in the most opportune time for increased motivation.

My methods are based on the Reader Response Theory (Rosenblatt, 2004), which focuses on the readers and their experiences with literary works. Through imploring authentic tasks and conversations as well as inviting students to become more involved in their reading tasks, I hope to continue to encourage the students to become a more active agent in their individual reading experience. The intention was not to have the readers focus heavily on the author, but more so on their experience and understandings created by interacting with the text. Through Louise Rosenblatt’s Reader Response model (1995), each reader creates her own, possibly unique, text-related performance and experience. In addition, the intention of this study was to encourage students to make connections to literature to aid in increasing reading motivation.

Methods:

The data for this action research project was collected from September 2016 to November 2016 from the 130 seventh grade students enrolled in the literature portion of the Language Arts class . The students attend a rural Wisconsin district that has a total enrollment of 1,750 students (4K – 12). The specific students for this research attend a 5-8th grade middle

school that has 474 enrolled students. Of these students, 95% identify as White/non-Hispanic and 26% qualify for subsidized lunch. There are no current English Language Learners enrolled in the school.

During the first week of instruction, students took a Reader Interest Survey [See Appendix A] to help gather information about their current reading interest and habits. In addition to the survey, informal observations on particular students' reading and book selection have been noted and used as a reference when considering their responses to the Reader Interest Survey. These observations and the initial survey information have helped to create an understanding of how the students value reading and how they identify as a particular type of reader.

At the end of the second week, each student was categorized into the self-identified reader type. By doing this, I was able to track trends and clearly see the population of each group. After students were categorized, two students were randomly selected in each of the following categories: "reader", "non-reader" and the "undefined/in-between". To get a better sense of what drives and defines these types of readers, a conference was conducted [see Appendix B: *Pre/Post Interview Questions*] with each of the selected students during the second and third week of the study. On a large scale, general information about motivation patterns was collected from the whole group, but specific information from each reader type category was collected via student conference.

To fully understand the motivation of choice reading, the students also participated in a non-choice component. The students in this study also read the novel, *The Giver* (Lowry, 1993) as a whole class text. Students were not allowed to use this novel as independent, or out-of-class reading, due to only one classroom set of 35 books available. To provide students with a consistent schedule, at least one full class day per week was featured as an independent

reading day, allowing for me to conference with students and make observations of reading habits. Students were encouraged to use the time to read their independent book when given free time, but not to advance with the class text, *The Giver*. The class text was accompanied with various lessons, nonfiction articles, class discussions, and activities used to model and expose students to a new genre, dystopian novels, they may not have otherwise considered previously. The dystopian genre is a very popular genre that is defined as a society characterized by poverty, squalor or oppression.

On a bi-weekly basis, participating students responded to reading motivation surveys that asked about their independent choice book and/or the required text [see Appendix C]. These surveys were given on the second week, again at the fourth week of the study, and then finally, at the sixth week of the study to reflect the trends and progress of the reading skills and growth of motivation.

By the end of week eight, the categorized students ("reader", "non-reader" and "undetermined/in-between") participated in the post-interview conference to follow up on their reader interest survey responses and to get a better understanding of reading habits of those students in the particular reader type category. This survey allowed more follow up to any changes they made since first identifying their reader type. All students participated in an individual conference, but only the selected students responses were recorded for tracking purposes.

The interview responses were recorded with the intention to identify trends and patterns between the students who identified similarly, as well as commonalities between the other two categories. These notes were helpful to get to know the trends and the general thoughts and mindsets of the whole class. As each conference progressed, notes were recorded for future

use as possible topics to address in one-on-one interviews with similar students regarding reader type identification.

The last method used to understand the reader type categories was through page tracking. By using a generic class roster, each student was sorted into his/her identified category. At the start of the week, students recorded what book they were reading and what page they were on as a starting point. For each following day, the students were given class reading time to allow for conferences and to advance on their choice reading. At the end of the independent reading time each student recorded his/her page. At the end of the week, the numbers of total pages read was privately recorded by the teacher and totaled up to see the growth and trends across reader types. This also allowed for a check-in point on readers who seemed to abandon books, leave their books at home, or make little to no progress on independent reading materials.

Analysis

Due to the variety of data points that were collected via surveys and interviews, the analysis section is organized into sections: Pre & Post- Survey Results, Parent Survey, Motivation Survey, Student Conferences and Trends, and Reading Frequency by Reader Type.

Pre & Post-Survey Results:

One of the first things the students did was to identify with their own reading habits and determine which reading label best fit them. On the “Reader Interest Survey” [See Appendix A] given during the first week of school, students self-identified as a “reader”, “non-reader” or “in-between”. This survey indicated that only 27.3% of the students identified as readers and 31.3% identified as non-readers. However, I was more surprised by the results of the “in-between” category which was 41.4% of the students. This indicated to me that the students

either had a negative understanding of what it means to be a reader or perhaps they lacked confidence in their reading abilities. [See Figure 1]

After seven weeks of instruction, conferencing, and independent reading, the students re-evaluated their reader type and took the survey again to update and make changes to their original self-identified label. The results showed some positive trends, specifically in the increase in students who identified as “readers” (46%) and the decrease in students who identified as “non-readers” (17.5%) [See Figure 2].

