Increasing motivation to read in a grade three classroom through the use of tangible and intangible incentives

Carrie Moritz

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Increasing Motivation to Read in a Grade Three Classroom

Through the Use of Tangible and Intangible Incentives

By

Carrie L. Moritz

A Graduate Field Experience

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Stacy J. Kelley
(Advisor)

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Abstract:

This is a study conducted in a 3rd grade classroom to see if implementing incentives, both tangible and intangible, would increase student motivation to read within the classroom environment. The study was administered for six weeks during the 2011-2012 academic school year in Janesville, Wisconsin. The researcher found a correlation between receiving incentives and an increase in motivation to read in the 3rd grade environment. The data collected concluded that as incentives increased, so did motivation to read within the classroom.
Chapter One

Introduction

As a third grade educator, I have encountered many obstacles in my teaching career. I am constantly wondering how to better myself as a teacher. How can I improve instruction to ensure my students are learning all they can? Is there a better way to teach reading? Can I encourage my pupils to become life long learners? It is through this process of questioning and reflecting on my own instruction that I came to focus on reading instruction.

Motivation to Read

As an elementary teacher, I instruct all subject areas minus art, music, and physical education. At the root of curriculum is the common theme of reading and teaching children to read and apply what they have read in every subject. As a matter of fact, Wisconsin Common Core Standards state that by the end of the third grade academic school year, students should be able to read independently, and proficiently, a text that is determined to be at the end of second to third grade reading level. It has been my experience that no matter how the subject matter is taught, there has always been a negative tone towards reading in my students’ minds. As I wondered what my topic would be for this action research, it dawned on me that my students were lacking motivation to read. I decided to see what research had already been completed on the topic, and what the data showed regarding motivation to read at the elementary level.

For the past 15 to 20 years, there have been various studies in which researchers were looking to find the same answer to my questions. Some of the research indicated there was no way to improve motivation, but some of the articles I found concluded there were simple ways to
increase motivation to read. I wanted to know if any of these methods could, indeed, work in my classroom as well.

Edmunds and Tancock (2003), Konheim-Kalkstein and Van den Broek (2004), Chen and Wu (2006), and Miller and Meece (1997) all conducted studies that surrounded the idea that incorporating incentives into the classroom could lead to an increase in motivation to read. Edmunds and Tancock are the only researchers from this list that found no difference between their two groups, one receiving incentives, and one not receiving incentives for reading. All the other articles suggest that incentives do increase motivation to read, at least in the academic environment.

It was also discovered through works by authors such as Applegate and Applegate (2010), Unrau and Schlackman (2006), Wang and Guthrie (2004), Van Kraayenoord, Beinicke, Schlagmuller, and Schneider (2012), and Melekoglu (2011), that motivation to read may increase reading achievement. All these researchers came to the same conclusion throughout their studies; that increasing student’s motivation does increase students’ ability to perform well on reading achievement tests. It may be due to the fact that these students are more likely to read, therefore, are getting more practice than those who despise the act of reading because they view it as boring, tedious, or difficult. From these articles, I began wondering what would happen if I could increase my students’ motivation to read? Would their scores on standardized tests improve? Would their overall grades in reading class improve?

Other authors such as Guthrie, Wigfield, Humenick, Perenevich, Taboada, and Barbosa (2006), Guthrie, Hoa, Wigfield, Tonks, and Perencevich (2006), and McKool (2007), wanted to see if an increase in motivation to read could lead to a long-term intrinsic motivation to read.
Their research proved that there were activities and incentives that could increase motivation to read, but the research was indecisive about how long those effects could last. While researchers suggested that an increase in motivation to read can only improve the chances of developing a long-term relationship with reading, it is difficult to say that the effects are present over time. The research was inconclusive on this topic as the studies have yet to be conducted over a longer period of time. While the research is interesting and applicable, I needed to develop a research plan that could be administered and assessed within a relatively short amount of time.

I decided to focus on a small aspect of motivation to read where I could focus on the basics before tackling a huge project with the possibility of no real results. The question I decided to focus on was this: Can the use of incentives, both tangible and intangible increase motivation to read in third grade students? With this question, I designed and implemented a six week intervention in my third grade classroom of 19 children in Janesville, Wisconsin to determine if there was a positive correlation between incentives and an increase in motivation to read. As I collected data, I evaluated the outcome of this study by utilizing the Reading Attitude Survey developed by Paul Campbell (Appendix A) as an assessment at both pre and post-intervention intervals. I also conducted interviews with three randomly selected students at both the beginning and the conclusion of the intervention.

The population consisted of 19 children, all between the ages of eight and nine, who were members of the researcher’s classroom during the course of the 2011-2012 academic school year. Lincoln Elementary School is located in the city of Janesville and is one of twelve elementary schools in the city. This particular school has 340 students enrolled from Kindergarten through fifth grade. Of these students, 14.7% were Hispanic, 2.9% African American, 2.1% Asian, 0.9% Native American, and 75.9% Caucasian. During the research year,
62.6% of students took part in free or reduced lunch services. The sample used for this study involved 5% Hispanic, 94% Caucasian, and 11% labeled as Learning Disabled or Emotional Behavioral Disorder.

During the school year 2011-12, the Janesville School District enrolled a total of 10,325 students from Pre-K to grade 12. Of the 10,325 students, 48.4% were female, and 51.6% male. There were 13.4% labeled as having a disability, and 7.2% labeled as English Language Learners. Of the population, 0.5% is American Indian, 1.9% Asian, 4.5% African American, 10.7% Hispanic, 0.1% Pacific Islander, 77.5% Caucasian, and 4.9% of two or more races. The Janesville School District reported 49.5% of its population economically disadvantaged.

**Conclusion to the Chapter**

The next chapter will move from a general idea of the past research I used to determine my action plan, to a summary of those studies and a clear idea of the conclusions that derived from their individual data. The information provided in the following chapter lead me to develop my own research on how to increase motivation to read in relation to my students.
Key Terms:

**Intrinsic Motivation:** Internal motivation to accomplish a task. Examples: Phone calls home, positive feedback, notes home, feeling good about one’s self, intangible rewards.

**Extrinsic Motivation:** External motivation to accomplish a task. Examples: Popcorn parties, movies, stickers, tangible rewards.

**Incentive:** something that encourages action or greater effort, as a reward offered for increased productivity.

**DEAR:** Drop Everything and Read. A period of 20 to 30 minutes where students have to “drop” what they are doing and read a text silently.

**SSR:** Sustained Silent Reading. A period of time in which students read silently to themselves.

**Intervention:** A period of time where intense, saturated instruction takes place to improve an area of academic weakness.
Outline for Chapter Two

Motivation to read can be one of the most difficult things to instill in students. One has to ask if motivation is determined by extrinsic incentives, or if a child is born with it through intrinsic wiring. This chapter focuses on how motivation to read can be fostered through various teaching methods. Through researching various studies that have been conducted over the years, one can determine the best approach to foster intrinsic motivation to read in children.

Incentives Affecting Motivation to Read

There is research being conducted to determine if incentives to read do, in fact, affect motivation to read.

Edmunds and Tancock (2003) conducted a study to determine whether students became more motivated to read based on incentives presented to them. The researchers asked how reading motivation of fourth-graders was affected by a number of incentives; tangible incentives that are non-reading related such as pencils, folders, and restaurant coupons; and books as incentives. The results of this study showed that there was not a significant difference in reading motivation between the non-reading related rewards treatment group and the control group as measured by the Reading Survey, Parent Survey, and the number of books read. Nor was there a significant difference between the control group and the reading related awards treatment group.

