LITERACY ENGAGEMENT AND MOTIVATION: RATIONALE, RESEARCH, TEACHING, AND ASSESSMENT

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The Literacy Landscape

Engagement in education is an idea sweeping the nation, if the appearance of Grit, by Duckworth is any indication (Duckworth, 2016). Nearly every organization committed to students’ development is embracing the notion that involvement and commitment count in learning. Although a person’s intelligence clearly makes a difference in how well she succeeds in school, engagement is emerging as even more vital, at least for some achievement outcomes (Duckworth, Quinn & Tsukayama, 2012). For instance, engagement in wide and deep literacy influences school achievement even more than powerful sociological factors such as parental income.

A recent Gallup poll said that U.S. citizens believe students are not as engaged in education as they should and could be. Responding to this need, Governors of all states issued a call for expanded engagement in learning for students K-12 through the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). Professional organizations allied with education such as the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, American Psychological Association, and National Research Council have rung the bell for more investment in engagement. They propose that students’ energized engagement in learning should become the priority for schools (e.g., National Research Council, 2004).

Moving to literacy, recent national and international surveys and studies focused on students’ literacy motivations and engagement along with their comprehension and achievement. A 2016 international literacy assessment of fourth graders (PIRLS) reported that diverse reading motivations and engagement in reading lessons were too low for many students. Disengagement from reading is typical of low achieving reduced students of all ethnic groups and income levels. Among adolescents from more than 70 countries, literacy engagement contributed strongly to scores on challenging multi-genre tests, both online and offline, according to the Program of International Student Assessment (PISA) study of 15 year olds (OECD, 2010).

Literacy engagement was the centerpiece of the International Literacy Association’s initial Literacy Research Panel’s report in 2012. Their mission statement said that teachers should be:
(a) involving students in recognizing and responding to authentic problems, (b) teaching reading and writing as integrated tools for learning and for solving personally meaningful problems, (c) helping students to take individual and collaborative control of their learning, (d) making engagement, relevance and initiative central pillars of teaching and learning. These practices require highly skilled teachers who are focused on active student engagement, redesign of curricula and content standards to focus on big ideas, and reallocation of time in classrooms so that pacing guides, “coverage,” test preparation, and assessment do not interfere with learning.

This vision guided the blogs, projects, convention sessions, and panel discussions of the IRA (now ILA) Literacy Research Panel for three years.

Using the strongest quantitative tools, the science of motivation and engagement in learning has grown recently. In sheer numbers of published, peer reviewed articles, handbooks of research and meta analyses, motivation and engagement relevant to literacy has expanded in the last two decades (Martin & Dowson, 2009). While the human need for engagement is self-evident, the scientific account of engagement is deeply rooted (Shanahan et al., 2010).

At present in the U.S., teachers are flooded with new challenges for teaching to the Core Content State Standards. To this end, schools are expected to measure outcomes, integrate teaching and cope with diverse student populations. In the midst of this stress, what is the rationale for thinking about engagement? In this chapter we offer basic concepts of motivation and engagement accompanied by a theoretical framework for organizing them. Next, we discuss several perspectives that teachers often seem to use to initiate motivation support in the classroom. As we review them briefly, we offer empirically based appraisals of each of these teaching perspectives. As educators are increasingly committed to data-based decision making, we present some assessment concepts and samples of scales that have been used in measuring motivation and engagement.

**Concepts of Motivation and Engagement**

One fundamental point we and others (Guthrie, Wigfield, & You, 2012; Moje et al., 2008), have made in theoretical writings on the nature of motivation is that it is not a single process. Just as the cognition of reading contains many aspects including phonemic awareness, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension, literacy motivation is a spectrum. Although many more exist, we talk about the “big five” motivation processes of: intrinsic motivation, self-efficacy, social, value and engagement. The first four are motivations that drive the engagement that flows out of them; each of these motivations is defined in more detail in Guthrie, Wigfield, and You (2012), and Wigfield et al. (2016).

Intrinsic motivation is the enjoyment of reading for its own sake. It is the formal way of saying that “reading is fun.” Next, self-efficacy is belief in one’s capacity for success in future reading tasks, or more simply, confidence. Social motivation is the disposition to enjoy sharing literacy activities with others. Value refers to the belief that reading is important, useful and beneficial to yourself. Each of these motivations will generate engagement, which is the doing of literacy activities. For instance, social motivation to read leads students into deeper reading for the purpose of exchanging, sharing, and communicating fully.

These multiple motivations are related but still distinct both conceptually and empirically (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997). A student may have self-efficacy, believing she can read well, without being intrinsically motivated, or thoroughly enjoying reading. Usually, however,
they are moderately clustered. There is a tendency for the five motivation–engagement processes to be linked with each other. However, we should not assume the connection or plan for it in teaching. We cannot nurture one motivation and expect all of them to grow. We need to foster each motivation.

It is unfortunate that the word “engagement” is used almost everywhere with little precision. We have marriage engagement, civic engagement, school engagement, and social engagement. What these phrases share are qualities of involvement, interaction, commitment, enthusiasm, and proactive behavior. In using the phrase “literacy engagement,” we mean the time, effort, and persistence of literacy behavior (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000; Guthrie et al., 2012). This refers to doing the reading and writing frequently with commitment in single or multiple genres. An avid reader who devours mysteries is engaged, as is a serious student immersed in text and thinking creatively about the movement West in early America.

For young adults, amount and diversity of book reading predicts their intellectual maturity. In the process of developing interests and preferences in literacy, students learn to direct their learning. Gaining a sense of which books will be “just right” for their abilities and suitable to their tastes, students initiate their own reading and become self-directing. Such independence is just as possible in the primary as the secondary grades. Beyond the development of self-regulated learning, students who are internally motivated will achieve well on assessments of their literacy skills. A strong research literature confirms that sustained engagement in reading enhances proficiency and growth in standardized measures of achievement, grades and observational measures of student attainment (DeNaeghel et al., 2012).

Beyond the extended behaviors of literacy engagement is instructional engagement, recently introduced by new research (PIRLS, 2016). During a literacy lesson, a student showing the attributes of attention, immersion, and awareness is displaying instructional engagement. An instructionally engaged learner is listening intently, wondering creatively, connecting new to old, and enthused. Such attentive participation is nurtured by teachers who communicate expectations clearly, provide interesting tasks, and encourage students effectively (PIRLS, 2016). In these ways, a student’s instructional engagement in literacy lessons is a branch of his or her commitment to literacy engagement.

In classrooms in the U.S., it is typical see a banner or poster for literacy. One of them is CRAFT, an acronym for: Comprehension, Response to text, Accuracy, Fluency, and Text elements. In the poster, examples of each letter are provided. For instance, “Response to text” entails using background knowledge to understand text. To complement such a poster that emphasizes cognitive processes, we suggest an acronym for literacy motivation, consisting of SMILE: Sharing (social motivation), Me (self-efficacy), Importance (valuing), Liking (intrinsic motivation), and Engage (literacy engagement). The SMILE acronym could be a banner, poster, or a game to build students awareness that motivation is an ever-present process in each literacy act.

In our writings (e.g., Guthrie, Coddington, & Wigfield, 2009), we have discussed a reverse, or undermining, side to each motivation we discussed. For example, the reversal of self-efficacy is perceived difficulty, or believing that reading is way too hard. Some students adopt the idea that reading is simply not possible for them. Too often, this negative motivation leads to avoidance. They believe can’t do it and so they don’t try. That is, students’ perceived difficulty for literacy tasks leads to disengagement.

If a student has low self-efficacy, he has decided that he is not likely to be a good reader. But this does not guarantee he thinks he is a complete failure. He may believe he is adequate, though not accomplished. In contrast, the student with perceived difficulty is convinced that he will not succeed at reading tasks of any kind, particularly the challenging classroom tasks.
Consequently, he disengages in reading, particularly of the types he finds most difficult. Without performing any reading tasks, or exerting minimal effort, his reading acquisition ceases. Under these conditions his future is bleak. It should be noted that a student’s self-efficacy may vary with type of text, for example, by having adequate self-efficacy for reading fiction for recreation but lower self-efficacy for reading science text in school. Evidence suggests that a specialized form of self-efficacy for reading information text arises in middle school (Ho & Guthrie, 2013). It is unknown how widely this pattern of motivational variation occurs.

Each motivation has its undermining side, according to recent research. Just as self-efficacy is the affirming side and perceived difficulty is the undermining side, we have the motivational opposites of: valuing and devaluing, social and antisocial, intrinsic motivation and dislike, engagement and disengagement. The undermining motivations depress reading behavior and skill development. When these motivations arise in the classroom, special attention and preventive actions are needed. Teachers should take extraordinary steps to address the down sides of undermining motivations when they appear.

We have presented many concepts and diverse entry points in the domains of motivation and engagement. These myriad components have been integrated into a structure, or a model of literacy engagement. From its earliest form published by Guthrie & Wigfield (2000), the model has evolved to more precisely reflect a monumental research base. Shown in Figure 3.1, the model incorporates literacy achievement, engagement, motivation, and classroom instruction. Within each module is a bundle of processes that constitute it.

