

# Reading motivation

## In a nutshell

- Reading motivation contributes to the amount of reading during free time which, in turn, promotes reading performance.
- Children are most motivated to learn when teachers' feedback gives support to their need to feel competent and autonomous as well as related to others.
- Classrooms that promote children's autonomy to initiate reading tasks and complete them, thus supporting their competence belief, without applying strict performance criteria or comparing to other students, have been shown to strengthen the children's intrinsic motivation at school.
- In child-centered classrooms, teachers assist and facilitate children's learning by providing them with both guidance and opportunities to direct their own exploration of objects and academic topics, making teaching akin to a partnership between the teacher and the children.

Although reading skills development is affected by different cognitive antecedents, such as letter knowledge and phonological awareness, evidence also suggests that a high interest in reading promotes later reading performance and improvement in reading skills<sup>1</sup>Ecalte, J., Magnan, A., & Gibert, F. (2006). Class size effects on literacy skills and literacy interest in first grade: A large-scale investigation. *Journal of School Psychology*, 44, 191-209.. Children's motivation in

reading has been reported to contribute to their reading activity and the amount of reading at free time which, in turn, promote their reading performance<sup>2</sup>Stanovich, K. E. (1986). Matthew effects in reading: Some consequences of individual differences in the acquisition of literacy. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 21, 360-407.. Previous studies have shown strong link between the amount of leisure reading and reading skills<sup>3</sup>Schiefele, U., Schaffner, E., Moller, J., & Wigfield, A. (2012). Dimensions of reading motivation and their relation to reading behavior and competence. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 47, 427–463.: those who read a lot are better readers than those who are reading less. For example, Torppa et.al<sup>4</sup>Torppa, M., Niemi, P., Vasalampi, K., Lerkkanen, M.-K., Tolvanen, A., Poikkeus, A.-M. (2020). Leisure Reading (But Not Any Kind) and Reading Comprehension Support Each Other—A Longitudinal Study Across Grades 1 and 9. *Child Development*, 91, 876-900. showed that in early grades poorer comprehension and fluency predicted less leisure reading, and in later grades more frequent leisure reading, particularly of books, predicted better reading comprehension.

Motivation directs students' behaviors and efforts in learning situations<sup>5</sup>Schiefele, U., Schaffner, E., Moller, J., & Wigfield, A. (2012). Dimensions of reading motivation and their relation to reading behavior and competence. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 47, 427–463. which then have a positive effect on achievement. According to self-determination theory<sup>6</sup>Schiefele, U., Schaffner, E., Moller, J., & Wigfield, A. (2012) Dimensions of reading motivation and their relation to reading behavior and competence. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 47, 427–463. children are most motivated to learn when teachers' feedback support their need to feel competent and autonomous as well as related to others. Motivation to act can come from within an individual (intrinsic motivation), such as interesting, challenging, and joyful activities that provide

internal satisfaction. For example, classroom that promote children's autonomy to initiate reading tasks and complete them supporting their competence belief, without applying strict performance criteria or comparing to other student, have been shown to strengthen the children's intrinsic motivation at school<sup>7</sup>Guay, F., Boggiano, A. K., & Vallerand, R. J. (2001). Autonomy support, intrinsic motivation, and perceived competence. Conceptual and empirical linkages. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 27, 643–650.. Alternatively, it can come from something external (extrinsic motivation), such as a reward system in a classroom, which is not related to the learning of the reading skill itself<sup>8</sup>Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behaviour*. New York: Plenum.. While intrinsic motivation involves student's thoughts, ability beliefs, and emotions in learning situations, extrinsic motivation often works only as long as the external reward is available, although appropriate extrinsic motivation can also be beneficial and support the students' engagement in learning situations and to begin the task.

The teaching practices play a role in the various aspects of motivation<sup>9</sup>Wigfield, A., Eccles, J. S., & Pintrich, P. R. (1996). Development between the ages of 11 and 25. In D. C. Berliner & R. C. Calfee (Eds.), *Handbook of educational psychology* (pp. 148–185). New York: Macmillan.. In child-centered classrooms, teachers assist and facilitate children's learning by providing them with both guidance and opportunities to direct their own exploration of objects and academic topics, making teaching akin to a partnership between the teacher and the children<sup>10</sup>Stipek, D., & Byler, P. (2004). The early childhood classroom observation measure. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 19, 375–397.. Child-centered classrooms are characterized by a shared responsibility for both management and learning, active teacher support for the children's learning efforts and social skills, and teaching

practices that are sensitive to children's needs and interests which further is associated on motivation to read<sup>11</sup>Lerkkanen, M.-K., Kiuru, N., Pakarinen, E., Viljaranta, J., Poikkeus, A.-M., Rasku-Puttonen, H., Siekkinen, M., & Nurmi, J.-E. (2012). The role of teaching practices in the development of children's interest in reading and mathematics in kindergarten. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 37, 266-279..

## References

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