5-2012

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Abstract
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Document Type
Thesis

Degree Name
MS in Literacy Education

Department
Education

Subject Categories
Education

This thesis is available at Fisher Digital Publications: http://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/education_ETD_masters/216
Student Perceptions of Their Own Reading Achievement and the Motivational Factors Which Affect this Achievement

By

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

M.S. Literacy Education

Supervised by

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May 2012
Abstract

So many students today in the American School Systems struggle to read. Therefore, the questions arise what are students’ perceptions of their own reading achievement, and what are the motivational factors that affect this achievement. This study took place in a medium sized suburb and in three different classrooms throughout the district. The findings of this study show a student’s beliefs are not connected to his/her reading achievement or DRA levels. However, a student’s attitude and motivational levels are weakly related to their DRA levels.
Student Perceptions of their Own Reading Achievement and the Motivational Factors Which Affect this Achievement

A great proportion of students in our school system today struggle to learn and achieve for a variety of reasons. Research has suggested that “struggling readers are likely to avoid reading or behave helplessly with text” (Brozo, 1991, p.#) and “content area teachers may not provide students with reading instruction and thus may ignore the needs of struggling readers” (Hall, 2005, p.#). If a student becomes a struggling reader at an early age, he or she is likely to stay a struggling reader throughout much of his or her school career. Teachers usually place most if not all of their focus on the many students who are grasping the material(s), and let the very small proportion of students who do not understand the material slip through the cracks. As teachers, we need to know these students are, so they do not slip through the cracks. We also need to know what motivates our students to want to learn when they constantly struggle with it. Knowing what motivates our students, as teachers, we should design lessons accordingly so that they are interesting and exciting to the students that we teach. We as teachers, should also design lessons that motivate students and make them want to come to school because it is fun to learn new things.

One significant subject in schools which is in need of a major overhaul is the area of reading. Therefore, this action research study is designed to investigate just this. First, this thesis paper will look at students’ attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions related to their own reading achievement. Next, it will look at the seven main motivational variables that affect students’ reading achievement.
In order to understand this research study at a deeper level, the theoretical frameworks that were evaluated and analyzed were Bandura’s Social-Cognitive or Social Learning Theory and Vygotsky’s Social Cultural Theory. It is said that a lot of experiences a person or student has depends on their previous experiences and the surrounding social and cultural contexts or atmosphere.

My research questions are as follows, what are students’ perceptions of their own reading achievement, and what are the motivational factors that affect this achievement? My target participants for my study were between the ages of eight and 12 (grades 2-5), with all participants being Caucasian. For this study, I used three classrooms. The three classrooms I used were a second grade general education classroom, a fourth grade self-contained classroom, and a fifth grade inclusive classroom. For the purposes of this paper, each classroom will be given a pseudonym. Classroom #1 will be the second grade general education classroom and will be referred to as Mrs. Batman’s Classroom. Classroom #2 will be the fourth grade self-contained classroom and will be referred to as Mrs. Belle’s classroom. Lastly, the third classroom, the fifth grade inclusive classroom will be referred to as Mrs. Clause’s Classroom. These three teachers work with students at varying reading levels, from levels 10 to 60 (DRA). Data was collected in three different elementary schools, in the Timbuktu Central School District (pseudonym) for this action research study. This district is located in a medium sized suburb just outside of a larger city in Western New York. Each student and parent who completed both the informed assent forms and the parental permission forms then completed three different questionnaires. The findings of my study showed that students’ beliefs of whether they were a good reader or not was not connected to their DRA levels. On the other hand, my findings showed students’ attitudes
about reading was connected to their DRA levels and weakly connected to their levels of motivation.

Theoretical Framework

Before looking at the current study, it is important to understand how motivation and specific learning theories impact a student’s development and academic achievement in school. Motivation is a key concept that will be a large focus for this section. The concept of motivation is a very large and broad concept that is affected by countless components and factors. One of the main reasons for understanding a student’s achievement is demonstrated through the works of Bandura (1986) and his Social-Cognitive Theory. The Social-Cognitive Theory is also known as the Social Learning Theory which states “children and adults operate cognitively on their social experiences and how these cognitive operations then come to influence their behavior and development” (Grusec, 1992, p. 781). In other words, a student’s social experiences influence or impact his/her subsequent social experiences, whether these experiences may be positive or negative. If a student’s first experience was positive, then his/her next experience will most likely be positive too. On the other hand, if a student’s first experience is negative, then most likely a subsequent experience will be negative, if not avoided altogether. Analyzing this theory deeper, in order to understand this current study below, a smaller, but important component of Bandura’s Social Cognitive Theory is the term self-efficacy. The term self-efficacy according to Bandura (1986) means “a sense of confidence regarding the performance of specific tasks (Bandura, 1986, p. 21). Also according to recent research, “self-efficacy has a high degree of importance as a basic element of individual behavior and attitudes in any work environment” (Harrison, Rainer, Hochwarter, & Thompson, 1997, p. 79-80). Using the information above and in relation to this study, if a student perceives him or herself as a poor reader (low self-efficacy)
then his or her performance or motivation to complete the task is also going to be low. On the other hand, if a student has a high self-confidence level (high self-efficacy) then his or her academic performance or motivation to complete the task may also be high.

This Social Cognitive Theory is important to this current study, because it relates to a student’s reading and his/her reading achievement. If a student’s confidence level (self-efficacy) is low then their attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions about their reading achievement will also be negatively affected. This effect is similar with students who have high confidence levels (high self-efficacy). High confidence levels (high self-efficacy) will most likely lead to more positive attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions about a student’s reading achievement. Wood and Bandura (1989) stated that “individuals who demonstrate strong self-efficacy are more likely to undertake challenging tasks, persist longer, and perform more successfully than those with lower self-efficacy beliefs” (p. 80). Therefore, self-efficacy is one of the main factors linked to a student’s motivation and academic achievement in the area of reading (Harrison et. al, 1997).

A second theoretical framework that helps to understand a student’s learning and performance in school is through the Sociocultural Theory by Vygotsky. The Sociocultural Theory is significant to understand a student’s learning and development because the process of learning is a meaning making process (John-Steiner, & Mahn, 1996). This meaning is gained through multiple avenues and contexts. Students can learn through their communities, homes, classrooms, and playgrounds etc... Learning is a socially constructed process in which students learn and make meaning from the interactions they have with others, in various contexts and environments (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996). The following example was given to help understand this theory on a deeper level. When a student is “beginning an activity, learners depend on others with more experience. Over time they take on increasing responsibility for their
own learning and participation in joint activity” (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 25). In other words, when any person, in this case a student, is learning a new skill he or she relies heavily on the social interaction with others. These others that he/she is interacting with are usually more knowledgeable and can guide them through the meaning making process, therefore internalizing their learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991). As a student’s knowledge increases he/she becomes more in charge of their learning. As the student takes on more of a leadership role in their own learning, they rely less on others for guidance and are able to collaborate with their classmates more through social interaction. Wang (2007) also agreed that the Sociocultural theory was a critical component in a students’ learning and development. Wang (2007) stated that a child’s learning occurs through many social and cultural contexts and by using many different forms of learning. Collaborative learning is a way that students are able to increase their “academic achievement and cognitive development” because they are in constant interaction with one another (p. 149). John-Steiner and Mahn (1996) also found similar results. They found that learning is done through a cultural context, in which social interaction is vital to a student’s learning and achievement, especially in the area of reading.

**Research Question**

Given that reading achievement and motivation is significantly a cognitive, social, and cultural practice, this action research project asks what are students’ perceptions of their own reading achievement and what are the motivational factors that affect this achievement?

**Literature Review**

The following literature review will explore a wide range of perspectives relating to a student’s reading achievement and the motivational variables that affect this achievement. First, I will explore how a struggling reader’s attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions affect their reading
Students’ Attitudes, Beliefs, and Perceptions in Relation to Their Reading Achievement

Improving reading instruction, especially how to teach struggling readers more effectively, has become a controversial issue over the past couple of years. Considering the amount of students who struggle and continue to struggle with reading in our schools is overwhelming. A student’s past reading experiences has a profound impact on their current and future attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions with reading. This is especially when it comes to the struggling readers attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions. According to the research of McCray, Vaughn, & Neal (2001), over half of the students who were diagnosed with a reading disability were still reading disabled by high school. In addition, according to the National Assessment of Education Progress, results show that over half of the students ranging from grades fourth through twelve are reading below grade level (McCray, Vaughn, & Neal, 2007). It was also emphasized that the reading skill level of a student in grades 1-3, had a strong influence on academic performance and achievement for the rest of their school career (Melekoglu, 2001). These three pieces of data above show that a student’s past reading experiences shape students attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions significantly.