At the far right of Figure 3.1 is literacy achievement. Representing achievement are basic processes of phonemic awareness, decoding, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. More complex processes including critical reasoning with text and using multiple text sources for learning could be entered into this module as well. From K-12 the emergent properties of literacy evolve from simpler to more complex. Irrespective of which processes are cresting at a given point of development, such as fluency or critical reasoning, the motivational and engagement modules will impact proficiency. For instance, primary students acquiring fluency (as well as other processes) are markedly influenced by the quality and quantity of their engagement in literacy activities (Hughes et al., 2008). Likewise, for advanced secondary

![Figure 3.1. Engagement Model of Reading Development](image-url)
students analyzing historical documents or chemical structures, the quality of their literacy engagement impacts their advanced proficiency.

The engagement module of Figure 3.1 comprises effort, time, persistence, and instructional aspects. A student’s capacity to spend sufficient time can sometimes be crucial. Long texts may require stamina; and complex texts may demand persistence. For any age or grade, proficiency in reading depends on high amounts of time interacting with diverse texts for a spectrum of purposes. It is these aspects of literacy engagement that increase achievement. It is well-known that girls usually achieve higher in reading than boys. However, when literacy engagement is equal, boys and girls score the same on achievement tests. More surprising is that when literacy engagement is equal, lower income and higher income students show the same achievement (OECD, 2010). The good news is that sufficient quantities of literacy engagement can level the playing field for students from demographic groups that traditionally have not achieved highly.

Engagement in literacy is deeply rooted in motivation but overall we view it as an outcome of motivation rather than motivation itself (Wigfield & Guthrie, 2010). Reading well takes time, attention, thought, focus and monotasking. Students need reasons for such commitments, and those reasons are motivations. Students read extensively because they enjoy it, or want to share it, or believe it is vital to them, or have goals to master the content. When these reasons are strong and enduring, students read and write magnificently well. Engagement and motivation exist in spiral; when one rises the other goes up. Likewise, when one declines the other drops. As an unmotivated student reads less, his motivation declines; and inversely, as a highly active student reads more, his motivations expand.

Engagement is not possible without cognitive processes or mental expertise. The cognitive module in the model shows a few essential processes for simpler literacies. More advanced reasoning, inferential thinking, multi-genre integrations, and evaluative goal setting all play important roles. A very large scale international study showed that across cultures, the cognitive module and a merger of the motivational-engagement modules increased literacy achievement about equally (OECD, 2010). Literacy achievement is a coin with two sides – a cognitive element and its motivational-engagement counter element. A key point here is that raising motivation does not automatically increase achievement. The link of engagement must be activated for motivation to impact achievement.

A central feature of our model of motivation and engagement is a focus on classroom processes and contexts that can impact each positively and negatively, as can be seen in Figure 3.1. Motivations arise in classroom contexts daily. Although parents and peers influence students’ motivations in varying degrees (Klauda, 2009), students are remarkably sensitive to the teacher and classroom experiences. Later, we will emphasize the engagement generating practices of choice, collaboration, success, importance and explicit engagement support. Suffice it to say here that these are all double edged swords operating daily. When a student experiences some autonomy support in a class period, his intrinsic motivation raises just a bit. Many such events will improve intrinsic motivation measurably. Unfortunately, the opposite happens, too. When a student experiences a class or even a lesson with no choice whatsoever, his intrinsic motivation drops (Assor et al., 2005). In every lesson, a teacher is either raising or lowering intrinsic motivation. That is the power of classroom context for motivation.

All of the classroom practices in Figure 3.1 have dual impacts on students’ motivations and engagements. From primary grades when teachers are sparking interest through reading stories aloud, to intermediate grades with extended self-selected reading, to middle school with real world science links that bring texts to life, to high school with multi-genre, project-based history, teachers are fostering motivation growth. Although the forms of the motivating
practices change each year and perhaps in each unit across the year, the basic principles appear to occur across grades. For example, autonomy support increases intrinsic motivation students from primary grades through secondary school. Of course, autonomy support must be developmentally appropriate. For first graders, it is sensible to give students the choice of which book the teacher might read aloud; for eleventh graders, autonomy support may consist of providing options for a week-long class project entailing various materials, activities, and partners. A reasonable generalization is to state that across contexts, meaningful choice increases intrinsic motivation, which facilitates literacy engagement, which leads to proficiency in processing the texts that students interacted with (Taboada et al., 2009). Clearly, the prevailing motivations vary across age groups K–12, but each of the motivations we described is significantly linked to achievement in that age range. It should also be noted that motivations of students from ethnic minority groups such as African American or Hispanic may be related to achievement in different ways than motivation relates to achievement for European American or Asian American students (Guthrie, Coddington & Wigfield, 2009).

Teachers’ Frames of Mind Regarding Motivation and Engagement

Having gathered the basic concepts underlying engagement and motivation, we now explore how teachers think about bringing them into the classroom. We suggest that teachers take at least five approaches to thinking about motivation, organizing for it in the classroom, and introducing students to exciting literacy departures. After presenting each approach, we appraise its benefits in light of available research. Although different approaches to motivating students play different roles, we will orchestrate them into coordination at the chapter’s end.

In elementary and secondary schools in the U.S. we propose that teachers have at least five ideas about how to motivate their students. We term them “Frames of Mind” regarding literacy motivations. According to our viewpoint, a first frame of mind is to “Spice It Up,” by involving students in exciting literacy activities. Although short-lived, these activities give attention to books, and literacy sharing. Second, teachers may create a literature-rich branch of their E/LA instruction. It is devoted to the enjoyment of reading about favorite topics and authors. Third, teachers often adopt a few key teaching practices that are designed to build longer term motivation. Sharing books, partner reading, and team collaboration in literacy activities are examples of deliberately encouraging prolonged social motivation for reading. Fourth, some literacy teachers seek to foster multiple motivations through implementing a systematic array of engagement supports. Finally, for a few rare teachers, motivating literacy is a way of life. These outstanding teachers naturally relate positively to students. Adopting students’ perspectives, they almost instinctively know how to foster their students’ literacy by fulfilling their emotional needs, social inclinations, and needs for understanding (Wharton-McDonald, Pressley & Hampston, 1998). We next describe each of these in turn.

**Spice It Up.** Spice It Up is a popular approach used by local schools and national organizations such as Reading Is Fundamental (RIF, 2016). One widespread activity representing this frame of mind is the Guest Read Aloud. A teacher–leader invites a local fireman, radio personality, or celebrity to read aloud to student groups in school. The guest may talk about how she discovered books or how she enjoys reading today.

Possibly connected to a Guest Read Aloud, the Principal may sponsor a school-wide event. Such a celebration may feature book displays, choral poetry events or students reading their own compositions. Many schools hold a Read-A-Thon. Teacher-leaders or the media specialist set a goal for the number of books students will read in a semester or a year. Book reading is charted for each student, classroom, and school. In an end-of-year
finale, the students’ efforts and accomplishments are recognized by school leaders and possibly outside guests.

Apart from the school-wide event, teachers may decide to Spice It Up within their classrooms. For example, some teachers organize a game of musical books. A book is placed under each chair. When the music stops, the students sit and introduce themselves to the book under their chair. At the end they mention their favorite book to the group. Teachers may initiate a program of students reading to other students in school. After finding a book of their choice, students practice reading it expressively. When ready, they read aloud to younger students. For instance, third graders may share their interest in either a fiction or non-fiction book with Kindergarten students. The youngsters will be fascinated to see that reading is enchanting to their school mates. In another popular form of Spice It Up, students share a character with the class. After reading a book on a favorite person, say Muhammad Ali, the student may have a day to dress up like the boxer, read from the book, and/or explain a poster on Muhammad Ali to the class. There is no end to the possibilities to Spice It Up. Sources for ideas and materials can be found in websites for Reading Rockets, Read. Gov, Click magazine, and others (Reading Rockets, 2016).

While these Spice It Up activities are often delightful to students, teachers, and parents, it is sensible to ask about their role in fostering motivation. Do they work, and how do they facilitate motivation development? To address this issue, we refer to the twin concepts of “situated interest” and “individual interest.” Situational interest is a momentary excitement within a context. For example, suppose a local Police Chief reads a story to the school to show that he enjoys books and literacy. If it is well organized, and the guest is an expressive reader, students will be intrigued and impressed. Yet, most likely their enthusiasm will fade in a week or day. In this case, an authentic interest was sparked by the policeman, the story, and the special event. But the student interest is limited to its immediate context.

By contrast to the short-term focus of Spice It Up, individual interest refers to a personalized interest in reading or other activities that students develop over time (Hidi & Renninger, 2006). Compared with situational interest, it is more fully internalized into a form that will energize a lot of reading activity. A grade five student who is a mystery devotee will show “individual interest” by reading mysteries avidly. Such long-term interest is akin to intrinsic motivation. It typifies the person and ignites extended engagement in literacy. However, the conversion from situated interest to individual interest is not automatic. In fact, it rarely occurs. Focused, enduring, student-sensitive support from a teacher or significant other is needed if a situated interest is to blossom into individual interest.

