

## To What Extent do Reading Strategies have an Impact on Students' Reading Motivations?

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**Abstract** This study investigates the relationship between employing extrinsic reading motivations and the impact they have on students' intrinsic reading motivations. Within this study, two rewarding motivations were introduced in a secondary school over a period of three months where in the final month there were no rewards implemented. This study particularly focused on Year Seven students and how their motivations to read have been influenced by the set rewards or motivations employed. Evidently, through the student questionnaires and teacher interviews, these motivations may not have the same effect on students' motivations to read on a long-term basis as when the motivations were taken away, some students were de-motivated. Interestingly, both teachers and students seem to play a role in reading for pleasure. Using teachers to support reading through promoting and encouraging it in their classroom had its benefits, yet it is down to the individual student to choose to work towards the rewards in place by reading. There is evidence that employing these motivations does play a part in motivating students intrinsically to read, however only to a short-term degree as when the motivations had been removed, the students' intrinsic motivation to read declined slightly. Throughout this study, it was clear that these motivations had some impact on encouraging students to read even when these motivations were taken away. This study also provides scope for further, long-term study.

**Keywords:** Education; Literacy; Practitioner Research; Reading

### INTRODUCTION

The National Literacy Trust's Manifesto for Literacy (2009) states that within England, 1.7 million adults have an expected literacy level of an eleven-year-old; with this in mind, the government introduced a teaching framework to help teach and improve reading during primary education. This meant that there was a renewed focus upon reading during primary education; however, there is a need for secondary schools to continue to pay greater attention to developing the reading abilities of students (Lewis 2001). Without sufficient reading ability, adults will struggle to live in a world with a necessity to read, therefore it is vitally important that adolescents' reading instruction should be continually implemented in secondary schools and not lost in their transition from their primary education.

Reading should be continually instructed to suit the curriculum, but it is also important that reading for pleasure should be valued too. According to Clark (2006, p.5) 'reading for pleasure refers to reading that we do of our own free will anticipating the satisfaction that we will get from the act of reading'. It can be quite arduous to teach students to read for pleasure, especially if they do not enjoy it or have

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never seen the need to. Most people can be forced to read, but once a student does not need to read just to pass an examination their reading motivation may substantially decrease. However, Nell (1988) suggests that reading for pleasure allows people to experience other worlds. Despite this source being quite outdated, it is important for people to be subjected to other worlds as these worlds can be interpreted in a variety of ways. Exploring these other worlds are extremely beneficial to students as it can help shape their knowledge of worlds they have never come across before, learn new key words and potentially enhance their own creativity. Likewise, others have described reading for pleasure as an interpretive activity which is shaped by the reader's expectations and experiences (Clark, 2006). Some students will naturally enjoy reading, thus will be motivated to do so. Nevertheless, research has highlighted that teaching reading for pleasure can be motivated through the use of rewards. For instance, Clark (2006) implemented some 'reading-targeted rewards', such as books or book vouchers to try and encourage students to read more. Students enjoyed receiving the rewards but it was unclear whether it meant they enjoyed reading more. However, when the students were reading more, their reading attainment improved slightly.

Clarke (2006) states that there are benefits to reading for pleasure such as: text comprehension and grammar, positive reading attitudes, pleasure in reading in later life and increased general knowledge. Likewise, Clark and De Zoysa (2011) suggests that there is a link between children who read at or above the expected level for their age as they seem to hold more positive attitudes towards reading than children who do not.

#### **PURPOSE AND RESEARCH AIMS**

Taking into account the research into rewards to promote reading for pleasure, the purpose of this study is to examine the extent that "reading strategies" impact on students' reading motivations in a secondary school, including free book offers and a 'Reading Challenge' competition, as well as a period in which no motivations are active. The aim of this study is to examine the effect of these rewarding motivations on students' intrinsic motivations to read whilst these are in place and when they are taken away, as well as considering the long-term effects on students' intrinsic motivation to read. Extrinsic motivation refers to behaviour that is driven by external rewards such as money, fame, grades, and praise. This type of motivation arises from outside the individual, as opposed to intrinsic motivation which refers to behaviour that is driven by internal rewards.

This study focuses on a population of 70 Year Seven pupils within the school and centres predominantly on how extrinsic reading motivations impact on students' intrinsic motivations. There are three English teachers for Year Seven. The questionnaires were given to the 70 students to complete, whilst the three English teachers were all interviewed. It was anticipated that most of the students would agree to complete the questionnaire and that the three English teachers would consent to be interviewed.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. To what extent do the two extrinsic motivation strategies have an impact on intrinsic reading motivations?
2. How might teachers' influences impact on students' intrinsic reading motivations?
3. Did the extrinsic reading motivations have a long-term effect on students' intrinsic motivations to read?

### THE RESEARCH STUDY

It is important to note here all participants were given a consent form to sign before this study to ensure that full consent is given to make sure that this study follows ethical guidelines (see Appendix 1, available in the online version of this article). This study was conducted across a three-month period with a different extrinsic motivation being implemented each month.

Before the three-month study, all Year Seven students were issued with a reading log which allowed both students and teachers to keep track of their reading progress. Students were informed of how to use the log booklets over the three-month period. These log booklets allowed students to complete a log each time they read, but also to complete book reviews after they had finished a book. Here it is important to mention that the reading logs were not used as data in the study. Even though they could have offered some qualitative data to measure against the other data collected to increase the reliability of results in terms of the impact on the number of books read during each month. However, as the reading logs had only recently been introduced prior to this study, it felt like students were not too familiar with their use, making it problematic for teachers to judge how honestly reflective these logs were. With this in mind, using the reading logs as a reliable data resource could have impacted negatively on the validity and reliability of the results.

In the first month, with the help from the library, one free book was offered to all Year Seven students, for which they could choose from a variety of genres. Students were reminded at this point to record their reading progress whilst reading their chosen book. Once they had finished reading their first book, they could then go and get a new book and so on. There was no limit to the number of free books students could get during the month. The extrinsic motivation during this month was the number of free books students would gain by the end of the motivation.

