

What activities can be implemented in the classroom to increase students' motivation to read?

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Background/Context

As a senior at Penn State, majoring in elementary education, I was chosen to complete a yearlong internship in one of two 3rd grade classrooms at Ferguson Township Elementary School in the State College Area School District. The school is located in a rural area of the district. Our school is very collaborative; teachers and interns often work together to help one another create the best learning opportunities for all students.

The third-grade classroom that I work in has twenty-six students, fifteen boys and eleven girls. Overall, these students work well together; they are helpful to each other as well as the adults in the room. With a large class size we have a wide range of ability. Some children work at a much faster pace than others. When children are working independently, the teacher needs to have other work ready for the students who finish before others.

We have a number of students who receive help from specialist teachers for different reasons. Two students receive ESL support. One of these students, a boy, speaks fluent Chinese, the other student, a girl, speaks fluent in Spanish, both students also speak fluent English. The ESL teacher comes to the classroom two-to-three days a week and works with both children in math and writing. Three boys leave the class everyday during language arts to receive learning support. One of these boys also leaves during math to receive learning support. Three different boys receive Title I math support. The Title I teacher works with our class schedule; she is told what the math activity will be and she decides if she needs to take the boys to another classroom and work with them, or if she will stay in the classroom to support these students. Three students leave math class once a week to go to enrichment math. Of these students, two are boys (including one of the ESL students) and one is a girl.

Throughout the day, our students are given time to SOAR (Stop Often And Read); however, there is not a set time throughout the day where they read independently. We also have a book that we read aloud for ten to fifteen minutes a few times per week. During language arts, our students are generally split into four groups. These groups are based on ability. Students are able to move from one group to another, however, because the groups are based on ability, many students remain in the same group. If students have made significant improvements in their reading ability, they will be moved to a reading group that meets their needs. The reading level of a book can also determine which group students are placed. After analyzing the reading difficulty of the book, we group students accordingly. For example, if we choose a challenging book, requiring a higher reading ability, our highest ability group would have fewer students. One of our reading groups stays consistent for the students who leave for a portion of language arts to receive reading support for about forty-five minutes a day. These boys return to our classroom and receive additional instruction in reading and spelling for fifteen to twenty minutes a day. Our language arts program is integrated with social studies; the books we use for language arts are from our social studies unit. Occasionally, at the beginning of a new social studies unit, the students will study books as a whole class, instead of in groups.

Rationale

From the beginning of the school year, it became obvious to me that many of my students love reading. I would notice some students taking books to lunch, reading during indoor recess or reading after they had completed a task. Following a test, when students were given a choice to draw or read silently, I began noticing that the same group of students would choose to read and the same group of students would choose to draw. After my mentor ran running records to determine the reading level of each student, I began noticing that many of the students who choose to read during their own free time were the students who were reading above grade level. Through the observations I made of my students and being presented with information about the reading levels of my students, I began to wonder what motivates some students to read and why other students choose to participate in other activities.

In our classroom, we have four reading groups. The reading groups are based upon reading ability, however, the students are moved from one group to another depending upon the difficulty of the books chosen and individual improvements in reading ability. Even with this mobility, a few students are always in the highest group and a few students are always in the lowest group. I also noticed that there was a difference in the language arts activities assigned to the different groups. The highest group participates in activities like writing and performing a readers' theater based on a book they read. The students in the lower group complete written responses to questions more often than the highest group, but occasionally participate in activities including writing a retelling of stories they recently read.

The wonderings I had at the beginning of the school year about reading and student motivation began to change into a wondering about the activities used during reading instruction and if these activities affect the reading motivation of our students. As an avid reader myself, I

wanted to somehow help the students who don't regularly enjoy reading, develop a passion for reading.

While there are many aspects to becoming a good reader, research has shown that reading motivation plays a large role in becoming a good reader. According to Mazzoni and Gambrell (2003), one component of a successful literacy program involves a classroom where children have the ability to read and are motivated to read during their own time (p.17). Students, who read more, generally become better readers; they read more fluently and have the ability to comprehend the text that they are reading (Worthy, 2002, p. 568).

I think it is important to use a wide variety of activities and strategies throughout reading instruction that focus on the components of creating good readers. These activities and strategies focus on word study, fluency and comprehension. The activities used to address the areas of reading instruction should be engaging and meaningful for all students. By determining what activities students enjoy, a teacher can structure the language arts curriculum to be fun and exciting for all students, which will hopefully help students develop a lifelong love for reading.

Research has shown that children's reading motivation tends to decrease as children get older. The greatest decline in reading motivation occurs between first and fourth grade (Edmunds & Bauserman, 2006, p. 415). As an intern in a third grade classroom, I want to encourage an increase in reading motivation. I think it is the job of every teacher to do what they can to help students find a passion for reading.

This inquiry has provided me with information about students' likes and dislikes of the activities and strategies used during reading instruction. It is important to always stay open to new and creative ideas when teaching. Throughout the course of this inquiry, I have determined that I will not find all of the answers to the questions I have. Instead, I will need to continue

experimenting with reading activities and strategies throughout the remainder of my PDS experience and in my future classroom. I will also continue asking students for their opinions on activities and strategies I use in the classroom to determine which activities are the most meaningful and motivating.

Wonderings

Main Wondering:

- What activities and strategies can be implemented in the classroom to increase students' motivation to read?

Sub-questions:

- Do I need to adjust the activities and strategies I use according to reading ability?
 - If so, what types of activities are appropriate for each reading group?
 - Which activities are appropriate for the whole class?
- Which activities will be the most popular? The least?

Inquiry vs. Project

My inquiry is based on many wonderings that I have developed about my students' motivation to read. The focus of my inquiry is to determine which strategies and activities motivate my students to read more in and outside of the classroom. I plan to experiment with new strategies and activities and alter existing activities and strategies we currently use during language arts to improve my students' enjoyment of reading. My inquiry is not intended to fix a problem; instead, my inquiry focuses on ways I can help my students become lifelong readers through the use of activities and strategies in the classroom. While I am not sure where this

inquiry will lead me, my hope is that I will find ways to help all of my students learn to love reading.

Inquiry Plan Description

Before I settled on an inquiry topic, I was interested in making language arts instruction more exciting and engaging for my students. I had worked with two different language arts groups before I began collecting data. During the data collection portion of my project, I asked students about the activities I had used with them throughout the course of my inquiry and I also asked them about the activities I had used with them prior to the official start of my inquiry.