Past experience, whether positive or negative seems to be one of the most significant reasons why students struggle with reading or avoid reading tasks. According to Little & Hines (2006), research supports that children who practice reading more are better readers and have a more positive relationship with reading. A study done by Morgan, Fuchs, Compton, Cordray, and Fuchs (2008) also found that children who are struggling readers have less positive views of themselves as readers, feel powerless, and are more likely to act out because they are unsure of
what to do. Students that carry these views of themselves as readers will do anything in order to avoid a reading task. This study also shows that those students’ perceptions of themselves as readers affect their beliefs about their reading abilities and in turn, shapes their attitudes about how they think of reading tasks or reading in general. Ludwig (2007) stated that “children at risk for reading failure tend to be less motivated to engage in reading tasks” (p. 1). Therefore, students’ past experiences or past reading failures (practice) tend to directly affect their future levels of motivation and practice. This effect on a student’s motivation ultimately limits the amount of exposure or practice some students may have. Another study found similar results in that past experiences can either “mediate” or “hinder” a student’s reading development (Goatley, 2001, p. 343). In this context, the word “mediate” refers to how the student’s learning is supported, whereas the word “hinder” refers to a student’s learning being stopped or sometimes being hurt. The most significant learning experience that can either mediate or hinder a student’s development is the opportunity for students to choose their own books for independent reading time (Goatley, 2001). The process of picking a book can either become a positive or negative reading experience. This experience can be a positive reading experience, by giving the student choice, or a negative reading experience, in which the parent/teacher is always telling the child what to read (Goatley, 2001). The experience of having freedom and independence to choose what they (the students) want to read during independent reading time can greatly increase the students’ future attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions of themselves as readers.

Guthrie, Schafer, & Huang’s (2001) research also proved that past experiences are a strong “predictor” on a student’s future level of motivation and in turn affects a student’s attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions. They found that motivation has a strong correlation to how often a student chooses to read. Bandura (1986) and Schunk (1989) also found that, “a student
who feels they cannot accomplish an academic task may be less motivated to engage with it” (p. 15). Therefore, a student, who does not read often, usually chooses not to read because of a continual cycle of negative reading experiences and their feelings that they cannot complete the task given to them. This continual cycle of negative reading experiences and feelings of inadequacy will eventually turn a student off to reading. When a student turns off to reading, this negative attitude creates even more barriers to successful reading achievement in the future. According to Stanovich (1986), this continual cycle of negative reading achievement is also known as the “Matthew Effect.”

As proposed by Walberg and Tsai (1983), the “Matthew Effect” is described as struggling students or “poor readers” getting poorer as the “successful readers” or the “rich” students getting richer; also known as the divergent effect (Protopapas, Sideridis, Mouzaki, & Simos, 2011, p. 402). Protopapas et. al. (2011) researched this divergent effect even further in relation to student reading achievement and discovered that results failed to indicate a “divergent effect” (p. 415). However, according to Protopapas’s et. al. (2011) even though the results fail to indicate a divergent effect, it still looks like there is this type of effect, for two significant reasons.

The first reason there seems to be a divergent effect present is because “higher ability students routinely outperform lower ability students in benefiting from practice and experiences” compared to their lower ability students (p. 416). By way of explanation this means, that higher ability students show more successful experiences, more practice, and more exposure to reading materials and tasks, whereas the lower ability students who usually avoid reading tasks have less experiences, practice, and exposure to reading materials. Hence, past experiences led to less practice, exposure to reading materials, and the lower the skill level(s) of a student.
The second reason there seems to be a divergent effect, but is not supported by the results is because of the progress gap. The “lower ability” students have more of a progress/gap to grow whereas the higher ability students have a smaller gap to progress. Therefore, as the higher ability students are making progress, so are the lower ability students, but just at a different rate (Protopapas et. al, 2011). Even though both groups of students are making growth, the “growth gap” is not closing because the lower ability students have more of a gap to cover than the higher ability students do (Protopapas, 2011, p. 415). In summary, past experiences with reading has a great effect on a student’s attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions because the more practice and exposure a student obtains the more confident he or she will feel. On the other hand, the less practice and exposure which a student obtains, the less confident he or she will feel as a reader. In addition, in order for a student’s past experiences to be positive these experiences need to be valuable and purposeful, which is the next idea discussed in the following paragraph.

Lack of purpose and background knowledge has a strong influence on a struggling readers attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions about reading. Struggling learners may or may not have adequate background knowledge about the reading process. If students do not have adequate background knowledge about the reading process they may or may not have appropriate strategies to use when reading. Not having appropriate strategies to use when reading or not using these strategies at the appropriate times can ultimately deter students from trying to read successfully in the future (Hynd, Holschuh, & Nist, 2001). Reading is even harder when a task is not meaningful or valuable to the student completing the reading task.

In an overall sense, the above shows that a students’ past reading experiences and achievement is directly impacted by a student’s attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions they hold about themselves as readers. It also shows that the work a student is given to complete, needs to
be meaningful and valuable to them also. A student’s attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions will determine whether he or she will or will not avoid a reading task and how much motivation he or she will put forth when completing a reading task. Constant negative experiences, as a continuous cycle, will eventually limit the amount of opportunities the student has to read (Stanovich, 1986). Many struggling readers have the desire to try to complete the reading task, but they do not have accurate background knowledge or they use ineffective strategies when reading. Having inaccurate background knowledge and ineffective strategies will ultimately produce continual unsuccessful reading experiences (Hall, 2006; Hynd et. al 2001). These continual unsuccessful reading experiences create a student’s negative reading attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions making them more likely to avoid reading tasks. With a limited amount of opportunities the student has to read, decreases his or her chances of success in future reading tasks. In addition, giving struggling readers tasks that have little or no value and meaning to them makes reading that much harder for them.

**Motivational Variables and Reading Achievement**

For well over many decades, motivation has been seen as a broad intricate concept that is interwoven into the learning process and is seen through students’ behaviors in the classroom. Research supports that “motivation should be a central consideration in reading curriculum because it often makes the difference between learning that is superficial and shallow and learning that is deep and internalized” (Gambrell & Codling, 2002, p. 26). Motivation is one of the key components that can support or inhibit a student’s learning (Powell, McIntyre, Rightmyer, 2006). Even though there seems to be countless variables that affect a student’s motivation when learning, there were seven motivational variables which seemed consistent across many of the research articles collected. These seven motivational variables include the
following: 1) student choice, 2) past experiences, 3) intrinsic motivation factors, 4) extrinsic motivation factors, 5) planned vs. spontaneous teaching and opportunities, 6) gender and 7) sociocultural practices. These seven motivational factors and how they affect a student’s reading achievement will be discussed in depth later in this paper.

Choice is essential in any classroom and is the first motivational factor which will be discussed in this paper. Students want to and need to have choices in many of the classroom activities being completed. Having choice is especially true when it comes to independent reading and having the choice to pick out a book for this independent reading time. As teachers it is our responsibility to “foster an environment of appreciation” (Ludwig, 2007, p. 13). It is also our responsibility to “create a classroom context that fosters motivation to read” (Gambrell, & Codling, 2002, 25). Therefore, it is very important that students are given the choice of what books they want to read without teacher or parent intervention. Opportunities for students to independently select books during reading time is a very much needed and valuable practice (Goately, 2001).

Teachers and parents alike, constantly telling their children what to read ultimately hinders their reading achievement and motivation to read (Goately, 2001). If teachers and parents are constantly telling their student/child what to read, a student’s reading growth and development are ultimately inhibited. Students need to be able to pick the books which they feel are the most meaningful and purposeful to them (Powell, et. al., 2006). At first, the books a student chooses may be too hard for him or her, but over time the student should be learning strategies in the classroom, in order to choose appropriate books for his or her reading level. By giving student strategies to pick out appropriate books for their reading level, parents and teachers should not feel as much of a need to intervene when their child is picking out a book. In
turn, by giving students’ choice when picking out a book to read, you as a teacher or parent are creating a more positive and meaningful reading experience for your student/child.

This same idea also applies to the completion of school tasks. If students are given choices on what activities/tasks they want to complete in school, they will be more motivated to complete the task because it has more meaning and purpose to them (Powell et. al, 2006). Ludwig (2007) found that choice was also an important consideration when it comes to student motivation. Another study, found similar results, which states that giving students’ multiple opportunities and exposures for choosing a variety of reading materials is extremely beneficial to their learning growth and development (Little & Hines, 2006). After school support was also shown to contribute positively to a student’s growth and reading achievement. Lastly, McKool (2007) found similar results that suggested that students who are given a variety of materials to choose from are more motivated to read during SSR (Sustained Silent Reading) during the school day.

A second motivation factor which affects a student’s reading achievement is past experiences with reading. Motivation when learning to read plays a crucial role in a student’s success or failures (Gambrell & Codling, 2002). A student’s past reading experience plays a significant role in the area of motivation because past negative experiences usually create students that are willing to do anything to avoiding reading tasks or reading in general. Guthrie et. al (2001), Juel (1988), and Stanovich (1986), has shown that “children who avoid frequent reading [and who] practice rarely become skilled readers” (p. 387). In this sense, students who avoid reading do not practice enough to get better at it; therefore, future reading attempts most likely are going to be unsuccessful also. Ashcroft (2004) found similar results in her study. Students who find reading easy and have previous reading success will increase the possibility of
success with reading in the future possibly because of increased motivation. On the other hand, students who have great difficulty reading, will lead to a lack of success further down the road. Students who have difficulty reading also have the increased possibility of “frustration, inappropriate behavior, and poor motivation” (Mercer & Mercer, 1998, p. 21).