In this light, the Spice It Up approach is a marvelous beginning to motivational support. Each student’s development begins somewhere. Parents who read to their children provide early reading events. Those events often create situated interest. But it is the parent’s sustained story book reading that builds individual interest. Similarly, in school, while a Spice It Up event is a promising initiative, long-term motivational development requires follow-up activities, access to literacy materials, and motivation support extending days and months.

Currently, neither researchers nor teachers know exactly how much time motivational development requires. For a standard of comparison, consider the cognition of reading. How long does it take a student to learn a cognitive skill? Suppose we take the case of a typical grade 4 student learning (or improving) the skill of inferencing between sentences with complex non-fiction text. A teacher might model this inferencing process for three lessons of 20 minutes each. She may give guided practice with new texts and more complex language for 15 lessons of 10 minutes each. She may then embed inferencing in concept mapping and provide 15 lessons of 20 minutes of this activity. In a total time of about 9 hours across
33 days, the student will have gained measurably in sentence-level inferencing for non-fiction text. A teacher who accomplished that feat would be remarkably successful.

For comparison, consider a case in which a teacher wants to increase the intrinsic motivation of a typical grade 4 student who is an indifferent reader. The teacher may provide highly guided choices with minimal options on the student’s existing interest on, say, sharks. She does this for five events lasting 10 minutes each in which she teaches the student to find the topic of sharks in the classroom library, and to identify the difficulty level that permits him to enjoy the book. Next, she provides moderate guidance on a wider selection of texts that include the topics of predatory fish and animals including lions. This consumes 10 events of 5 minutes each. Finally, the teacher affords the student minimally guided activity selecting, reading and enjoying both fiction and nonfiction books on the broad topic of animal survival for 20 events of 5 minutes each of her time. In the total time of 3 hours across 35 days, this teacher has enabled the student to increase intrinsic motivation for reading animal survival books in school. She began with an existing interest of reading nonfiction about sharks and evolved to multi-genre reading on animal survival. This would be a marvelous accomplishment in a mere 35 days. What this case illustrates is that motivation is not created in a moment or probably not in a day for most children most of the time. Sustained, deliberate motivation support is needed after a Spice It Up activity generates a promising explosion of situated interest.

**Literature-rich classrooms.** A host of leading educators believe that students will become motivated learners when teachers have Literature-rich classrooms. As Leslie Morrow says, young children develop interests from being immersed in an abundance of stories, colorful books, and soft spaces to share reading (Morrow, 1997). In a Literature-rich classroom, teachers plan to provide time daily for children to read books of their choice and preference. Displayed in crates, piles, clusters, or shelves, a wealth of books is immediately accessible within the classroom. In fact, the size and appeal of the classroom library, more than the school media center, promotes the growth of children’s reading life style and achievement. In the middle and later elementary grades, teachers often have a 90-minute literacy block with 30 minutes devoted to a range of self-selected reading, buddy reading, group choral expressive reading, text-based writing, and diverse literacy interactions.

In a Literature-rich classroom, some children are often engaged in a variety of reading and writing activities while other students are working in groups or working individually. Students explore books of various genres not just in the library but during classroom free reading time. The role of the teacher is to encourage all attempts at reading, writing, and speaking, allowing students of varying ability to experience the different pleasures of literacy activities. Combining opportunities for independent exploration and peer interaction enhances upon skills. Through frequent interactions with materials and activities, reading skills become more automatic and students grow in relating to a variety of stories and texts that are usually fiction (Mol & Bus, 2011).

An alternative Literature-rich approach is to have a classroom theme that integrates a spectrum of activities. For example, the theme of “weather” works well in grades 2–5. Such a theme can be initiated with a “wind walk” where students walk outside for 5 minutes, feeling the wind, and noticing its signs in trees, bushes, grass, and flags. Alternative ways to spark curiosity and elicit background knowledge are to watch a short video, or view pictures of wind. Immediately following, students read books on wind and weather. They may draw clouds and chart the daily rain or temperature in a journal. Younger students may use tactile books, manipulatives, slant boards, and pencil grips. Teachers can help students ask questions, label objects, and gain experiences with new vocabulary.

To extend literacy learning, a variety of stories and poems on wind, rain, weather, clouds, floods, and the growth of plants and wildlife can be integrated with knowledge from
nonfiction. Children can express their learning by drawing murals, composing posters, or writing a story pretending they are raindrops. To provide themes for students from ethnic minorities or international groups, themes can be built from multicultural topics. The customs of Mexico, myths of India, beliefs of Native Americans are well-known to positively impact minority as well as mainstream students. Accommodations can be made for second language learners such as allowing children to make mistakes when attempting to use a second language, or encouraging children to read the same books repeatedly to become familiar with the text. Reading, writing, and discussing these may invigorate students who find new relevance in the classroom.

Just as we asked about the benefits of Spice It Up, we should inquire about the evidence supporting the benefits of Literature-rich classroom contexts for motivation and engagement. There is substantial research confirming that the amount of reading increases reading achievement through decoding fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and world knowledge gained from text (e.g., Mol & Bus, 2011; Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997). As Literature-rich classrooms almost assure increased amounts of reading, they are extremely likely to accelerate these cognitive skills.

To date, however, the benefits of Literature-rich classrooms for motivation, however, are less strongly supported. A few well designed experimental studies showed that providing time in which self-selected reading for primary students was observed to occur regularly increased intrinsic motivation to read stories (Morrow, 1997). Although beneficial, a similar finding has not been reported for the other motivations of self-efficacy, valuing, and social interaction. Therefore, the empirical evidence is positive, but limited in scope. It is unknown how fully the positive impact of Literature-rich classrooms on intrinsic motivation extends to other ages.

We believe it is plausible that Literature-rich classrooms will enhance and extend a student’s existing motivation. An individual who already enjoys reading will relish more opportunities and will grow in intrinsic motivation. However, it seems less likely that new motivations will be formed. For example, it is unusual to provide a high amount of time in well-organized forms of social reading, such as team project work, in a Literature-rich classroom. It may happen, but it is not assured to occur. As a result, students’ development of social motivations for reading is not highly likely. The same is true for self-efficacy, valuing, mastery goals, belonging, or success attributions. They may happen to increase, but they are not assured. The outcome is that Literature-rich classroom environments are likely to increase cognitive skills through amount of reading, and may enhance intrinsic motivation in younger students, but will not necessarily foster the development of new motivations that drive achievement. Such emergence of markedly new motivations depends on more systematic encouragement and emotionally charged literacy experiences.

**Key classroom practices for engagement and motivations.** In the beginning of this chapter, we proposed that there are a host of good reasons for supporting motivation in the classroom. To give a base for building this motivation support, we outlined key concepts of the kinds of diverse motivation enhancing practices that build on Spice It Up and Literature-rich classrooms. Although these are necessary starting points, they are not enough. The third frame of mind refers to explicit designs for concrete classroom practices that are highly promising ways to build specific motivations (Gambrell, 2011). We return to the SMILE acronym introduced earlier to delineate these practices.

The term “practices for motivation” connotes deliberate, planned action scenarios with the aim of engendering literacy motivations of students. The rationale for investing time and resources in these practices is that building motivations is a challenge. Teachers are familiar with the challenges of building cognitive skills such as decoding, vocabulary, comprehension, and reasoning with text. Just so, motivation processes include all the SMILE constructs,
consisting of Social motivation, Self-efficacy, Valuing, Intrinsic motivation, and Engagement. Just as decoding must be targeted by instruction differently from reasoning with text, self-efficacy must be targeted differently from valuing. Neither the cognitive skills nor the motivation processes erupt rapidly in a day without a fertile context. Certainly, some children teach themselves to read in a few months. Some students find motivating purposes in a momentary event. But these are exceptions that only highlight the rule that building motivation takes time, effort, and intention. We will discuss these in the order of the SMILE acronym beginning with social motivation which is supported by teachers organizing collaboration in the classroom.

Social motivation. Our first motivation practice refers to enabling students to enhance their social motivations for literacy through collaborating with others. Students are often excited to interact with fellow students, teachers, and others in ways that can be extended to books and literacy. The simplest collaborating activity is to ask students to do literacy work with a partner. It can be rhyming together to foster phonemic awareness. For older students, it may consist of reading aloud together to figure out the main idea of a paragraph. In such activities two individuals are sharing their competencies to attain a common goal. For the large majority, the sharing is energizing whether or not the task is inherently satisfying. Such a simple collaboration can occur from K-12 on every literacy task.

Healthy collaboration depends on a few needed ingredients. Both individuals should do equal parts of the work. Both individuals should accept and use the contribution of the partner. Mutual respect is necessary. With these underpinnings, partnering will usually work. Not all students are natural collaborators. Teachers often need to scaffold by giving directions, modeling the process, providing examples, and recognizing pairs for effective sharing. If an individual in one pair does all the work of one partnership, the adroit teacher explains, demonstrates, encourages, and gives positive feedback for equal work in that partnership. With extended partnering, individuals will perform literacy tasks more proficiently, recognize their partner’s contribution, and be inclined to increase their efforts on new tasks. Briefly, their social motivations will improve in quality and strength.

Collaborative activities may include working in teams, helping individuals who will benefit from working together, being cooperative in group activities, providing leadership for a small group through initiating discussion, clarifying, and guiding group process such as suggesting next steps for the group work. As they grow socially, students become increasingly proactive in making partnerships, teams, and whole class activities work effectively.