In December of 2006, I began working with my first language arts group. This group consisted of six students who were all advanced readers. The book that I used with this group was *Esio Trot* by Roald Dahl. Throughout the instruction of this group of students, I planned many activities that I hoped would be engaging and exciting for the group, but that would also address the different aspects of language arts instruction including word study, comprehension and fluency. To launch the book, I created a Jeopardy game using the PowerPoint program to introduce the students to new vocabulary found in the first few chapters of the book. Other word study and vocabulary activities included completing a crossword puzzle, finding descriptive words in the story, using descriptive words to rewrite sentences and completing a dialogue mini-lesson, in which the students wrote sentences on sentence strips and used colored macaroni as quotation marks and commas. Throughout the book, I had the students complete many activities that focused on their comprehension and fluency skills. These activities included writing a letter from one of the characters to another character in the story, writing a secret message in “tortoise language”, writing a diary entry from the viewpoint of the tortoise in the story and rewriting the ending of the story (for examples of all of these activities, see Appendix A1).

After completing the book *Esio Trot* by Roald Dahl with my first reading group, I began working with a different group in January of 2007 with the book *Fantastic Mr. Fox* also written by Roald Dahl. This group consisted of eleven students who read at or slightly above grade level. I took a different approach in language arts instruction with this group. I created a packet, modeled after a packet that my mentor had used with the same book in previous years. This packet consisted of different activities for each chapter in the story. Some activities required the students to complete written responses to comprehension questions while other activities required the students to draw their favorite part of a story, create an invitation to a feast held by the characters in the story and draw a map of the main character's travel (for an excerpt from the packet, see Appendix A2). I also had the students use context clues to decide which words would fit into a sentence, an activity found in the State College Area Language Arts Curriculum (State College Area School District, 2003). Examples of the context-clue sentences used with this group can be found in Appendix A2. For vocabulary, I had the students choose one to two words in each chapter that they didn't understand, we discussed the vocabulary and would use a thesaurus to find synonyms for the words. While the packet was easier for me to plan and manage, I was not happy with the way I instructed this reading group. I felt that the activities I planned for this reading group were not as exciting or engaging as the activities I had planned for my previous reading group.

In the middle of February, I began to work with my third reading group on a book *The Littles Go Exploring* by John Peterson. This group consisted of six boys who read at or slightly below grade level. Through discussions with my mentor I knew that these boys struggled in the area of fluency and comprehension, mainly when asked to answer inference questions. I wanted to plan different activities for these students to help them become better readers, but to also

motivate them to read more in and outside of the school. For this group, I also created a packet with questions, but I did not use the entire packet with the students. Instead, I used the packet to supplement the activities I planned for my students. In the area of vocabulary and word study, I played many games with the students to help them learn definitions of words as well as properties of words. I had the students complete crossword puzzles, synonym chains and word maps. The word maps are from the State College Area Language Arts Curriculum (State College Area School District, 2003). Prior to the first chapter in the story, the students were given a vocabulary word, asked to look up the definition in the dictionary and create a cartoon of the word to present to the group. I also played Bingo where I asked the students to identify words by their definition and by the category to which the words belonged. For example I would ask the students to cover words on their Bingo card that were compound words, nouns, verbs or adjectives. For examples of these word study activities, see Appendix A3. To help improve the students' comprehension abilities, I introduced an activity called an IEPC (Imagine, Elaborate, Predict, Confirm) form. I had learned about this form after reading an article in *The Reading Teacher*. The article stated "Teachers trying out the IEPC strategy for the first time reported that the students could not wait to read or hear the story or selection that followed. Many described their students as 'thoroughly engrossed in the lesson,' 'captivated to see if their predictions were correct,' and 'extremely attentive from beginning to end.' A number of teachers also reported participation from reluctant readers" (Wood & Endres, 2005). I decided to use this strategy with my reading group do to the motivational component as well as the emphasis on improving comprehension. I created an IEPC form to use for a descriptive chapter in *The Littles Go Exploring* (for an example, see Appendix A3). I explained the form to my students, and then had them close their eyes while I read two pages of a chapter aloud. After listening to the selection,

the students listed everything they had imagined, using all of their senses. I read the section aloud again to the students and asked them to focus on the details of their visualization of the reading. The students then listed more detailed descriptions of their visualization in the Elaborate column of the form. Next, the students made a prediction based on their visualizations. Last, the students read the chapter to see if their predictions were confirmed in the text. After completing this activity, I gave the students slips of paper and asked them to rate how much they enjoyed the activity.

I conducted my first survey on February 27, 2007. At this point, I had just begun working with my third reading group on *The Littles Go Exploring* by John Peterson. My first survey was administered to all of my students and consisted of many open-ended questions asking the students what they like the most and what they like the least about language arts. This was a great way to gather baseline data but after analyzing the surveys I had more questions than answers. I decided to have a short, five-minute conversation with my third reading group. I gained some information from this first survey and group conversation that enabled me to begin implementing the activities that my students enjoyed into my language arts instruction.

After completing *The Littles Go Exploring* with my third reading group, I created different reading activities to use with the whole class. At this point, we were beginning our studies of Africa. As an introduction to the grassland region of Africa, I read the book *Here is the African Savanna* by Madeleine Dunphy. This book has a repetitive story line and I encouraged my students to participate and read along with me. By the end of the book, almost every student was reading the story aloud. Following the story, as a whole class, we completed a chain that included the main parts of the story.

I also completed a three-day lesson on the book *Traveling to Tondo* by Verna Aardema with the whole class. Prior to the first day, I created a poster with the names and pronunciations of the characters and actions in the book. I used the poster to teach the students the words and proper pronunciation for the words throughout book. I left the poster up throughout the remainder of the lesson for the students to use when completing an activity for the book. To see a picture of this poster, see Appendix A4. Again, this book was repetitive and I encouraged the students to read along with me. Following the reading, the students met with a partner and began listing the different events of the story. The second day of the lesson involved listing the events as a whole group on the board and brainstorming symbols to represent each event. On the third day, I had the students create a map that followed the main character, Bowane, on his travels to Tondo. To see examples of student's maps see Appendix A4.

Following the activity with the book *Traveling to Tondo*, I interviewed a majority of my students, asking them what they enjoy and what they don't enjoy about language arts. I also had them complete another survey where they ranked the different activities they participated in during reading instruction. The last step in my inquiry included a second round of interviews with the students in the class to clarify some questions I had developed after analyzing the second survey.

Data Collection

Student Surveys

To collect baseline data, I began my inquiry with a survey administered to twenty-four students in my classroom (two students were absent the day of the survey). A majority of this survey was open-ended. The first two questions were multiple-choice and asked the students about their favorite reading genre and what would motivate them to read more at home. The

open-ended portion of the survey asked the students to write about what they like most about language arts, what they like least about language arts and what they would choose to do during language arts if given a choice. I chose to create an open-ended survey because I wanted to gauge which language arts activities were the most memorable to my students. To see a blank form of this survey, see Appendix B1.