In a similar study, Konheim-Kalkstein and Van den Broek examined the effect of incentives on cognitive processes of reading in order to examine the way motivation could affect cognitive processing of texts.
They determined that when monetary motivation was used, readers took longer to read text than participants who received no incentive for recall. Researchers concluded that readers who received monetary incentive to recall text did indeed recall more information than students who did not receive such incentive.

In a similar study, Chen and Wu (2006) explored the effects of rewards to increase motivation to read in elementary students in Taiwan. The researchers looked at both intangible and tangible rewards to see which caused intrinsic, extrinsic, and global reading motivation to increase. From the findings, the researchers concluded that teachers should use rewards judiciously in attempting to motivate students to read. Rewards should be intangible rather than tangible in order to increase motivation in students.

Similarly, Miller and Meece (1997) examined how different assignments in reading and language arts could influence students’ motivational goals. Researchers found that when educators worked together to create an integrated curriculum and reduced the number of piecemeal assignments, students’ motivation increased. Regardless of the assignment, the students stated that they wanted to learn something new and increase their level of understanding.

Along with the idea of incentives affecting motivation to read, there have been studies conducted to determine if reading achievement is related to a students’ motivation to read. Applegate and Applegate (2010) conducted a study to determine if there was such a relationship.

Motivation to Read and the Relationship to Reading Achievement
Applegate and Applegate (2010) conducted a study to determine if children who receive higher scores on a measure of thoughtful literacy be more motivated to read than children who scored lower on thoughtful literacy. Applegate and Applegate (2010) determined that children with a high inclination to respond thoughtfully to text were more motivated to read than students who excelled only in text-based comprehension.

Unrau and Schlackman (2006) conducted a two-year long study to investigate the effects of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation on reading achievement for urban middle school students. Older students showed lower motivation to read overall than younger students. The model also indicated that grade in school had a positive effect on reading achievement, indicating that, as expected, students in higher grades scored higher on the reading achievement test. Through these findings, the researchers concluded that they cannot make the claim that extrinsic motivation is counterproductive to reading achievement in students.

Wang and Guthrie (2004) conducted a study to examine the extent that motivational processes facilitate comprehension of texts. The researchers support that intrinsic an extrinsic motivations have different relationships with text comprehension pointing to the conclusion that intrinsic motivation is positively related to comprehension, and extrinsic motivation, while can increase amount of reading for school, is negatively related to overall text comprehension.

Van Kraayenoord, Beinicke, Schlagmuller, & Schneider (2012) explored reading comprehension involving the interaction of cognitive, metacognitive, and motivational variables. Researchers discovered that there was a stronger relationship between word identification and reading comprehension than between metacognitive knowledge and reading comprehension. Reading comprehension proved to be predicted strongly by word identification. Also,
motivation seemed to have a direct effect on reading comprehension as well as metacognitive knowledge and word identification.

Macid A. Melekoglu (2011) investigated the impact of motivation to read by studying gains made in reading by struggling readers with and without learning disabilities. The difference between motivation scores from pre to post tests indicated improvements in motivation as a result of the assessments.

Studies have also been conducted in which researchers determined how to best foster long-term intrinsic motivation for reading.

**Fostering Long-Term Intrinsic Motivation to Read**

Many researchers are wondering what the most effective way to foster long-term intrinsic motivation to read would be.

Guthrie, Wigfield, Humenick, Perencevich, Taboada, and Barbosa (2006) conducted a study to determine whether motivation has an effect on reading comprehension. The researchers determined that the instruction group receiving a high number of stimulating activities related to reading did show higher reading comprehension as well as higher motivation related to reading than the other group receiving a lower number of stimulating reading tasks. Using this information, researchers concluded that an increase in stimulating activities related to reading can cause an increase in intrinsic motivation to read.

Guthrie, Hoa, Wigfield, Tonks, and Perencevich (2006) determined if situational reading interest could lead to long-term reading motivation. The researchers concluded that changes in
situated motivation can be predictors of changes in general reading motivation within an instructional context that supports motivation in reading.

Sharon McKool (2007), investigated why some children choose to read outside of school and others do not, focusing only on factors that contribute to students’ decisions to read and also the students’ perspectives about these factors. McKool research suggested that when students value the act of reading, they are more likely to voluntarily read outside of school.

**Conclusion to the Chapter**

Edmunds and Tancock (2003) determined that there were not significant differences between groups or within subjects on the Value of Reading Subscale or children’s total reading motivation. Konheim-Kalkstein and Van den Broek determined that when monetary motivation was used, readers took longer to read text than participants who received no incentive for recall. Chen and Wu (2006) discovered that incentives need to be intangible in order to increase motivation. Miller and Meece (1997) discussed the importance of educators collaborating to meet the needs of the students and create curriculum that is interesting. Applegate and Applegate (2010) determined that children with a high inclination to respond thoughtfully to text were more motivated to read thank students who excelled only in text-based comprehension. Unrau and Schlackman (2006), as well as Wang and Guthrie (2004), found that an increase in reading achievement is correlated to intrinsic motivation. Also, Van Kraayenoord, Beinicke, Schlagmuller, & Schneider (2012) discovered that motivation influenced reading comprehension. In 2011, Macid A. Melekoğlu realized that the same is true of reading motivation in students with and without learning disabilities. Guthrie, Wigfield, Humenick,
Perencevich, Taboada, and Barbosa (2006) determined that the instruction group receiving a high number of stimulating activities related to reading did show higher reading comprehension as well as higher motivation related to reading than the other group receiving a lower number of stimulating reading tasks. Guthrie, Hoa, Wigfield, Tonks, and Perencevich (2006) determined that students who participated in the informational text group showed situational intrinsic motivation increased significantly from the beginning of the study to the end of the nine-week period. Intrinsic motivation increased for this group as well. Sharon McKool (2007) found that if a student finds texts that are interesting, they will be more apt to read outside of school hours. From these studies, one can conclude that there are ways to teach skills that will cause intrinsic motivation to increase in students, thus developing students who excel at reading comprehension.
Chapter Two

A Review of the Literature

Motivation to read can be one of the most difficult things to instill in students. One has to ask if motivation is determined by extrinsic incentives, or if a child is born with it through intrinsic wiring. This chapter focuses on how motivation to read can be fostered through various teaching methods. Through researching various studies that have been conducted over the years, one can determine the best approach to foster intrinsic motivation to read in children.

Incentives Affecting Motivation to Read

There is research being conducted to determine if incentives to read do, in fact, affect motivation to read.

Edmunds and Tancock (2003) conducted a study to determine whether students became more motivated to read based on incentives presented to them. The researchers asked how reading motivation of fourth-graders was affected by a number of incentives; tangible incentives that are non-reading related such as pencils, folders, and restaurant coupons; and books as incentives. The design of the study consisted of a control group, and two samples in which one received incentives not related to reading, and one received books as incentives for reading. Reading motivation was then measured by the number of books read, parent perceptions on a parent survey from the Multiple Analysis of Variance (MANOVA), and students’ perceptions in a reading survey from the Motivation to Read Profile (Gambrell, Palmer, Codling, & Mazzaroni, 1996).
The site was an elementary school in a mid-sized town located in the South which has 831 students in grades pre-K through fifth. Fifty-nine percent of the students were Caucasian, 38% of the students were African American, and 3% were other. The sample consisted of six fourth-grade classrooms in which three teachers taught Language Arts and Reading. The teachers who taught Math and Science were not a part of this study. The three teachers who taught Language Arts and Reading randomly assigned the students in their class in which 28 students were in the control group, 27 students in the treatment group who received books as rewards while the 36 students in the treatment group received non-reading related rewards. The students placed into these classes were chosen on a random selection.