Figure 1:

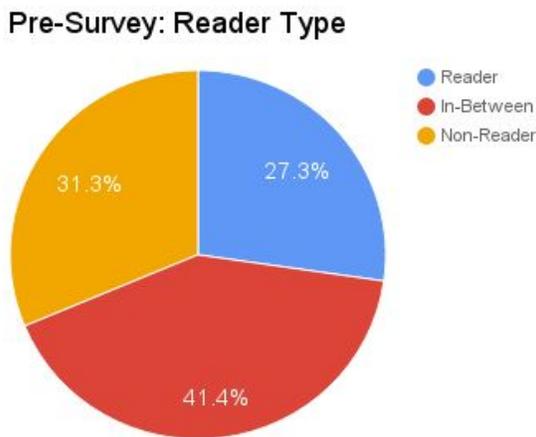
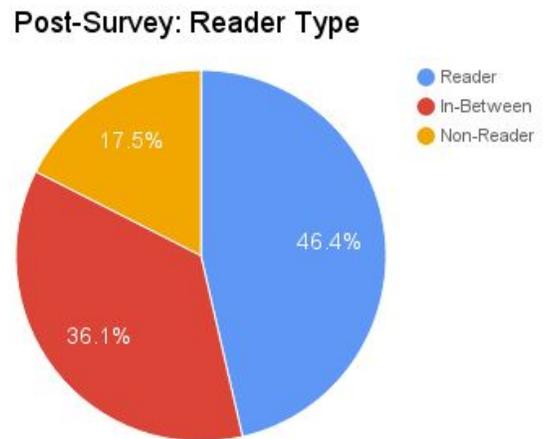


Figure 2:



Between the two surveys, there was a 39% positive change, indicating that students who originally identified as a “non-reader” or “in-between” changed their category by the second survey. Based on the comparison of the two surveys, there was a 16% change from the “non-reader” category to the “in-between” category. In addition, there was a 19% change from the “in-between” category to the “reader” and a 4% change from the “non-reader” to the reader category. It is important to note that 54% of the students indicated that they did not change categories from their original identifying label, which is not surprising after only seven weeks of

instruction. As we continue these practices that have been instilled, I hope to see more positive changes.

As I looked closer at the original self-identification, I found that 94% of self-identified students in the “reader” category scored at or above grade level on the STAR Reading Screener. As we continue to look at the trends, 52% of self-identified students in the “in-between” category and 45% of students who identified in the “non-reader” scored at or above grade level on the STAR Reading screener. This correlation is interesting to note since many of what makes students feel successful is the feedback they get about their reading. If the STAR Reading screener indicates that the students are below grade level, the student is more likely to self-assess themselves on how they feel they fit with the feedback. The negativity of the feedback may influence the students’ identification with a reader type category.

Parent Survey:

To get a better understanding of how the students' reading habits have formed, I requested the help of the students’ parents. Through an anonymous survey [See Appendix E] I asked parents their honest observations and feelings towards reading as a starting point for understanding the students. As a result, I learned that 66% of parents felt that reading was important for their child, 29% felt that reading was only a little important, and 4% felt that it was not important.

The first parent survey was given about the time that the students were self-identifying with a type of reader. At the beginning of the school year, 55% of parents reported that their child was not reading for fun and has not read a book for some time. This was not surprising since it was the end of summer, and many student responses indicated they did not read over the summer months. [See Figure 3]

At the conclusion of the study, I asked parents to complete a similar survey to focus on any changes in reading habits they may have observed in their students. Knowing that all students have been reading a book, I found it interesting that only 55.6% of parents reported that their child was currently reading a book outside of the classroom. This is a massive improvement from the first survey that indicated that only 32% of students were currently reading a book for fun [See Figure 4].

Figure 3: First Parent Survey: Reading Observations

Which best describes your child?



Figure 4: Second Parent Survey

Although 25% of parents stated that their child enjoyed reading prior to this study, 44% of parents indicated that they have seen a positive change in their student's reading habits since the start of the study and school year. Of the parents surveyed, 82% of parents indicated that their students were talking about books at home. This could be the class novel, *The Giver*, or their choice novel since it was not specified in the question. Either way, it is a positive sign, since many of these students would not talk about books let alone share them with their parents.

In addition to the data collected from this survey, some parents left comments that helped to understand the large group of students that I was studying. One parent commented, "My child does not enjoy reading at home and only reads outside of school if forced to for a grade." This goes against the whole purpose of the study. This was not meant to show that they do or do not enjoy reading but instead that they are motivated to read, regardless of being forced for a grade or not.

However, other parents were able to comment about the general attitude of reading after only seven weeks of school. One parent commented, "[My child is] definitely more engaged in the book being read in class as it is being talked about at home." Another parent stated, "My child is discovering new genres which is exciting to watch and listen to." These types of comments help to reflect back on the intentions of the study, which were to help students to become more motivated for independent reading.

Figure 5:

Motivation Survey:

Since the focus of this study was to explore what changes occur when choice is a factor with reading, the students participated in three different “motivation surveys” [See Appendix C]. These surveys did not have an impact on their grade and were done anonymously to protect identity. All students even those with IEPs and other reading supports completed the surveys.