The second survey administered to the students in my classroom was more structured. I asked students to rate how much they enjoy specific activities that they have done during reading instruction. Many of the items that I asked the students about in the second survey were items that the students had mentioned liking or disliking on the first survey. Other questions asked students to rate recent activities I had experimented with during reading instruction. To see a blank form of this survey, see Appendix B2.

Student Ratings on Individual Activities

Following the implementation of a new activity during a language arts lesson, I gave each student in the reading group I was working with a small piece of paper. I asked the students to rate, on a scale from 1-5 how enjoyable they found the activity. The number 1 meant that they really did not like the activity and the number 5 meant that they loved the activity and would want to do the activity again during future language arts lessons.

Group Discussions

After administering the first survey to my students, I felt like I had more questions than answers. To clarify some of the students' responses, I had a short, five-minute discussion with one of the reading groups. This reading group has six boys who all read a little below grade

level. I asked many questions related to the survey including if they liked reading with a partner, writing journal entries, writing answers to open ended questions, retelling stories, word games (like crossword puzzles and word searches), drawing pictures and word maps.

I held a second discussion with this group after they ranked a new activity. Throughout this discussion, I asked the students what they enjoyed about the IEPC strategy, what they didn't like about the strategy and ways I could make the strategy more enjoyable.

Student Interviews

Before administering the second survey, I conducted short, five minute, interviews with twenty-three of my students. I chose not to interview the three students who leave during language arts for specialized instruction in reading. These three students receive forty-five minutes of reading instruction outside of our classroom. They receive fifteen to twenty minutes of reading instruction in our classroom. The reading instruction these students receive in our classroom is very different from the instruction the other students receive. These students often work from comprehension and fluency packets to improve comprehension and fluency. They rarely participate in the types of activities offered to the other students in our classroom. I wanted to find, through these interviews, what activities offered in our classroom are the most enjoyable and if they impact the students' motivation to read. While conducting the interviews, I used a form with five questions for each student. The questions I asked included: what activities have we done during language arts that you remember, what activities do you enjoy, what activities do you not enjoy, if given an assignment, would you rather write or draw and do you have any suggestions for language arts? During the interviews I asked follow-up questions to students' response to gain more information into their opinions of language arts instruction in our

classroom. For example, after a student said that they liked completing packets on a book, I asked them what parts of the packets they liked the most – drawing pictures, completing vocabulary activities or writing answers to questions. To see a blank form that I used during the interviews, see Appendix B3.

After the students completed the second survey, I conducted another round of interviews with the same twenty-three students. Again, I chose not to interview the three students who leave every day to receive specialized reading instruction. These interviews were much shorter. I asked students if the activities we use during reading instruction affect how much they enjoy a book, which activities affect the enjoyment of a book, if they like choosing books from the book basket, if they like completing story maps for the books from the book basket and if the completing the story maps affects their enjoyment of the books they are reading. For an example of the form I used while interviewing each student, see Appendix B4.

Data Analysis

After the students completed the first survey, I read through each survey. I decided that I needed a way to see if there were patterns in my students' responses to the questions. I created a chart (this chart can be seen in Appendix C1) that included every student's response from the survey as well as responses that occurred multiple times from different students.

After the first survey was conducted, I felt like I needed to clarify, with my students, some of their responses. I held a short discussion with one of our reading groups about the survey. I asked the students questions about their likes and dislikes with reading instruction and wrote down all of their responses (to read the responses from the discussion, see Appendix C2).

Following this discussion, I compared the responses I received through the discussion with the first survey.

A few weeks after having the students take the survey; I introduced a new activity to one of my language arts groups. Following the activity, I asked the students to rate the activity so that I could gauge how much they enjoyed the activity (these ratings can be found in Appendix C3). I followed this up with a short discussion to see what I could do to make the activity more enjoyable for all students.

About a month later, I held interviews with students in my classroom to gauge what they like most and least about language arts. Following the interviews, I placed all students' answers into a chart. After entering all of the students' responses, I grouped the responses by reading group to look for patterns among students of similar reading ability. The charts can be found in Appendix C4.

Following the student interviews, I had the students complete a second survey. After receiving the surveys back from my students, I again made a chart listing the different activities and the students' rating for each activity. While creating the chart, I began to see some patterns that interested me so I decided to compare items on the survey by creating matrices to see if there are correlations between student enjoyment levels and different activities. To see the chart and matrices, see Appendix C5.

After analyzing data from the second surveys, I conducted a second interview with a majority of my students. Like with the first set of interviews, I created a chart where I placed all of the student's responses. I then grouped these responses by similar reading abilities to see if patterns emerged from separate reading groups. This chart can be found in Appendix C6.

Claims

Claim 1: In our classroom, readers' theater was the most favored activity.

I had hoped this inquiry would allow me to find a handful of activities that I could use during language arts instruction that would be engaging and enjoyable for all of my students. Unfortunately, as described in a later claim, I did not find many activities that are enjoyed by all students. The only activity that appealed to a majority of my students was readers' theater.

In the first survey I had the students complete, only one student had mentioned that they enjoyed readers' theater. This could be due to the fact that, prior to this survey, only one reading group, with four students, had experience with readers' theater. Throughout the month of March, every student in our classroom was involved in a readers' theater that they performed at a culmination event for our Festival of the Arts unit.

I decided to ask my students to rate how much they enjoyed readers' theater in my second survey. Twenty-one students said that they really enjoyed readers' theater; five said they neither like nor disliked readers' theater and no students disliked readers' theater.

While I didn't ask my students specifically about readers' theater in my first set of interviews, seven students said that they enjoyed readers' theater and want to do more readers' theaters during language arts. Like in the survey, during the interviews, no students said that they disliked readers' theater.

Claim 2: The types of activities that motivate students during reading instruction depend upon personal likes and dislikes of individual students.

While a majority of the students in the classroom enjoy readers' theater, I did not find this overwhelming enjoyment with any of the other activities. As mentioned before, I was expecting to find activities that a majority of students would enjoy; however, what I found was

that the types of activities my students enjoyed depended upon their personal likes and dislikes, strengths and weakness and their learning style.

On the first survey, I had a wide range of responses from my students about their likes and dislikes in language arts. Three students said that they enjoyed writing journals or journal entries and three students said that they did not enjoy writing journals or journal entries. Two students said that they enjoyed filling out packets of questions for books, while four said they did not enjoy filling out the packets. One student said that they enjoyed retelling and summarizing books, one said that they didn't enjoy retelling or summarizing. To see the different activities students liked and disliked see Appendix C1. After receiving this range of likes and dislikes, I decided to ask all students about specific aspects of language arts instruction in my next survey.

