Activities and Activities
Topic 4: Motivation

Activity 4.1 Title: Motivating Students (Elementary)

Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcome 1: Examine the classroom application of the work of motivational theorists in areas such as attribution theory, extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, and self-efficacy.

Standards:

INTASC Standard 5: Motivation and Management: The teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

The Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) standards were developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers and member states. Copies may be downloaded from the Council’s website at http://www.ccsso.org.

http://www.ccsso.org/content/pdfs/corestrd.pdf.

Assignment Introduction Text: Motivation is one of the most critical components of effective instruction, and yet it can be very difficult to measure. Psychologists define motivation as an internal process that activates, guides, and maintains behavior over time. Motivation can vary in both intensity and direction. It is not only important in getting students to engage in academic activities; it is also important in determining how much students will learn from the activities they perform or the information to which they are exposed. Students who are motivated to learn something use higher cognitive processes in learning about it and absorb and retain more from it.

Motivation can be intrinsic (from within) or extrinsic (from outside). Identifying what will motivate each child is a great challenge to a teacher. What works for one student may not work for another. Some students may be driven by internal factors such as personal interests, a sense of pride, or autonomy in selecting their artistic subjects. Other students may respond to teacher or peer approval, encouraging feedback, visual prompts that inspire ideas, or the opportunity to display their work. To encourage student interest and involvement, a teacher needs to create a positive environment where students can be comfortable to explore their creative efforts.

In this activity, you will view two different art teachers and observe how each motivates her students. In the first clip, teacher Ivey Coleman talks about how she decorates her room with student artwork, as well as her own and the importance of doing this. In the second clip, teacher Debi West employs various techniques to create a positive and motivating atmosphere. She makes the project fun and provides a unique way to work in art appreciation and art history.

Video Asset 1: Motivating by Modeling

Video Asset 2: Motivating Students
Question 1 Text: What are some examples of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation used by the teacher in the first clip?

Question 1 Hint: What is the classroom in the first clip like?

Question 1 Feedback: Posting student work around the classroom is an example of extrinsic motivation, but it can also motivate intrinsically as students take pride in their work and may be driven to display only their best pieces. By posting her own work, students also may be driven to mimic her style and work.

Question 2 Text: Why does Ivey Coleman feel it's important that she post her own work on her classroom walls? Why might this be important?

Question 2 Hint: What is the difference between an art teacher and an artist?

Question 2 Feedback: She explains that it’s important that teachers put up their own work so students can see that they are more than art teachers; that they’re also artists themselves. In seeing a teacher as an artist, they also see him or her as an expert.

Question 3 Text: What are some examples of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation used by the teacher in the second clip?

Question 3 Hint: What is the classroom environment like in the second clip?

Question 3 Feedback: The teacher provides a great deal of direct, positive feedback on individual student work, touching base with all of her students. By encouraging random and free thinking, students are able to complete their assignment in their own way. There is no specific or correct way to complete the assignment. Their expression is motivated by their personal interests.

Question 4 Text: What techniques does Debi West use to encourage her students during the activity?

Question 4 Hint: How does Debi West create a nonthreatening environment?

Question 4 Feedback: The teacher uses fun expressions, direct encouragement on individual pieces, and even teaches the students a song as a way of remembering a fact about the artist whose artistic style the students are exploring. She incorporates art history and art appreciation into an art activity. She creates a fun environment that has no room for boredom.

Question 5 Text: Compare and contrast the two teachers’ styles.

Question 5 Hint: How are they similar? How is each teacher unique?
**Question 5 Feedback:** Both teachers project a very positive and pleasant attitude that creates an encouraging environment. Both teachers encourage independent self-expression. Ivey Coleman’s classroom is more traditional, and so she uses student work to decorate the room, as well as her own. Debi West’s class is a studio environment, so the students are closer together, and she has much more direct and personal contact with her students.

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**Activity 4.2: Motivating for Lifelong Learning (Elementary)**

**Learning Outcomes**

**Learning Outcome 2:** Distinguish between the appropriate use of extrinsic motivators (grades, praise, and recognition) and the nurturing of intrinsic motivation, which produces lifelong learners.

**Standards:**

**INTASC Standard 5: Motivation and Management:** The teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

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**Assignment Introduction Text:** In this video clip, several students in a second-grade class read the stories they have written about field day events earlier in the week, and their classmates critique their work. After watching the video clip, return to this exercise and answer the following questions.