The research method of this study was quantitative. The independent variables were the books being administered as incentives, as well as the non-reading incentives. The dependent variable consisted of the Reading Survey and the Parent Survey that were collected by the researchers.

The study was conducted over a course of a nineteen-week period. Following the implementation of the incentive programs, the educators administered the Reading Survey from the Motivation to Read Profile (Gambrell, Palmer, Codling, & Mazzaroni, 1996) to all the students. This instrument was given during the first week of the study as well as at the conclusion. The students also completed a book log in which they recorded how many books they had read. These book logs were collected and compared between the control group as well as the other two groups.

A Multiple Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was used to analyze the data collected from the reading survey as well as the survey administered to parents. Through this process, the
researchers were able to determine if there were any significant differences in the value of reading, or the total motivation of reading between groups. A one-way analysis variance (ANOVA) was used to determine if there were any significant differences between groups in the total number of books read.

As the study was conducted, the teacher of the non-reading related rewards group used an incentive system consisting of five categories of incentives. These categories correlated to a point system in which the students needed to obtain points to reach each level of incentives. Each book the child read was designated a point scale based on calculated point values from the Accelerated Reader program (Renaissance Learning, 2011). The incentives in the class increased with value. For example, the first category consisted of erasers, pencils, and pencil grips, level five included restaurant and movie passes.

The other treatment group included two classes that received books as incentives. As the first treatment group, this teacher too developed a five category system of incentives. This teacher also used the point system derived from the Accelerated Reader program, but instead of pencils and movie passes, this teacher used books as an incentive for reading. The control group did not receive incentives for reading books. These two classes participated in the Accelerated Reader program and the teacher did not establish any kind of reward system.

Edmunds and Tancock (2003) determined that there were not significant differences between groups or within subjects on the Value of Reading Subscale or children’s total reading motivation. The results suggest that the use of books and non-reading related objects used as incentives did not affect the students’ value of reading or total reading motivation. The MANOVA and ANOVA also demonstrated that there was not a significant difference between
groups in the amount of books read during the length of the treatment. The results of this study showed that there was not a significant difference in reading motivation between the non-reading related rewards treatment group and the control group as measured by the Reading Survey, Parent Survey, and the number of books read. Nor was there a significant difference between the control group and the reading related awards treatment group. Thus it cannot be concluded that receiving books as an incentive for reading or receiving non-reading related incentives will increase children’s reading motivation.

In a similar study, Konheim-Kalkstein and Van den Broek examined the effect of incentives on cognitive processes of reading in order to examine the way motivation could affect cognitive processing of texts. The design of this study consisted of two groups, one receiving monetary incentives for recall of text, and one group that did not receive incentives for recall. Researchers suspected that participants who were given incentives would retain more of the text than the non-motivated participants of the study.

The groups for the study consisted of 64 undergraduate students from a university in the Mid-West. Researchers recruited individuals for their study by asking for native speakers of English with at least a high school reading level. Participants were randomly selected to either be in the motivated condition, or the non-motivated condition, with roughly an equal number of males and females being assigned to each group. The motivated group had the chance to earn money in exchange for what they recalled from the text. Participants in the non-motivated group were unaware of the money as incentives being administered to the motivation group.

The research method for this study was quantitative. The independent variables consisted of the group receiving money as incentives as well as that non-motivated group. The tests that
were administered to both groups were the PANAS (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1998), Subjective Motivation Survey (Konheim-Kalkstein, & Van den Broek, 2008), and the PsyScope (Cohen, MacWhinney, Flatt, & Provost, 1993) were the dependable variables.

A Positive Affect and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS), a questionnaire, was used to analyze participants’ emotions and how manipulatives may affect these emotions. The researchers developed a Subjective Motivation Survey in which participants indicated how motivated they were to remember and recall information from text based on a five-point scale. Use of the PsyScope recorded reading times of the participants for self-paced reading.

Texts chosen for this study consisted of six short narratives that were read by the participants in each group. All texts were approximately the same length, and were displayed on a computer with sixteen lines of text at a time. A participant in the motivation group was informed they would need to read the text on the screen, fill out the surveys, and recall the stories they read. A roll of quarters was shown to the participant and the money being earned was recorded in front of the participant so they could see how much they were earning as they read the text.

The researchers determined that when monetary motivation was used, readers took longer to read text than participants who received no incentive for recall. The motivation group recalled more information than the non-motivated group. The Subjective Motivation Survey showed that participants perceived money as a motivator for recall. Analysis of the PANAS did not show a significant difference in positive or negative affect between motivated and non-motivated participants. Researchers concluded that readers who received monetary incentive to recall text did indeed recall more information than students who did not receive such incentive.
In a similar study, Chen and Wu (2006) explored the effects of rewards to increase motivation to read in elementary students in Taiwan. The researchers looked at both intangible and tangible rewards to see which caused intrinsic, extrinsic, and global reading motivation to increase. Through this qualitative process, there were two purposes for this study. The authors attempted to realize the predictive model of rewards and identify the reward predictors for reading motivation.

The survey was made up of 722 students in which 340 were boys and 382 were girls. The sample included 30 classes in five elementary schools located in southern Taiwan. There were over 200 students from grades two, four, and six.

The authors used two instruments to collect data. One of the assessments was the Elementary School Students’ Reward Experience Questionnaire. This survey was designed by the authors of the study and was divided into two parts. The first part of the questionnaire focused on rewards for reading that were received over the course of the semester. The second part of the survey was aimed to collect information on the students’ attributions for receiving these rewards to reading. The other instrument that was used to obtain valuable data was the Elementary School Students’ Reading Motivation Scale (Lai, 2005). There were two factors extracted from this assessment; intrinsic and extrinsic reading motivation. This survey was used to determine pre-reward learning as well as post-reward learning.

Chen and Wu found that girls were more motivated in reading than boys, and students in higher grades tend to have less motivation than those in lower grades. The research also showed that the presence of tangible rewards had no predictive influence on extrinsic motivation, whereas intangible rewards showed positive predictive effect on intrinsic, extrinsic, and global
reading motivation. From the findings, the researchers concluded that teachers should use rewards judiciously in attempting to motivate students to read. Rewards should be intangible rather than tangible in order to increase motivation in students.

Similarly, Miller and Meece (1997) examined how different assignments in reading and language arts could influence students’ motivational goals. The qualitative study lasted two years. The first year was a planning year in which each teacher developed a list of activities to have the students complete. The second year was an intervention year in which the students took part in the reading and language arts activities. Each activity was designed to incorporate a writing component and was created by the educators during brainstorming sessions. With the activities planned out, the teachers were well equipped and ready to collect data for the researchers.

The study took place in the Piedmont area of North Carolina and lasted for two years. 187 third grade students from eight classrooms and their teachers all participated. Each of the eight classes ranged in size from 20 to 25 students and was heterogeneously grouped. The researchers frequently visited the classrooms over the two year period to confirm that the teachers were implementing the activities as discussed.

Assignments included any written product that the students completed during class or as a homework assignment. The researchers coded the writing into three different categories based on how complex the assignment was. Student questionnaires were administered to the students after their various assignments had been completed. The questionnaire used was designed by Meece (1988) and was used to assess how the intervention influenced the students’ motivation, cognitive engagement, and achievement. The questionnaire had to be modified from science
specific to reading and writing specific, and the vocabulary had to be simplified to make it easier for third graders to better understand.