After reading an article in *The Reading Teacher* about an activity called Imagine, Elaborate, Predict and Confirm, I decided to implement this activity with one of my reading groups because the article said that "IEPC is designed to motivate students' interest in reading while simultaneously enhancing their ability to comprehend and write descriptively" (Wood & Endres, 2005). While implementing the new activity, some of my students were really enthusiastic about the activity making statements like "This is really cool" or "I like this kind of thing." However, other students were not as enthusiastic about the activity, making statements like "This isn't very fun." I asked the students to rate, on a scale from one to five, how much they liked this form, five meaning that they really liked the form and one meaning they didn't like the form. Of the six students who completed this activity, two students rated the form a five, one a four, one a three, one a two and a half and one a two. The next day, I held a discussion with my students and asked them how I could change this activity to help them enjoy it more. A few of the students said that they didn't enjoy writing but would rather draw. This was the point

in my inquiry that I began to realize that what students enjoy and find motivating depends upon their learning style and what they enjoy doing. I asked all of the students if they would enjoy the activity if I gave them a choice to write or draw for the answers on the form. They all said that they would enjoy having the choice to write or draw.

Like in the first survey, I found a variety of responses to students' likes and dislikes on the second survey I conducted. One question asked the students to rate how much they enjoy drawing pictures after a chapter or book. Fifty-four percent of students who answered this question said they enjoyed drawing pictures, twenty-three percent neither liked nor disliked drawing pictures and eleven percent did not like drawing pictures. I also asked the students to rate how much they enjoy writing answers in a packet. Twenty percent of students who answered the question said they liked writing in the packet, forty-two percent said they neither liked nor disliked writing in the packet and thirty-eight percent said they did not like writing in the packet. I decided to compare individual student responses from both questions to see if the students who like drawing did not like writing and to see if the students who enjoy writing did not enjoy drawing pictures. A chart with the comparisons can be found in Appendix C5. What I found was that twenty-three percent of students who answered both questions enjoyed drawing but did not like writing responses to questions in the packet. Fifteen percent of students liked both drawing and writing, no students liked writing and disliked drawing and twelve percent of students did not like drawing or writing.

The second survey also asked the students to rate the different games or activities like vocabulary bingo and crossword puzzles. For crossword puzzles, eighty-three percent of students who answered this question said that they enjoyed crossword puzzles, thirteen percent neither liked nor disliked crossword puzzles and four percent did not like crossword puzzles. I

had expected to see a similar response to bingo, but instead, only fifty-four percent of students who answered this question said they liked vocabulary bingo, twenty-three percent neither liked nor disliked vocabulary bingo and twenty-three percent did not like bingo.

In my student interviews, I asked students about their likes and dislikes, but also if they preferred writing or drawing. Of the twenty-three students interviewed, thirteen said they would prefer to draw than write, five would prefer to write and five enjoyed both writing and drawing.

Claim 3: The types of activities that are used during reading instruction can impact students' enjoyment of the book that they are reading.

During my interviews, one boy mentioned that he really enjoyed a packet we created for Caldecott books we had in a book basket. No other student had mentioned this before in the first survey or in other interviews. I asked the boy to tell me what he liked about the packet and he said that he enjoyed being able to choose the books that he wants to read. I decided to include this question on my second survey to see how other students felt about having a choice in the books that they read. I was also interested in seeing how they felt about having to fill out story maps on the books that they chose to read. After the survey, I conducted follow up interviews with all of my students to ask them if the activities we use with a book affect how much they enjoy the book.

In the second survey, fifty two percent of students who answered the question said that they enjoyed being able to choose the book that they read from the book basket, forty-eight percent of students said that they neither liked nor disliked having a choice in the books they read and no students said that they disliked having a choice in the books that they read. A second question asked the students to rate the story maps they were to complete when choosing a book from the book basket. Eight percent of students who answered this question said that they

enjoyed filling out the story maps, thirty-two percent said that they neither liked nor disliked completing the story maps and sixty percent said that they disliked completing the story maps. I was a little surprised by this finding so I created a matrix to compare answers to both questions. Of the students who answered both questions, I found that twenty-four percent of students disliked the maps, but liked having a choice. Thirty-six percent of students disliked the maps and neither liked nor disliked having a choice in the books that they read. Four percent liked both having a choice in the books they read and completing the story maps.

In my second set of interviews, I asked my students if the types of activities we do during reading affects how much they enjoy the book they are reading. Before the interviews, I assumed that if students like the activities they participate in during reading instruction, they will enjoy the book more and if they don't like the activities, that they will enjoy the book less. What I found was a little different than I had expected. Of the twenty-three students interviewed, fifteen said that if they enjoy the activity used with a book, they enjoy the book more. Six said that if they like an activity, it doesn't change how they feel about the book and one student said "it depends on the book that I'm reading." Based on these responses, if the students like the activity they are completing it helps them enjoy the book more. When asked why the activities they enjoy would make them enjoy the book more one student said, "Because it helps me understand the book," another student said, "They make me like the book more and makes me want to read more," and another student said, "They open up the book so you can understand it more." I had expected similar responses when I asked the students if they don't enjoy the activity, does it make them enjoy the book less; however, what I found was a little surprising. Six students said that if they don't like the activity, they like the book less, fourteen said that if they don't like the activity, it doesn't make them like the book less and two students said that it

depends upon the book that they are reading. The activities that students enjoy may help the students enjoy the book more, but if the student's don't enjoy the activity, it doesn't necessarily make them like the book less.

Another question in the survey asked the students if they enjoyed choosing books from the book basket, if they enjoyed completing different story maps for the books and if completing the story maps affects how much they enjoy reading the books. Five students said that they liked choosing the books and liked completing story maps on the books, six said that they liked choosing books but don't like the story maps, one said that he choosing books and enjoys some parts of the story map, one sometimes likes choosing the books but doesn't like the story maps, three said that they like choosing the books and said that the story maps were "okay", two said that they don't like the choice or the story maps, one student said that completing the story maps makes her like the books more, another doesn't like choosing books but her enjoyment of the story maps depends upon the book she's reading. Fourteen students said that they would like choosing the books more if they didn't have to complete story maps. Eight students said that they story maps don't change how much they enjoy choosing the books. One of the last students I interviewed said that she would enjoy choosing the books more if she was given a choice about the type of activity to complete after reading the book. After the last student's response, I wondered if the other students would enjoy having a choice between completing a story map and another activity, but I was unable to ask the students this question.

Claim 4: There is no correlation, in my class, between a student's reading level and the specific types of activities students enjoy or don't enjoy.

Prior to this inquiry, I had anticipated finding that students from similar reading levels would enjoy the same types of activities for different reasons including the types of activities their reading group participates in and the strengths and weaknesses of the students from similar reading levels. What I found was that the students responses varied among reading levels; students from similar reading levels did not always enjoy the same types of activities as their peers.

Unfortunately, I did not administer the surveys according to reading groups, instead, every student in the classroom was administered the surveys at the same time and the students were instructed not to put their names on the surveys to encourage more honest responses. Had I administered the surveys according to reading groups, I may have found more evidence to support this claim.