During the second month, the 'Reading Challenge' competition was introduced. The 'Reading Challenge' was introduced as a reading-related competition for students. During this month, students recorded their reading progress in these booklets and they gained five points per reading log and 25 points per book review in their log booklets. Students were rewarded with certificates when they achieved a certain number of points. Students were also informed that at the end of the month, there were prizes for the top 10 students in the year – these prizes were reading-related rewards. Each week, the top-ten readers were published on the 'Reading Challenge' board so that the Year Seven students could track their progress in relation to their peers. Prizes for first, second and third place were Amazon Kindle Fires and prizes for fourth to tenth places were Amazon vouchers.

During the third month, there were no extrinsic motivations present. However, students were still informed to complete their logs and book reviews and to continue to read.

This study focused on the relationship between using extrinsic rewards and the impact on students' intrinsic motivation to read for pleasure, but it is important to consider that extrinsic motivations may have short-term effects as it is questionable whether students would still continue reading for pleasure when these extrinsic rewards were removed.

Students' reading ages were not considered for this study. From previous experience, the reading ages of students are not exactly reflective as they may have been predicted incorrectly during the transition from primary to secondary or may be wrongly represented in reading tests. Therefore, this would have been another dependent variable to consider throughout the study as a before and after reading age measurement may not have been entirely reliable for the reasons previously stated. As this study was short-term over a three-month-period it did not seem fit to include this variable. This study focused predominantly on the age group of Year Seven students, however if a similar study was conducted in the future on a more long-term basis then reading ages could be taken into account.

### RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

Prior to the study, teachers were informed that there would be a three-month trial of motivations to encourage Year Seven students to read. Teachers were not informed in advance of what the motivations were. Likewise, the Year Seven students were only introduced to the extrinsic motivation on a month-by-month basis with the hope that this would increase validity in the study, thus leading to more reliable results as no prior preparation could be made by either teachers or students.

Once the three-month study had finished students were given a questionnaire to complete in a classroom to ensure that they were all handed back in. Students were informed that it was anonymous, in the hope that they would answer honestly. All students completed the same questionnaire and were given as much time as they needed to ensure that they were not filled out hurriedly (Cohen, 2007) leading to more reliable and valid results.

Similarly, the three teachers were interviewed after the study and all were asked the same questions to ensure validity in the data collection method and in turn, gain reliable results. Before the interview was conducted, the interviewer explained the purpose of the interview, the format, confidentiality and asked the interviewee if they had any concerns before starting. This pre-discussion ensured that the interviewee still gave consent to be interviewed and understood why they were being interviewed, thereby ensuring that the interview could attain as accurate results as possible. As the triangulation method has been used in this study, the results from the student questionnaire were compared and contrasted with the three teacher interviews. This should increase the validity of this study, especially if the student questionnaire results correspond to those of the teacher interview results to hopefully balance out the potential weaknesses in both methods of data collection (Gray, 2004).

### ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Firstly, in any study it is important to ensure that ethical implications are considered, otherwise it could result in penalties and liabilities for the individual or institutions involved (Cohen, 2007, p.71). Research is a voluntary activity and 'most social research necessitates obtaining the consent and cooperation of subjects' (*ibid.*, p.52); as such, a consent form was completed by all participants (see Appendix 1, available in the online version of this article). The privacy and psychological wellbeing of participants is paramount, therefore all research was anonymised so that participants as well as the

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school involved remained anonymous throughout. Any data collected in this study was kept anonymous to abide by safeguarding and ethical considerations. As this study took place in an educational establishment it was also imperative to abide by the school's data protection policy.

During the interview, asking questions about teachers' practice needed to be done sensitively as this study did not intentionally want to add more pressure to teachers if they feel like they are not doing something they should be. It also needed to be expressed to teachers that these are possible practices for teachers to try, not a list of things they should be doing. On this note, it was also crucial that the researcher did not judge existing practice but improved their understanding of practice along with the situation in which the practice takes place (Carr, 2003). This needs to be considered when analysing the results as the participants, particularly the teachers, should not be judged or criticised about their pedagogy but it should be used as a way of improving practice within the school.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This research study has taken into account factors in and beyond the scope of a conducted literature review to determine an interesting research study to help encourage reading motivations during the transition from Primary to Secondary school. The chosen education establishment already encourages reading by making it high-profile but it will be interesting to implement some extrinsic strategies to study the impact on students' intrinsic reading motivations.

This study implemented some extrinsic motivations to give students a desired outcome to achieve a reading-related reward over a two-month period, followed by no rewards for one month and consider the impact these have on students' intrinsic motivations to read.

Additionally, the 'triangulation method' (Gray, 2004) was used to measure the independent and dependent variables. Both the qualitative and quantitative data were analysed alongside one another as Jick (1979) states that they should be perceived as complementary rather than rival. Therefore, using the triangulation method was beneficial as it combines qualitative and quantitative methods to help "balance out any of the potential weaknesses in each data collection method" (Gray, 2004, p.24) to try and maintain high-levels of reliability and validity.

The use of multiple methods is beneficial as it helps build confidence and validity in the study if the results of one method correspond to those of another. The independent variable will be the intrinsic motivation of students, whereas the dependent variable will be the extrinsic motivation that is put into action. It was important to consider that the independent variable may change depending on other external factors, such as commitments outside of school, therefore the dependent variable may affect students differently. There will be two extrinsic motivations being employed over a three-month period, with the motivation differing each month: 1) free books and 2) 'Reading Challenge', followed by a third month with no extrinsic motivations.

After the study, Year Seven students completed a questionnaire and teachers were interviewed with the research questions as a focus for both methods of data collection:

- To what extent do the two extrinsic motivation strategies have an impact on intrinsic reading motivations?
- How might teachers' influences impact on students' intrinsic reading motivations?

- Did the extrinsic reading motivations have a long-term effect on students' intrinsic motivations to read?