A range of social structures in classrooms can be built. One successful example is Reciprocal Teaching (Palinscar & Brown, 1984). In this model, students play the roles of question generating, clarifying, predicting, and summarizing as they read stories and narrative. Students assigned to a given role use these processes as strategies to learn during the reading of a story or literature. When they learn and implement the roles with teacher guidance, this social structure facilitates cognitive learning and fosters proactive social interactions.

In another kind of classroom social structure, collaborative reasoning is fostered. The participatory roles shift responsibility from the teacher to the students. Students determine: the approach to be taken, interpretive authority, turn taking, and the topic of the discourse. This places students in control of interpreting literary text, and it may be applied to nonfiction test as well (Chinn, Anderson & Waggoner, 2001). To enable these collaborative team structures, teachers, provide social scaffolding. Successful teachers explain the roles, assign students to groups, assign roles to students, monitor the role taking, and debrief the group work regarding the successes and needs for improvement in role taking.

Collaborative reasoning activities are central to classroom pedagogies such as project-based learning, in which students work in teams on extended academic endeavors. Occurring in
any discipline including literature, science, social studies, math, or even interdisciplinary units, literacy engagement extends over days and months. Although the teacher initiates the topical goals, team membership, and some task goals, students share the goal setting and leadership. The ingredients of full participation and psychological safety are equally as essential to effective teams as effective partnerships. For purposes of literacy learning, the environment must be Literature-rich. An abundance of books, texts, Internet sites, and multi-genre materials are needed to challenge the quick learners and accommodate the lower literacy capacities of some students. In a culminating activity, teams may construct posters, books, PowerPoint presentations, web pages, wall-size murals, or functional products such as a robot.

Dialogue with another person, especially a trusted peer, has been shown to yield many returns cognitively and socially (Almasi, O’Flahavan & Arya, 2001). Flashes of insight, depth of understanding, appreciation for a contrasting view, or the delight in finding common cause with another person may all flow from collaborative work or even a conversation. Enabling students to learn with and for others is a twenty-first-century aim for education. It can be an explicit goal for assisting students to be employed in the information age, contribute to the gross domestic product, and become self-determining.

A major priority for all collaborative activities is extended literacy engagement. Students must be doing a lot of interacting with text. If the time in sharing does not multiply the time in text, the collaboration is not productive from a literacy learning perspective. Of course, learning to work together is a worthy aim. But when individuals in groups talk excessively about movies, clothing, social media, parties, and gossip, literacy engagement is endangered. A simple standard for collaborative effectiveness is that the collaborative time must more than double the literacy engagement time that would otherwise have occurred if students worked individually. The doubling is possible due to literacy engagement time spent inside the literacy lessons and/or outside the lessons in free time or homework. We have seen students in Civil War projects who get hooked on biographies, and read them on their own time to make a fuller project contribution. Collaborating should engender in literacy engagement at least 200% of the time it consumes. Otherwise, it is less than productive for literacy attainment.

Success through enhancing self-efficacy. Helping students succeed in their reading is critical for their broader achievement, especially for students who struggle to learn to read (Guthrie, 2004). In discussing support for the SMILE acronym of motivations and engagement discussed in this chapter, we next point to guidance for self-efficacy denoted with “M” for “Me” in the acronym. Recall that self-efficacy is belief in one’s capacity for success in literacy and other tasks (Schunk & Pajares, 2009). It is different from self-esteem, which is a broadly generalized sense of self-worth. In contrast, self-efficacy is task oriented. A person can have self-efficacy for playing baseball but not learning chemistry. More specifically, one can have self-efficacy for reading mysteries but not reading science text. These self-efficacies differentiate with age. For primary students, self-efficacy relates to “reading,” which often means “word recognition” to the child. By grade 7, students cite “understanding” as the criterion for self-efficacy. In middle school, students often have a specialized self-efficacy for information text. While their general self-efficacy for reading fiction may be moderate or high, their self-efficacy for texts in science, math and history may be either high or low. Self-efficacy should be cultivated for the diverse literacies in the disciplines in digital or print forms. It should be noted that self-efficacy for reading out-of-school notes, messages, or texts may differ radically from in-school reading domains.

The term “success” is used as the handle for instructional support of self-efficacy because belief in one’s capability is grounded in recent performance. Good performance leads to optimistic beliefs, and vice versa. Needless to say, teachers constantly seek to enable students to be successful. But explicitly supporting self-efficacy has additional instructional
requirement. Students may be reasonably adequate, or inadequate, without necessarily being aware of their competency. Some are not conscious of when they have not comprehended a page or chapter. One reason is that students may not possess an appropriate standard of excellence for the purpose at hand. For example, a student may expect that literal understanding through memorizing is a good standard; whereas the teacher may expect her to integrate new text-based knowledge with old information. In supporting self-efficacy, the teacher’s primary goal is to assist students in setting a criterion for what is means to “comprehend” what a text said, and to compare this level with one’s own actual comprehension.

Students should be able to answer the question “Did I understand that text?” After students have attained the skill of knowing whether they can comprehend a text for a specific purpose, teachers can guide them to fix their misunderstandings. When their understanding is inadequate, students need to exert new effort. This energy will go to rereading, asking questions, reorganizing knowledge, looking up vocabulary, or discussing the text with another person. Building self-efficacy includes helping students learn and believe they can use the strategies to improve performance. Students with appropriate self-efficacy for text can accurately state either: “I can understand this,” or “I can understand this only if I take notes on it,” or “I can understand this only with the teacher’s help.” These statements represent different levels of self-efficacy. Clearly, the highest priority for improving self-efficacy is providing students with a) strategies for comprehending challenging text, b) proficiency to use them effectively, c) satisfaction with the fact the adept use of strategies makes them a better reader, and d) expectation that adroit strategy use will enable them to succeed.

To build effective literacy strategies that they deploy confidently, students need extensive task feedback. Task-specific feedback is not “good job,” but rather “you used the T strategy well by filling out both sides” or “your concept map for those two pages of text is nicely balanced.” Accompanying task feedback, teachers recognize and encourage effort, persistence, and stamina for completing literacy activities. Students’ fullest attainment of self-efficacy comes when they have internalized the full suite of processes including: expectations for comprehending text, willingness to use strategies they know, exertion of effort until their goals for comprehending are met, and self-recognition of accomplishment (Schunk & Pajares, 2009).

**Valuing reading.** The importance of importance. In SMILE, the third letter “I” stands for importance which is related to valuing, an important construct in the expectancy–value theory of motivation (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002). Valuing as a literacy motivation is the perception that reading and other literacy activities are important and useful to oneself. When a pursuit such as golf, quilting, meditation, reading, or healing the sick is viewed as important, the individual commits time, energy, and talent to it. For things we value, we become engaged by participating or promoting them. Signs of reading value may include reading avidly, completing homework, collecting books, writing about texts, being a club member, and so on. These may occur whether or not one is interested or social about the preferred form of literacy. For secondary students, valuing literacy is a high priority because the subject matters are diverse. If they seek to achieve, secondary students cannot afford to restrict their reading to their interests. A poetic student who values school literacy will read the chemistry text adequately to fulfill expectations, although she may enjoy reading poems more frequently (Wigfield et al., 2016).

To foster value in a classroom setting, teachers enable students to understand how different kinds of reading activities are important and useful to them (Guthrie, & Klauda, 2014). Such benefits are contextualized in the here and now. For example, a student making a poster on the underground railroad may read about the subject, draw pictures, talk with a partner, show progress to the teacher, and perhaps enjoy presenting it to the class. This student will
experience value of reading if she traces the poster to specific texts with pride, or exhibits delight with her text-based expertise in the topic. Such valuing may appear from at least grades 3–12, but it gains ascendency in secondary school. When within-class valuing has been experienced by students, the teacher may seek to enable students to experience literacy valuing in other parts of the school, local community, or home. Such expansion will deepen and enrich students’ literacy involvements.

A range of straightforward classroom activities can foster valuing. In one study of secondary classrooms, students increased their valuing for course materials when they wrote five half-page essays on how at least one text from the course had helped them personally. Students who did this brief composition gained value and higher course grades. In another study, when the difficult and unpleasant task of reading about statistical probability was explained as a professional benefit for teachers, the teachers gained a sense of utility and comprehended the text relatively fully (Jang, 2008). Myriad benefits and uses for texts may accrue to reading texts that are unfamiliar or even distasteful. But students are rarely aware of the benefits until they are directed to notice them.

Other kinds of classroom activities focused more generally on motivation may also enhance valuing of school work. For example, exploring possible selves is a popular and effective approach. In one version, students identify a future goal for themselves such as becoming a chef, journalist, space engineer, or robot programmer. Those aims become the top leafy areas of a tree. Next, they specify the main educational requirements, which are the branches supporting the leaves. The tree trunk is the place they occupy now to support the branches, and the roots are their background life, experiences, and interests. The educator guides the students to find out what kinds of skills, expertise, and future education is needed for the tree to grow a handsome crown. With mentoring, students can acquire a realistic sense of value for intellectual pursuits and benefits of schooling. Although this works for school valuing and appears promising, it has not been attempted for literacy valuing.