Throughout the student interviews, I put the students name on an interview sheet to enable me to group their responses according to reading level during the data analysis portion of my inquiry. The student responses varied within each reading group. Students in similar reading groups liked and disliked different activities. For example with group two, the average readers, some students stated that they enjoyed written responses to questions in a packet, while others stated that they did not like written responses. Some students enjoyed writing journal entries about a book, while others did not enjoy journal entries. Seven students in this group enjoyed drawing, two enjoyed writing and two enjoyed both writing and drawing. These variations in student responses to what activities they like and dislike, can be found in all three reading groups

interviewed. A list of student responses to the questions asked during the interviews are grouped by reading level and can be found in Appendix C4 and Appendix C6.

Conclusions

This inquiry has taught me the importance of having a variety of activities and assessments available to students. Students learn differently and should have the opportunities available to showcase their strengths through a variety of activities. I have also learned how the activities we ask our students to complete can affect their enjoyment of a book. I want to use activities that my students enjoy to help them learn more and to increase their enjoyment of the book that they are reading.

I plan to continue investigating the different types of activities that I can provide for my students during language arts instruction that are engaging. The more I can tailor my instruction to meet the needs and strengths of each student, the more I can encourage my students to enjoy reading. I also need to offer a variety of activities, that are enjoyable, to help my students improve in areas that they may struggle, like writing. I also think it is important to continue asking my students what they like and what they don't like so that I can make their learning experiences more enjoyable.

With the information gained from student interviews and surveys, I will implement the activities that my students enjoy the most throughout the remainder of my PDS experience, but also in my own future classroom. I intend to include readers' theaters opportunities during my language arts instruction for all students. I will also offer my students more choice in the books that they read and the activities that they are required to complete. It would be beneficial to experiment with reading groups. I think it is important to group students so that they are reading

books that are appropriate for their reading level, but that will also challenge them to become better readers. Occasionally, I believe it would be motivating for students to group them according to the books they enjoy the most or want to read and also to group students according to the types of activities that they enjoy the most. This type of grouping would require me to choose books that every student could read, which means that students with a higher reading ability will be reading text below their ability. I would only group students according to interests intermittingly so that I could group students in a way to improve every child's reading skills.

In the future, I believe it would be beneficial to broaden my inquiry into other subject areas including math, writing and science. While this inquiry focused on language arts instruction, I want to help my students become motivated learners in all subject areas.

New Wonderings

- Would the students be more motivated to read if grouped by the types of books they enjoy?
- Would students be more motivated to read if they were offered more choices in the types of activities they are asked to complete?
- If we offered different choices (other than story maps) to complete when reading a book from the book basket would the students enjoy the reading and activities more?
- What activities motivate students in other subject areas?

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Writing a Secret Message in "Tortoise" Language

Esia Trot

Name: _____

Reread Pages 17 - 27

Remember that Mrs. Silver wanted Alfie to change from his dark green color to a light brown color. What secret message would Mr. Hoppy suggest Mrs. Silver whisper to Alfie? First write the message in English on this page (write it forward) then write it in Tortoise language on the next page (write it backward).

English:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Esia Trot

Name: _____

Tortoise Language:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

A2: *Fantastic Mr. Fox* Activities

Fantastic Mr. Fox Packet Excerpt

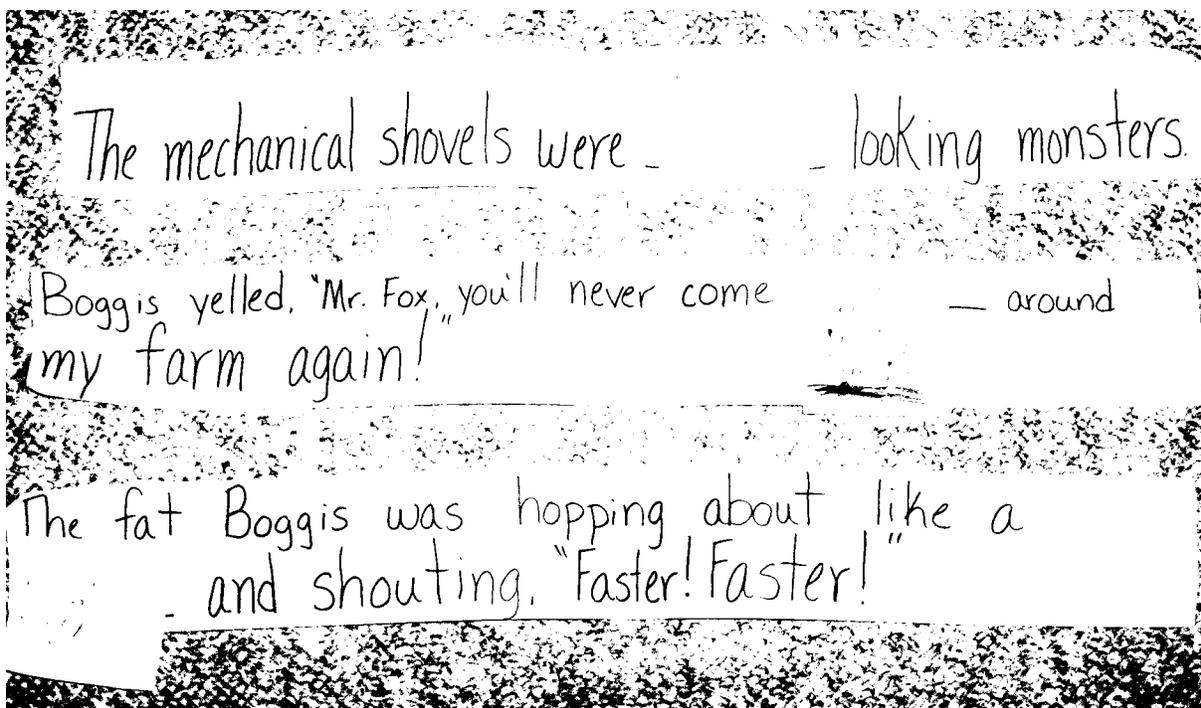
Chapter 10: How do you think Boggis would react if he found out that his chickens were stolen by the fox he is trying to capture? Why?

Chapter 11: Where do you think the tunnel will go next? Why?

Chapter 12: Make an invitation inviting the starving animals to Mr. Fox's feast.

A large rectangular area enclosed by a dashed line, intended for a student to draw an invitation for Mr. Fox's feast.