Survey One focused on the non-choice selection, *The Giver*, and the motivation and engagement students were experiencing based on this novel. Survey Two, given two weeks later to help them establish a choice novel, focused on their independent reading book. Survey Three focused on both selections and asked students to give feedback to help identify more motivation triggers that may increase reading habits.

In regards to the first survey about the non-choice selection, 52% of students surveyed said they were encouraged to read more. In fact, 58% of the students stated they did not mind that the book was selected for them, which is often a reason why students do not read class assigned books. However, it is important to note, that the novel was never assigned as an out of class reading book, but was read together aloud as a class. As a result, only 21% of students stated they were not as interested in the book because it was “assigned” and thus, became less motivated. The idea that they did not have a say in the novel did give some negative feedback, but after finishing the novel, many students liked that they were able to read something outside of their usual genre selection.

The second survey allowed students to reflect on their choice novels that they had individually selected, sometimes with recommendations from peers or the teacher. Of the choice novels, 73% of students indicated choice positively influenced them to read more. This is supportive of the research that states that choice is a positive influence on reading habits . When students are allowed choice, they are more invested in the process (Hall, Hedrick & Williams, 2014, p. 92; Morgan & Wagner, 2013, p. 660).

However, one common trend was obvious as the study continued. When choice is involved, especially at the middle school age, many students struggle to know where to start to look for a book. Of the students I worked with, 44% stated they needed help with finding good books to read. By doing a class novel, this issue was resolved and it allowed for students to be exposed to a book they would likely not select on their own. Only 19% of students indicated they would be likely to pick *The Giver* as an independent novel. However, after finishing the novel, 56% of the student indicated they were interested in reading the rest of the series.

Student Conferences and Interviews:

Through the duration of the seven week study I conducted two different types of conferences with each of the 130 7th grade students. The first conference meeting was an individual conference that took place shortly after the student had completed the reader interest survey. The students signed up for an individual conference that lasted between two and five minutes in length. The purpose of this conference was to get to know each student as a reader and to help to identify what we could work on together to help ensure his or her reading success. This was very helpful to monitor and ask questions as to their reading style and their reading goals for the year. As the research Moley, Bandre & George (2011) suggests, the

opportunities for authentic tasks such as social interaction and conversational elements are beneficial to increasing motivation and engagement with reading tasks (p. 252).

As I met with each of the different types of readers randomly selected, I started to notice some patterns they had in common and even some surprising things I had not originally considered. To start the conference, I asked each individual about his/her self-identified reader type and why they selected that type. We continued with questions that focused on their reading goals and their reading habits. [See Appendix B and Appendix C]

When I talked with the two individuals who represented the “reader” category, I found that they identified in this category for very different reasons. Ben^{*1} identified as a “reader” because he “really enjoys reading” and even stated that he looks forward to it when he has some down time. Ben showed lots of enthusiasm towards reading and had a reading goal that was challenging but still attainable for his abilities. As a reader, Ben showed that he was aware of his abilities and weaknesses by mentioning that he wants to work on comprehension with the focus on “not racing” through books. He even commented that he was looking forward to rereading the Harry Potter series because he “really enjoyed it.”

Another reader, Aaron, explained during his conference that “good books” made him a reader. What was surprising was that he confessed he does not read all the time and because of this new information he was under the impression that that would make him more of an “in-between” reader. Aaron claimed that when he has a good book he tends to read whenever he has time to read. He said he mostly reads at school and only sometimes reads at home since he is busy outside of school. He explained that he has a good place to read at home because it is “kind of quiet”. At the time of the conference he was reading an informational text on D-Day. One surprising thing about Aaron’s conference was that his goal for the year was to

¹ *The names of all students have been changed.

read eight books. After a quick discussion of why he felt like this was a good goal, we modified the goal to eight books over 300 pages through the course of the academic year. In general, Aaron explained that he has an idea of what to read but no list of books to read. Aaron struggled with coming up with something he was proud of in regards to his reading, which was a little surprising. When I talked to Aaron the enthusiasm for reading was not at the same level as it was for Ben. The fact that he categorized himself as a reader does make sense but it ultimately shows that even though students may identify under the same reader type.

When I conferenced with the “non-reader” students, Carter and Vicky, I noticed the justification to their identities had similarities to those of the “in-between” students. For example, when I met with Carter he explained that he is a “non-reader” because he “doesn’t really read books at all, unless I find something that I like.” Similarly, Vicky stated that she is “not very good at finding books that I like enough to keep reading them.” However, she continued to state that once she does find a book, she feels that she actually enjoys reading. Carter also expressed that he was proud of finding a book on his own and could give a title of a book that he had previously read and enjoyed. Vicky had a basic idea of what she liked and look forward to, but could not really give a title of a book she had read and enjoyed. She continued to talk about the current book she had been working on for a while and explained that she was “easily confused” by the book due to switching of characters. When I asked how she selected the book she stated that she randomly selected it one day in the school library and thought the cover looked nice. Both “non-readers” stated that they normally do not have time to read at home so when they do read it is at school.