**Video Asset:** Author’s Chair


**Question 1 Text:** What behaviors and/or statements suggest that the students are intrinsically motivated during this activity?

**Question 1 Hint:** Pay attention to their emotions for clues that they are enjoying the activity.

**Question 1 Feedback:** Several students seem eager to read their stories to the class. The students seem genuinely attentive to their classmates’ stories. The student authors don’t seem to mind
having their work critiqued, indicating that their focus may be more on mastery goals than on performance goals.

**Question 2 Text:** What conditions in the classroom may be fostering some extrinsic motivation during this activity?

**Question 2 Hint:** What sort of feedback might they get from peers and from the teacher that would affect their motivation?

**Question 2 Feedback:** Because their writing is so “public,” most of the students probably have some concern about how they appear to their classmates; thus, they probably have performance goals as well as mastery goals.

The students are getting praise from their teacher and classmates. Praise can promote either intrinsic or extrinsic motivation, depending on the extent to which it enhances students’ sense of competence, on the one hand, or diminishes their sense of self-determination, on the other. Most of the praise appears to be competence-affirming rather than controlling, and so it probably promotes intrinsic motivation rather than extrinsic motivation.

**Question 3 Text:** What strategies does the teacher use to motivate her students? Provide specific examples from the video to back up your claim.

**Question 3 Hint:** Think about the way she asks questions and also the behaviors she models for the class.

**Question 3 Feedback:** She fosters internal attributions by implying that becoming a good writer is within students’ control. For example, she says, “Our job is to help [Lindsey] become a better writer. Give her, maybe, a compliment and something she can do to be a better writer.” She finds good things to say about each student’s story, and she is specific about what she praises. For instance, she says, “Something else I liked about Elizabeth’s writing: She told what she liked, and she told why she liked it. Notice this…” (she points out a particular sentence in Elizabeth’s story).

She asks classmates to offer two kinds of feedback: things that they liked about a story (which should enhance the student’s sense of competence) and ways that they could make the student become a better writer (which should focus attention on a mastery goal). She models enthusiasm for good writing. She questions students who offer vague feedback so that they provide more specific information about what is good about a story.

She keeps Elizabeth on task when Andrew gets up to read his story: “Now, Elizabeth, the boys and girls gave you good feedback, now we need your help on helping Andrew.”

She points out that learning to write is an ongoing process: “All of your writing could probably stand a little review, and when we finish today, I’d like for you to go back and look at your writing.”

**Question 4 Text:** What strategies does the teacher use to help her students become more self-regulating?
Question 4 Hint: Think about the way she provides feedback as well as the behaviors she models for the class.

Question 4 Feedback: By focusing students’ attention on helping their classmates become better writers, she fosters internal, controllable attributions. Students who attribute their failures to such controllable factors as lack of effort or ineffective learning strategies are more likely to work hard, persist in the face of failure, and seek help when they need it.

By giving specific feedback regarding what she likes about the stories, and by encouraging classmates to give equally specific feedback, she provides criteria by which students will be able to evaluate their own writing in the future.

She uses suggestions and rationales more than direct commands. For example, she says, “I thought Eric’s comment was very well said—that he felt like by listening to your story that he was actually there. And that’s exactly what a good writer wants you to feel like.”

Activity 4.3: Motivational Strategies (Middle/High School)

Learning Outcomes
Learning Outcome 3: Demonstrate an understanding and knowledge of locating motivational strategies applicable in K–12 classrooms.

Standards:
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Assignment Introduction Text: The artist-in-residence program is shared with the viewers as students are motivated to learn in a new and unique way, appealing to each participating student’s strength in a variety of areas. The connection with the television serves as a beginning point to teach students how to construct media literacy as they create videos.

Video Asset: Motivating At-Risk Students

Question 1 Text: What specific applications are used in this video in an effort to positively affect at-risk students?
Question 1 Hint: In the artist-in-residence program, teachers connect directly with students identified as at-risk and allow them to take what is known and apply it to different subject areas. As you watch the video, identify specific applications that are used in an effort to positively affect at-risk students.

Question 1 Feedback: This program provides an opportunity to connect the curriculum to the students’ strengths. Because the students in this particular school were so interested in media literacy, the leader of the artist-in-residence program, as well as the principal and teachers, developed the focus. The students then applied the skills that they would traditionally be learning in a language arts classroom in a real-world setting, all leading to the culminating event in which many people will see and enjoy their work.