**Intrinsic motivation.** Fostering relevance and affording choice. In the motivation-engagement acronym of SMILE, our next motivation is liking, which is akin to intrinsic motivation. However, these are not identical and it is the enjoyment of reading that is most central to intrinsic motivation. On the other hand, liking refers to fondness or affection which an emotional state more than a motivational drive. Classroom activities that foster intrinsic motivation are very personal to the individual. We use relevance to characterize learning activities that seem “very close to me” or “connected to my life.” A relevant activity is one that is familiar, and related to the students’ interests and preferences.

One immediately obvious way to make reading relevant is to link it to students’ interests. If teachers know existing interests, or take a survey to identify them, she can generate reading activities about them. Perhaps students are interested in magic, lions, space flight, or Harriet Tubman. By locating books on these topics and providing independent reading time for them, teachers can create relevance for reading by linking books to students existing preferred topics of exploration.

Relevance can also be offered by linking a book, character or scene to students’ experiences. For example, one high school teacher was asking the students to read Homer’s *Odyssey*. Students were struggling with the language and remoteness of the adventure. To build relevance the teacher asked students to write their personal account of an event lasting about a week. After composing, students shared their trials, tribulations, and triumphs from the essays. Then it was natural to tie their experiences to those of Telemachus. Writing their own Odysseys brought Homer’s book to life. In one middle school English class, students reading Wiessel’s *Night*, they could not relate to the text where Jewish individuals were ushered into a railroad car. The teacher placed a rectangle of tape on the classroom floor and
asked students to huddle in the tiny area and wait. After squirming for several minutes, they were able to empathize slightly with the Jewish citizens and the scene became vivid. Connecting personal experience to text renders it intrinsically meaningful and builds interest.

In elementary classrooms it is possible to provide hands on experiences to breathe life into text. A simple aquarium can evoke a sense of observation and mystery. After watching fish or snakes in water, students will want to talk and read about them. After taking a 10–minute wind walk at school to sense the strength, direction, and smells of the breeze, students will want to talk and learn. Such discussion can lead to reading, debating, and learning about weather, climate, or storms.

When it is not feasible to observe in person, students can interact with a video. Sources such as the Discovery Channel provide thousands of videos about science, history, and literature. After a five-minute viewing of predation in the Serengeti, a Revolutionary battle enactment, an octopus swimming, or a Tom Sawyer scene, students will feel like they had a vivid personal experience. Asking students to describe what was important, surprising, puzzling, or amazing brings forth knowledge and inferences. When students’ interest in a topic is sparked by video, students will read more enthusiastically. The video provides realism that motivates intrinsic motivation for reading on the topic.

Giving students reasonable and bounded choices during their literacy instruction is another crucial way to foster intrinsic motivation for reading (Guthrie, Wigfield, & You, 2012). In research providing choice is termed autonomy support, which refers to affording students the sense they are in charge of a portion of their behaviors, learning, and lives in the classroom. Students seek to make decisions that enable them to succeed, explore, and express their preferences. By giving students minor options, teachers assure that students are making an investment in themselves. With this investment, students develop their distinctiveness.

Autonomy support means giving students the latitude within the classroom boundaries to express their individuality. Such support is most obviously evidenced in myriad mini-choices. Teachers can and should plan for giving an academic choice every lesson. The choice should be significant. Giving a middle schooler the option of whether to use a yellow or blue pencil to write a paragraph is patronizing and not academically substantive. But allowing him to decide whether or not to discuss the paragraph with a classmate before writing is very likely to be an attractive option. And when a student accepts the choice, he assumes increased responsibility for improved performance. In other words, choices are intrinsically motivating because they allow students to customize their environment to their needs and preferences, even if only slightly. Productive choices accumulate to enable a student to become a more self-directing learner who achieves because he has found learning more worthwhile.

Scaffolding is vitally important in providing choice. In the extreme, giving students too little choice imprisons them, which prevents autonomy growth. Giving too much choice leaves students lost or leads them to make choices, which can be counter-productive, such as a struggling reader choosing a text that is beyond their current comprehension levels. Regrettably, the typical direct instruction lesson on a cognitive skill such as inferencing has the teacher selecting the text; the teacher setting one or more questions; the students offering answers; and the teacher deciding whether the students are correct in answering. Although this may be cognitively powerful, it contains no autonomy support. Consequently, such a lesson will be slightly disengaging. However, teaching skills need not be demotivating.

Even in tightly planned cognitive instruction for reading skills, teachers can provide autonomy support. For instance, teachers can offer a choice of text by giving an option of which paragraph to read for an inferencing task. Alternatively, she can offer text options by allowing students to decide which character in the scene of a text to follow closely in order to infer reasons for behavior. A teacher can write two questions and then ask students to form
two questions on the same text. After assuring the questions are appropriate and well formed, the teacher can ask students to answer any three of the questions. Following the question writing and answering, teachers can ask students to determine which answers are best. In such a lesson which targets inferencing with complex text, teachers offer a motivational scaffold for intrinsic motivation as well as a scaffold for cognitive processing of inferences. Such autonomy support provides options, opportunities, and self-direction for the students. While one lesson with a motivation scaffold will not assure intrinsically motivated learners, a unit of 30 autonomy-supportive lessons will almost certainly expand students’ intrinsic motivation for those reading tasks. As students grow in intrinsic motivation, the teacher reduces the scaffold allowing more latitude, options, and challenges for broader self-directed learning.

Organizing instruction thematically. Literacy researchers from both cognitive and motivational perspectives understand the importance of organizing instruction thematically. In terms of cognition, instructional themes help students see connections in the material and also help them connect what they are learning to their background knowledge. This can be done both in a given subject area or across them. When literacy is linked to science, the literacy processes are embedded in engrossing content. When literacy and history are integrated, the cognitive systems of reading reveal the personalities, conflicts, dilemmas, and glories of people from other times and cultures.

From the perspective of motivation theorists, organizing units thematically helps foster students’ mastery goals for learning. Mastery goals refer to the students’ desire for deep comprehension and the attainment of full knowledge in subject matter (Lucariello et al., 2016). Such mastery goals are contrasted to performance goals. Performance goals refer the students’ aims to perform well on tests and to attain the best grades. Students with these performance goals tend to have lower achievement and do not enjoy school work as fully as students with mastery goals.

To promote mastery goals, meaningful objectives for learning deeply are set by the teachers. In our opinion, the skills of literacy such as inferencing, while important, are not effective mastery goals. They cannot be inherently worthy targets for students’ personal purposes because they are not substantive. Students can embrace learning about a tree’s growth, a pirate’s treasure, a king’s castle, a chain of chemicals, or thermonuclear energy. But they are not likely to find it exciting to adopt learning goals that consist of inferencing from paragraphs, navigating electronic text, and dissecting sentence syntax.

In this light, thematic teaching fosters students’ development of setting and fulfilling mastery goals. To aid mastery goal development teachers can co-construct a theme such as “causes of the Civil War” with students. Sub themes such as economic conditions, leadership, technology, and industrial wealth can be formed. By co-constructing guiding questions with the teacher, students can locate and use diverse texts to pursue the theme. The attainment of deep learning will crystalize the learning goals, and enable students to form them for other subject matters and disciplines. Thematic learning, then, is one productive environment for the acquisition and strengthening of mastery goal motivation.

Fostering engagement. The final letter in SMILE is “E” for engagement, which as we noted earlier is the time, effort, and persistence in doing the reading and writing of school and also recreation. Engagement is the fruition of the literacy many motivations. And vitally important is the strong research finding that engagement is the link between motivations and achievement. Although crucial, the link is not automatic. Only when motivations of self-efficacy, intrinsic motivation, and so on culminate in more time and energy spent in deep reading does achievement show an improvement. If a motivational practice like choice does not eventuate in more reading, then the practice has not worked, from the literacy
achievement perspective. From a motivational development perspective, learning to choose wisely may be desirable, but from a literacy achievement view, being an adept chooser must generate more sophistication and stamina in reading activity to justify the time invested in it. Therefore, engagement should be the target of explicit teacher attention, instruction, assessment, and student recognition.

Explicitly providing instructional support for engagement begins with providing abundant resources, of books, texts, Internet sites, and diverse documents. Linked to a rich reserve is time to pursue interests, complete assigned tasks, and satisfy curiosity. Such resources and time should be planned into each lesson and unit. None of the motivations, much less the volitional strategies for effective engagement, will grow in a moment.