During the planning year, assignment data collection occurred at three two-week intervals. During the second year, the assignments data collection occurred at five two-week intervals. Collections did not begin until October so the teachers could develop a routine within the classroom first. Throughout the year, the teachers would photocopy assignments and lesson plans to be entered in as data. After reading all the stories in the basal unit, the researchers, and the teachers, selected those that supported a common theme. The educators then created a list of activities with accompanying assignments that supported the agreed upon theme. The students then completed 26 weekly reading and language arts assignments: 17 involved simple marks, 4 involved sentence-level writing, and 5 involved paragraphed writing. Questionnaires were administered to the students within a 24 hour window of completing tasks.

Researchers found that when educators worked together to create an integrated curriculum and reduced the number of piecemeal assignments, students’ motivation increased. Regardless of the assignment, the students stated that they wanted to learn something new and increase their level of understanding. The researchers wanted to increase the likelihood that the students would have opportunities to experience reading and language arts activities that would evoke more positive forms of motivation than traditional worksheet assignments would. The intervention efforts were successful. Miller and Meece suggested that if these changes are maintained, students’ motivation should continue to increase as well as their interest in reading and language arts.
If incentives affect motivation to read, can motivation improve reading achievement? There have been studies conducted to determine if reading achievement is, indeed, related to students’ motivation to read. One such study was Applegate and Applegate’s (2010) research conducted to determine if there was such a relationship in students from grade three to grade six.

**Motivation to Read and the Relationship to Reading Achievement**

Studies have been conducted to determine if children who receive higher scores on a measure of thoughtful literacy be more motivated to read than children who scored lower on thoughtful literacy. Students were grouped according to strength in the area of text-based comprehension scores. From these two groups, researchers conducted a study to determine if they would differ with respect to their overall motivation to read.

The site for the study consisted of 443 participants ranging from third grade to grade six in the New England area of the United States. The study was ongoing between the years of 2006 and 2009. Students were measured on their current grade level on two narrative passages from the Critical Reading Inventory (Applegate, Quinn, & Applegate, 2008) and had to score at least an 81 percent in text-based comprehension. The participants were grouped according to comprehension scores. The Red Group consisted of children who were strong in text-based comprehension, but weak in higher order comprehension. The Blue Group consisted of participants who were strong in both text-based and higher order comprehension measures.

This quantitative study incorporated several independent variables. The Red Group, whose students scored highly on text-based comprehension, but lacked in the area of higher order comprehension, was one independent variable, the other was the Blue Group who scored high in both text-based and higher order comprehension. The Dependent variables were the
measures used to form conclusions such as the Critical Reading Inventory (Applegate, Quinn, & Applegate, 2008), and the Motivation to Read Profile (Gambrell, Palmer, Codling, & Mazzoni, 1996).

The Critical Reading Inventory (Applegate, Quinn, & Applegate, 2008) was used to assess the inclination of children to respond thoughtfully to text. This skill involves both the ability to link experience with text as well as the ability to grasp larger significance of text to arrive at a larger significance of the text. The Motivation to Read Profile (Gambrell, Palmer, Codling, & Mazzoni, 1996) measure was used to identify the level of motivation related to reading for each of the students.

Applegate and Applegate (2010) determined that children with a high inclination to respond thoughtfully to text were more motivated to read than students who excelled only in text-based comprehension. The researchers established that the inclination to respond thoughtfully to text was not an indicator of motivation, but that the two factors appeared to be related. The findings suggested that the inclination of a student to think about what they read does contribute to the student’s motivation to read.

The researchers still wondered how this motivation could improve reading achievement so; Unrau and Schlackman (2006) conducted a two-year long study to investigate the effects of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation on reading achievement for urban middle school students. Researchers asked to what extent intrinsic and extrinsic motivation relate to the reading achievement of students in middle school through the use of the Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ) and the Gates-MacGinitie Reading test. The design of the study was qualitative. Researchers hypothesized that students with high intrinsic motivation, and those
exposed to extrinsic motivation, would have higher scores in reading achievement than those who lack motivation altogether.

The site was an urban middle school of approximately 2,000 students in the Los Angeles area. Participants in the study were in grades 6, 7, and 8. The school’s population included 75% Hispanic, 20% Asian. The remaining students were African American, American Indian, and Caucasian. The average class size in the school was about 28 students. All students in grades 6 and 7 participated in the data collected for this study except those that were in Special Education classes and not mainstreamed into the regular English classes.

This study was administered over the course of a two year period. The students in grade 6 were part of a cohort described as group “6-7” and the students in grade 7 were described as group “7-8.” All surveys and assessments were administered during English classes by the teachers of that classroom. The results of these tests were scored by the personnel in the Title I office of the middle school for consistency.

The Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (Wingfield, 1996) was administered in the fall of year one as well as the fall of year two and was used to assess various aspects of reading motivation. Questions were based on a scale of 1 to 4 with 1 meaning the item was very difficult for the student, to 4 meaning the item was a lot like the student. Students also completed the Gates-MacGinitie test (3rd ed.; MacGinitie & MacGinitie, 1989) as a measure of reading achievement through comprehension and vocabulary skills.

After reviewing the findings of the tests, the researchers concluded many things related to gender, age, and race. The findings did suggest that higher grades in middle school predicted lower intrinsic motivation as well as lower extrinsic motivation than those in younger grades.
Therefore, older students showed lower motivation to read overall than younger students. The model also indicated that grade in school had a positive effect on reading achievement, indicating that, as expected, students in higher grades scored higher on the reading achievement test. The data also showed that Asian students who had high intrinsic motivation also had high scores on reading achievement. Hispanic students, however, showed that neither intrinsic nor extrinsic motivation effected reading achievement. Through these findings, the researchers concluded that they cannot make the claim that extrinsic motivation is counterproductive to reading achievement in students.

In a similar study, Wang and Guthrie (2004) conducted a study to examine the extent that motivational processes facilitate comprehension of texts. The researchers asked to what extent intrinsic and extrinsic motivation correlates with text comprehension directly or indirectly through reading achievement. Intrinsic motivation was represented by three components: curiosity, involvement, and preference for challenge. Extrinsic motivation was defined as recognition, grades, competition, and compliance. Students for this study were assessed by the Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (1997), as well as the Reading Activity Inventory (1994). The researchers also used data collected from the narrative section of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement Reading Literacy Test. From these assessments, the researchers were able to gauge reading comprehension as it related to motivation to read from both intrinsic and extrinsic sources.

Participants consisted of 187 recruited fourth grade students from the mid-Atlantic area. A proposal of the study was sent to administrators of many schools and the principals who were interested supported the research activities in their schools, which lead to the recruitment of
pupils. Most of these children lived in suburban regions and fifteen percent of that population was eligible to receive free lunch.

Data from both the Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (1997) as well as the Reading Activity Inventory (1994) were collected during regular class time in the schools in the first session of assessments. The second session of data was collected through the use of the narrative part of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement Reading Literacy Test after children completed the other two assessments mentioned prior.

Students were instructed that their responses to the questionnaires in the first session depended on their own feelings and experiences in reading and that all answers were acceptable. The same participants were instructed how to answer questions carefully in the second session, which was measuring comprehension.

Wang and Guthrie were able to conclude that intrinsic motivation had a positive direct association with text comprehension while extrinsic motivation had a negative direct association with comprehension. It seemed that intrinsic motivation can be a strong predictor of overall reading enjoyment. Thus, the researchers support that intrinsic and extrinsic motivations have different relationships with text comprehension pointing to the conclusion that intrinsic motivation is positively related to comprehension, and extrinsic motivation, while can increase amount of reading for school, is negatively related to overall text comprehension.