In addition, past home experiences were also another important factor that contributed to a student’s motivation to read (Baker & Scher, 2002). The researchers stated that there are various ways in which parents can help their students create positive reading experiences in the home. First, parents can help their children read. Second, parents can show a positive attitude toward reading. Third, parents can provide their students with a variety of resources and materials to read and learn from. Through these home experiences, a child’s reading achievement and motivation can be affected in either a positive or negative way. McKool (2007) also agreed with Baker & Scher (2002) because parents or families, who do not see reading practice at home very valuable, will not provide their children with many, if any, valuable reading materials or experiences in the home. These families will see reading as a valuable part of school only, not in the home (McKool, 2007). McKool’s (2007) research also pointed out that “all of the reluctant readers in this study reported that they learned to read in school, and half of them reported that learning to read was difficult” (p. 122). It is important as a parent to place a high value and importance on reading in the home, so that children pick up on this positive attitude early in their schooling. By placing a high value and importance on reading, students will understand that reading is enjoyable and may be more likely to read independently outside of school.

Intrinsic motivation is a third motivational factor that affects a student’s reading achievement and motivation. Intrinsic motivation usually refers to motivation that comes from within. For instance, a student completes a task because they feel it is important and meaningful
to them, not because they are going to get a reward when they finish (rewards=extrinsic motivation). Ashcroft (2004) research study shows that a student can develop intrinsic motivation to read by providing them with continual positive reading experiences. Hynd et. al. (2001) also found similar results to Ashcroft (2004) in that interest and motivation were significant to a students learning and growth. If a student is interested and sees value and purpose in the reading task at hand, he or she is more likely to complete the task (Hynd et. al, 2001). On the other hand, if a student does not see “importance” of the task and how this task relates to their own lives, then he or she will be less likely to complete the task because of low levels of motivation (Hynd et. al, 2001, p. 36). The same applies to a student’s intrinsic motivation to read. If a student does not find the reading purposeful, then he/she is going to lack the motivation to complete the reading task at hand. They may feel frustrated, uninterested, discouraged, and helpless, all lowering their motivation to complete the reading task (Hynd. et. al, 2001).

Therefore, a tasks value, purpose, and meaning are essential pieces in order to increase and maintain a student’s motivation and successful task completion. It was also found that if a reading was done in isolation vs. reading and then completing activities, the reading provided more purpose and meaning to the reader (Powell et. al, 2006). For example, if students were told to read and nothing was done after their reading, such as a discussion, guided practice, or extension activity students would most likely see their reading as lacking purpose, meaning, and relation to their lives, hence low levels of motivation. On the other hand, if the students completed the reading, had a discussion by making conclusions and connections from their reading to their own lives their motivation to complete the task would be much greater than before (Powell et. al, 2006). Their motivation would be much greater in the second example because they were able to use their reading to complete purposeful and valuable reading
connections. In addition, it was also found that students lacked interest in what they were reading in school, especially the struggling readers. The reading material was usually too difficult or they could not connect to what they were reading (McCray et. al, 2001). In this situation, a lack of intrinsic motivation causes a lack of reading achievement (McCray et. al, 2001).

A fourth significant factor that affects a student reading achievement is extrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation is seen as rewards or something that the student receives after completing a task. Such external rewards include grades, living up to parents or teacher expectations, the need for this knowledge in later grades, fear of failure, and social standing (Hynd et. al, 2001, Powell et. al, 2006, Rueda, MacGillivray, and Monzo, 2001).

Next, planned vs. Spontaneous opportunities is a fifth motivational variable that strongly affects a student’s reading achievement and motivation. Planned opportunities are activities that were structured into a students day by the teacher. These activities include computer time, specials, and centers etc. (Goately, 2001). On the other hand, spontaneous opportunities were ones which occurred at a specific moment of the day, also known to teachers as teachable moments. Spontaneous opportunities included on the spot learning/conversations, informal discussions, or even individual conversations etc. These planned and spontaneous opportunities were both opportunities that either supported or inhibited a student’s reading achievement and motivation levels (Goately, 2001). By providing students with structure (planned opportunities), they will be aware of what is planned throughout the day. However, by including spontaneous opportunities, it allows the teacher to spice things up and create change and excitement in the daily schedule, in turn increasing students’ levels of motivation.

Gender is the sixth significant motivation factor that seems to affect a student’s reading achievement levels. Wheldall & Limbrick’s (2010) study questioned whether gender differences
play a role in reading achievement and motivation. Many other studies done in this area of gender differences report mixed findings, however this study wanted to research the issue in greater depth in terms of specific motivational factors. Wheldall & Limbrick’s (2010) study reported that “there is evidence to suggest that reported gender differences in reading achievement may not be due to differences in reading skills, but rather be a result of methodological factors” (p. 419). By way of explanation, this means reading achievement in both boys and girls may not be connected to their skill or ability in reading, but rather to how the teacher teaches or instructs them how to read. In this study there were approximately 1,133, 988 students involved in grades three and five. There were a total of approximately 600,000 boys who participated and 500,000 girls over a ten year period. Data was collected through reading, language, writing, and numeracy tests. Results showed that more boys than girls had reading problems, and more girls than boys showed higher reading achievement (outperformed boys). The study concluded that girls outperformed boys not because of skill level, but because of possible motivational and attention factors. However, this article did not state what these possible motivational and attention factors were.

One last motivational factor is sociocultural practice. According to Rueda, et. al (2001) their research looked at how a student’s society and culture effect a student’s reading achievement and motivation level. They found that “just because someone [a student] is able to engage in a behavior does not mean that he or she will be willing to do so. This is especially true with students who are...at risk for academic failure” (p. 1). In other words, just because a student has the skills to read, he or she is not always going to be motivated to read. Ghaith & Bouzeineddine (2003) also agree with Rueda’s et. al (2001) study. Ghaith & Bouzeineddine (2003) stated students who had positive self-concepts, were more likely to understand their
reading, enjoy their reading and be more intrinsically motivated. Whereas the students who had negative experiences had more negative self-concepts, were less likely to understand what they read, were less likely to enjoy what they read and had lower levels of motivation. According to the National Reading Research Center, motivation is a crucial component to a student’s reading abilities and achievement (Rueda et. al, 2001, p. 6). Through a student’s surrounding community learning is emphasized through cultural and social practices, traditions, and histories (Rueda et. al, 2001).

Summary

The research of the collected literature clearly shows a student’s attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions are strongly influenced by a student’s past experiences with reading and background knowledge. The literature also shows a student has to be provided with meaningful and purposeful reading tasks for authentic, motivated learning to occur. In addition, the literature shows there are countless factors which affect a student’s reading motivation, but this paper focused on seven main factors. As stated above, these seven main factors include, choice, past experiences, intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, planned vs. spontaneous opportunities, gender, and sociocultural practices. Knowing what influences a student’s attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions along with what is meaningful and purposeful to the students will help teachers create lessons accordingly (especially with struggling readers). Lastly, knowing the seven significant motivational factors will in turn help a teacher to develop lessons that are more engaging and also create a continual cycle of successful reading experiences to come.

Method

Context
This action research study was conducted in three different elementary schools, in Timbuktu Central School District (pseudonym). This district is located in a medium sized suburb, just outside of a larger city in Western New York. The district of Timbuktu includes about 43,500 residents with average income per household around $60,000 (Public School Review, 2012). Also, in this district/suburb, almost 50% of the population has earned a college degree, compared to 32% in New York State overall (Public School Review, 2012). The school district of Timbuktu approximately serves around 9,000 students, in eleven schools, with about 640 teachers employed across the district (Public School Review, 2012). Taking a greater in depth look at this suburb and the school district of Timbuktu more statistical information was obtained. More statistical information was obtained because of its relevance to this paper and to provide the reader with a deeper understanding about the school district of Timbuktu. Seven percent (592 students) are eligible for free lunch, whereas four percent (331 students) are eligible for reduced lunch (School report card, 2010). Considering the average income per household mentioned above and the number of students eligible for free or reduced lunch, this district of Timbuktu seems to be mostly made up of middle class citizens (well above the poverty line). In addition, looking further into the district the population of the schools in this district seems to have very little cultural diversity. 91% of students are White, 2.8% are African American, 2.3% Hispanic, 3% Asian, 0.1% American Indian, and less than 1% other (Public School Review, 2012). Lastly, only 1% (128 students) are considered to be Limited English Proficient (School report card, 2010).

Looking more specifically into the schools across the district as stated earlier in the paper, Timbuktu employs about 640 teachers, with between 450-550 students at each school. Therefore, the classroom ratio’s range from about 14:1 to 17:1 teacher to student ratio (Public
School Review, 2012). Also, the student body seems to be proportional in terms of gender, with 49% of students who are female, and 51% of students who are male.