Fantastic Mr. Fox Context Clue Sentence Activity



Fantastic Mr. Fox
 Chapters 5 and 6

1. The mechanical shovels were _____ looking monsters.
2. Boggis yelled "Mr. Fox, you'll never come _____ around my farm again."
3. The fat Boggis was hopping about like a _____ and shouting, "Faster! Faster!"
4. The people _____ and laughed at the three farmers.
5. The people made the three farmers more furious and more _____

A3: *The Littles go Exploring Activities*

Synonym Chains

Chapter 5:

Complete a synonym chain for each word below. If you get stuck, you can use a thesaurus.

rough -

explode -

sneak -

Word Map

Word Map

Antonym		Synonym
The Word		
Anchor		
Dictionary Definition		Sentence from story

Vocabulary Bingo

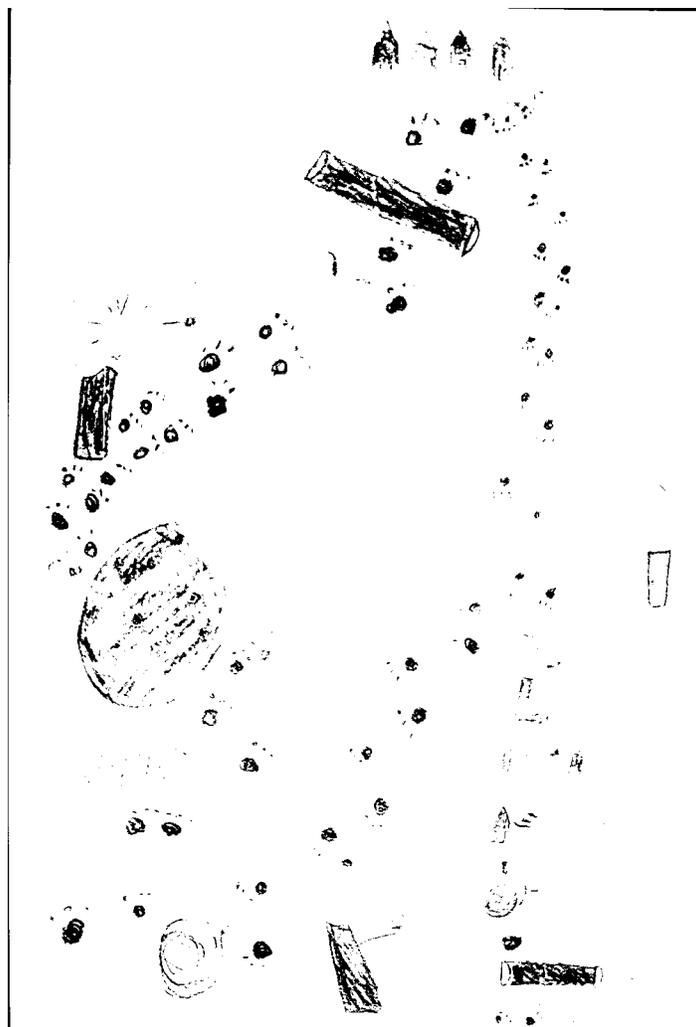
Formed	Hollowed	Fussing
Driftwood	FREE SPACE	Footbridge
Parachute	Alongside	Crouched

IEPC Form

Name: _____

IEPC Form

Imagine	Elaborate	Prediction	Confirm
Close your eyes and imagine the setting, characters and events. What do you see, feel, hear or smell?	Describe and give details of what you saw in your mind.	Make a prediction about the rest of the chapter, based on what you imagined.	Read to prove or change your prediction.



Appendix B: Data Collection Methods

B1: First Survey

February Survey

1. What is your favorite genre?
 - A. Adult Fiction
 - B. Adventure Fiction
 - C. Science Fiction or Fantasy
 - D. Historical Fiction
 - E. Nonfiction Fiction
 - F. Sports Fiction
 - G. Realistic Fiction

2. What, if any, help do you read more at home?
 - A. If your parents read to you
 - B. You read to your parents or a brother or sister
 - C. You had a special reading time each day
 - D. _____

3. What activities do you do in Language Arts that you like the most?

4. What activities do you do in Language Arts that you like the least?

5. If you could choose what types of activities you would want to do during Language Arts, what would you choose?

B2: Second Survey

Circle the face that shows how you feel about different activities we do during language arts. If you have not done an activity in language arts, don't circle any of the faces.

-  Means that you really enjoy the activity
 Means that you don't like or dislike the activity
 Means that you really don't like doing the activity

1. Reader's Theater



2. IEPIC form (Imagine, Elaborate, Predict, Confirm)



3. Word web



4. Crossword puzzles



5. Vocabulary Bingo



6. Drawing pictures after reading a chapter or book



7. Rewriting the ending to a story or retelling a book



8. Writing a journal



9. Writing answers to questions in a packet



10. Creating a map of a story (like we did for the book *Traveling to Tondo*)



11. Completing story maps for the books in our book basket (like the *Catdecotts*)



12. Being able to choose the books you want to read from book baskets



List the activities that we do in language arts that you wish we did more. You can write about activities that aren't listed above or activities that you have seen other reading groups do that you haven't done.

B3: Student Interviews

Student Interviews

What activities have you done in language arts that you remember?

What activities do you remember that you really enjoyed?

What activities do you remember that you didn't enjoy?

If you had an assignment, would you rather write or draw?

Do you have any suggestions for language arts? Are there activities that you have seen other students do that you want to do? Have you done anything in other classes (2nd grade) or in a different school that you would like to do during language arts?

B4: Second Interview Form

Do the types of activities we do during reading / language arts determine if you like the book you are reading?

What type of activities makes you not like a book?

What type of activities makes you like a book?

Do you like choosing a book from the book baskets? Do you like completing story maps for these books? Do the story maps determine if you like or dislike the book you are reading?

Appendix C: Data Analysis

C1: First Survey Analysis

Favorite Genre:

Animal Fiction	Adventure Fiction	Science Fiction	Fantasy	Historical Fiction	Humorous Fiction	Sports Fiction	Realistic Fiction
6	6	4	6	0	5	2	0

What would encourage students to read more at home:

Parents read to them	Read to parents or brother or sister	Special Reading Time
3	4	11

Other things that would encourage students to read more at home:

- If they had good books
- Getting more time to read
- Parents help students with difficult words
- Getting new books
- Read to a friend
- Take things out of day that they don't need to do
- Find a quiet space to read alone

Things about language arts that students enjoy:

Activity:	# of Students
Reading	10
Reading with a partner	5
Journal	3
Word map	3
Making Predictions	2
Filling out packets	2
Answering Questions	1
Write	1
Read independently	1

Activity:	# of Students
Rewriting the end of a book or story	1
Drawing Pictures	1
Retelling/Summarizing	1
Learning about different characters	1
Reading a variety of books	1
Read funny books	1
Readers' Theater	1
Crossword Puzzle	1

Things about language arts that students' don't enjoy:

Activity:	# of Students
Answering questions	5
Packets	4
Journals	3
Writing	3
Reading independently	2