The “non-readers” and “in-between” readers had a lot in common. For example, Jason, an “in-between” reader, claimed that he was not a “real” reader because he does not like fictional stories but prefers “factual and informational books” mostly related to science and

technology. During the time of the conference, he was reading an informational text on the periodic table of elements. During our conference together we talked about what he plans to do with the information and he could not really explain more than he just finds it interesting. Similar to the other students, he stated that he does not really read at home and continued to explain that he does not read unless he is required. One of the most alarming things was when he was asked if he was enjoying the books he reads he said he "sort of" did.

The second "in-between" reader, Tegan, also claimed that he does not "get a lot of time to read. I haven't find a book that I really, really like." Similar to the previous students, he stated that he only reads at school because he does not have time to read outside of school. Tegan was proud that he finally found a book he likes. When asked about his previous experiences with reading, he was able to describe a book that he enjoyed and even gave the specific library shelf it was on in the library. His ultimate goal was to stay "on-track with reading". When I asked him to clarify he was able to explain what he knew about his own reading habits. He said he is aware that his reading patterns are very inconsistent. Tegan confessed that he "would read a lot one day, but then not pick up the book for a few days and it would take me a long time to finish up a book." He explained that he really wants to focus on making a habit of reading a little every day to finish a book faster.

All of these students, regardless of reader type, exhibited similar patterns in regards to reading habits. Not reading outside of school was the most notable similarity since only one student claimed he made an effort to read at home. What was interesting to note was that the only two students who made a comment about their own reading abilities and had a plan for how they were going to improve were not in the same reading category. The "non-reader" and "in-between" readers seemed to overlap in similarities and could have easily have been in either category. The overall enthusiasm and passion was most noticed in one of each category, but

specifically the students who were most proud of finding a book on their own. The students who struggled to find a book to read at this point in the study had a noticeable lower enthusiasm and almost acted ashamed of their reading habits during the conference interviews.

The second conference was to establish more of a reading community and to focus on the authentic task of social interaction. As a result of the first conference, I found that many students felt that they had no one to share their reading with and that it was limited to the book and the reader. This perspective led me to focus on the importance of sharing the reading experience to build a sense of community.

This second conference was done in small groups that allowed me to focus on the interests and reading styles of each of the students involved. The groups were put together based on similar interests and book history. The group sizes were between three and five students, depending upon the overall class size. These informal conversations allowed students to hear other students discuss when they read, what troubles they are having with reading, and even make suggestions for future reading plans. One of the most surprising things that came from these groups was students listening to other students talk about their books and deciding if it sounded interesting. In a few instances, a student would share with the group that he/she were not really enjoying their book anymore. This type of situation allowed other students to chime in to give suggestions for another read. Even more rewarding was when they would pull a book out of the classroom library and explain why it would be a good selection. Many times students were in groups with people that were outside of their normal circle of friends, so they had to warm up to each other. Not every conference grouping allowed for it to be student led since it was so early in the school year. Because group conferencing was new method, I did have to take the lead by asking questions to the whole group with the students chiming in as they could. However, as I continue to use group conferences as a strategy I hope

to focus on establishing a sense of community and to hear someone else talk about his/her experiences with reading, other than the teacher.

When we discussed as a full class about their preferences for conference types, either individual or small group, it was a pretty mixed reply. There was value in both but the purpose of the conference has to be clear in order for the gains to be made.

Reading Frequency by Reader Type:

An additional data point that I collected was to have the students read daily with a check in tracker to monitor their reading and track their page numbers. As I explained to the students, this would help me understand their reading habits outside of the classroom. I was ultimately looking for common patterns among the different groups. I only collected this data for one week but the students since have requested it be done more frequently since they like that it holds them accountable and they can see their own progress. This was not graded but was explained that this would help me to see their progress of how they read outside of my classroom.

Because this was a shortened week of only three days due to inservices, I tracked the page they started on and the book title they were currently reading. When a student abandoned or finished a book, I also indicated that on the tracking sheet.. Many students have requested that they have a way to track their own progress in pages, instead of by book titles since it may take them a while to finish a whole book whereas pages give them a better indication of their progress. One student commented that she wished I did it more often since she finally found a book that she is enjoying reading and knows her page numbers have increased significantly.

After looking at each student's progress, I calculated the average pages read and looked at their scores in accordance to the reader category they originally identified. On average, the students in the "reader" category read 29.5 pages per day, ranging from 1.5 pages per day up to

95 pages per day. The “in-between” students read 16.9 pages per day, ranging from 1.5 pages per day up to 48 pages per day, and the “non-readers” read 11.5 pages per day, ranging from 2 pages per day up to 45.5 pages per day..

Based on this data collection, I noticed that 62% of “readers”, 40% of “in-between” and only 32% of “non-readers” read over 10 pages per day. This may be a reflection of the number of students who bring their book home or to other classes and how the students use the time set aside for independent reading.