## METHODS FOR DATA COLLECTION

### *Student Questionnaire*

The first method of data collection was a questionnaire. Questionnaires can be useful to elicit the impact of the extrinsic motivations on Year Seven students to gain an insight into how students perceive the impact of extrinsic motivations on their own motivation for reading with a balanced variety of open and closed questions. Questionnaires are reliable because they are 'anonymous' thus, students may feel more comfortable answering honestly, resulting in more reliable data. Questionnaires are also easy and quick to complete, provide direct responses and the information is quantifiable. On the other hand, it needs to be considered 'whether respondents who complete questionnaires do so accurately, honestly and correctly' (Cohen, 2007, p.157) as some are 'often filled in hurriedly' (*ibid.*, p.158). Thus, the question of reliability can be raised as some students may rush filling it in or copy their peers to just finish it so not actually think about the questions being asked. The results of questionnaires can usually be quickly and easily quantified by the researcher and these results can be used to compare and contrast other research and to measure change.

Considering all aspects of using questionnaires, this study used questionnaires to allow students to express their opinions on the use of extrinsic motivations (see Appendix 2, available in the online version of this article). There was a balance of open- and closed-ended questions to allow for both qualitative and quantitative data to complement one another. The questionnaire consisted of 17 questions – 9 closed-ended questions and 8 open-ended questions. For instance, the closed-ended questions used the 5-point-likert-scale to establish some quantitative data to see how often students read and how often extrinsic motivations are used in their lessons or by their teachers. Along with questions to see when motivations are used in the classroom and how they are used. The 5-point scale was used as it normally provides sufficient discrimination among levels of agreement as they typically balance favourable and unfavourable statements (Goodwin, 2009, p.477). The range of questions should allow for a measure of how well integrated the extrinsic motivations are in the classroom. Open-ended questions were used to explore students' opinions on: the benefits of extrinsic motivations; their favourite motivation; how their own motivation to read differs when these extrinsic motivations are in place as well as when they are absent, and the use of these motivations in and outside of the classroom. Questions have been carefully worded so as to avoid leading questions or judgemental language (Cohen & Manion, 1989). Furthermore, the questionnaires were anonymous and were issued to be completed in a room to ensure that they all get handed back in to not affect the reliability of results.

### *Teacher Interview*

Teacher interviews were also used in this study on three Year Seven English teachers. To ensure that the interviews were reliable it was important to make sure that they were structured and the same questions were asked to each respondent (Cohen & Manion, 1989). However, interviews can be time-consuming as the researcher has to think of the questions, conduct the interview and interpret the responses. Also, some interviewees may 'feel compelled to present opinions they feel will be acceptable to the interviewer' (Cohen & Manion 1989, p.319). There can be biases of the interviewer present as the questions could influence the interviewee to respond in a particular manner, along with the fact that the interviewer is also scribing the responses, which may affect reliability.

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The purpose of the teacher interviews was to explore the relationship between teachers' perceptions of reading and their impact on increasing students' reading motivations, their perceptions on the extrinsic motivations, how they implemented them and their thoughts on the effect on students' intrinsic motivations.

This interview followed a semi-structured format with pre-determined open questions and sub-questions (see Appendix 3, available in the online version of this article). This format allowed the interviewee the freedom to express their interpretations whilst still allowing for narrowing down the specific issues identified in advance. The interviewees did not have the questions in advance as the reliability of the study could have been affected if the teachers could have prepared their responses to say what they believe the interviewer wants to hear. The respondents, however, were informed that they will be interviewed on reading motivations so that they can reflect on this topic before the interview took place. The preliminary interview schedule in the appendix material (available online) highlights the form the interview took along with indicating the pre-determined topics. The teachers' views were measured with regard to which extrinsic motivations were successful and why they thought this. The interview also allowed scope for contemplation of the unsuccessful methods of extrinsic motivations and permitted the interviewee to explore why this may have been. To help ensure reliable results, it is important for the respondent to have reflected on these issues themselves before the interview.

With all of this in mind, there could be an issue of power in an interview situation. In this particular study, the interviewer and the interviewee were colleagues. Also, the discussion of English subject topics could be a charged area for the interviewees as they will be partially experts in the areas of questioning. Despite the possible bias, these factors cannot be changed; nevertheless, they need to be acknowledged and the results need to be interpreted with awareness of this. The interviews were transcribed by hand by the interviewer while the interview was taking place. At the end of the interview, the interviewee could read what was written to ensure that they agreed with it.

## DATA ANALYSIS

The students responding to the questionnaire were all from the same school and of the same age. The responses to the open-ended questions on the student questionnaire and teacher interviews were analysed using a thematic approach to gain qualitative data in relation to the research questions. The anticipated themes to identify will be:

- The relationship between the extrinsic motivation strategies on intrinsic motivations – both from students and teachers.
- How the teachers' perceptions on reading motivations affect students' intrinsic motivations.
- The long-term effect of these extrinsic motivations on students' intrinsic motivations to read.

The quantitative data from the student questionnaire and teacher interviews were gathered from the scaled-questions in order to be analysed for the relationship between the two extrinsic motivations and the effect they had on students' motivations to read.

Additionally, it is important to note that extrinsic motivations may only have a short-term effect as when they are no longer present students may choose not to read. Therefore, it is interesting to analyse if and how students' intrinsic motivation changed during the third month when there were no extrinsic motivations present.

Moreover, both the qualitative and quantitative data were measured on a complementary level (Jick, 1979) to present the correlation between the extrinsic motivations and students' intrinsic motivations to read along with the teacher motivations and impact on intrinsic motivations.

## FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

In terms of collecting data and documenting the findings, a range of techniques were used to gain the best possible picture of the effects of the intervention on the pupils. The quantitative results of the student questionnaire could be seen more as a self-reflection of how the students felt towards the extrinsic motivations they were introduced to. When looking at the results it is important to consider the bias they will naturally portray as it must be considered whether students and teachers have responded with what they believe to be the correct or desired answer (Cohen, 2007). The qualitative data from the questionnaire thematically correlates to the qualitative data from the teacher interviews. Yet, it is important to note that there were 70 students to complete the questionnaire, yet only three English teachers. Thus, considerations need to be sought for the reliability and validity of the interview results in comparison with the questionnaire results; so the triangulation method was used a way of improving the authenticity of the research.