Next, this paper will take a closer look into the Special Education population of the schools. There are about 1,100 students who require special education services in this district (School Report Card, 2010). Approximately 70% of these students spend most of their time in the general education classroom, where as 13% of students spend about half the time in the general education classroom. In addition, 11% spend less than half their day in the general education classroom, and around 6% spend their time in separate or other settings (School Report Card, 2010). Lastly, there are 179 Paraprofessionals, 92 other professional staff, 21 assistant principals, and 11 principals who are employed throughout this district (School Report Card, 2010).

For this action research study, I will be conducting my research across three different elementary schools in the Timbuktu district. The first classroom I will be using is a 2nd grade general education classroom. The next classroom I will be using is a fourth grade self-contained classroom. The third and last classroom I will be using is an inclusive fifth grade classroom. These classrooms will be explained in greater depth later in the paper.

Participants

My target participants are between the ages of eight and twelve (grades 2-5), with all participants being Caucasian. For this study, I used three classrooms as mentioned above. The three classrooms I used was a second grade general education classroom, a fourth grade self-contained classroom, and a fifth grade inclusive classroom. For the purposes of this paper, each classroom will be given a pseudonym. Classroom #1 will be the second grade general education classroom and will be referred to as Mrs. Batman’s Classroom. Classroom #2 will be the fourth
grade self-contained classroom and will be referred to as Mrs. Belle’s classroom. Lastly, the third classroom, the fifth grade inclusive classroom will be referred to as Mrs. Clause’s Classroom. Between all three teachers, the average years of teaching is about 20 years. These three teachers work with students at varying reading levels, from level 10 to level 60 (DRA).

Mrs. Batman has been teaching for about 30 years, and most of her teaching career being in the Timbuktu Central School District. In her classroom, there are 14 boys, and eight girls (with 22 students total). All students are of Caucasian background, and they range from low to middle class in socioeconomic status. At a second grade level, the students’ reading levels range between 18-30, DRA levels. In addition, in this classroom, there are no students who are classified with special needs.

Mrs. Belle has been teaching for about 24 years and has also done most of her teaching in the Timbuktu Central School District. All of the students in her classroom are of Caucasian background and are low to middle class. She has a mix of boys and girls, (six boys and five girls, eleven student’s total). Considering this classroom is a self-contained classroom, all of the students are classified with disabilities, and their reading levels vary greatly. Reading levels in this classroom range from 10-38 DRA levels. In addition, there is a diverse set of disabilities in this classroom that range from less to more profound. The classified disabilities in this classroom range from specific learning disabilities, emotional/behavioral disabilities, Down syndrome and Autism/Asperger’s.

The last classroom, the third classroom, is Ms. Clause’s classroom. She has been teaching for about 10 years and has done all of her teaching in the Timbuktu Central School District. She has a total of 18 students (eleven boys and seven girls) all are of Caucasian background and middle class concerning socioeconomic status. In Ms. Clause’s classroom, the student reading levels range from a DRA of 36 to 60.

**Research Stance**
After graduating with my Bachelor’s Degree in Childhood and Special Education (Grades 1-6) two years ago, I have worked in numerous classrooms ranging from Kindergarten to Eighth grade. The types of classrooms I have worked in have varied also. I have experience in general education classrooms, inclusive classrooms, resource rooms, self-contained classrooms, in school suspension (at the middle school level) and as a Librarian. I have also done field work and have substitute taught in both the city and suburban districts for the past two years. In addition, I work in the city school district as a tutor, tutoring second, third, fourth, and sixth graders in the area of Math and Reading. While substitute teaching and tutoring, I am finishing up my Master’s in Literacy Education (grades Birth-6). During this action research study, I will take on the role of a passive observer (Mills, 2007). According to Mills (2007), passive observers “should be focused only on their data collection” (p. 59). For my action research, I do not want to take on the role of the teacher, I want to specifically observe and analyze students’ attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions about reading and their motivation to read or not. By observing, I am looking at why students choose the answers they did on the questionnaires given. In turn, through this position, of a passive observer I will be able to gather a variety of forms of data, both qualitative and quantitative that will be useful to my findings and results section.

Method

For this action research project, a variety of forms of data was collected in order to complete an accurate and valid study. Each of the three classroom teachers was given three questionnaires to administer to their students. Questionnaire #1 was called “The Elementary Reading Survey” (Garfield) (McKenna & Kear, 1990), Questionnaire #2 was called the “Reading Motivation Scale” (Adapted from Guthrie, Coddington, & Wigfield, 2009) and Questionnaire #3 was called the “The Motivation for Reading Questionnaire” (Adapted from Bowden). Next, I
collected students reading level records and compared them against the survey results. I compared the reading levels with the survey results to see if there was a positive relationship between reading achievement/level and motivation to read. Third, I conducted small, short interviews with each teacher over email about their observations of their own students reading behaviors and motivations. (All questionnaires, and interview questions/answers, will be included in the paper’s appendices to follow).

**Quality and Credibility of Research**

In an action research paper, it is extremely important to be able to demonstrate trustworthiness. According to Guba’s (1981) criteria for Validity of Qualitative Research, Mills (2007) states that these criteria are vital components in order to develop a study that is trustworthy. These four criteria include credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Credibility can be defined as “the researcher’s ability to take into account the complexities that present themselves in a study and to deal with patterns that are not easily explained” (p. 85). In other words, credibility in terms of an action research study means that as the researcher you have to spend a considerable amount of time at the research site and with the research participants. The word credibility also means that you, as the researcher have to gather enough information to provide valid, or in another words credible results. In my research study, credibility will be ensured by using three different types of reading motivation surveys as well as teacher interviews. In addition, I will present all the data that is collected, even if it doesn’t match with what my study was trying to prove.

A second criterion of a trustworthy action research study is transferability. Transferability, can be defined as “The researcher’s belief that everything is context-bound”
The word transferability being used in regards to an action research study means that results are due to the context of that particular study and if some elements of the study were to change so would the results. In turn, the results of this study are not made to be easily generalizable to an entire population, but are more contextually based. In order to ensure transferability in my study, I presented my collected data in a way so the reader understands that it is context bound and results will change if elements of the study were to change.

Third, Dependability is an important criterion for a trustworthy study. By definition dependability means “the stability of the data” (p. 86). Dependability is when an action researcher conducts his or her research, using multiple sources of data collection. Therefore, a weakness of in one type of data collected, might be made up for by strength of another type of data collected (Mills, 2007). By “overlapping methods” it provides the researcher with more data and a better understanding of the present study (p. 86). By ensuring dependability in my study, I am using various methods of data collection. Through the use of three different reading motivation surveys, and teacher interviews (over email), I am hoping to “overlap methods” (Mills, 2007, p. 86) so that dependability is ensured.

Lastly, Confirmability is the fourth vital criteria of a trustworthy study. Confirmability is stated as “the neutrality or objectivity of the data collected” (p. 86). In other words, confirmability is by using various forms of data collection in which each form can be used to “cross check” another. Having data “cross check one another is important in order to fulfill the process of triangulation (p. 86). This process is similar to the checks and balances procedure we see in the United States Government. To ensure confirmability in my study I am using various forms of qualitative and quantitative data collection.
By using all four criteria as mentioned above, my study will be a trustworthy study. In the end, it will provide the readers with more pertinent and useful information about struggling readers’ attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, and the motivational factors that affect their reading achievement. This information may in turn give teachers additional ideas about how to assist their struggling readers and their motivation to read when given reading tasks.

**Informed Consent and Protecting the Rights of Participants**

First, in order to make participants aware of my reasons for my action research along with the associated risks of this study, informed assent and consent forms will be signed by every participant in each classroom. Next, I sent parental permission forms home with each student. Once the informed assent and parental permission forms were completed and sent back to school, these forms were given to myself in order to analyze the data from each classroom. In addition, all data (student work) that was collected was voided of any identifying information. Lastly, a pseudonym was given to the school district, all classroom teachers, and all individual students being mentioned in this paper.

**Data Collection**

As stated above, I used both types of data, qualitative and quantitative data for the purposes of this study. Qualitative data was useful when I was analyzing a student’s attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions relating to their reading achievement. On the other hand, quantitative data was useful when I was analyzing a student’s motivation level and the motivational factors in relation to their reading achievement, DRA level. Next, I used three different types of data collection in order to meet the criteria of triangulation in this action research study. These three different types of data collection will be discussed in depth below.
The first type of data I collected was through the use the reading questionnaires. I used three reading motivation questionnaires as mentioned above. First, was the “The Elementary Reading Survey” (Garfield) (McKenna & Kear, 1990). Second, “The Reading Motivation Scale” Questionnaire (Adapted from Guthrie, Coddington, & Wigfield, 2009). Third, “The Motivation for Reading Questionnaire” (Adapted from Bowden). I found all three questionnaires on the internet and adapted them for the purposes of my study. The “Elementary Reading Survey” (McKenna & Kear, 1990) took a look at academic vs. recreational reading. The “Reading Motivation Scale” took a look at four different motivational variables of reading, intrinsic motivation, avoidance, self-efficacy, and perceived difficulty. Third, the last questionnaire, “The Motivation for Reading Questionnaire” took a look at motivation to read and the influences on a reader and why he or she chooses to read or not.