However, I wanted to look a little more closely at the progress of the students in the groups. I specifically looked at students who were identified as below grade level on the STAR screener: Based on this information, I was able to look and see which students were in the group. There were two students in the “reader” category, seven of students in the “in-between” category, and eleven in the “non-reader” category who were identified as below grade level. Of those individuals, none of the “reader” students read over 10 pages a day, three of the “in-between” students read over 10 pages day, and seven “non-readers” read over 10 pages a day. I found this interesting since I would have originally thought that the reason why the “readers”, even though they are not at grade level, would have identified in this group because they were active readers. However, I was surprised to find that the “non-readers” were more invested in regards to the amount of pages being read which may be an indication of motivation to read independently. In addition, I wanted to look at the books that were being read and tracked by the “non-readers” that were obviously getting them to read. All of these books were in the target grade level of the individual students. The books included some high interest books ranging from *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*, estimated at a fifth grade reading level, to the *Divergent* series, estimated at an eighth grade reading level. Even though the fifth grade reading level may not have been appropriate for a student who is more advanced, it is important to understand

that in a multi-ability classroom readers come at all levels. In this case, the reading material was appropriate for each student as was documented by the daily check-ins via the page tracker.

Strengths & Limitations:

Although reading outside of class is still a struggle, the focus of the study was on the motivation to read in general. In regards to both types of reading, choice and non-choice, both showed to be beneficial and brought about some positive data. Choice was an obvious motivational piece for reading but even the non-choice class novel yielded some positive insight.

One of the limitations of this study is that I could only control what happened in my own classroom during my class time. It is difficult to manage and help students develop if they are not willing to invest more time. I only have access to their progress for 44 minutes a day. Since this study was done in a rural school district where farming is a main source of income, many students have chores that other communities would not have to take into consideration. This is important to notice since many of the students did claim that time outside of school was a factor in their lack of reading.

The second parent survey does not measure *what* specifically has impacted the change, but instead focused on the idea that a change has occurred. Since they did not read *The Giver* outside of class for homework, the only reading they might be participating in would be their choice reading. For this study's purpose, we will assume that the reading habits that are being observed by the parents are those that come from the choice reading.

Another limitation I noticed was that choice was difficult if students do not know where to look. Many students struggled with the idea of being able to pick out a book for themselves. Since many students relied on the Accelerated Reader score to influence them on what they should read via point value, many students were overwhelmed by the options they had to pick their own book. The classroom library in my room is organized by genre or similar authors to

make it easier to locate books that may be of interest. The classroom library set up was done to help students locate books they might be interested in and it seems to be doing just that.

However, it is easy to rely solely on the classroom library genre organization and not teach the skills they will need when they only have the school library as a resource. When the students visit the school library they are often at a loss to find books that are of interest due to their lack of understanding of how a library is set up. This led to a mini-lesson on how to locate books to help foster and develop an understanding of how the library is organized.

Concluding Thoughts:

Many secondary students face a harsh reality when it comes to reading in our educational system. What is even worse is that so many students have the potential to identify as readers, but are missing authentic opportunities to develop those skills to really partake in these lifelong skills. How reading is taught is of no fault to the students. However, as a response to the ever-growing desire to test, much of the reading focus has been re-adjusted to focus on the new priorities of state testing.

One of the common factors observed through this study was the confidence levels in reading abilities. Many students who are reading at or above grade level or who are avid readers do not necessarily see themselves as “readers” due to their lack of confidence. In addition, many students believe that if they put a book back they are failing as readers. It is important for them to see that abandoning a book or taking a while to read a book is normal. It is all part of the cycle of being a reader.

The push for extrinsic motivation with grades or prizes, as found with A.R., tends to outweigh the intrinsic motivation that is naturally derived from independent reading. Even parents are aware of the challenge of getting students to enjoy reading. Through the Parent

Survey, a parent commented that her student will not read outside of school unless a grade is tied to it. This may be true, but the point is not to “force” the student to read, but rather to instill the joy of reading.

As a response to the overwhelming amount of students continuing to claim that they had not made more effort to read at home, even after the second conference, I altered the classroom structure to allow students to read for at least 10 minutes at the beginning of everyday. This allowed me to check in with students, help find books, and give them almost 20 minutes more per week to dive into their book than what they previously had with the old scheduled reading time. I found that many students were only reading from their independent book in my class. Since I was only having independent reading day on Fridays while we read *The Giver* together in class, many students were not reading outside of class. So when they finally got time to read, they were likely confused as to what happened in their independent reading book since the last time they read or simply lost interest in the story all-together. The decision to change the frequency of reading in class was made to allow students to have more time and be able to really become invested in their books. The consistency of the schedule has since made the value of the reading time more apparent and fewer books have been abandoned.

Since this modification to the independent reading time, I feel that the students are more invested and know that reading time is a priority for me too. If after I finish up with a conference and there is still time left, I pick up my independent reading book and silently read as I stand or sit at the front of the class. The students do notice that I am using this time to read instead of grade papers, take attendance, or other teacher duties. The one day the students did not get the reading time, they actually expressed disappointment that they were all ready and actually

enjoyed the time to unwind before starting a new lesson. For many students, this specific reading time has become very useful for them to become invested in their reading. .