### *Findings in the Quantitative Data*

**Table 1:** Results from the closed-ended questions in the questionnaire. The responses for each question are shown as percentages of the responses from 70 students.

Response	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
<b>1 = not at all</b>	21%	10%	0%	0%	10%	0%	0%	8%
<b>2 = rarely</b>	29%	10%	0%	6%	17%	0%	17%	19%
<b>3 = occasionally</b>	36%	47%	6%	9%	37%	14%	33%	33%
<b>4 = mostly</b>	0%	12%	56%	38%	19%	19%	37%	30%
<b>5 = all of the time</b>	14%	21%	38%	47%	17%	67%	13%	10%

The questions in the questionnaire were as follows:

1. Before the last three months, to what extent did you feel motivated to read?
2. When the free books were on offer, to what extent did this make you read more often?
3. When there were reading related prizes available for reading during the Reading Challenge, to what extent did this make you read more often?
4. Whilst in the classroom, how much did your teachers encourage you to read?
5. Whilst outside the classroom, how much did your teachers encourage you to read?
6. How often were these motivations used in the classroom?
7. Across your weekly four English lessons, were these motivations used in every lesson?

8. Once these two motivations had stopped, to what extent did you stay motivated to read?

Table 1 shows the distribution of responses regarding students' perceptions on the reading motivations in place over the three-month period (see questionnaire in Appendix 3, available in the online version of this article). The results clearly indicate that after the three-month period of extrinsic motivations, more responses were appearing at the 4-5 end of the scale in the questionnaire. This makes it clear that there was at least some impact on the students' reading motivations. To ensure the reliability of these results, it is important to examine the correlations between the teacher interviews and the questionnaire results. It is also important to note that there could be other factors contributing to this increase in motivation, such as teacher influence, the class the student was in as well as their own personal intrinsic motivation (which may differ between students). Whilst looking at the results for question one, which was questioning students on their incentives to read prior to the extrinsic motivations; it is clear that around 15% of students were motivated to read 'all of the time' beforehand. In spite of this, when looking at the results for question two, which was to explore how the free-book-swap motivation worked, the results increased by nearly half, as around 20% of students claimed that this made them read 'all of the time'. In comparison, after introducing the Reading Challenge, the percentage of students reading 'all of the time' increased to 40% which was an increase of 20 percentage points from prior to the implementation of these extrinsic motivations. This said, it is interesting to note that once the motivations had stopped (question eight), the percentage of students who were motivated to read 'all of the time' fell to only 10%, which was less than before the study. These quantitative results clearly indicate that the two extrinsic motivations may have had some impact on increasing students' intrinsic motivations to read, however it is important to triangulate this quantitative data with those results from the qualitative data.

### ***Findings in the Qualitative Data***

The qualitative data from both the student questionnaires and teacher interviews follows a thematic correlation which links to the research questions. The qualitative data expresses links between both students' opinions on the impact of these extrinsic motivations on their intrinsic reading motivations along with teachers' opinions too. Most of the opinions between the students and teachers were alike in their responses. These responses further supported the literature previously reviewed. The qualitative data allows for a greater insight into the impact of the extrinsic motivations in place.

From triangulating the qualitative data alongside the quantitative data, there were three common themes established:

- The end outcomes of reading i.e. types of rewards
- Impact of teachers on students' intrinsic motivations
- Dearth of long-term effects

### **ANALYSIS OF THE DATA**

The research findings relate to the research questions following a general assessment of the questionnaire and interview results highlighting some overarching themes. These conclusions were drawn when it was triangulated across more than one of the interviews and the questionnaires, along

with being compared with current literature on the extrinsic motivations in order to attain a greater potential for reliability and validity.

### ***The End Outcomes of Reading i.e. Types of Rewards***

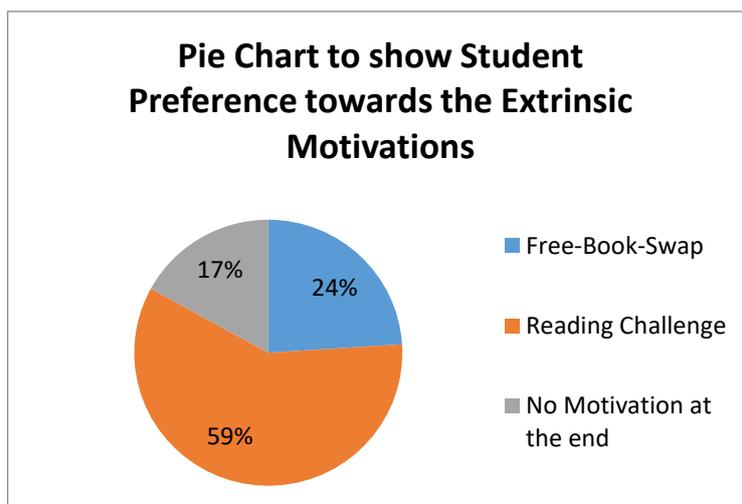
Firstly, it became quite clear that most of the students and teachers felt quite positive towards having reward in place to encourage students to read. The feelings of the teachers towards having extrinsic motivations in place to try and increase students' intrinsic motivations to read were quite optimistic:

*"I think that students became much more motivated to read when there was a reward at the end of it. Not every student will appreciate a book case of free books, so I think the rewards were a more successful manner of increasing motivations" – Teacher 01.*

This said, it would be open to debate whether this applies to all of the students in Year Seven as it would be difficult to determine whether this is the case for every student in the year group, considering that the quantitative data suggests that only 30% of students felt motivated to read 'mostly' or 'all of the time' when the free-book-swap was offered. Similarly, another teacher expressed:

*"I have never seen some of the students this motivated to read books before, some of the students in my class were reading on a weekly basis – this is something which I have struggled to enthuse before" – Teacher 02.*

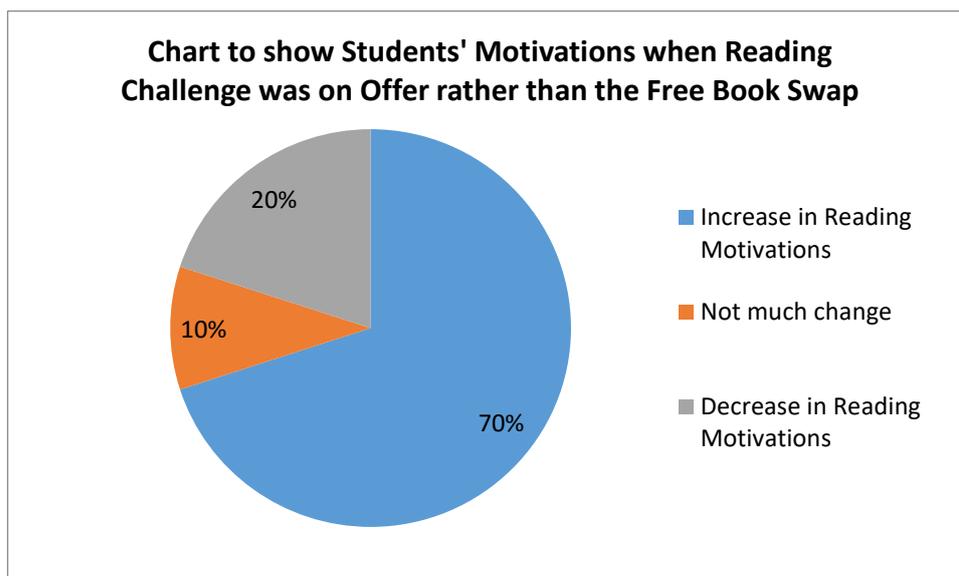
This is a point of view that is supported by Marinak (1997) who argued that the appropriate use of incentives lead learners to engage in reading. This opinion also supports Clark (2006) who implemented reading-related rewards to try and increase the intrinsic motivations of students to read more. Evidently, the student questionnaire responses correlate to that of the responses from the teachers. Quantitatively, it was evident that students' motivations to read increased due to at least one, if not both, of the motivations being put into place. Prior to these motivations, only 15% of the year felt motivated to read either 'most' or 'all of the time'. When the free-book-swap was introduced this figure amplified to 30% of the year feeling more motivated to read. Additionally, when the Reading Challenge was implemented this figure magnified to 95% of the year group feeling determined to read 'most' or 'all of the time'. Whether a little increase or a greater increase occurred it is clear that the motivations may have had some impact on students' intrinsic reading motivations.



**Figure 1:** Student preference towards the three extrinsic motivations in play.

Figure 1 identifies the number of student responses to question nine, which asks them to determine which of the extrinsic motivations increased their motivation to read more. It is clear that the majority of students preferred the Reading Challenge to the free-book-swap and no motivations at all. Nevertheless, it is interesting that 17% of students still felt motivated to read with the absence of the extrinsic motivations. This could be due to many reasons as these particular students could be naturally intrinsically keen and motivated readers, thus the extrinsic motivations might not have much impact on their motivation to read. Alternatively, it could be argued that of these 12 students, some of them may not have been naturally enthused readers, but after being motivated to read they have found a new value to reading. There could be many factors behind contributing to the students reading motivations, so it is hard to determine the true reason behind this result.

Similarly, through analysing the qualitative data the bar chart below portrays that there was a more significant increase in students' intrinsic motivations when the Reading Challenge was on offer rather than the free book swap:



**Figure 2:** Students' motivations when the Reading Challenge was on offer compared to the free-book-swap.

Figure 2 suggests that more than half of the students' motivations increased when the Reading Challenge was in play, rather than the free book swap. Likewise, it was evidently clear that most students felt that gaining a reward had more of an impact than just swapping free books:

*"I never got a big reward like the Kindles that were on offer but I did win some bookmarks and book vouchers – which was great as I don't really like reading because I struggle with it sometimes so having lots of free books would have put me off reading more than doing more of it, so that's why I liked the reading rewards"* – Student 43.

This further supports Strickland (2004) who argued that students can be strongly influenced by their previous performance. Thus, if students are being rewarded for their accomplishments, they may believe that they can continue to achieve more of these rewards, in turn increasing their intrinsic motivations to read. Similarly, Marinak (1997) argued that if appropriate incentives are offered for reading performance it can enhance intrinsic motivation to read. Some of the teachers' interview responses corresponded with the concept of the Reading Challenge rewards being the more successful manner of raising students' intrinsic motivations:

*"One of the most gratifying elements of the Reading Challenge was witnessing the new-found value of reading across the year group, but more so it was lovely seeing students discussing what they had spent their vouchers on"* – Teacher 03.

It could be argued that with either of the motivations in place, the opportunity to keep a free book or earn a reward meant that students were completing the reading because they felt like there was a reason behind doing so as they expected to gain something from it. Therefore, implementation of the Reading Challenge could be an effective strategy to motivate students to read more.

In terms of the answering the first and third research questions, it can be argued that the implementation of these rewards did have an impact on students' intrinsic motivations with a more significant impact highlighted from instigating the Reading Challenge more so than the free-book-swap. Both students and teachers felt that reading-related rewards were more successful in increasing students' motivations to read. However, it must be taken into account that this study can only determine the short-term effects of these extrinsic motivations; it would be interesting to study the long-term effects of implementing these extrinsic motivations in a school.

### ***Impact of Teachers on Students' Intrinsic Motivations***

Secondly, it became apparent that teachers had quite a substantial effect on influencing students to read. It is noteworthy that the three teachers all had different opinions on what reading means to them:

*"To me, reading is a way of escapism – discovering new worlds, new characters and letting my imagination run wild"* – Teacher 01.