Also, Van Kraayenoord, Beinicke, Schlagmuller, & Schneider (2012) explored reading comprehension involving the interaction of cognitive, metacognitive, and motivational variables. The researchers investigated the role these variables play in reading comprehension of Australian students in grades three and four. In this study, researchers focused on intrinsic motivation
through self-concept as well as interest in reading. Reading comprehension was assessed by combining scores from a standardized measure as well as teacher judgment of a student’s reading achievement. The question posed asked if the variables of interest would predict reading comprehension.

Participants included 139 Australian students from grades three and four. Of the 139 students, 34 were male and 44 were female. Students were acquired from two different schools in suburbs of Brisbane, Queensland, Australia. None of the students were identified as having developmental, emotional, or sensory issues. There were four third grade teachers, and four fourth grade teachers involved in the study as well.

The instruments used to collect the data included four assessments. The Word Identification Subtest-Test 3 of the Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests-Revised (Form H, Woodcock, 1987) was administered individually to the students and requires accurate word reading. The Index of Reading Awareness (Jacobs & Paris, 1987) was also administered. This assessment involved twenty items to measure metacognitive knowledge about strategies that one could use in reading. A 30-item measure that assessed reading self-concept was Reading Self-Concept Scale (Chapman & Tunmer, 1993). Interest in Reading Scale (Van Kraayenoord, 1996) was also used to determine children’s attitudes towards reading and how their habits relate to their behaviors associated with reading. Finally, each teacher was asked to rate each child on various subscales and make a judgment about the child’s reading ability in general.

Data was collected from students who had obtained permission from guardians to participate in this study. Two people from the research team were present in each classroom during the administering of the assessments. The students in each class were aware of the
purpose of this study from the beginning. The raw scores of each test were aggregated and normed by the researchers at the conclusion of the study.

Researchers discovered that there was a stronger relationship between word identification and reading comprehension than between metacognitive knowledge and reading comprehension. Reading comprehension proved to be predicted strongly by word identification. Also, motivation seemed to have a direct effect on reading comprehension as well as metacognitive knowledge and word identification. Thus, motivation influenced reading comprehension. From this data, the researchers concluded that there is a clear need for effective initial teaching of reading, and reading comprehension. It is also imperative that educators provide interesting texts, offer choices, and use activities to increase interest in reading.

Finally, in 2011, Macid A. Melekoglu investigated the impact of motivation to read by studying gains made in reading by struggling readers with and without learning disabilities. The students involved in this study were exposed to READ 180 which is a program that is structured, as well as research based. Melekoglu’s goal of the study was to evaluate whether motivation to read has a significant correlation with reading gains through the use of the structured reading program five days per week in students who are struggling readers.

The study took place in a United States Midwestern state and included 13 students with a learning disability and 25 students without disabilities from two middle schools and one high school over the period of 18 weeks. Teachers who participated in this study were familiar with the READ 180 program and were employed by the participating school districts. READ 180 is a program that includes comprehensive reading intervention which is designed to meet the needs of struggling readers in 4th through 12th grade. The program combines whole group instruction,
small-group instruction, and technology-integrated instruction. Struggling readers were targeted by their schools based on academic discrepancy as well as readers without a learning disability in middle and high school setting. All participants were selected based on their pretest reading achievement rather than their IQ scores. Students with emotional behavioral disabilities, speech or language impairment, and other health impairments were not selected to take part in this particular study.

For this study, local middle and high schools that offered a structured, research-based reading program for students with reading impairments were recruited. Two school districts agreed to participate in the study throughout the course of one academic year. The three schools are located in rural cities where about 14% of students receive special education services.

Students’ motivation to read was assessed through the use of the Adolescent Motivation to Read Survey (2007), and was administered by the researcher at the end of the first and third quarters. The survey included 20 items to which students responded to measure self-concept as a reader and their personal value placed on reading. The survey was presented to the entire class within one week before or after the administration of standardized reading pre and post tests. The standardized test was administered by the READ 180 teachers to their classes.

The standardized tests revealed Lexile scores which indicated students’ reading achievement. The difference between the pre and post tests showed improvement in students’ reading gain over the course of the study. Similarly, the difference between motivation scores from pre to post tests indicated improvements in motivation as well. It should be noted that these gains, while substantial, still left the students below current grade level on reading achievement post tests. Melekoğlu suggested that both youth with a learning disability and those without a
learning disability exhibited reading gains over the course of the study. However, only the self-concept of students without disabilities improved greatly over the study period of 18 weeks. In the case of students with a learning disability, there seemed to be no significant change in motivation to read. The author speculated that this could be the result of constant struggling to read, even from a young age, thus creating comprehension difficulties and a lack of wanting to read for enjoyment. The researcher suggested that the increase in reading achievement was due to the students being exposed to a structured and research-based intervention. With this in mind, and educator could make the argument that it is never too late to help a student succeed and make gains in the area of comprehension as long as the intervention are tailored to meet the needs of the student.

Studies have also been conducted in which researchers determined how to best foster long-term intrinsic motivation for reading.

Fostering Long-Term Intrinsic Motivation to Read

Many researchers are wondering what the most effective way to foster long-term intrinsic motivation to read would be. Studies have been conducted to discover the answer. One of which was performed by Guthrie, Wigfield, Humenick, Perencevich, Taboada, and Barbosa (2006) to determine whether motivation has an effect on reading comprehension. The researchers hypothesized that students who were given a high number of stimulating tasks in reading would receive higher reading comprehension scores and higher reading motivation scores than students who did not receive a high number of stimulating tasks related to reading. The participants consisted of two groups of third-graders where two teachers provided a high number of stimulating reading tasks while the other two presented a low number of stimulating
reading tasks. All students participated in various assessments to measure motivation such as rubrics developed by the researchers and the Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997).

The site included 98 third graders from a mid-Atlantic elementary school. The students were located in four classrooms which were grouped into two instruction groups where two teachers taught using a high number of stimulating reading tasks and the other two teachers utilized a low number of stimulating reading tasks. All classrooms participated in one to four science experiments and worked towards the same content goals from their science inquiry. Students read about topics related to the science experiments over the duration of the study. All students participating in this study participated in a program that included the same reading goals, as well as text materials.

In this quantitative study, the independent variables were the two groups participating in the study. Two classrooms focused on a high number of stimulating reading tasks and two classrooms received low amounts of stimulation related to reading tasks. The dependent variables consisted of rubrics used for students’ hypotheses about their experiments, rubrics for questions raised by the students, rubrics for tables and graphs created by the students (Guthrie, et al. 2006) and the Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997).

Guthrie, Wigfield, Humenick, Perencevich, Taboada, and Barbosa (2006) determined that the instruction group receiving a high number of stimulating activities related to reading did show higher reading comprehension as well as higher motivation related to reading than the other group receiving a lower number of stimulating reading tasks. Using this information,
researchers concluded that an increase in stimulating activities related to reading can cause an increase in intrinsic motivation to read.

Similarly, Guthrie, Hoa, Wigfield, Tonks, and Perencevich (2004) determined if situational reading interest could lead to long-term reading motivation. The researchers conducted a quantitative study to investigate to what extent situational reading interest could lead to long-term intrinsic reading motivation. Researchers hypothesized that increases in situational motivation would lead to increases in intrinsic reading motivation through the use of classroom context Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction (Guthrie, Wigfield, & Perencevich, 2004). The design of this study consisted of two groups of third-graders who were grouped after indicating whether their favorite books were informational texts or narrative texts. Information was gathered through surveys and questionnaires.