While observing students I was surprised by one student who I was worried had already written off reading as something that would be an impossibility. During the first weeks of school, a male student, who identified as a “non-reader”, approached me to tell me that there was no way that he would ever be a reader, “it’s not just not my thing and it probably never will be”. He was determined that there were just more important things to do with his time rather than reading. Even his parent survey indicated that reading was not important at home. We worked together to get him into a book based on what he told me he enjoyed. We focused on hunting and fishing books by Gary Paulsen, and other books that featured outdoor adventure. This process took a while and I could see he was feeling like he had proved his point. One day I did hear him telling another student about a book he was reading and how it was really interesting. However, even after finishing Gary Paulsen’s *Guts*, this individual still resented the fact that he was a reader and resorted to using independent reading time to read informational text, confiding in me that he was mostly skipping around and looking at the pictures. He told me he just “couldn’t find anything” he liked. At the conclusion of the study, this particular student approached me to tell me he finally found a book he thought he could enjoy. I asked him about the informational text he had been observed reading for the last week and he told me he got bored of wasting his time with something that was not really interesting and decided to look at the class library for anything that looked better. He showed me the novel he selected, *Guts and Glory: The American Civil War*, which was at 7th grade level. This was a huge accomplishment since he had been trying to read books that were well below his reading level prior to this advancement.

Of course, not every student has changed his/her reading habits or attitudes about reading. At the conclusion of the study some students who originally identified as “non-readers” were just that. As young people, they are very observant and attempted to answer based on what they think authorities *want* to hear. After several conferences, many book suggestions, and even some class discussions, I hope that I was able to help all students to understand that just because a book is not interesting does not make a student any less of a reader. I never punished students for putting back a book, or embarrassed them if they were reading something that was losing interest for them. I simply helped them to move on so they knew that this was all part of the process of what *real* readers go through. Like most reading teachers, I want my students to understand that anyone at any level can be a reader, regardless of what a test says, what types of books they are interested in, or how many books are not their style.

Implications for Future Research:

As I continue to look forward to the rest of the school year with this group of students, I would like to focus on the upward trend of independent reading motivation. However, there are some changes I plan to make to hopefully increase reading motivation and have a better understanding of my student group. One change I want to make is to have the students define the different types of readers with word associations. By hosting this as a class discussion I hope to encourage a more consistent and thorough understanding of what each of these reader types “looks” like. For this study, I gave the students the definition of what I would classify as a typical “reader” and “non-reader”. Because I constructed a generalized meaning for them with little input from them, I feel that students may have attached a different meaning to each of the reader type categories.

One thing that I want to work on throughout this year is having more of a community to continue to build this idea that we are all working towards being better readers. This idea of community may be helpful as a support system to help show growth, especially amongst middle schoolers who are very influenced by their peers. I plan to do this with more conferences in varied approaches as well as literature circles and other socially interactive based elements to reflect on authentic tasks, which are valuable to increasing motivation and engagement with reading.

Another thing I would like to focus on as we continue the year is to get students to see the value of carrying their reading habits into other classrooms. This may mean that I have to offer some incentives and ask my content-area colleagues to help me to hold the students accountable. To do this, I hope to have the students track their reading and chart their own patterns. By holding them accountable they may find value in the information they gain and may even start to see some positive changes, unlike this study where I was the one doing the tracking.

In addition, I ultimately want the students to become more aware of *why* they do not read. Many students explained that they do not have any time due to studying and sports. However, I want to have students focus on how they use their reading time when they are given time to read, specifically at school. By tracking distractions, students will become aware of their surroundings and ultimately be able to determine their own patterns. This could be done through some online check-in system or through their personal tracking sheets. I hope to use these as resources to help them see their own development and growth as readers.

One of the most alarming things I found through this study was that even though I knew that every student had a book he/she was reading in my class, when I did the parent survey many parents claimed their student was not reading. As I continue this year, I hope to focus on

the importance of carrying on reading habits that are established in our classroom community to other environments, such as home or other classes. This may be done through some group conferences to talk more about when and how each student finds time to read. In addition, I want to make sure that I give attention to the students who already consider themselves “readers”. These students may not need my support, but they do need a community of readers to share with and challenge them.

Ultimately, even though this study has produced some positive results there is still more work to be done in order to continue to encourage students to read independently. As I continue to motivate students through their choice of reading materials. By doing this I will put their best interests in mind and focus on what I can do to help support them on their reading development journey.

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Appendix

Table of Contents

Appendix A: Reader Interest Survey.....	Page 38
Appendix B: Conference Question Prompt.....	Page 41
Appendix C: Student Conference Form.....	Page 43
Appendix D: Motivation Surveys	
Survey 1: Choice Book.....	Page 44
Survey 2: <i>The Giver</i>	Page 46
Survey 3: Choice and Non-Choice.....	Page 48

Appendix A

Reader Interest Survey

Name: _____

Hour: _____

1. Do you consider yourself a:
 - a. Reader
 - b. Non-Reader
 - c. In-Between/Unsure

2. If you pick up a book and you don't like it, what are you most likely to do?
 - a. Keep reading it to get to the end

- b. Put it back and find something else
- c. Carry it around even though you've stopped reading it
- d. Other (student input response)

3. Do you find reading enjoyable?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Sort of

If you answered "Sort of", please explain.