*"Reading is a way of developing my own vocabulary, writing and understanding deeper metaphorical meanings"* – Teacher 02.

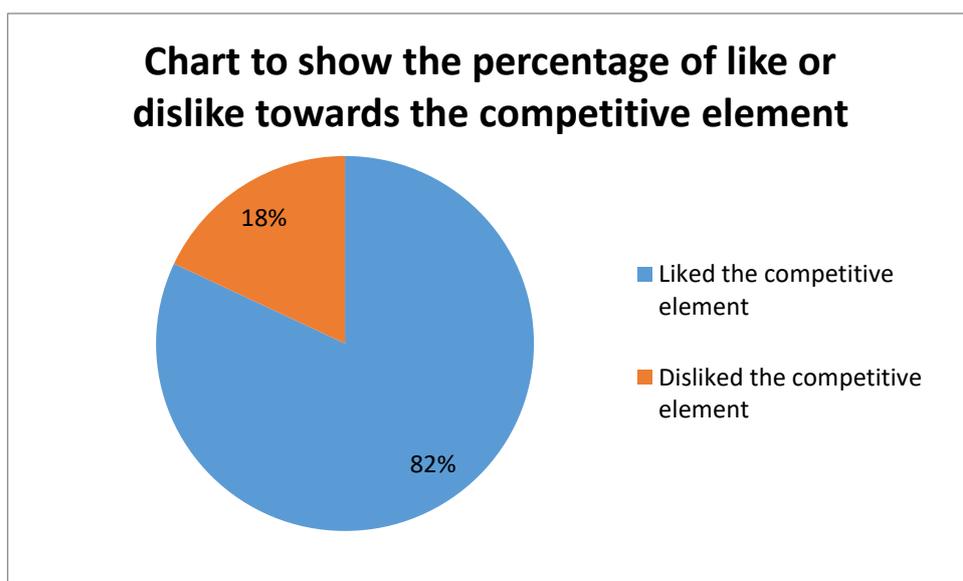
*"Reading is what you make it out to be – there is no definitive answer"* – Teacher 03.

These three responses are thought-provoking as they all see reading in a different light. It could be interesting to note here that these varying perceptions of reading could impact their influence on students' motivations for reading. Thus, it could be argued that the teachers in this study may have

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used different strategies to motivate the students in their class to read during the free-book-swap or Reading Challenge. This needs to be taken into account when testing for reliability and validity in these results. During the interview the teachers were asked how they implemented the reading motivations during the monthly periods. Linking in to the different views on reading above, the teachers' responses were quite similar:

*"I kept score of points in the Reading Challenge and free-book-swap and tallied them in front of the whole class. This way it had turned more into a competition between the students in my class to achieve the most points" – Teacher 02.*



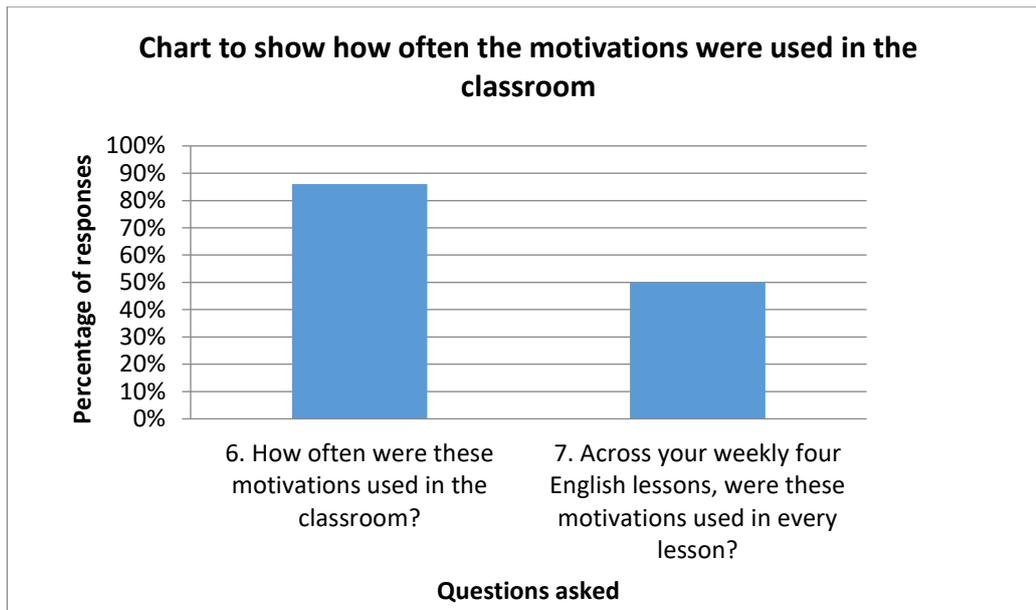
**Figure 3:** Students' like or dislike of the competitive element designed by teachers.

Figure 3 clearly shows that 82% of students enjoyed the competitive element; one particularly moving response from a student suggests that this may have also helped their progress in reading:

*"I'm not a fast reader and at one point I was doing the worst out of everyone in my class so I decided not to bother reading the next week. When my teacher noticed I wasn't reading she decided to spend time at lunch with me to do some reading aloud. I liked this as it meant I could get help with words I didn't know and my teacher also read some of my book to me. Now I feel more confident" – Student 29.*

The support from this teacher appeared to increase this particular student's motivation to read. Therefore, the teacher intervention may have helped support that student to continue to read and take part in the free-book-swap and Reading Challenge. Thus, highlights that teachers can have an influence on students motivations to read.

Evidently, teachers have played a part in motivating students to read whilst in the classroom. It is notable that the quantitative data reinforces the qualitative responses. In the questionnaire, students were asked about the motivations in the classroom.