The study’s participants were third-graders from seven classrooms in two different mid-Atlantic schools. All of these classrooms participated in Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction in which teachers instruct for 90 minutes per day and focus on multiple reading strategies while supporting motivational processes which was fostered by allowing the students to choose their reading material in the context area of Science. The two groups of students in this study were determined by the genre they liked the most. One group chose informational text as the preferred reading material whereas the other group chose narrative text.

In this quantitative study, the independent variables were the two groups of third-graders who participated in the study. The dependent variables were the tests that were administered to the participants such as a reading interest log, Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (Wigfield
and Guthrie, 1997), and the Gates-Macginitie Reading Comprehension test (Macginitie, W.H., Macginitie, R.K., Maria, and Dreyer, 2000).

This study was administered over the course of a seven-week period. Both the reading interest log and the Motivation for Reading Questionnaire were administered at the beginning and the end of the study. As the participants took part in the reading interest logs, they were asked to rate interest level on various books they were to read as a part of CORI on a five-point scale. After rating each book, they were asked to indicate the one book that they found to be the most interesting. Students were then asked to choose from a list of twelve possible reasons as to why they rated that book as the most interesting. Six reasons were intended to reflect a student’s intrinsic motivation while the other six reasons reflected extrinsic motivation. The Motivation for Reading Questionnaire was utilized to assess different aspects of motivation to read, including intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in children. Comprehension was then measured using the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Comprehension test where students were asked to read a passage and then complete a task on a computer.

Guthrie, Hoa, Wigfield, Tonks, and Perencevich (2006) determined that students who participated in the informational text group showed situational intrinsic motivation increased significantly from the beginning of the study to the end of the nine-week period. Intrinsic motivation increased for this group as well. These students initially gave reasons for choosing informational texts that reflected both intrinsic motivational reasons and extrinsic motivational reasons. For the students who chose narrative texts as their preferred reading material, the researchers determined that situated intrinsic motivation did not change significantly from the beginning of the study to the end. Intrinsic reading motivation for this group did not change. These students initially gave reasons for choosing narrative texts that were reflected both
intrinsic and extrinsic motivational reasons, however, by week five, the extrinsic motivational reasons reduced in frequency. From these findings, Guthrie, Hoa, Wigfield, Tonks, & Perenevich concluded that changes in situated motivation can be predictors of changes in general reading motivation within an instructional context that supports motivation in reading.

A similar study, by Sharon McKool (2007), investigated why some children choose to read outside of school and others do not, focusing only on factors that contribute to students’ decisions to read and also the students’ perspectives about these factors. Through this study, McKool found that students who came from a home where parents read to them, as well as students who were involved in a classroom setting that encouraged self-selected texts, tended to be more personally interested in reading, thus being more motivated to read. The researcher also found that caution should be taken when relying on external rewards to motivate and promote voluntary reading.

This study consisted on 199 fifth grade students from two elementary schools; one from a rural area, and the other from a large school district in the southwest. Both schools were ethnically diverse including students who were African American, Hispanic, Asian American, and Native American. Of the students who participated, 70 of them were from a low-income household.

Data was collected over the course of a four month period and came from reflexive journals, students’ activity logs, researcher administered reading surveys, reading achievement information from mandated assessments, and student interviews. Each survey and questionnaire took no longer than 15 minutes and was conducted during the language arts block of the school
All students kept a daily out-of-school activity logs over a ten day period. The students were unaware that their reading habits were being studied.

Both the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey and the Motivation to Read Profile were distributed. These assessments were used to determine students’ attitude towards reading, as well as how the students perceived themselves as readers. Ten students from each school were also interviewed about their reading habits outside of school. They were also asked about their leisure time habits in general. The interview began with questions regarding amount of time spent watching television, interaction with family and friends, and other activities that occupied their time after school. The students were also asked a series of questions that focused on their attitudes about reading as well as their motives behind their reading habits and preferences. All the interviews were recorded and transcribed for data analysis.

The results of this study suggest that most fifth-graders do very little voluntary reading outside of school. After school activities seem to compete with voluntary reading time as well, such as television watching. Another hindrance to reading voluntarily was after school activities, especially in those that are already reluctant readers. The findings from this study do suggest that avid readers tend to have a more positive attitude towards recreational reading than those who are reluctant readers. Avid readers also had much higher self concepts as readers and seemed to value the importance of reading more so than reluctant readers. McKool research suggested that when students value the act of reading, they are more likely to voluntarily read outside of school. With this information, an educator knows that she/he needs to promote the importance of practicing reading outside of school, thus improving fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension in students.
Conclusion to the Chapter

Edmunds and Tancock (2003) determined that there were not significant differences between groups or within subjects on the Value of Reading Subscale or children’s total reading motivation. Konheim-Kalkstein and Van den Broek determined that when monetary motivation was used, readers took longer to read text than participants who received no incentive for recall. Chen and Wu (2006) discovered that incentives need to be intangible in order to increase motivation. Miller and Meece (1997) discussed the importance of educators collaborating to meet the needs of the students and create curriculum that is interesting. Applegate and Applegate (2010) determined that children with a high inclination to respond thoughtfully to text were more motivated to read than students who excelled only in text-based comprehension. Unrau and Schlackman (2006), as well as Wang and Guthrie (2004), found that an increase in reading achievement is correlated to intrinsic motivation. Also, Van Kraayenoord, Beinicke, Schlagmuller, & Schneider (2012) discovered that motivation influenced reading comprehension. In 2011, Macid A. Melekoglu realized that the same is true of reading motivation in students with and without learning disabilities. Guthrie, Wigfield, Humenick, Perencevich, Taboada, and Barbosa (2006) determined that the instruction group receiving a high number of stimulating activities related to reading did show higher reading comprehension as well as higher motivation related to reading than the other group receiving a lower number of stimulating reading tasks. Guthrie, Hoa, Wigfield, Tonks, and Perencevich (2006) determined that students who participated in the informational text group showed situational intrinsic motivation increased significantly from the beginning of the study to the end of the nine-week period. Intrinsic motivation increased for this group as well. Sharon McKool (2007) found that if a student finds texts that are interesting, they will be more apt to read outside of school hours.
From these studies, one can conclude that there are ways to teach skills that will cause intrinsic motivation to increase in students, thus developing students who excel at reading comprehension.
Chapter 3

Assessment

In order to better understand the role of motivation to read in children’s lives, an educator needs to know how the students feel about reading in various scenarios. The purpose of this study was to determine the starting points of a third grade classroom set of students and to use that information to improve motivation to read over the course of a six week period. The researcher used various tools to indicate if growth in this area was improving as a result of several incentives, both extrinsic and intrinsic, being placed on the sample.

Description of Sample Population

This study was conducted in a third grade classroom in an elementary school located in southern Wisconsin. The population consisted of 19 children, all between the ages of eight and nine, who were members of the researcher’s classroom during the course of the 2011-2012 academic school year. Lincoln Elementary School is located in the city of Janesville and is one of twelve elementary schools in the city. This particular school has 340 students enrolled from Kindergarten through fifth grade. Of these students, 14.7% were Hispanic, 2.9% African American, 2.1% Asian, 0.9% Native American, and 75.9% Caucasian. During the research year, 62.6% of students took part in free or reduced lunch services. The sample used for this study involved 5% Hispanic, 94% Caucasian, and 11% labeled as Learning Disabled or Emotional Behavioral Disorder.