The second type of data I collected was the reading achievement scores (DRA’s) for each student in the class. Each classroom teacher had compiled a list of current reading levels for each student in their classroom. This list was then compiled and sent to me through email. Collecting students’ DRA levels is extremely vital to this research study because these DRA levels are used for comparison in the findings section many times.

Lastly, the third type of data I collected was through teacher interviews, which were emailed to them. The reason for these teacher interviews was because I wanted to see what a teacher’s perception of their students were concerning reading motivation and reading achievement levels. I also wanted to see if teachers’ perceptions were congruent or different to their students’ perceptions of themselves as readers and learners.

By using both qualitative and quantitative data in my action research study it has allowed me to analyze students’ attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions in relation to their reading
achievement. Also, by using qualitative and quantitative data it has helped me to analyze a student’s level of motivation and motivational factors in relation to their reading achievement. Lastly, through all three types of data collection, these methods have allowed me to get a fuller and more complete picture about a student’s reading achievement levels and motivational factors to read.

**Data Analysis**

After all my data was collected, my first step was to organize and code each type of data. Coding one’s data is necessary for proper analysis, evaluation, and discussion of the findings. My first step in the data analysis process was the scoring of each questionnaire. For the first questionnaire, “The Elementary Reading Survey” (Garfield) (McKenna & Kear, 1990) gave me three different scores. First, I found each participant’s recreational score (raw score & percentiles). Second, I found each participant’s academic score (raw score & percentiles). Third, I found each participant’s full scale score (see appendix A for questionnaire example).

Next, I scored the “Reading Motivation Scale” questionnaire (Adapted from Guthrie, Coddington, & Wigfield, 2009). I scored this questionnaire by adding up all the responses (circled numbers, 1-4) to get the total sum. The numbers 1-4 meant (1) being very little motivation to (4) being very motivated. Then I divided that total sum by the number of questions in the questionnaire, which was 19 questions. I did this to get the average score for each participant. For example, if the responses (circled numbers) added up to a sum of 60, I would divide 60/19 to get an answer of 3.15. This 3.15 would then be rounded to 3.2. This 3.2 would then represent the student’s level of reading motivation on that particular questionnaire. Next, I analyzed this same survey and color coded it. I colored coded the positive reading attitude questions in pink and the negative reading attitude questions in orange. I color coded these
questions because it was easier to analyze the positive and negative attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs of all participants involved in this study. The positive questions were (#1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 18, and 19) whereas the negative questions were (2, 3, 4, 13, 15, and 17) (see appendix B for example of questionnaire). After color coding these questions, I analyzed the positive and negative questions to get the overall attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs of each student. I also looked at the two short answer questions at the end of the questionnaire in order to gain more overall information about students’ attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions about reading.

Third, I coded “The Motivation for Reading Questionnaire” (Adapted from Bowden). When I first found this questionnaire, it was already separated into four different sections, which is how I coded it also. Section 1 was labeled intrinsic motivation; section 2 was labeled avoidance, section 3 self-efficacy, and section 4 perceived difficulty. I then coded each of the four sections by assigning the numbers 1-4 to each section. These numbers 1-4 represented the following: (1) very negative attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions, (2) somewhat negative attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions, (3) somewhat positive attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions and (4) very positive attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions relating to the task of reading (see table C for example). After all three questionnaires were individually coded, I put all of the data in one chart, for easier analysis and evaluation (see appendix D for table called “Overall View”).

Lastly, I coded the teacher interviews. I read each teacher interview closely and wrote notes in the margins. These notes then helped me to decide what patterns or themes were prevalent among all three teacher interviews. Teacher expectations and developmentally appropriate instruction were two of the significant themes noticed throughout all interviews (See appendix E for three teacher interviews).
After all data was scored and coded, I began to see certain patterns beginning to develop. One pattern that began to develop was a relationship between students’ attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions in relation to their reading achievement. A second relationship that began to develop was students’ motivational levels in relation to their reading achievement. Lastly, a third relationship that began to develop was in relation to the teacher interviews and developmentally appropriate instruction and teacher expectations. Seeing these patterns start to develop, the data below is presented according to three distinguished themes. These three themes include student beliefs and DRA levels, student attitudes and DRA levels, and reading motivation and DRA levels.

**Findings and Discussion**

The task of reading is challenging to many students. Many students are unmotivated to read if they continually struggle with the process of reading. This research study was designed to measure students’ reading attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs in relation to their reading achievement (DRA levels). This research also was designed to measure students’ levels of motivation and the factors that affect their motivation in relation to their reading achievement. Reading achievement levels (DRA levels) are vital pieces of information for any teacher to possess. It is important that each student is continually showing growth and increased skill building. According to the researched literature above, it was emphasized that the reading skill level of a student in grades 1-3, had a strong influence on academic performance and achievement for the rest of their school career (Melekoglu, 2001). In turn, this continual growth and skill building should pave a path for more successful and positive attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions in relation to a student’s reading achievement levels. It has also allowed for
increased motivation to learn in relation to reading. As my research question states, what are students’ perceptions of their own reading achievement and what are the motivational variables that affect this achievement. Considering my research question, the findings from the research and data collected will be discussed through two main themes. These two themes include reading self-perceptions and the connection to DRA levels, reading motivation and the connection to reading motivation and DRA levels. Both themes will then be further supported by the teacher interview data that was collected also.

**Student’s Reading Beliefs not connected to DRA levels**

Reading achievement (DRA levels) are important pieces of information for any teacher to know about his or her students. These DRA levels are the foundation or springboard for any teaching that will occur in the classroom. For purposes of this research study, I collected DRA levels across three different grades. As mentioned above, the three classrooms I used were a second grade general education classroom, a fourth grade self-contained classroom, and a fifth grade general education classroom. After comparing a student’s DRA level with his or her own beliefs/perceptions of themselves as a reader, the findings suggest that there is no connection between them. As follows, Table 1 shows a student’s reading DRA level has no connection to his or her own beliefs/perceptions of themselves as a reader. However, as table 1 also shows a student’s attitude does have a connection to a student’s reading achievement levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Current DRA/Perceptions</th>
<th>Reasons to Read</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1*

*Reading Achievement Levels (DRA) and Student Beliefs of themselves as Readers*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(Pseudonyms)</th>
<th>Grade Level DRA</th>
<th>(Good Reader or Not?)</th>
<th>(Questionnaires #2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Batman</td>
<td>10/40-44</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Doesn’t see reading as fun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>10-40-44</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Reads only for teachers, if they tell her too.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bugs Bunny</td>
<td>14/40-44</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Likes to read to get better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Im New Man</td>
<td>16/40-44</td>
<td>Ok</td>
<td>Doesn’t like to read for fun. Only reads for good grades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scooby Doo</td>
<td>16/40-44</td>
<td>Ok</td>
<td>Likes to read because it helps you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ariel</td>
<td>20/40-44</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Thinks reading is fun and likes to learn new things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe</td>
<td>20/18-30</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Only reads for grades, does not like to read for fun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munchkin</td>
<td>20/18-30</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Likes to read for fun and to learn new things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>20/18-30</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Read to learn new things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew</td>
<td>24/40-44</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Reading is fun because if you don’t read you...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Score Range</td>
<td>Perception</td>
<td>Remarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selena Gomez</td>
<td>24/40-44</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Reading is fun because she likes to learn new things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snuffy</td>
<td>30/40-44</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Reading is fun. It is important to be a good reader and to learn new things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leina D.</td>
<td>36/44-on</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Reading is fun and is important to learn new things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jasmine</td>
<td>38/40-44</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Reading is fun, likes a challenge and likes to learn new things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miley</td>
<td>40/44-on</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Reads for future use, but not enjoyment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lillie</td>
<td>50/44-on</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Likes to read not only for school purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joey</td>
<td>50/44-on</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Only reads to get good grades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornelius</td>
<td>50/44-on</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Does not like to read for fun or enjoyment, only does it for future purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bob the Builder</td>
<td>60/44-on</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Likes to read for fun and to learn new things.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This table above shows the data that was collected about students’ beliefs and perceptions of themselves as a reader in comparison to their current DRA level and their grade appropriate DRA level. This table also shows a student’s attitude about reading. First, after analyzing the data, it does not show any consistent positive relationship between a student’s DRA level and a student’s belief, about whether he or she is a good reader or not. For example, a fourth grade student named Batman (pseudonym) has a DRA level of 10 which places him at a first grade reading level. However, he still believes he is a good reader, according to questionnaire #2. Another fourth grade student named Bugs Bunny (pseudonym) has a DRA level of 14, which again places him also at a first grade reading level. However, he still believes he is a good reader, according to questionnaire #2. Considering the above findings, there was no consistent positive relationship between a student’s reading achievement levels and their own beliefs about their reading achievement. These results seem consistent across the board according to Table 1. However, my data and findings seem to contradict the researched literature mentioned above.