Question 2 Text: Even though this video specifically discusses ways to motivate at-risk students, how might these same skills positively affect all students?

Question 2 Hint: Many applications useful for one group of students can easily transfer into application for other students. After identifying specific applications in question one, consider how those skills may be useful in reaching all students.

Question 2 Feedback: As the instructor of the artist-in-residence program works with administrators and teachers to first identify the focus of the program, they investigate student interests and abilities as well as target the group of students who would benefit the most from such a program. After the initial work has been done, they continue to work together to build on the program’s foundation gathering equipment and material needed to successfully implement the program. Time is provided for the students to build their work, and continual feedback is provided both from instructors and from peers. In the final product, the students present their work to a group that can provide valuable feedback. If these steps were followed in a traditional classroom setting, the outcomes would be just as impressive. Student-centered teaching implies that they are worth the attention and automatically sets the stage for success.

Activity 4.4: Promoting Student Involvement (Middle School)

Learning Outcomes
Learning Outcome 4: Recognize the factors of a positive classroom management/environment that engender an intrinsically motivating atmosphere.

Standards:
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Assignment Introduction Text: In these two videos, a fifth-grade teacher works with her students to understand the qualities of a good paragraph. She opens the lesson with a sample of a well-constructed paragraph and points out the necessary components. As the lesson unfolds, the students are asked to develop their own work with the final activity to include presenting their work in front of the class.

Video Asset 1: Applying Cognitive Motivation Theory: Part 1

Video Asset 2: Applying Cognitive Motivation Theory: Part 2

Question 1 Text: Identify one extrinsic (outward) and one intrinsic (internal) motivator used in the fifth-grade writing class.

Question 1 Hint: As you watch the lesson, note each time the students receive or have the opportunity to receive a reward from the teacher. Also note signs of students being encouraged intrinsically.

Question 1 Feedback: Extrinsic motivators include the teacher stating, “I want you to help me out” as they begin to develop a sample paragraph; a rubric that enables students to see how their work will be graded; and recognition of the students’ work upon completion of the task, as all will have an opportunity to share their work with the entire class. Intrinsic motivators include multiple affirmations of the students’ ability to write a successful paragraph.

Question 2 Text: The teacher asks her students who wants to go first in the sharing of their writing. Many students raise their hands, as the teacher comments, “I should’ve known that,” implying that many of her students voluntarily share their work. What has the teacher done to create a positive atmosphere in which many of her students want to read their work first?

Question 2 Hint: The teacher reminds the students of how the papers will be graded prior to the presentations. Even leading up to the actual sharing of the work, the teacher instills within each student an expectation of excellence. As the students go before their classmates and share their work, it is obvious that the environment is a safe and positive one. Identify specifically what the teacher has done to create such a positive atmosphere.

Question 2 Feedback: As the teacher prepares the students for the grading of their work, she reminds them of how the papers will be graded (“We’re gonna give you a three if you have all of the information that I asked for, a topic sentence, four supporting sentences, and you stayed on topic. You’re gonna get a two, and then you say you don’t have any grammatical errors, ok. You’re gonna get a two if you have the topic sentence and say you only have three supporting sentences, but you did stay on topic and you only had a few grammatical errors. You’re gonna
get a one if you wrote a topic sentence, but you added all this different information that didn’t have to do with your topic, you had a lot of grammar mistakes, and no one’s gonna get a zero because everybody’s gonna do it, right?”). She also has high expectations of her students as she states that everyone will do what they are asked to do; thus, no one will receive a zero. She refocuses the students’ attention to the child presenting his or her paper. The students then evaluate each presented paragraph, based on their understanding of the rubric provided. As the lesson concludes, many are disappointed that they did not have a chance to read their work out loud. This is an indication that the students enjoyed the lesson.

Question 3 Text: Why might the individual presentations be considered a motivator? Do you think all students see presenting as a motivator?

Question 3 Hint: How can you tell the students seem to enjoy presenting their paragraphs to the class?

Question 3 Feedback: The teacher involves the students in assessing each other’s paragraphs, which gives the students a sense of active involvement in the class. Also, because their paragraphs are about their own interests, they seem to enjoy sharing their thoughts with each other, and seeing what interests each other. However, a teacher needs to be aware that presenting in front of their peers can be intimidating for some students, and therefore could be a negative act. In this class, the teacher has created a positive, encouraging environment.