Description of Procedures Used
At the beginning of the study, the researcher discussed that the goal over the next six weeks was to improve motivation to read in each student. The students were aware that there were going to be surveys, interviews, and tangible as well as intangible incentives throughout the process to determine the level of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

To determine the initial level of interest in reading, the teacher administered the Reading Attitude Survey written by Paul Campbell. This survey consisted of questions about personal feelings toward reading inside and outside of the classroom setting. This survey was administered at the beginning and the end of the six week period.

During the six weeks, three children were randomly selected to participate in an interview in which the researcher asked them questions about their reading habits, how they felt about reading, and what they learned about reading enjoyment. These same three students were interviewed at the start of the study, at the mid point, and at the conclusion of the intervention.

In class, each day the students would read for 30 minutes during Sustained Silent Reading (DEAR-Drop Everything and Read). The students were encouraged to read at their independent level but could pick from any book they wanted to read within that level from either the library or the classroom Guided Reading library. At the end of each week, in addition to DEAR, each student could choose to read with a partner. At these times, the students could read anything they would like, even if it was not within their instructional level. Each of these times, the educator observed the reading habits of the students while circulating through the classroom and taking notes when necessary.

The incentives given over the course of the six weeks consisted of coupons for free pizza after completing a reading log each week, Friday movie and popcorn for those who read during
Sustained Silent Reading everyday, verbal feedback on running record assessments, and written comments sent home about reading interest and improvement. The class also worked together to design a reading igloo made of empty milk cartons where the star reader for the day could choose to read their silent reading books. The classroom also consisted of a library area full of pillows, a carpet, and lamps for lighting to enjoy reading in during DEAR times.

**Description of Data Collection**

The first assessment used was the Reading Attitude Survey written by Paul Campbell. This survey is made up of questions related to how a child feels about reading in various scenarios. Each question posed requested that the student pick an answer that reflected their feelings about reading. The answers were determined by circling the corresponding picture of a puppy as to how that question made them feel. Each set of five pictures began with an excited puppy and ended with a sleeping, sad looking puppy to indicate boredom or sadness associated with that question. Each question was read aloud to ensure that decoding or comprehension was not a distractor. The same survey was administered at the conclusion of the study.

Interviews consisted of asking three children the same questions and listening to their answers to indicate if motivation to read was improving, staying the same, or decreasing. The educator sat with each child individually and asked various questions about their initial feelings about reading in school, as well as at home. The interviews also focused on which incentive they were most looking forward to and how they think that incentive influenced their interest in reading. The same questions were asked at the beginning, as well as the end of the six week period. The students had been in the teacher’s class all year, and felt very comfortable opening up and answering any questions the researcher had.
Conclusion to the Chapter

The researcher administered a survey to each child involved in the study at the pre-intervention stage as well as at the conclusion. There were interview questions asked to randomly selected participants at the beginning and end of the study. The researcher implemented both intrinsic as well as extrinsic incentives in an attempt to increase student motivation to read. Through the process of administering these surveys, interviews, and implementing the rewards, the researcher gained knowledge to help decipher what methods are best for increasing student motivation to read, and how the educator’s role can help establish interest in reading in students.
Chapter 4

Results

The last chapter focused on implementing an intervention and ways in which data was collected to research how motivation to read could be increased in students in a third grade classroom. This chapter will focus on the results of the data collected in the study through discussion of comparing pre and post-intervention survey results, and viewing interview questions and answers provided by the subjects of the study.

Presentation and Analysis of Data

At the beginning of the six-week period, the Reading Attitude Survey was conducted by the researcher and administered to each student. As the survey was written, (Appendix A) there are five different dogs to correlate with various feelings associated with reading. Each child circled the puppy that corresponded with how they felt in each scenario. The puppies were given a number to better decipher the results of the survey. The happiest dog, (as represented as the puppy of the far left) was given a number of five meaning the highest score possible for this question. The next dog to the right was given a score of four, the next dog was given a three, then a two and the last puppy on the right who looks the saddest and least excited was given a score of one.

After the scores were calculated, there were increases in all areas, except for three. The question that asked “How do you feel about reading books for fun at home?” decreased .05 points from pre to post survey. Another question that had a decrease in average score was “How do you feel when you are asked to read out loud?” This question decreased by .37. Finally, the
question that asked “How do you think your friends feel when you read out loud?” went down .06 of a point.

Of the questions posed, there were 73 percent that showed an increase from pre to post intervention results. The question that had the biggest gain from pre to post survey score was the question that asked “How do you feel when you are asked to read out loud to the teacher?” This question increased from an average score of 3.53 to 4.26 indicating an increase of 0.73. After all the scores to all the questions were calculated and averaged, the overall test did increase from pre to post intervention 21.3 percent.

The Table below shows the areas of increase, as well as decrease from pre to post intervention results.
The researcher also conducted interviews with randomly selected students from the class. There were three students who were selected to discuss feelings about reading over the course of the intervention with the teacher. They were asked the same questions in the beginning as well as at the conclusion of the intervention. A sample of the interviews is shown below:

Pre-Intervention Interview (Student 1)

Teacher: How do you feel about reading?
Student: I like reading, I guess.

Teacher: What do you like about reading?

Student: I like when we get to read any book we want. I like it when you read to us after lunch. Those books are funny!

Teacher: Do you like reading from your text books?

Student: Not really. Those are boring.

Teacher: Do you enjoy reading at home?

Student: No. My mom makes me read boring books.

Teacher: Would you enjoy reading at home if you had a “fun” book to read?

Student: I guess so.

Teacher: Do you think you will like reading for fun when you are older?

Student: Probably.

Teacher: Why do you think you will like it when you are older?

Student: Because you like reading, and I guess it’s what you do for fun when you are older.

Post-Intervention Interview (Student 1)

Teacher: How do you feel about reading?
Student: It depends on what I’m reading, I guess. But I like it. I like reading funny books like Diary of a Wimpy Kid.

Teacher: What do you like about reading?

Student: I like that we get to pick what we read, and that we get to sit anywhere in the room, and I like that we get to read with partners.

Teacher: Do you like reading from your text books?

Student: I guess it’s OK, but not really. They are kinda boring.

Teacher: What was your favorite incentive for reading?

Student: When you made us popcorn with that whirly thingy! It was sooo good! And all we had to do was read! It was awesome!

Teacher: Do you enjoy reading at home?

Student: It’s OK. My mom took me to the library so I could get some new books to read. At least they aren’t boring books.

Teacher: What kind of books did you get?

Student: I don’t remember their names, but it’s about a mouse who lives in all different times in history. It’s really funny! When I read it with my mom, she makes me laugh because she talks in funny voices!

Teacher: Do you like reading with you mom?

Student: Yeah! She’s really funny. She tells me to reread some stuff to make it funnier!
Teacher: How do you think you will feel about reading when you are older?

Student: I think I will like it.

**Conclusions**

As a result of the intervention, it is clear that most areas in question did increase over the six-week period. Most students showed an increase in reading at school, wanting to receive books as presents, how they feel about reading to the teacher, and about reading when they are older. The few areas that decreased were areas such as how the students feel about reading at home for enjoyment. The study showed no indication as to why that question decreased over time. Through the interviews and the survey, researchers can conclude that using both intrinsic and extrinsic incentives can improve students’ overall motivation to read. Though the study only lasted six-weeks, one can conclude that an even longer study would be needed to infer the dynamic of the changes found in motivation to read.