**Figure 4:** Graph to show how often the motivations were used in the classroom.

Figure 4 conveys that 86% of students agreed that these motivations were referred to in the classroom either 'mostly' or 'all of the time'. Despite this, when students were asked if the motivations were used in every lesson they had each week, only 50% of students responded 'mostly' or 'all of the time' which could indicate that maybe they were referred to more in some lessons than others.

This idea that teachers were referring to reading and the rewards on offer could have played a considerable role in enthusing students' intrinsic motivations to read. However, the fact they were not referring to these motivations in every lesson needs to be taken into account as there is an inconsistency in terms of teacher impact; some weeks there could have been a strong level of motivation, yet in other weeks there could have been very little. This could be due to other factors depending on what had to be completed in their English lessons at the time. It is worth contemplating that all students are in control of their own motivation to read which needs to be considered when taking into account the full extent of teacher influences on students' intrinsic motivations to read.

In relation to research question two, it could be determined that teachers could play a role in the influence of students' motivations to read, however these influences would have been governed by the teacher themselves and their views towards the meaning of reading as well as catering for the needs of the individual students. Correspondingly, it is clear that all of the teachers did articulate that they thought all students were more motivated to read whilst there were extrinsic motivations on offer whether it was the free-book-swap or the Reading Challenge.

### ***Dearth of Long-Term Effects***

Aside from the positive qualitative data received about the extrinsic motivations put into effect over the two-months, it is questionable as to whether students' intrinsic motivations have been affected long-term:

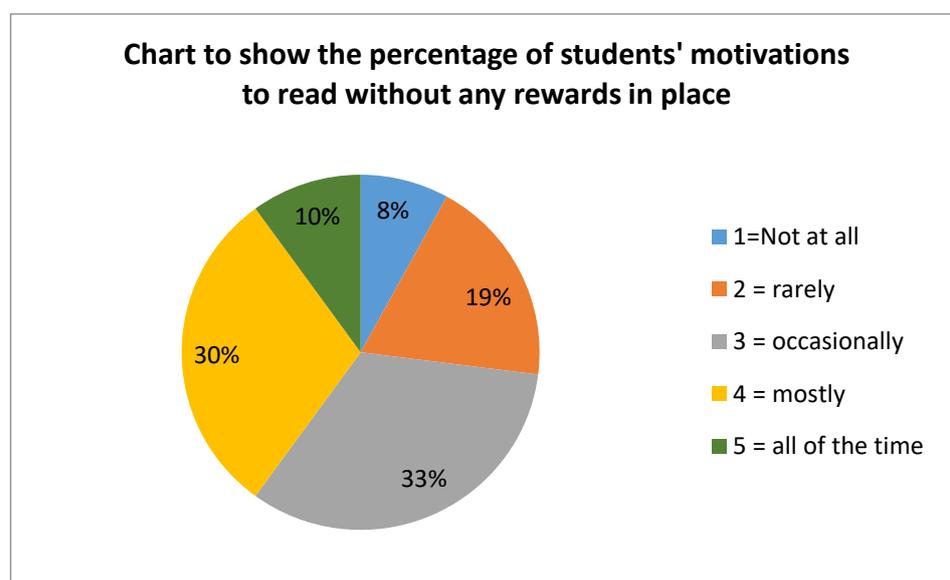
*"I enjoyed these rewards but now they're gone I'm not going to read as much because I don't see what I'll get out of it" – Student 34.*

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This response indicates that students will still read but not to the extent that they had previously been reading. The rewards in this case have been used as a desirable outcome for students to do a specific task, yet when these desired outcomes became non-existent, students' motivation to read decreased; with only 10% of students feeling motivated to read 'all of the time':

*"In all fairness, since the rewards have stopped, I haven't been motivating students to read as much as I did as I felt like I would be forcing them to read more so, than encouraging them"* – Teacher 03.

With these responses in mind, some of the teachers felt like they were forcing students to read once the rewards had been taken away, it could be argued that the long-term effects are quite small. Likewise, Metsala (1997) expressed that engaging students in reading is a continuing challenge for teachers, especially based on the responses to question eight: Once these two motivations had stopped, to what extent did you stay motivated to read?



**Figure 4:** Students' motivations to read without any rewards in place.

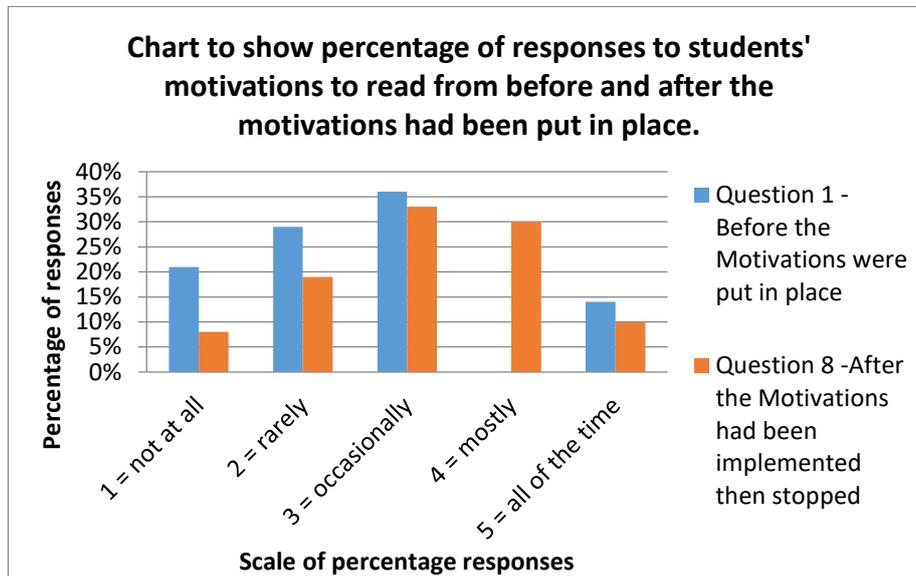
This is supported by the student questionnaire as when the extrinsic motivations were taken away 60% of students felt 'not at all', 'rarely' or 'occasionally' motivated to read. This is a huge increase in responses scaling in the 1-3 range, as when the free-book-swap and Reading Challenge were employed only 30% of students scaled 1-3. This suggests that the short-term effects of employing extrinsic motivations outweigh the long-term effects.