Expectations for reading time should be pre-determined and planned. For primary students, engaged reading time in school should be at least one hour with an additional half hour at home. If home reading is not realistic, school reading time should be increased. This is not instructional time, but self-directed time in reading-to-enjoy and/or reading-to-learn. A lesson on decoding multisyllabic words is certainly literacy instruction, but it is not sustained reading engagement that enlists all the processes of fluency, comprehension, and understanding text. Decoding skill is a needed tool, but should not be confused with the complete functioning of the reading system that is needed for engagement. Time for reading in grades 3–5 should consist of two hours in school and one hour at home, or three hours total. An abundance of sustained literacy engagement requires an unending supply of books, and lines of inquiry for the most advanced as well as the needy students in a class. Finally, secondary students who achieve well are reading four hours daily in school and two hours daily at home for a six hour daily total. This refers to time in text with attention devoted to finding meanings. This is not time listening to a teacher read a poem, watching a science demonstration, or analyzing two sentences closely in a historical document. While necessary, those activities are enablers to literacy engagement but are not counted as the essence of engagement itself. These volumes of reading are not strongly research-based. However, they are typical patterns for on-grade learners in the hundreds of diverse classrooms in which we conducted research and professional development. More highly achieving students will likely invest much more time and struggling readers may not reach these goals.

**Fostering Multiple Motivations**

In the previous section, we presented one motivation-engagement support for each motivation in SMILE. Each of these has its own credibility. However, there is a rationale for attempting to promote all of the motivations. One piece of the justification is that the motivations are associated even though it is a moderate linkage. As a result, teaching for one, such as self-efficacy, may improve another such as social motivation. If a student feels more confident about his reading, he may be willing to share his thoughts about a text. Another reason is that the stakes in education are high, and we want to foster all motivations to accelerate achievement growth as fully as possible. It is known that outstanding teachers have been observed to support many motivations simultaneously. Just as teachers can encourage the development of fluency, comprehension, and reasoning with text simultaneously, they can foster the acquisition of SMILE as an integrated set (Guthrie et al., 2007).

One reading comprehension instruction program that focuses on enhancing different aged students’ comprehension and reading motivation is Concept Oriented Reading Instruction, or CORI (Guthrie et al., 2004; Guthrie & Klauda, 2014). In the CORI framework for reading instruction, we have provided a teachers’ guide and professional development for
teachers to implement support for sharing, self-efficacy, importance, interest, and engagement simultaneously. We also provided support for teachers to implement them successively one at a time across several weeks, which is more feasible for some programs, especially in middle school. As shown in the unit plan of Figure 3.2, teachers implemented a Civil War unit for seventh graders over one month. Within this theme key historical concepts consisted of: economics, culture, slavery, politics, leadership, beliefs, and military. To build reading skills for complex text, teachers used direct instruction to teach the strategies of inferencing, summarizing, concept mapping, and multiple strategy use. Within every lesson, motivation support was embedded. In a sequence over four weeks, teachers emphasized success, choice, importance, and collaboration. The supports were cumulative such that after targeting the improvement of self-efficacy through emphasizing success, support for choice was added to the support system and did not replace success support. Our rationale for beginning with success was that the seventh graders were extremely dubious about their abilities to handle historical text. We wanted to preclude having them assume the texts were impossible to read and act on the belief by avoiding reading. Therefore, we used simple texts initially and supported them with video introductions. We provided collaboration support last through an extended group project to make a large multidisciplinary poster showing the outcomes of the Civil War for either the North or the South. The motivation practices were implemented using activities such as those described in this chapter, and they have been detailed more fully elsewhere (Guthrie & Klauda, 2014).

In this CORI unit, we initiated learning with a Spice It Up activity consisting of stunning video clips of Civil War enactments from Discovery Channel. Discussion led to questions that students pursued using trade books. For these texts, teachers taught inferencing and other comprehension strategies. We include a literacy rich environment through independent reading in which each student was expected to read a variety of texts including at least one

<table>
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<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
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<td>Causes of the Civil War</td>
<td>Military Conduct &amp; Events of War</td>
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<td><strong>Concepts</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Struggling Reader</strong></td>
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*Figure 3.2. Unit Framework for Multiple Motivations in Interdisciplinary Instruction*
biography of a leading figure such as Harriet Tubman, Jefferson Davis, or Sojourner Truth. Each motivation-engagement practice was implemented during the direct instruction of reading strategies as showing in Figure 3.3. For example, during summarizing instruction, students were given a choice of texts to use for guided practice. All of the four frames of mind for motivation support were woven into the fabric of this unit.

Evidence that an interdisciplinary, multi-genre unit with motivation support will increase achievement has been documented in several sources. A meta-analysis of CORI studies was reported in one publication showing that CORI surpassed comparison classrooms of tradition instruction or strategy instruction by substantial amounts as represented in moderate to large effect sizes (Guthrie, McRae & Klauda, 2007). A recent publication shows that teachers can implement CORI practices during a specific time in the school year with beneficial effects on students compared with a different time when traditional E/LA practices were used. The study showed that the students’ perception of the practices supporting success, choice, importance, and collaboration increased motivations in either CORI or traditional E/LA, although the effect was much stronger during the CORI implementation. This verifies both that the practices impacted students’ motivation—engagement and that professional development for CORI can enhance that benefit. (Guthrie & Klauda, 2014). It should be noted that International Literacy Association provides access to a wide diversity of interdisciplinary units K–12 in the ILA Bridges program. Many of these units contain embedded motivation—engagement practices that are evidence-based and are aligned with the Common Core State Standard.

When teachers organize their classroom context to foster sustained support for multiple motivations and engagement, students benefit in several ways. Initially children enjoy reading. Although teaching cognitive skills is necessary, building literacy is not limited to this

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<td>Video Link: Video: Northern cities, Southern plantations</td>
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<td>Video Link: Video: Life in the Northern States</td>
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<td>Video Link: Video: Life on Southern Plantations</td>
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<td>Video Link: Video: Political Power Shifts</td>
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<td>Video Link: Video: The Confederate States of America</td>
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<td>Interferring Guide Questions 1 &amp; 3</td>
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<td>Information text reading: Influential People and Special Groups of the Civil War</td>
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domain. Literacy is also built by generating desire to read, and enthusiasm about books or authors. Prominent among a teacher’s benefits for fostering engagement is the sheer pleasure of seeing students delightfully absorbed in literacy. As students consistently pursue the adventures and challenges of books that appeal, many cognitive skills are growing. Sheer volume of reading enhances vocabulary, content knowledge from information texts, emotional empathy from literary works, and comprehension processes from a variety of materials.

**Extraordinary Teachers and How they Foster Motivation**

In nearly every school, there are a few teachers who simply work miracles with students. Apparently without extraordinary effort, they enable a large majority if not all of their students to enjoy learning and achieve highly. They seem to have a charismatic impact on students who respect and admire them. For these educators, teaching is a creative expression that generates productive and joyful literacy engagement continually. The unique qualities of these teachers are little known. Observational studies reveal an abundant list of attributes that distinguish these remarkable people.

According to several observational approaches, outstanding teachers have excellent class management by incorporating routines that support pupil independence with a strong emphasis on demanding literacy tasks and specific feedback about progress. They maximize curricular integrity and differentiate teaching for diverse students. They spend time on teacher-directed, similar-ability, small-group work, and shift the composition of these groups frequently. Students in their classes experience partner reading, shared readings, independent reading, book choosing, and new and familiar texts. They write for a variety of purposes individually and collaboratively. Teachers model literate behavior and provide extensive scaffolding for students who need it, building on students’ cultural backgrounds. It is evident that support for a wide spectrum of cognitive learning and a suite of motivations will be encouraged by these teachers. The relationships with students that these teachers create and sustain appear to dominate their repertoire of expertise, which enables them to empower students to grow as engaged literacy learners (Wharton-McDonald et al., 1998). Although it is not possible to mentor teachers to this level of expertise through brief professional development programs, it is quite feasible for any teacher to work toward this ideal by embracing the teaching approaches in this chapter described as Spice It Up, Literature-rich environment, Motivational practices, and Multiple motivation support.

**Successful Brief Motivation Interventions**

The CORI program described earlier is a relatively long-term classroom-based program to enhance students’ reading comprehension and motivation. Over the last 15 years, a variety of new motivational interventions to enhance students’ motivation in reading and other areas have been developed, implemented, and assessed. Generated mostly from social psychological research, all of them have been shown to be effective in enhancing students’ performance and motivation even over the relatively long term (Lazowski & Hulleman, 2016; Yeager & Walton, 2011). One option draws on attribution theory, which addresses the types of reasons students’ use to explain their successes and failures in classroom work. Four main reasons or attributions exist, consisting of luck, ability, task difficulty, and effort. After failing to perform well on a challenging literacy task or test, some students claim they had poor luck, saying perhaps that the test did not ask “their” questions. In that situation other students may blame their ability, suggesting that a poor literacy grade was due to the fact that “I’m just not good at reading.” Some will say that their inadequate performance was due to task difficulty,
claiming in a poetry quiz that “those poems were too hard for me.” All of these attributions are directed outward and do not help students to achieve more highly. Higher achieving students are likely to attribute their performance, either successful or unsuccessful, to their effort. They suggest that “I failed the tasks because I had not worked hard enough to prepare” or “I did well because I studied hard.”

Attribution training consists of helping students perceive their reasons for performance as related to their effort and approach, which they can control (Fosterling, 1985). It steers students away from luck, ability, and task difficulty explanations that they cannot control. After coming to believe that they are in control, students can work on strategies, planning, and time management to increase their success on daily or wider literacy activities.