Activity:	# of Students
Writing a retelling of the story	1
Word Map	1
Sad Books	1
Answering Multiple Choice Questions	1
Writing a retelling of the story	1

Types of activities students would choose to do during language arts:

Activity:	# of Students
Reading	4
Read with a partner	3
Draw Pictures	3
Popcorn	2
Readers' Theater	2
Games	2
Answer questions as a whole group	1
Read a book then share a picture with the group	1
Write facts about books instead of journals	1
Word Mazes	1
Make multiple choice questions and give to others	1

Activity:	# of Students
Word Search	1
Boggle	1
Read funny books	1
Read books about Fairies	1
Play Chunks	1
Crossword Puzzle	1
Word Web	1
Listen to read aloud	1
Answer questions with the group	1
Read animal books	1
Packet	1

C2: Notes From a Discussion with a Reading Group

C3: IEPC Ratings

Rating	5	4	3	2.5	2	1
# of Students	2	1	1	1	1	0

C4: First Interview Analysis

Group 1: Advanced Readers

	What activities have you done for reading that you remember?	What activities do you remember really enjoying in reading?	What activities do you remember doing for reading that you don't like?	If given a choice, would you rather write or draw?	Suggestions for reading groups, things you want to do more of or that you wish you could do
A.G.	Reading, fill in blanks on packets, boggle	Boggle, other games, packets (drawing pictures)	Packets (writing)	Draw	Wants to perform more readers' theaters
E.K.	Diary entries, jeopardy	Jeopardy, diary entries, reading Roald Dahl (favorite author)	Sorting vocabulary words	Both	N/R
K.R.	Map, brochure	Making readers' theater	Packets - writing	Draw	Wants to do journal
R.S.	N/R	Multiple choice questions – teacher's and peer written, writing in packets, Readers' theater	N/R	Draw	N/R
A.S.	Reader's theater, packets	Maps of a story	Packets - writing	Write	Wants to do journals
K.T.	Writing readers' theater and packets	Write readers' theater scripts, Esio Trot – writing secret message in turtle language, vocab word maps, jeopardy, crosswords, rereading – likes to hear others read	Vocabulary, Love Letter for Esio Trot (didn't like reading it to others)	Write	More reading and writing of readers' theaters scripts. Wants to complete journal like Amber Brown group

Group 2: Average Readers

	What activities have you done for reading that you remember?	What activities do you remember really enjoying in reading?	What activities do you remember doing for reading that you don't like?	If given a choice, would you rather write or draw?	Suggestions for reading groups, things you want to do more of or that you wish you could do
J.C.	Writing paragraphs, context clue sentences, letters to characters	Reading, reading with partners, context clue sentences	Writing	Draw	N/R
J.G.	Reading Fantastic Mr. Fox	Readers' Theaters, packets (drawing pictures)	Journals (writing), packets (writing)	Draw	Wants to do stations (like in 2nd grade)
I.H.	Draw pictures after chapters, journals	Draw pictures	N/R	Draw	N/R
C.H.	Reading books	Drawing pictures, rewording examples from the story, context clue sentences	Answering questions – especially hard ones, doesn't like having deadlines	Draw	N/R
A.J.	Journals, packets, reading with partners, reading alone	Readers' theaters, journals	packets	Draw	Make more story maps (Tondo), draw favorite parts of story
M.L.	Amber Brown, bingo	Packets (pictures and writing)	N/R	Both	Vocab Bingo, read more Roald Dahl
K.M.	Journals, reading books	Reading books, word searches, drawing pictures for the packets, read alouds	Written responses to questions in a packet	Draw	N/R
B.O.	Readers' theater, reading books	Readers' theater, making maps (Tondo)	Writing about books (journals and packets)	Draw	N/R
J.R.	Readers' theater, packets, journals	Word searches, vocabulary (mult. choice questions), reading different books	Filling out packets - writing	Both	Wants to write own script and choose the book we read for the groups
E.S.	Reading books, journals	Journals, packets, reading with partners	N/R	Write	N/R
G.S.	Journal, packets	Journal, Readers' Theater	Book baskets (completing the story maps)	Write	N/R

Group 3: Struggling Readers

	What activities have you done for reading that you remember?	What activities do you remember really enjoying in reading?	What activities do you remember doing for reading that you don't like?	If given a choice, would you rather write or draw?	Suggestions for reading groups, things you want to do more of or that you wish you could do
T.A.	Little packets, word maps, word chains, journal entries, Caldecott book basket	Word chains, word maps, journal entries, Caldecott story maps, likes to choose books from book basket	Doesn't like rereading because it takes too long to get through books	Draw	2nd grade – booklets that you could draw and color in that are related to the book – just for fun – had as much time to complete as necessary
T.F.	Beginning, Middle, End story map	Draw pictures and retell chapters of books (rewrite)	N/R	Both	Wants to play more games like bingo
M.K.	Crosswords, reading paragraphs then drawing pictures (IEPC), packets	Drawing pictures, games, making comic strips	N/R	Draw	N/R
C.R.	IEPC	Likes finding words in the dictionary, likes packets	N/R	Draw	Play Boggle and Chunks
J.R.	Journal entries, draw and write	Journal, draw pictures, retell stories, making maps, bingo	N/R	Both	Journals
J.V.	Writing in packets, reading	Reading with a group, comic strips	N/R	Write	N/R

C5: Second Survey Analysis

Activity:	Like	Neutral	Dislike	Unanswered
Readers' Theater	21 (81%)	5 (19%)	0 (0%)	
IEPC	2 (20%)	7 (70%)	1 (10%)	16
Word Web	3 (13%)	12 (52%)	8 (35%)	3
Crossword Puzzles	20 (83%)	3 (13%)	1 (4%)	2
Vocab Bingo	11 (58%)	6 (23%)	2 (11%)	7
Drawing Pictures after Ch.	14 (54%)	6 (23%)	6 (23%)	0
Rewriting Endings/ Retelling	0 (0%)	7 (32%)	15 (68%)	4
Journals	5 (29%)	8 (47%)	4 (24%)	9
Writing Answers in Packet	5 (20%)	11 (42%)	10 (38%)	0
Map of Story	17 (65%)	8 (31%)	1 (4%)	0
Story Maps – Book Basket	2 (8%)	8 (32%)	15 (60%)	1
Choose books – Book Basket	13 (52%)	12 (48%)	0 (0%)	1

	Liked maps	Neutral maps	Dislike maps
Liked Choice	1 (4%)	6 (24%)	6 (24%)
Neutral Choice	1 (4%)	2 (8%)	9 (36%)

	Liked Journal	Neutral Journal	Dislike Journal
Like written response	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

Neutral written response	2 (12%)	7 (40%)	1 (6%)
Dislike written response	2 (12%)	1 (6%)	3 (18%)