4. What is a recent book you read and enjoyed?

5. Do you have a favorite author? If yes, who is it?

6. Are you currently reading anything?

7. On average, how long do you spend reading each day?

____ Hours ____ Minutes

8. How do you choose a book to read?

9. During the summer, I read ____ book(s) for fun.

- a. No books
- b. 1 book

- c. 2-3 books
- d. 4-5 books
- e. More than 5 books

10. When I read for pleasure, I pick the following... (Check all that apply)

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Novels | <input type="checkbox"/> Poetry Books | <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic Novels |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper | <input type="checkbox"/> History Books | <input type="checkbox"/> Sports |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fantasy | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | <input type="checkbox"/> Mystery |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fiction | <input type="checkbox"/> Biography | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Fiction |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Humorous | <input type="checkbox"/> Scary | |

11. What is your all-time favorite book?

12. This year, I would to read a book about...

13. What problems do you have when you are reading?

- I don't like reading out loud
- Sometimes the words are too big for me to understand
- I can't remember anything I read
- I can't find anything that interests me or I get distracted easily
- I have minor problems and overall enjoy reading

14. What can Mrs. Steiner do this year to help you improve your reading or keep you interested in reading?

15. What topics do you like to read about?

16. What is something you'd like to accomplish this year in Reading 7?

(What is your "Big Goal"?)

Appendix B: Conference Question Prompts

Pre/Post Interview Question List

(Based on Reader's Interest Survey)

1. Which category do you most closely identify with?

Reader

In-between

Non-Reader

*Why do you feel you fit in category?

2. When do you read at home?

School?

Other?

3. Describe your perfect place to read.

4. Do you think that finding time to read is easy or hard for you? Why?
5. What obstacles do you find that make reading difficult? Time or skill based?
6. Are you currently reading a book and/or do you have plans for future reading?
7. How well do you feel you read?
 - Below grade level
 - Average
 - above grade level
8. What are your feelings toward Free-Reading Time (SSR)?
9. When you finish a book, what do you do? What's your next step?
10. What makes you abandon a book?
11. When you don't like a book, what do you do?
12. What makes you want to read a book? How do you decide to start a particular book?
13. Is reading important to you? Do you feel that it is important to those around you (parents, friends, etc.)?
14. How do you find out about books that you'd like to read?
15. Are you successful in choosing your own books to read? Why/Why not?
16. If given the opportunity to choose your own books, would this motivate you to read more or make it more difficult to select a book? How might this affect your attitude toward/against reading?
17. If a book was selected for you and assigned to read, what would your general attitude be?

Appendix C: Reading Conference Form

Book Conference Notes

Name: _____
Group # _____ Hour #: _____

Big Year Goal:

Quarter 1 Goal:

My Reading Skill Reflection:

Something I'm Proud of:

I Need Help/Support/Guidance With:

1st Conference Notes:

Book Discussed: _____ Date: _____
Comments:

2nd Conference Notes:

Book Discussed: _____ Date: _____
Comments:

Appendix D: Motivation Surveys

Motivation Survey- Choice Book

Book Title: _____

Author: _____

1. What influenced your decision to select this book?

___ Other people's recommendation

___ teacher ___ friends ___ parents

___ Library presentations

___ Book Award Posters

___ Reading the back/summary

___ Similar to what I've read

Series Author Genre

Randomly selected

Other: _____

2. Would you normally select this book on your own?

- a. Yes, it's similar to what I've read before
- b. Probably
- c. No, this is different from what I normally select for myself

3. Are you enjoying reading this book?

Yes No Sort of

If "sort of", explain what is keeping you interested and what is making it less enjoyable:

—

4. Are you interested in how this book ends?

Yes No Sort of

If "sort of", explain what is keeping you interested and/or what is making it less enjoyable:

—

5. Are you interested in reading more works that are... (Select all that apply)

By the same author

Similar in topic

Similar in genre

Similar in format

Other: _____

6. Has this book encouraged you to read more? (Select one)

- Yes, I already have plans for my next book to read
 - Yes, but I'm not sure what to read next
 - Maybe, I haven't decided/still trying to finish this book.
 - No, this book has had little/no impact on encouraging me to read
 - No, this book has had a negative impact on my reading habits.
- Other: _____

7. Do you feel that by having a choice has helped to motivate you to become more independent reader?

- Yes- The choice adds to encouraging me to become more of an independent reader
- No- The choice has made it more difficult or decreased my reading motivation
- Maybe- I'm still not completely motivated to read independently
- No change

Motivation Survey- Required Text: *The Giver*

1. If not required, how likely would have selected this book on your own (choice reading)?

- a. Very, it's similar to what I've read before
- b. Maybe, but probably not first choice
- c. Not likely, this is different from what I normally select for myself

2. Are you enjoying reading this book?

- Yes No Sort of

If “sort of”, explain what is keeping you interested and what is making it less enjoyable:

—

3. Are you interested in how this book ends?

____ Yes ____ No ____ Sort of

If “sort of”, explain what is keeping you interested and what is making it less enjoyable:

—

4. How likely are you to read other books by the same author?

- a. Very, it's similar to what I've read before
- b. Maybe, but probably not first choice
- c. Not likely, this is different from what I normally select for myself

5. How likely are you to read a book similar to this genre or topic?

- a. Very, it's similar to what I've read before
- b. Maybe, but probably not first choice
- c. Not likely, this is different from what I normally select for myself