The researched literature suggests children who are struggling readers have less positive beliefs of themselves as readers, feel powerless, and are more likely to act out because they are unsure of what to do. Students that carry these beliefs of themselves as readers will do anything in order to avoid a reading task. Therefore, students’ beliefs of themselves as readers affects their own reading achievement (Morgan, Fuchs, Comptom, Cordray, and Fuchs, 2008). My findings seem to contradict this researched literature because no relationship was found between a student’s beliefs and their own reading achievement. I think my findings contradict with the literature for one significant reason. This reason could be because of the classrooms I had used.
For example, the classroom with the students who are reading drastically below grade level (Mrs. Belle’s classroom) have a teacher that is constantly encouraging them and making sure they believe in themselves. As a teacher it is very important to always encourage your students, no matter how “low” they may be.

On the other hand, after further analysis and evaluation of the data, my findings suggest that there is a positive relationship between a student’s attitudes about reading and their DRA levels. In this paper, a student’s attitude toward reading is different from their beliefs or perceptions about reading. A belief or perception in this paper is referenced as whether the student thinks he or she is a good reader or not. A student’s attitude towards reading, in relation to this study was whether he or she thought reading was important and/or fun. For instance, a student with a low DRA score, such as Batman (pseudonym) with a DRA level of 10 has a negative attitude that shows that reading is not fun. Along with I’m new Man (pseudonym) with a DRA level of 16, who also has a negative attitude, which is reading is not fun. On the other hand, Jasmine (pseudonym) has a high DRA level at a 38, and has a positive attitude towards reading. She sees reading as fun, likes a challenge and likes to learn new things. In addition, Lillie has a DRA level of 50 and has a positive attitude and she sees reading as fun and she likes to read outside of school for enjoyment also. Lastly, after analyzing all the data, there were some outliers too, who did not fall under any of the categories mentioned above. Some students who had low DRA levels, actually enjoyed reading and reading to learn new things. As shown in table 1, some students also had high DRA levels, but did not enjoy reading for purposes other than school.

Lastly, through the teacher interviews, teachers stated that if they held high expectations for their students that had a tremendous impact on a student’s belief of whether he or she thought
they were a good reader or not. As Mrs. Belle stated “I strongly believe that a teacher’s expectations and personal value toward reading translates into the classroom and onto the students. How could it not? If I don’t believe in my kids, why would they?” (Personal interview, March 6, 2012). Whereas Ms. Clause stated “I think so. Setting high expectations mean students become more accountable for their learning” (Personal interview, March 7th, 2012). Mrs. Batman stated “When teachers believe in students’, confidence increases” (personal interview, March 7th, 2012). Through these three teacher interviews, they all seem to agree that it is important to set high expectations for his or her students. In turn, his or her students’ will be more apt to creating positive beliefs about themselves and more positive attitudes towards reading.

**Reading Motivation Connection to DRA levels**

Motivation seems to be an important factor when considering reading achievement. Research supports that “motivation should be a central consideration in reading curriculum because it often makes the difference between learning that is superficial and shallow and learning that is deep and internalized” (Gambrell & Codling, 2002, 26). Motivation is one of the key components that can support or inhibit a student’s learning (Powell, McIntyre, Rightmyer, 2006). There are countless variables or factors that affect a student’s motivation when learning. Therefore, part of this study was designed to measure just this, motivation and the motivational factors related to a student’s reading achievement. The findings of this study show a positive relationship between motivation and reading achievement levels (DRA levels) with some occasional outliers. Motivation of each student was gauged by using both questionnaire’s #1 and #2 total scores, as shown in table 2.
Table 2

*Reading Motivation Related to Reading Achievement Levels*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Grade &amp; DRA level</th>
<th>Current DRA level</th>
<th>Questionnaire #1: Garfield (Full Scale %)</th>
<th>Questionnaire #2: Reading Motivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Batman</td>
<td>4th (40-44)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>47.5%</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>4th (40-44)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>78.75%</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bugs Bunny</td>
<td>4th (40-44)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Im New Man</td>
<td>4th (40-44)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scooby Doo</td>
<td>4th (40-44)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>43.75%</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ariel</td>
<td>4th (40-44)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe</td>
<td>2nd (18-30)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>63.75%</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munchkin</td>
<td>2nd (18-30)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>2nd (18-30)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew</td>
<td>4th (40-44)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selena Gomez</td>
<td>4th (40-44)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrie U.</td>
<td>4th (40-44)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snuffy</td>
<td>4th (40-44)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leina D.</td>
<td>5th (44-on)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>61.25%</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jasmine</td>
<td>4th (40-44)</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miley</td>
<td>5th (44-on)</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>51.25%</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lillie</td>
<td>5th (44-on)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>76.25%</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joey</td>
<td>5th (44-on)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>57.5%</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As table 2 shows, Batman who has a DRA level of 10 scored a 47.5% (1st questionnaire), indicating a low level of motivation towards reading. He also scored a 2.6 (second questionnaire) again showing a low level of motivation, considering the scores range from 1-4 on the second questionnaire. A sample response from him on Questionnaire #1 (Garfield) indicates his low level of motivation also. For example, when asked “how do you feel when you are reading for fun at home?” He responded by circling the “sad/angry” Garfield. Another question that he was asked was “How do you feel about reading in school?” he responded by circling the “sad/angry” Garfield. Second, I’m New Man has a DRA level of 16 and scored a 56% (1st questionnaire), again indicating a low level of motivation towards reading tasks. He also scored 2.5 (2nd questionnaire), indicating again a low level of motivation. In addition, Joe has a DRA level of 20 and scored 63.75% (1st questionnaire) and a 2.5 (2nd questionnaire). Similar results apply to students with a higher DRA levels also. Selena Gomez has a DRA level of 24 and scored a 75% (1st questionnaire) and a 3.4 on the (second questionnaire), indicating high levels of motivation in relation to reading tasks. Also, Snuffy has a DRA level of 30 and scored a 95% (1st questionnaire) and a 3.7 (second questionnaire) also indicating high levels of motivation towards reading. On questionnaire #1, when he was asked “How do you feel about reading for fun at home?” He responded by circling the “excited” Garfield. Also, when asked “How do you feel when it’s time for reading in class?” He responded by circling the “happy” Garfield. Similarly, Bob the Builder has a DRA level of 60, scored a 78.75% (1st questionnaire) and a 3.2 (2nd questionnaire) which again indicates a high level of motivation in relation to his reading achievement level (DRA).
After analyzing all the data there were some occasional outliers who were not consistent with this positive correlation between motivation and reading achievement. Miley has a DRA score of a 40, but scored a 51.25% (1st questionnaire) and a 2.3 (second questionnaire) indicating low levels of motivation in relation to her high reading achievement level (DRA 40). In addition, Cornelius has a DRA score of a level 50 and he scored 58.75% (1st questionnaire) and a 2.2 (second questionnaire) again indicating low levels of motivation in relation to his high reading achievement level (DRA 50). Therefore, the findings suggest that even though their seems to be a positive relationship between reading achievement levels (DRA) and reading motivation, it does not hold true for all students who participated in this study. The research literature also supports these findings.

According to the National Reading Research Center, motivation is a crucial component to a student reading abilities and achievement (Rueda et. al, 2001, p. 6). The researched literature supports my findings of my study in one major way according to Ghaith & Bouzeineddine (2003) study. Their study had stated that students, who had positive self-concepts, were more likely to understand their reading, enjoy their reading and be more intrinsically motivated. Whereas the students who had negative experiences had more negative self-concepts, were less likely to understand what they read, were less likely to enjoy what they read and had lower levels of motivation. This was also found in my study results and data collected.