	Like drawing	Neutral drawing	Dislike drawing
Like written	4 (15%)	1 (4%)	0 (0%)
Neutral written	4 (15%)	4 (15%)	3 (12%)
Dislike written	6 (23%)	1 (4%)	3 (12%)

Other things students like or want to do or want to do more:

Activity:	# of Students
Vocab Bingo	9
Journal	7
Crossword puzzles	5
Readers' Theater	5
Map of a story	3
Drawing a picture after reading a book	3

Activity:	# of Students
Word Search	2
Play Chunks or Boggle	2
Circle Stories	1
IEPC	1
Vocabulary questions	1
Read in groups	1

C6: Second Interview Analysis

Group 1: Advanced Readers

	Do the types of activities we do during reading determine if you like the book you are reading?	What types of activities makes you like a book less?	What types of activities makes you like a book more?	Do you like choosing from the book basket? Do you like the story maps? Do the story maps affect how much you like reading from the book basket?
A.G.	The activities don't affect whether or not she likes a book	N/A	N/A	Doesn't like choosing books - enjoys reading with someone else. Likes the story maps a little. If she didn't have to do story maps, she'd like the book choice more
E.K.	If he likes an activity, it makes him like the book a little more. If he doesn't like the activity, he likes the books a little less.	Sorting words	Diary entries (like in Esio Trot)	Book baskets "It's ok" - doesn't like story maps. Would like choosing from the basket more if he didn't have to complete the story maps.
K.R.	Activities don't affect how much she enjoys a book	N/R	N/R	Likes choosing the books, doesn't like the story maps, if she doesn't do the story maps she would like choosing the books more
R.S.	Activities don't affect how much she enjoys reading the books	N/R	N/R	Sometimes she likes choosing the books from the book basket but doesn't like the story maps. If she doesn't do the story maps she may like choice more
A.S.	Likes activity - likes book more Does not like activity - likes book less	N/R	Write short paragraphs about characters	Story maps makes her like the book more
K.T.	Like activity makes her like the book more because she understands the book more. If she doesn't like an activity it doesn't change how she likes the book	N/R	Readers' theater, word games (crossword puzzles), comic strips, maps	Likes choosing books, likes some parts of the story maps. Would like books more if she was given a choice about the form/activity to do following reading

Group 2: Average Readers

	Do the types of activities we do during reading determine if you like the book you are reading?	What types of activities makes you like a book less?	What types of activities makes you like a book more?	Do you like choosing from the book basket? Do you like the story maps? Do the story maps affect how much you like reading from the book basket?
J.C.	Likes activity he likes book more. If he doesn't like activity it doesn't affect enjoyment of the book	N/R	Journals, drawing pictures	Likes choosing books and story maps
J.G.	Doesn't affect enjoyment of book	N/R	N/R	Likes choosing books, doesn't like story maps, if no story maps would like the book more
I.H.	Doesn't affect enjoyment of book	N/R	N/R	Doesn't like choosing from book basket b/c he likes choosing from a wider variety of material. Thinks the story maps are hard and doesn't like them. Would enjoy the book basket more if we didn't have story maps
C.H.	Depends upon the book. He may not like the book but might like the activity	N/R	N/R	Likes reading some of the books, story maps are "o.k." he would like book choice more without story maps
A.J.	Likes the activities - likes the books more. Don't like the activities - sometimes likes the books less	Packets, reading in groups	Journals, reading with a partner	Doesn't like choosing from the book basket b/c she enjoys having the teachers choose books for her. Her enjoyment of the story maps depend upon the book she is reading. The story maps don't affect her enjoyment of books from the book basket.
M.L.	Likes book more if likes the activity	Packets, writing	Journals	Likes choice but the story maps makes her like the books less
K.M.	Depends upon the activity. If she likes the activity, she likes the book the same or more. If she doesn't like the activity she likes the book the same or less	Answering questions like "Would you be friends with this character?"	Word searches, crossword puzzles, drawing pictures of their favorite part of the book	She does not like choosing from the book basket b/c the books are usually similar - there is not a variety of books. She also doesn't like the baskets because she must complete story maps. If she didn't have to fill out the story maps, she would like reading from the book baskets more
B.O.	If he doesn't like activity, it doesn't affect how much he enjoys the book. If he likes an activity it makes him like the book more	N/R	Map, draw pictures	Doesn't like choosing from the book basket because he has to complete story maps. If he didn't have to complete the story maps he would like the books from the basket more.
J.R.	Likes all the books we've read so far, the activities do not effect enjoyment of book	N/R	N/R	Likes choosing books and kind of likes the story maps, but the story maps don't affect how much she likes reading the books
E.S.	If she likes the activity it makes her like book more. If she doesn't like the activity it doesn't affect how she enjoys the books.	N/R	Writing about the book	Likes the book basket, likes story maps, maps have no effect on how much she enjoys the books
G.S.	If she likes activities, enjoys the books more "Makes me like more books and makes me read more" - Doesn't like activities - won't read the book again	Writing paragraphs about the book	Drawing pictures, writing 1-2 sentences about the book	Likes choosing books, sort of likes story maps, if no story maps she would like the choice more

Group 3: Struggling Readers

	Do the types of activities we do during reading determine if you like the book you are reading?	What types of activities makes you like a book less?	What types of activities makes you like a book more?	Do you like choosing from the book basket? Do you like the story maps? Do the story maps affect how much you like reading from the book basket?
T.A.	If likes activities - likes books more he says it "opens up the book more so you can understand it more". If he doesn't like an activity, it doesn't change how much he likes the book.	N/R	Packets, word chains	Doesn't change how much he enjoys reading the books
T.F.	Likes activities more - likes the book more. If he doesn't like the activity it makes him like the book less	N/R	N/R	Likes choice, doesn't like maps, doing maps doesn't change how much he likes reading books from basket
M.K.	If he likes the activities - he likes the book more, if he doesn't like the activities it doesn't affect how much he enjoys the books.	N/R	Drawing pictures, IEPC form	Likes choosing books but doesn't like the story maps. If he didn't have to complete story maps, he would like the book more.
C.R.	If he likes an activity it doesn't affect how much he enjoys the book but if he doesn't like the activity he enjoys the book a little less	Writing	Likes journals/journal entries	Likes the book basket choice, kind of likes the story maps. Would like the books more if he didn't have to complete story maps.
J.R.	If he likes the activities it helps him like the book more, if he doesn't like the activities, it doesn't affect his enjoyment of a book	N/R	Rewriting the ending to a story, IEPC form, drawing pictures	Likes choosing from the book basket and the story maps.
J.V.	If he likes the activity more, he likes the books more, if he doesn't like the activity - doesn't change his opinion of the book	N/R	Writing in packets	Likes choosing books and likes the story maps