6. Has this book encouraged you to read more?

- a. Yes, I already have plans for my next book to read (5)
- b. Yes, but I'm not sure what to read next (4)
- c. Maybe, I haven't decided/still trying to finish this book. (3)
- d. No, this book has had little/no impact on encouraging me to read (2)
- e. No, this book has had a negative impact on my reading habits. (1)

Other: _____

7. How do you feel about the fact that this book was selected for you?

- a. I don't mind
- b. I don't feel as invested because I didn't have a choice
- c. I like that it was selected for me

8. Has having everyone reading the same book increased your motivation to read?

- a. Yes, reading together has helped to make me more a motivated reader
- b. No, it doesn't add to my motivation to read more
- c. No change

Other: _____

9. How do you generally feel about whole class novels?

1-----|-----5

(negative)

(neutral)

(positive)

Comments:

Motivation Survey- Choice and Non-Choice Selections

Motivation Survey #3

Part 1: *The Giver*

1. If not required, how likely would you normally select this book on your own for independent reading?

____ Very, it's similar to what I've read before

____ Maybe, but probably not first choice

____ Not likely, this is different from what I normally select for myself

2. Did you enjoying reading this book?

____ Yes

____ No

____ Sort of

If "sort of", explain what is keeping you interested and what is making it less enjoyable.

—

3. Now that we have finished the book, are you interested in reading other books in *The Giver* series?

____ Yes

____ No

____ Sort of

If "sort of", explain what is keeping you interested and/or what is making it less enjoyable.

4. Are you interested in reading more works that are...

____ By the same author

____ Similar in topic

____ Similar in genre

Similar in format

Other:

5. How likely are you to read a book similar to this genre or type?

Very, it's similar to what I've read before

Maybe, but probably not first choice

Not likely, this is different from what I normally would select for myself

6. Has this book encouraged you to read more? *

Yes, I already have plans for my next book to read

Yes, but I'm not sure what to read next

Maybe, I haven't decided/still trying to finish this book

No, this book has had little/no impact on encouraging me to read

No, this book has had a negative impact on my reading habits

7. Since you did not have an input in reading this book, how has this limitation impacted your interest in the book?

A. I don't mind

B. I don't feel as interested in the book because I didn't have a choice

C. I like that it was selected for me

8. Has having everyone reading the same book increased your motivation to read?

A. Yes, reading together has helped to make me a more motivated reader

B. No, it doesn't add to my motivation to read more

C. No change in reading motivation

Other :

9. How do you generally feel about whole class novels?
(Scale from 1 (negative) to 5 (extreme enjoyment))

10. Which of the following has had the most impact on your motivation and engagement with reading *The Giver*

____ Reading the book out loud

____ Everyone reading the same book so confusions are easier to clear up

____ Class discussions

____ Book topics, plot or character

Other : _____

Part 2: Independent Choice Book

11. In comparison to *The Giver*, which book are/did you enjoy more?

____ *The Giver*

____ Independent Choice Book

12. Has having choice in what book to read had a positive influence on your motivation to read?

____ Yes

____ No

____ Sort Of

If "Sort of", explain

13. What did you first identify as for "Reader Type"

Reader

Non-Reader

In-Between

14. Select the statement that best describes your Reader Type changes. *

No change- Reader

No change- Non-Reader

No change- In-between

Positive Change- Non-Reader to In-between

Positive Change- Non-Reader to Reader

Positive Change- In-between to Reader

Negative Change- Reader to any other type

Negative Change- In-between to Non-Reader

Appendix E: Parent Surveys

First Parent Survey:

1. Which best describes your child?
 Currently reading a book for fun
 Not currently reading a book for fun, but recently finished one
 Has not read a book for fun in a while
2. How important is it to you that your child read books for fun?
 Extremely important
 Very important
 A little important
 Not important
3. How many days a week does your child read books for fun?
 5-7 days a week
 1-4 days a week
 Less than one day a week
4. Indicate your agreement with this statement: I need help finding books my child likes?
 Strongly agree
 Somewhat agree
 Somewhat disagree
 Strongly disagree
5. In general, would your child rather read print books or books on a device?
 Print books
 Books read from a device
 No preference
6. In the past six months, how many print and or books on a device have you acquired for your child for the purpose of reading for fun? *
 25 or more
 10-24
 5-9
 Less than 5
7. How many days in a typical week do you personally read books?
 5-7 days a week
 1-4 days a week
 Less than one day a week
8. How many print books are in your home (any level)
 100+
 25-99

___ 6-24

___ Less than 5

9. What have you done at home that you are willing to share that has inspired your child to want to read at home for fun?

Second Parent Survey

My child is currently reading a book for fun

___ Yes

- No
- I'm not sure

Have you noticed positive changes in your students reading habits since starting 7th grade?
(bringing a book home, talking about their reading, going to the library, etc.)

- Yes
- No
- My child enjoyed reading prior to 7th grade and no changes have occurred since

I have observed my child... (check all that apply)

- Reading more at home
- Talking about a book
- Making plans for their next book
- Asking for suggestions about books
- Have a more positive attitude toward reading in general
- Asking to go to library or store to find a book

Any additional comments related to your child's motivation to read since the start of 7th grade.

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