A related intervention to increase literacy engagement is termed a “growth mindset” interpretation of one’s school work (Dweck, 2006). Drawing their perceptions of their mental competencies, students may hold beliefs that their intelligence is either fixed or flexible. The fixed mindset is that your reading or writing is determined by the level of your intelligence, which is fixed and stable at a certain level. A student who says “I am just dumb at everything” often assumes that dumbness will not change and consequently effort is not useful. The alternative perspective holds that intelligence is flexible and can be improved with the investment of time and effort on cognitive tasks. In the flexible view, actual intelligence will improve with well guided practice and feedback on significant tasks. For instance, students with a flexible mindset believe that intelligence and therefore reading can be improved. These students believe that using effortful strategies will improve reading even of the hardest texts.

Communicating a flexible or “growth” mindset to secondary students is quite feasible. In discussion, and/or writing activities, students’ perspectives of their intelligence as fixed or flexible can be determined. Following that recognition, examples of flexible intelligence can be discussed, and benefits of that perspective can be identified within the context of classroom tasks relevant to the students. Adopting the flexible view, temporarily, students can experience how that stance toward literacy tasks influences their thinking and performance. Such “growth mindset” training increases students’ effort, concentration, engagement, and achievement in literacy tasks.

A widely popular and effective program for fostering engaged learning in classrooms was pioneered by Pianta and his colleagues (Pianta, Hamre, & Allen, 2012). In their view, engaged school behaviors include active engagement such as reading aloud, writing, singing, answering a question, and passive engagement, which is listening or watching attentively. Off-task behavior refers to cases where students were distracted, unproductive, and/or attending to something other than the task at hand including staring into space, talking with classmates during a lesson, or finishing math homework when it is time to be writing in his or her journal.

In Pianta et al.’s (2012) view, engaged behaviors are enhanced and off-task behaviors are reduced in the presence of strong teacher–student relationships. His team observed the key qualities of those relationships to consist of the following: overcontrol (reverse scored), chaos (reverse), positive emotional climate, negative emotional climate (reverse), detachment of the teacher (reverse), teacher sensitivity, and productive use of instructional time.

Overcontrol is the degree to which classrooms were teacher driven and rigidly structured, and chaos referred to the degree to which teachers ineffectively managed children in the classroom so that disruption and disorder predominated. Positive emotional climate reflected the overall emotional tone of the classroom and the connection between teachers and students, whereas negative emotional climate reflected the overall level of expressed negativity in the classroom. Detachment refers to times when teachers were emotionally distant from students,
whereas teacher sensitivity encompassed teachers’ responsiveness to students’ needs and awareness of students’ levels of academic and emotional functioning. Also, productive use of instructional time considered how well teachers manage instructional time and routines so that students have the maximum number of opportunities to learn.

When teachers learn to see themselves in terms of these qualities, they can expand the positive attributes, such as teacher sensitivity and positive emotional climate, and reduce the negative ones such as over-control, chaos, and detachment. Intervention studies in which professional development is provided for teachers to enhance their relationships with students show remarkable improvement in the amount and quality of students’ engagement in learning and consequent achievement. Extremely encouraging is the finding that at-risk primary students appear to improve the most in engagement and achievement from heightened qualities of teacher-student relationships in the classroom (Pianta, Hamre & Allen, 2012).

**The Role of Extrinsic Motivation**

Before discussing other kinds of motivation interventions, it is imperative to discuss extrinsic motivation because it is such a commonly used and widely popular approach to motivating students’ reading. Many teachers or programs provide rewards for reading success. Examples include: programs that give prizes for classes that read the most books in a competition; school-wide campaigns that give public recognition to students who excel in reading tests; and teachers who award candy to students who complete reading tasks. These rewards delight many students. They elicit the desired reading behaviors in many cases.

In apparent contradiction to these benefits of extrinsic rewards, research shows conclusively that extrinsic motivation correlates negatively with achievement. In other words, students who say that they read to gain points, grades, recognition, or money are lower achievers than students who say they do not read for these incentives (Becker, McElvany & Kortenbruck, 2010). High achievers are more likely than lower achievers to read for enjoyment, interest, and involvement in literature. Regrettably, lower achieving students usually have not experienced the delightful immersion in a good book and have not acquired interests in a favorite genre or authors. Consequently, lower achievers rarely read for intrinsic reasons. However, they will read for the extrinsic incentives of rewards. Unfortunately, it is not satisfactory to read exclusively for the extrinsic reward because the student’s attention is on the reward rather than the text. Attention is not riveted on the text meaning but on finishing the reading task to reap the enticing reward. Consequently, the reading is likely to be superficial and not to spur high achievement. In general, teachers want to build intrinsic motivations that will sustain extended engagement which then fuels achievement growth.

In most classrooms there are students who do not show any inclination to read books for pleasure. Most, though not all, of these students are lower achievers in the classroom. How can teachers boost these students? We believe there is justification for using extrinsic motivations to jump start a student’s reading if it is followed by systematic support for intrinsic motivations that will nurture long-term internal drivers of reading. For example, suppose a teacher has a relatively low achieving student who is a reluctant reader. This student will most likely enjoy watching sports, playing a video game, or relaxing in free time. We recommend that a teacher could follow these steps: (1) ask the student to read a text matched to his reading level for the reward of a favorite activity, such as playing a video game. The student keeps a brief log of the text, time, and one thing he liked in the reading. (2) The teacher arranges five events of reading for the reward of the video game along with the log. The teacher reviews the log and discusses the “likes” quickly with the student. (3) The teacher provides the student three texts as options to read for the video game reward. For five of these events, the student keeps
the log with one “like” per text. The teacher continues to discuss the “likes” and seeks to find the texts the student enjoys. (4) The teacher next provides three texts as choices but does not provide the video game reward. The student keeps the log with his likes recorded. The teacher recognizes the student’s accomplishment in completing the reading and finding relatively interesting texts through choices. (5) The teacher gives the student wider, more realistic choices and appropriate amounts of reading time similar to other students in the classroom.

Needless to say, this is a framework, not a prescription. The teacher may need to repeat a stage, alter the reward, or change the choices. We are not aware of experimental evidence supporting this procedure, but believe it is logically and intuitively sound. But the principle is to begin with an extrinsic reward such as the video, combined with an intrinsic motivation support such as the choice, and then slowly remove the extrinsic reward. The satisfaction of reading and making choices will become the reward. Of course, this plan could be used with a group of one to eight students, but the group should be small enough that the teacher can give individual feedback.

To extend or alter this plan, the teacher could provide a different motivation support, such as talking with a partner about the book or text. This collaboration takes the place of the choice. Either way, the intrinsic motivation of reading for interest, or reading to share will replace the extrinsic motivation of reading for the reward. The extrinsic motivation plays a role at the outset, which then evolves into intrinsic motivation. In the long run, intrinsic motivation is more powerful. Think about the intrinsically motivated readers you know who devour books for long periods of time. They would much rather read an engrossing book such as a novel for the sheer enjoyment of satisfying their interest than read an equally long, boring text such as a medical treatise for the reward of a piece of candy. Normal people prefer joy over candy. Given the opportunities to take root, intrinsic motivations will become the nutrients of literacy accomplishment.

**Evidence-based Engagement and Motivation Support**

It is important to inquire about the nature of the research conducted on motivation in school. First, too many educators and even researchers think that motivation is too difficult to define and ephemeral to measure, and therefore believe rigorous quantitative research on it is impossible. Researchers have laid this misconception to rest. Motivation is best measured by having students self-report, say their interest, because motivation is inherently a state of the inner self. Only you know whether you are interested. Each of the motivations in SMILE has been measured with several self-report questionnaires. For every motivation, questionnaires have been validated by showing that they correlate with either extensive interviews with students or observations of student involvement in reading tasks. Engagement as self-reported dedication, and effort has been validated by diaries of reading amount and diversity.

The many connective links in Figure 3.1 have been quantitatively confirmed with several types of research. One powerful statistical analysis system is structural equation modeling. In this approach, variables are connected in a map like Figure 3.1. The analysis shows how strongly the variables are linked. All of the specific aspects of motivation, engagement, cognition, instruction, and student backgrounds such as income have been connected in these models. For motivation and instruction, reciprocal relationships have been reported, suggesting that they influence each other continually (Skinner & Belmont, 1993). It must be recognized that no single model incorporates all of those aspects simultaneously, but Figure 3.1 is the synthesis of many modeling studies (Guthrie, Wigfield & You, 2012).
Even more important than studies of associations among the components of Figure 3.1 are experimental attempts to change each one. If a researcher can modify one of the components, such as how relevant reading is, and show that the change increases motivation compared with a group that did not have relevant reading, the conclusion that relevance increases motivation is strong. Experiments have been done on each instructional practice in Figure 3.1. The effects were positive on the motivations in the motivation set. In most cases, but not all, the motivations were shown to increase engagement (Hulleman et al., 2010).

Remarkably, qualitative research confirms quantitative research in its conclusions regarding the relationship of engagement and achievement or attainment. Many studies using grounded theory illuminate the linkages of individual’s engagements in culturally relevant literacy activities and their proficiency in literacy tasks embedded in those activities. (Scribner & Cole, 1981). Beyond the individual studies, at least half a dozen Handbooks have reviewed research on school-related motivation, engagement, and student growth. These Handbooks may be seen in the reference list. It is reasonable to conclude that the empirical research supporting the many connections of teaching, motivation, engagement, cognition, and achievement in Figure 3.1 have been substantiated fully.