**Summary**

The results from the data indicate that there were increases in several areas such as how the students thought they would feel about reading as adults and how the students feel when a teacher reads aloud to them. In similar ways, the interviews indicated an overall increase in motivation to read for enjoyment, rather than reading for educational purposes within the confines of the classroom. Data also points to decreases in motivation from the pre to post-intervention survey within the sample such as how the students feel about reading books for fun at home as well as how they feel when they are asked to read a story out loud. With this data, the researcher was lead to draw some conclusions about what the results revealed about the
intervention as well as implications for future research endeavors and implementation into the classroom.
Chapter 5

Conclusions

Connections to Existing Research

Wisconsin Common Core Standards state that third grade students should be able to read and comprehend a text at a high second to third grade level in its entirety independently by the end of the academic school year. In order for this level of comprehension to occur, it is essential that a child possess the motivation necessary to accomplish this task. There has been a lot of research conducted on motivation to read and how to increase motivation to read in students. When I first started thinking about how to conduct my intervention, I had to look at all the other data that has been collected over the years by various researchers. The main study that I kept coming back to, and the one most the other researchers quoted, was Guthrie, Hoa, Wigfeld, Tonks, And Perenevich (2006). This study set out to determine if situational reading interest could lead to long-term reading motivation. The researchers found the same evidence as I did; concluding that changes in situational interest can lead to changes in reading motivation within an instructional context. What was clear in a similar study conducted the same year, was that Guthrie, Wigfield, Humenick, Perenevich, Taboada, and Barbosa found that an increase in stimulating activities related to reading could cause an increase in motivation to read. With these studies in mind, I knew there was a correlation between motivation to read and increasing interest in reading within the classroom setting.

Chen and Wu (2006) explored the effects of using rewards to increase motivation to read in elementary students. The difference with this study was that it was conducted in Taiwan. The researchers concluded that rewards could increase motivation to read, but they insisted the most
essential way to improve motivation to read was through the use of intangible incentives rather than tangible ones. I found this interesting given the article that spiked my curiosity of the topic in the first place.

The article that sparked how I was going to conduct my intervention came when I read Edmounds and Tancock’s study published in 2003. In this case, the researchers determined whether a student would become more motivated to read if incentives were presented to them. Interestingly enough, though, these authors found no difference between the groups who received incentives and those that did not receive incentives for reading. I found this interesting, given the other articles I had previously read. I wanted to compose my own study based on these same principles and see if I would have a similar outcome, or if I could find something different. What I found was an increase in overall motivation to read within my classroom using a six-week approach to implementing incentives for daily reading within and outside of the classroom environment. My goal was to improve the way my students thought about reading, causing them to incorporate a reading habit into their lives, thus improving their overall attitude towards reading.

**Explanation of Results**

The results of this study showed that there was an increase in motivation to read over the course of a six-week period. The data suggests that when a student is given incentives, both intrinsic, as well as extrinsic, their motivation to read does increase over time. When the students in my class were given phone calls home, positive notes, choices in books, movies, stickers, and treats, their motivation to read texts did increase 21.3 percent over a six-week period of time.
In most cases, students rated questions about the feelings they had about reading as marks higher than a three, which would be the middle range. Times when answers were scored lower than the middle mark were questions dependent on how they felt others felt about their reading such as, “How do you think your friends feel when you read out loud?” These are difficult questions to answer, and subjective in nature. Also, questions that could be subject to peer pressure such as, “How do you feel when you are asked to read out loud to your friends?” This can be a difficult question to answer because the very thought of reading out loud to peers can be frightening to a student who may be shy, or view themselves as a poor reader, or not as fluent as the others, and do not wish the other students to make fun of their reading abilities. I feel that these questions, in general were more difficult for the students to answer honestly and accurately.

As I talked with the students in a one on one basis, I found that most of them enjoyed reading when it was considered a fun, or different task. Anytime I would ask them to read from their texts, in a typical classroom setting, was when they remarked that they viewed reading as boring and non-interesting. From this, I can conclude that teaching from the text books may not be the best method for attempting to foster motivation to read in elementary aged students. Finding something the student is interested in and taking time to understand their needs is essential to begin the process of building motivation to read.

**Strengths and Limitations**

This study was beneficial and accurate because I was working with my class of 19 students who had been in my class for the entire school year. This was an advantage because they were already comfortable with me, and I knew each of them very well as far as instructional practice as well as home life. Since this study took place in the Spring of the school year, I spent
the beginning of the school year focusing on making sure I knew how each child read, what level they were reading at, and what their interests were. It was essential, since the intervention was so short, that I knew ahead of time what needs my students had when it came to reading comprehension.

Since I am the sole teacher in this classroom, it worked well that there were no disruptions during the daily reading block, nor was there anyone with a different teaching style surrounding reading instruction. The students were exposed to the vocabulary of the study such as incentive, extrinsic, and intrinsic and used them appropriately themselves as a result.

One limitation that incurred was the lack of adequate time. While there was an increase in overall data, I would have liked to have been able to conduct this intervention for much longer. It would have been interesting to see what kinds of gains there may have been had this process been in place from the beginning of the school year, rather than at the conclusion of the academic year. Since most students revealed that they enjoyed reading at home when they had the choice of reading material, that could have been a goal of mine to ensure they were taking books home to read that they enjoyed, not being left to read books that were of no interest to them because they were what was available at home.

Another limitation was the timing of the day for reading. A typical day consists of reading right away in the morning, but it is interrupted by specials such as Art, Music, and Physical Education. I found that some students would want to read a book, but as soon as they were able to focus on the text and found it exciting, it was time to leave reading behind to go to another class. Had the reading block been a full hour of time, I think the students would have
had more of an opportunity to delve into a book and really enjoy the process without being rushed, or interrupted.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

Looking into the future, I would recommend that anyone who decides to research the effects of motivation to read study the various research that has been conducted over the years. There are a lot of studies that may lean towards negative connotations about using rewards to improve motivation, but there are also quite a few that suggest rewards are the best method to hook a child into becoming more motivated to read.

The study of motivation would benefit from being conducted over a longer course of time, perhaps a whole school year. There needs to be some kind of control group in which the researcher can compare the data to that of the intervention group. Also, it would be helpful to see how this data could be applied and examined through all the grades at the elementary level. Does motivation to read increase with age and intelligence, or does motivation to read decrease as instruction and curriculum become more intense? Another option would be to include a parent survey asking about reading in the home both as adults and students. Does family life interfere with motivation to read within the classroom? Some other questions may be of importance in a future study as well. Does a positive relationship with the educator affect motivation to read? Does a negative relationship? Do relationships within the classroom affect a student’s motivation to read? These are all factors to be considered before future research can take place.

The general common conclusion that I found, as well as the common theme throughout the articles I have read concerning the topic of motivation to read, is that each child needs to be
encouraged to read and encouraged to succeed. Finding the right way to instruct a student to read is the essential factor in facilitating the creation of students who love to read.
References


Appendix A

Reading Attitude Inventory
School District Literacy Task Force

Reading Attitude Inventory
Paul Campbell

1. How do you feel when your teacher reads a story out loud?

2. How do you feel when someone gives you a book for a present?

3. How do you feel about reading books for fun at home?
4. How do you feel when you are asked to read out loud to your group?

5. How do you feel when you are asked to read out loud to the teacher?

6. How do you feel when you come to a new word while reading?
7. How do you feel when it is time to do your worksheet?

8. How do you feel about going to school?

9. How do you feel about how well you can read?

10. How do you think your friends feel about reading?
11. How do you think your teacher feels when you read?

12. How do you think your friends feel when you read out loud?

13. How do you feel about the reading group you are in?

14. How do you think you’ll feel about reading when you’re older?