Next, the results that were gathered from the third questionnaire discussed reading motivational factors. This third questionnaire looked at four different motivational factors, 1) intrinsic motivation, 2) avoidance 3) self-efficacy 4) perceived difficulty. Most of the questions on this questionnaire centered around, what a student does when he or she is given a challenging reading task to complete. The results of this study showed a weak positive relationship between
motivational factors and reading achievement levels. As Table 3 shows, many students had high self-efficacy levels, but had low intrinsic motivation, high levels of avoidance, and ok perceived difficulty.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Grade &amp; DRA level</th>
<th>Current DRA level</th>
<th>Quest. #1 (Full Scale %)</th>
<th>Quest. #2 Reading Motivation</th>
<th>Quest. #3 Reading Motivation Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Batman</td>
<td>4th (40-44)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>47.5%</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>4, 2, 4, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>4th (40-44)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>78.75%</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3, 2, 2, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bugs Bunny</td>
<td>4th (40-44)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3, 2, 2, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Im New Man</td>
<td>4th (40-44)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2, 4, 2, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scooby Doo</td>
<td>4th (40-44)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>43.75%</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>2, 1, 4, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ariel</td>
<td>4th (40-44)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3, 4, 4, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe</td>
<td>2nd (18-30)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>63.75%</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2, 1, 2, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munchkin</td>
<td>2nd (18-30)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1, 3, 3, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>2nd (18-30)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2, 3, 3, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew</td>
<td>4th (40-44)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4, 4, 4, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selena Gomez</td>
<td>4th (40-44)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3, 4, 4, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrie U.</td>
<td>4th (40-44)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3, 4, 4, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snuffy</td>
<td>4th (40-44)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4, 4, 4, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leina D.</td>
<td>5th (44-on)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>61.25%</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2, 3, 3, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jasmine</td>
<td>4th (40-44)</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>4, 4, 4, 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The numbers 1-4 show in the last column of the table range from low to high. For example, as discussed above, Batman has a low reading achievement level (DRA 10) with a 47.5% motivation level (questionnaire #1) and 2.6 (questionnaire #2). However, when looking at the motivational factors in relation to his reading achievement level, he has high intrinsic motivation (4), high self-efficacy (4), and does not perceive many things as difficult (4), but he also has a high avoidance score (2) when it comes to reading tasks. Joe also has a low DRA score of 20 with a 63.75% on questionnaire #1 and 2.5 on questionnaire #2. He has low intrinsic motivation (2), high avoidance (1), and self-efficacy and perceived difficulty (both scored as 2’s). According to this questionnaire, questionnaire #3, he is not motivated to complete reading tasks and will do anything to avoid completing these reading tasks. This could possibly be explained because the results show that he has low self-confidence in his reading abilities and perceives a lot of reading tasks to be difficult. Lastly, Snuffy has a DRA level of 30 with 95% on the first questionnaire, 3.7 on the second questionnaire. He has high intrinsic motivation (4), low levels of avoidance (4), high self-efficacy (4), and does not perceive many reading tasks as difficult (4). After looking at these results, this means that this student has high levels of motivation, will not avoid reading tasks when they are given to him. This is because he shows high levels of self-confidence and does not see many reading tasks as difficult. The findings
above mean that a student’s reading achievement levels have a very weak relation to the motivational factors that are shown, such as intrinsic motivation, avoidance, self-efficacy, and perceived difficulty. The reason for this very weak relationship to the motivational factors as shown is because there is not a consistent pattern seen across participants or grade levels. A student’s DRA level does not seem to show a consistent pattern to why the student display’s a certain level of motivation, avoidance, self-efficacy, or perceived difficulty.

In addition, as stated in the teacher interviews developmentally appropriate instruction had a big influence on a student’s levels of motivation. As teachers, it is important to choose materials for our students that will not be too hard or too easy. As Mrs. Belle had stated “proper instruction [needs to be] matched to students needs--if you can help a struggling reader become a better reader, they will be more engaged. Selecting appropriately leveled, engaging materials...with modeling...and positive reinforcement” seemed to be a must (personal interview, March 6th, 2012). Mrs. Clause had stated that “she tries to encourage all students to read, and find a joy in reading. I explain that I struggled as a reader when I was their age...” (Personal interview, March 7th, 2012). In addition, Mrs. Batman did not have very much to say on this topic. As seen in all three interviews, developmentally appropriate instruction seems to be a significant component when considering a student’s motivation when it comes to reading, especially when working with struggling readers.

In summary, my findings do not support a relationship between a student’s beliefs of whether he or she thinks they are a good reader and their reading achievement levels (DRA). However, my findings do support that a student’s attitude towards reading compared to their DRA scores has a positive relationship. In addition, the teacher interviews provided more support for my data, in the form of teacher expectations and developmentally appropriate
instruction. Teacher expectations do have a strong effect on a student’s beliefs of whether he or she thinks they are good reader or not. As mentioned above, for the sake of this paper, a student’s beliefs were based on whether or not he or she thought they were a good reader or not. On the other hand, a student’s attitudes referred to what they thought about reading, whether they had a positive or negative attitude about reading and if they saw reading as fun or not. Lastly, my findings suggest there is a very weak relationship between students’ reading achievement levels and the motivational factors in relation to reading and reading tasks.

Implications

After collecting and analyzing all my data, I have found a couple of implications for my future teaching practice as well as implications for other teachers working with struggling readers. As a result of the collected data, the first implication I have for my future teaching practice as well as others is to make sure the students are always being encouraged. As my data results had shown students’ beliefs about whether they were a good reader or not had no connection to their DRA levels. Therefore, even if a student is developmentally below grade level in an area, in this case reading, it is crucial that the teacher is always encouraging them.

The second implication I have for my teaching practice as well as to others is developmentally appropriate reading instruction. By providing the student with developmentally appropriate reading instruction the teacher will be providing his or her students with reading tasks that are not too easy, but not too challenging. These tasks need to be scaffolded in order to produce successful results each time. By scaffolding tasks this way the student will be less likely to fall into what is called the “Matthew Effect,” as mentioned in the above literature review (Protopapas et. al, 2011). In short, the “Matthew Effect” is a continuous cycle of negative experiences a child may have, in this case with reading (Protopapas et. al, 2011). By using tasks
that constantly produce successful results, students will be more likely to develop positive attitudes towards reading instead of negative ones. With a positive attitude these students may even be more motivated to complete many reading tasks.

A third implication for teachers is to make sure they understand how to make learning in the classroom a more socially constructed process. Students construct most of their learning and make meaning from the interaction they have with others. In the classroom, the students would benefit greatly from learning opportunities that involves lots of social interaction with one another. In the area of reading, learning opportunities that involve social interaction could be buddy reading or partner reading, or even literature circles (in the older grades), or even just project work in pairs or a small groups.

My data and findings have impacted my future teaching in a variety of ways, all positive for that matter. First, I have always wondered whether students’ perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes were actually affected by their reading achievement levels (DRA levels) or if this view was a common misconception. Through the research literature, this idea proved true. Guthrie, Schafer, & Huang’s (2001) research also proved that past experiences are a strong “predictor” on students’ future level of motivation and in turn, affects students’ attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions. They found that motivation has a strong relationship to how often a student chooses to read. Bandura (1986) and Schunk (1989) also found that, “a student who feels they cannot accomplish an academic task may be less motivated to engage with it” (p. 15). Therefore, a student, who does not read often, usually chooses not to read because of a continual cycle of negative reading experiences and their feelings that they cannot complete the task given to them. In this study students’ beliefs and perceptions are not affected by their achievement levels, DRA levels. However, a student’s attitude and levels of motivation are weakly connected to their
reading achievement or DRA levels. As mentioned above, for the sake of this paper, a student’s beliefs were based on whether or not he or she thought they were a good reader or not. On the other hand, a student’s attitudes referred to what they thought about reading, whether they had a positive or negative attitude about reading and if they saw reading as fun or not. Past experiences also seemed to play a very significant role in the level of student motivation. My data supports some of these ideas and contradicts some of other ideas.

Conclusions

This action research study was designed to investigate students’ perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs about their own reading achievement and the motivational variables that affect this achievement. In order to understand this research study at a deeper level, the theoretical frameworks that were evaluated and analyzed were Bandura’s Social-Cognitive or Social Learning Theory and Vygotsky’s Social Cultural Theory. It is said that a lot of experiences a student has depends on their previous experiences and his/her surrounding social and cultural contexts/atmosphere. There were seven motivational factors discussed in the researched literature and these included the following: 1) student choice, 2) past experiences, 3) intrinsic motivation, 4) extrinsic motivation, 5) planned vs. spontaneous teaching and opportunities, 6) gender and 7) sociocultural practices. These seven motivational factors seemed to affect a student’s reading motivation and reading achievement levels (DRA).

The findings of my study showed that students’ beliefs of whether they were a good reader or not was not connected to their DRA levels. On the other hand, my findings showed that students’ attitude about reading was connected to their DRA levels and weakly connected to their levels of motivation. Therefore, the findings of my study will help to better my own teaching
practice as well as give suggestions to other current or future teachers when working with struggling readers. Teaching and student learning is a highly dependent and socially constructed process in which students learn from watching and working with others. Therefore, as teachers, it is important for us to constantly encourage students. In turn, our students develop positive attitudes towards reading and should be successful when working with their classmates who may be at different levels. In addition, it is important to provide developmentally appropriate instruction in order to constantly produce successful results. Developmentally appropriate instruction will produce students' that believe in themselves, who have positive attitudes towards reading and are motivated to complete reading tasks. If we as teachers foster this positive attitude and beliefs in our students, then we will hopefully have students who do not read just for the sake of completing the task, but will read outside of school for enjoyment too.

Even though some of my data supported my researched literature and some of my data contradicted my research literature, there are some things I would do differently next time. First, I would administer a different questionnaire for questionnaire #3. I feel as if questionnaire #3 did not have as much of a connection between the researched literature motivational factors and the motivational factors asked about in the questionnaire, hence less validity. Next time, I would pick a different questionnaire to evaluate motivational factors if I were to do this study again or another similar study. Second, I would have more of a variety of student participants when considering the placement of the schools. For instance, next time I would not use all suburban schools. I would use city and suburban schools. Lastly, I would liked to have more participants. Even though I started off with three classrooms, not a lot of informed consent or parental permission forms came back.
My study allowed me to research and gather important data concerning my topic, but I feel as though I have only touched the surface. If time was not a constraint, I would have liked to do more in depth questionnaires at many grade levels, over a long period of time with more types of data collection such as classroom observations. However, with the time and resources I had been given, I feel confident in my study and the results that were found.