**School-based Assessments of Motivation and Engagement in Literacy**

In today’s data-based management systems for districts, schools, and classrooms, students’ status in motivation and engagement should be addressed with rigorous assessments. As teachers increasingly use data to make instructional decisions, the priority for measuring engagement and motivation grows. Although this is a new field for schools, we will share a promising crop of measurement scales and appraisal techniques for educators to use.

Four different types of measures have been successfully used consisting of: student motivation self-report, student engagement self-report, teacher observation, and student report of motivation support. Although their psychometric characteristics will not be reported here, such information is readily available from citations in the reference list (Fredricks et al., 2011).

To assess student motivation through self-report, questionnaires have been validated for a variety of motivations including: intrinsic motivation, interest, self-efficacy, prosocial goals, valuing, expectation, mastery goals, performance goals, belonging, attributions, self-concept, identification, autonomous motivation, and several more. Each construct can be measured reliably by four to seven items. A questionnaire consisting of four constructs may be administered to students in about five to ten minutes. For students younger than about nine, especially struggling readers, it is advisable to read them aloud to the class (Schiefele et al., 2012).

As we have suggested, literacy engagement refers to students’ time, effort, and persistence in reading activities. Two different types of literacy engagement measures have been successfully used. One is a self-report of these qualities, such as the measure of “dedication” which includes such items as:

- Even if the reading assignments were difficult, I completed them.
- I went above and beyond what was expected of me in reading.
- I spent as much time as needed to complete my reading homework.
- For every reading assignment, I worked hard.
- I made sure I had enough time to complete my reading assignments.
- I put a lot of effort into reading.
Students responded (1) not at all true of me; (2) not very true; (3) somewhat true; (4) very true of me. The sum of these items is quite reliable, and predicts both literacy achievement level and literacy growth. Such a measure, in turn, is predicted by all the SMILE motivations.

An alternative indicator of engagement is a student report of amount of reading. This may be a daily log, or more simply a report of the types of materials read, such as science texts, stories, history, sports, along with the frequencies and time spent (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997). Because such measures of reading volume are indicators of literacy engagement, they serve as links between motivations and achievement. Measures of print exposure using author recognition or book recognition are also indicators of engagement. Initially designed by Stanovich and colleagues, print exposure is another measure of engagement which predicts reading competencies across a wide age span (Mol & Bus, 2011).

Teacher observation of student motivation and engagement is quite feasible. Crafted for use in the upper elementary grades, the Reading Engagement Index is quite reliable and validly predicts reading achievement. The teacher rates each child 1 (not true) to 4 (very true) on the following statements:

1. This student often reads independently.
2. This student reads favorite topics and authors.
3. This student is easily distracted in self-selected reading.* (reverse scored)
4. This student works hard in reading.*
5. This student is a confident reader.*
6. This student uses comprehension strategies well.*
7. This student thinks deeply about the content of texts.
8. This student enjoys discussing books with peers.

Clearly, this is an omnibus measure, capturing several motivations of self-efficacy, interest, and social, as well as literacy engagement and cognitive strategy use. This indicator has been shown to function as the primary link between CORI units and reading achievement for grade 4 students (Wigfield et al., 2008). Many indicators of engagement have been used, focusing on the school (school engagement), classroom, course, and others in a range of ages from primary grades through university. An excellent review is available in IES Measuring student engagement.

Measures of motivation/engagement and achievement should go hand in hand in schools. It is desirable to foster development in both domains of literacy. They are naturally reciprocal. As motivation grows, achievement follows; and simultaneously as achievement increases, motivation expands. Clearly the disengaged, low achieving student deserves immediate support. In addition, the exceptions merit special attention. A student who is reasonably engaged but low achieving calls for closer analysis of his strengths and weaknesses and perhaps more well customized texts to read. A student who is highly achieving but relatively disengaged is missing an exciting pursuit and will lag behind peers in knowledge and expertise quite soon. This individual needs challenge, social literacy opportunities, and nourishment of literacy interest.

In the case that a district, school, or teacher seeks to improve the student levels of motivation and engagement, an additional form of assessment will be illuminating. Teachers can administer a questionnaire that captures the students’ experiences of engagement support in the classroom. For example, each of the engagement-generating practices, including collaboration, success, valuing, intrinsic motivation, and engagement, will be experienced by students if they are occurring regularly. A questionnaire of four to seven items can tap whether a student has experienced choice and autonomy support. The time span can be the prior day,
week, month, or semester, depending on the student’s age. A questionnaire of 25 items may consist of five constructs with five items each, and be administered in 10–15 minutes.

For example, an item set for tapping grade 4 student choice experiences is: In the last week,

- My teacher gave me choices about which books to read in independent reading time.
- I had chances to decide who my partner would be.
- My teacher asked me to write my opinion about something we read.
- In my class, we are allowed to work wherever we want to inside the classroom
- My teacher encourages us to ask questions about what we are reading.

The sum of scores on such a questionnaire represents students’ experience of autonomy motivation support. It will predict student growth in engagement and advancement in achievement. More vitally, the student perceptions will almost certainly surprise and inform teachers. Often, teachers believe they have provided a meaningful choice, or arranged a productive team task, only to discover that students did not know they had a choice or collaborative opportunity. However, engagement and achievement are predicted by the student’s experience of motivation support, not the teacher’s report of her intentions or actions. To boost active learning, we have to tap and build on students’ experiences.

Implementing Motivation and Engagement Support: Broader Suggestions

The principles of motivation and engagement support can be implemented, including a group within a class, classroom, school, district, state, or teacher education. A goal of increasing educational commitment can be directed to a group of students within a classroom who especially need it, according to the teacher’s understanding of the students. The commitment can be made to provide preservice teachers with the theoretical knowledge base, modeling by a highly motivating teacher, or instructional frameworks that incorporate motivation-engagement into lessons taught during preservice education.

Regardless of which center of activity is selected, a similar set of implementation issues will arise. Goal setting is a first step, which may consist of increasing a single motivation; increasing a fuller set of motivations; increasing students’ effort and determination; increasing the amount of time spent and text consumed in literacy; increasing the achievement on specific literacy tasks; and increasing tested achievement in summative assessments. Those goals refer to students’ literacy motivations and outcomes. Another set of goals could be set for the motivation–engagement support in classrooms. For example, a school may decide that a distinct motivational activity should occur for every student at least once a day, or preferably at least once a lesson.

In attempting to attain any of the goals, a crucial set of enablers must be anticipated and provided. Materials for literacy are vitally important. Students need an abundant number of appropriate texts to interact with and consume. In one summer school motivation program, teachers took fifth graders to a nearby park to observe nature, create questions, and then read about them in school. Several students were excited to find a “Madagascar hissing cockroach” in the park. But back in the classroom, they were frustrated and even angry when they could not find any text on that creature. Without the right type and quantity of materials to satisfy students’ needs, a motivational activity can backfire. Time to read and react must be provided. If motivated, students want to dive into text and discuss it, which must be guided and scaffolded for productivity. One highly motivating activity can launch
literacy interactions for two to ten days when well selected materials and sufficient time are accorded to it.

Motivation support that is explicitly designed and delivered is central. Simply exposing students to a wall of books does not automatically motivate. The plans for how students will interact with text and how teachers or others will enable that interaction are key. Perhaps grade 4 students will work in pairs, choose the same book, read it, discuss it, and make a book cover to advertise the book to school mates. Needless to say, this must be planned and orchestrated by the teacher or helpers. Integrating this motivating activity into the curriculum is necessary. Occasionally, the motivation activity will be a book club standing apart from a systematic literacy instruction program, which can be effective. However, the motivation and skills instruction can often be related. For example, a teacher may arrange for practice of cognitive skills, such as answering questions on information text to be used during the motivational activity. When this is accomplished, it ties the motivation into the instructional content, which can energize mainstream cognitive learning.

Indicators of success should be devised. For an engagement goal of “books read” teachers can set the aim of having students read a certain number of books in a specified period, such as having a class of 25 students read 50 books in three weeks. For an indicator of time and effort in reading activities, a questionnaire can be identified or constructed. Questionnaires exist on this topic. For the goal of increasing students’ interests in reading, likewise a questionnaire of reading interest may be located or created. Note that administrative guidelines are needed to prevent or reduce students’ exaggerations on self-reports. It is often useful to have someone other than the teacher to administer the questionnaire, have the questionnaire anonymous, and urge students to be honest and accurate in responding. Multiple indicators are ideal. Having an independent person observe students and/or groups in a classroom combined with self-reports from all classroom members will provide corroboration of findings.

Achievement on literacy tasks within motivating activities can be discerned. For example, using rubrics to grade concept maps, posters, persuasive essays, or student presentations can document the quality of cognitive accomplishment during classroom motivation support. It is valuable to display that motivational activities are often fun, but also go beyond entertainment into deeper learning and fuller knowledge acquisition. Assessments of motivation-engagement should be entered into systematic measures of cognitive literacy accomplishments and growth across units, grade periods, and years.

References