Furthermore, during the one-month where there were no motivations present; it is interesting to witness how this affected students' intrinsic motivations to read. The National Literacy Trust (NLT) argued that using rewards could be a good method to increase students' intrinsic motivations to read for pleasure, but they also considered the notion that they could only have short-term effects as they questioned whether students would continue to read when they were removed. The qualitative results conveyed some negative opinions towards reading when there were no motivations proposed:

*"I didn't understand the point in reading if I wasn't going to achieve anything out of it"* – Student 39.

*"I feel annoyed that there were only two-months where we could get something out of reading to then saying that there are no rewards at all"* – Student 58.

These two responses reflect the short-term impact of extrinsic motivations which correlates to that of Koestner (1999) who considered that when the rewards are taken away, students may no longer pursue the activity.



**Figure 6:** Students' motivations to read, before and after the motivations had been put in place.

Figure 6 clearly shows that motivations to read have decreased since the motivations have been taken away. However, this is not the case for all students:

*"I was never one to read for pleasure but after being enthused to read by the Reading Challenge, I actually found a genre of books I enjoy. I cannot wait to pick up the next dystopian novel!" – Student 37.*

This response slightly supports the idea that these extrinsic motivations can influence students' motivations to read more for pleasure. Even though the quantitative results showed only a minor increase in reading with no motivations, this is still a positive result.

With regards to the research questions, the data has portrayed that a range of reading strategies should be employed to appeal to a range of potential 'abilities' and 'motivations' to try for more long-term effects. To some extent these two extrinsic motivations did affect students' reading motivations, but it is debatable for how long they will continue reading with the absence of the extrinsic motivations. Nonetheless, if this study was longer, there would have been more scope to examine this factor more deeply to draw more conclusive results on the long-term effects and ultimately these results might have differed to a more significant degree.

### LIMITATIONS OF THIS RESEARCH

The results presented have indicated that the use of extrinsic motivations to increase students' motivations for reading should not be disregarded; there is certainly scope to continue to use rewards even if they may only be effective in the short-term. There were limitations to this small-scale study which should be addressed to improve future studies in this field and to help enhance the improvement of literacy in this particular school.

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To provide a greater scope for analysis it would be beneficial to implement this study at a much larger scale to confirm whether the data presented in this study would be representative of that in a larger-scale study. In such a small-scale study it is difficult to determine the extent of how these rewards can be translated into improvement in reading motivation. A larger scale study could allow for more conclusive results as to the impact of extrinsic motivations on students' reading abilities and whether these motivations may help students to progress in this area.

Furthering on from this, the two motivations in this study offered similar outcomes of reading-related rewards. It would be interesting to see how other, more contrasting motivations may affect students' motivations differently to those in this study. This could offer scope to reach a more significant conclusion over which type of motivations are more effective and possibly draw further conclusions as to why certain types are more successful than others.

On this note, it may have been useful to compare student motivations to their current reading ability level however, for this particular study it seemed appropriate to maintain student anonymity for ethical reasons. If the inclusion of the students' reading data was implemented then the questionnaire responses could be analysed against ability levels and their perceptions on the extrinsic motivations in place. This would have allowed for more numerical data to be correlated to the qualitative responses which could have offered more validity to the results of this study.

The research methods selected to use in the study were largely appropriate. Both interviews and questionnaires were deemed an effective method for data collection. Although, if this study was completed over a longer period, then it could be spread across other year groups and more teachers could have been interviewed to allow for more depth and breadth of teacher responses. This study could have benefitted from interviewing more teachers across the school to allow for a wider spectrum of results to then compare with the student questionnaire results.

With regards to the teacher interviews, it is important to note that teachers can be scrutinised in their careers. Therefore, knowing that the results would be published in a study the teachers may have articulated what they thought people would want to hear and it may not truly reflect their opinions. Nonetheless, this could be the case with any study and so the qualitative results could be questionable for reliability.

Similarly, it needs to be taken into account that the quantitative data obtained from the student questionnaire may not be reliable as students may have responded with what they believed to have been the desired response or may have copied their peers. Likewise, some of the qualitative responses in the questionnaires were not as detailed as hoped which, at times, could make it difficult to see links between answers. For that reason, it might be a consideration that there could have been too many open-ended questions for the age of the participants to answer effectively.

With both of these methods of data collection in mind, it is noteworthy that there were 70 student questionnaires being compared against three teacher interviews. When comparing this ratio of responses, reliability and validity are questionable as it would have been ideal to have more teachers to interview. However, when conducting research in a school it will mostly be more than likely that more students will participate than teachers. Therefore, if this study or a similar study was to be conducted again it might be an idea to expand the participant range to include more year groups, a variety of subjects or even a cross-over between other schools for comparison. This would hopefully provide a wider spectrum of data to compare and analyse; leading to more reliable results and conclusions.

## CONCLUSIONS

This research study could be seen as beneficially contributing to the subject field as it has offered a potential approach for increasing students' intrinsic reading motivations which hopefully will increase their reading abilities. This study has clearly identified that employing reading motivations does have an impact on students' motivations to read more, as they felt like they were attaining something beneficial. However, when there were no motivations in place, students' motivation deteriorated.

Even though this study was small-scale and took place over a three-month period, the findings stress the importance of approaching reading motivations through offering extrinsic motivations (such as a desirable reward), even if the outcome is only short-term. The results indicate that a small number of students were influenced to read with no extrinsic motivations in place, which highlights that there has been some impact on students' intrinsic motivations to continue reading. Nonetheless, this study has mainly emphasised the short-term effects more so than the long-term effects. However, to reach more conclusive results of long-term effects, a future study in this field would need to be conducted over a longer time period and to be able to assess more thoroughly the long-term effects once the extrinsic motivations have been withdrawn.

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