Lastly, I am still left with some questions. First, what are some other factors that could be researched that affect students’ reading achievement levels? Second, what are some reasons why the area of reading is such a turn off for a majority of the students in our school systems? Considering my study results, the limitations, and questions I am still left with, future directions would be to look in two ways. First, what other factors affect students’ reading achievement levels. Second, what are the reasons why the area of reading is a struggle or challenge for many students in the American School Systems today?

Overall, the researched literature and data has taught me many important concepts about how students think about themselves as readers. I now know a teacher plays a bigger role, than I once thought, in what a student thinks about themselves (beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes). Although, I did look into the motivational factors that affected a student’s reading achievement, I would have liked to learn more about motivation and the factors that affect a student’s reading achievement. Lastly, I feel this research study has helped myself and others grow as teachers and will allow us to use this pertinent information in our everyday teaching practice. Our students today would greatly benefit from the most up to date and recent teaching practices, so each student can live up to his or her fullest potential.
References


Retrieved February 13, 2012 from [https://reportcards.nysed.gov/](https://reportcards.nysed.gov/)

Powell, R., McIntyre, E., & Rightmyer, E. (2006). Johnny won't read, and Susie won't either:


Appendix A
Elementary Reading Attitude Survey

School_____________ Grade_____ Name____________________

Please circle the picture that describes how you feel when you read a book.

1. How do you feel when you read a book on a rainy Saturday?

2. How do you feel when you read a book in school during free time?

3. How do you feel about reading for fun at home?

4. How do you feel about getting a book for a present?
Please circle the picture that describes how you feel when you read a book.

5. How do you feel about spending free time reading a book?

6. How do you feel about starting a new book?

7. How do you feel about reading during summer vacation?

8. How do you feel about reading instead of playing?
Please circle the picture that describes how you feel when you read a book.

9. How do you feel about going to a bookstore?

10. How do you feel about reading different kinds of books?

11. How do you feel when a teacher asks you questions about what you read?

12. How do you feel about reading workbook pages and worksheets?
Please circle the picture that describes how you feel when you read a book.

13. How do you feel about reading in school?

14. How do you feel about reading your school books?

15. How do you feel about learning from a book?

16. How do you feel when it's time for reading in class?
Elementary Reading Attitude Survey Scoring Sheet

Student Name_______________________________________________
Teacher_________________________________________________________
Grade________________________ Administration Date______________________

Scoring Guide
4 points Happiest Garfield
3 points Slightly smiling Garfield
2 points Mildly upset Garfield
1 point Very upset Garfield

Recreational reading Academic reading
1. ____ 1. ____
2. ____ 2. ____
3. ____ 3. ____
4. ____ 4. ____
5. ____ 5. ____
6. ____ 6. ____
7. ____ 7. ____
8. ____ 8. ____
9. ____ 9. ____
10. ____ 10. ____

Raw Score: ____ Raw Score: ____
Full scale raw score ............. (Recreational + Academic): ____
Percentile ranks: .................... Recreational
........................ Academic
........................ Full scale

© PAWS – www.professorgarfield.org
Survey designed by Dennis J. Kear, Wichita State University
Appendix B

Reading Motivation Questionnaire

Student name: __________________________

Pretend Name: __________________________ (This will be the name I use for you when I use your information below, in my homework). For example: Your name could be Batman, Cinderella, Bob, you choose!!

School name: __________________________

Teacher name: __________________________
Grade: __________

Date: ______________

I am interested in your reading. The sentences in this questionnaire describe how some students feel about reading. Read each sentence and decide whether it describes you as a reader. There are no right or wrong answers. We only want to know how you feel about reading. For many of the statements, you should think about the kinds of things you read in your class.

**Here are two samples to try before we start on the ones about reading:**
If the statement is very different from you, circle a 1.
If the statement is a little different from you, circle a 2.
If the statement is a little like you, circle a 3.
If the statement is a lot like you, circle a 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Very Different From Me</th>
<th>A Little Different From Me</th>
<th>A Little Like Me</th>
<th>A Lot Like Me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ex: I like Ice Cream</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex: I like Spinach</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Okay, are you Ready? :) Let's Begin on the next page!
Real Name: __________________________
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Very Different From Me</th>
<th>A little Different From Me</th>
<th>A Little Like Me</th>
<th>A Lot Like Me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I visit the library a lot with my family.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I like to read hard books.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. If I have reading homework I do anything I can to not do it.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I read because my teacher tells me to.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I read because I want to.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Reading is fun in school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I like to read outside of school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Reading is fun outside of school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I am a good reader.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I read to learn new things.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I like hearing the teacher say “I read well.”</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I like to read to other people in my family.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I don't like reading when the words are to hard/tricky.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. I like to share with my friends what I am reading about.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. My grades tell me whether I am a good reader or not.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I like to help others with their reading.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. I read only to get a good grade in school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Great job!!!! Almost finished, complete the sentences below....

1. If I could choose anything to read, what would it be? (For example: Picture book, chapter book, comic book, magazine, newspaper etc...)

2. Is it important to read? Yes or No (Circle one)

Why did you circle the answer you did?

Source: http://www.literacyintervention.org/documents/MRQ.pdf

Responses to this data collection will be used only for statistical purposes. The reports prepared for this study will summarize findings across the sample and will not associate responses with a specific district or individual. We will not provide information that identifies you or your district to anyone outside the study team, except as required by law.
Appendix C

Reading Motivation Scale

1. Do you enjoy reading books in your free time?
2. Do you like to read new books?
3. Is reading boring to you?
4. Do you enjoy the challenge of reading a book?
5. Do you enjoy reading interesting books even if they are hard?
6. Once you start a book do you usually finish it?
7. Do you like it when books make you think?
8. Do you guess a lot when reading so you can finish quickly?
9. Do you read easier books so you don’t have to work as much?
10. How often do you try to find a good book?
11. How often do you think, “I don’t want to read this”?
12. Do you try to get out of reading books for school?
13. Do you wish you didn’t have to read for school?
14. Do you read as little as possible?
15. Can you figure out hard words when reading?
16. Can you sound out long words?
17. Do you learn more from reading than most students in the class?
18. Can you recognize words easily when you read?
19. Do you think you will do well in reading next year?
20. Are you good at remembering words?
21. Do hard words in a story stop you from reading?
22. Do you need extra help in reading?
23. Are you a good reader?
24. Is it hard for you to understand stories you read in class?
25. Do you make lots of mistakes in reading?
22. Are the books you read in class too difficult?
23. Do you feel others are smarter than you in reading?
24. Is reading to the class a challenge for you?
## Overall View

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Grade &amp; DRA level</th>
<th>Current DRA level</th>
<th>Ques. #1 Full Scale %</th>
<th>Quest. #2 Motivation Scale</th>
<th>Quest. #2 Good Reader?</th>
<th>Quest. #3 Motivation Scale Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Batman</td>
<td>4th (40-44)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>47.5%</td>
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<td>Good</td>
<td>4, 2, 4, 4</td>
</tr>
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<td>May</td>
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<td>14</td>
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<td>Bugs Bunny</td>
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<td>Im New Man</td>
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<td>16</td>
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<td>Ariel</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>86%</td>
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<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>2nd (18-30)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>1.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Matthew</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>28</td>
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<td>95%</td>
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<td>Leina D.</td>
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<td>Miley</td>
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<td>40</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Score</td>
<td>GPA</td>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Perceptions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joey</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>57.5%</td>
<td>2.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cornelius</td>
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<td>76.25%</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Good</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bob the Builder</td>
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<td>78.75%</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Good</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix E

Master’s Thesis Research:
Teacher Interview Questions

Think of your “good” and struggling readers and how they act (behaviors) when they are given a reading task to complete. Do their perceptions of themselves, beliefs of themselves, and their attitudes about reading, affect how he or she reacts when completing a reading task?

Thank you in advance for assisting myself when completing my research for my master’s thesis. Your time, attention, patience, and cooperation is greatly appreciated!! :)

1. During guided reading time, how are you groups made? Why?

2. Do some of your students have an easier time reading compared to others? How do you know?

3. Think of your “good” readers, how do you know they are good readers?

4. How do your “good” readers see themselves? How do these students see reading tasks?
5. Now think of your struggling readers, how do **you** know these students struggle with reading?

6. Do your struggling readers know they struggle with reading? If they do know they struggle with reading, does this knowledge affect their motivation to complete reading tasks?

7. How do your struggling readers see **themselves**? How do they see reading tasks?

8. What do **you** do as a teacher to motivate your struggling readers to read?

9. Do **you** believe a student’s self-efficacy affects their motivation to complete reading tasks?

10. Do many of your students read outside of school? Why or why not?
11. Do you believe a teacher’s expectations effects a student’s beliefs about their own reading ability and their motivation to read? How and/or why?

12. What are some components that motivate “good” readers to read?

13. What are some components that motivate struggling readers to read?

14. Why do struggling readers have a hard time reading?

Additional thoughts: (If any)