

Teaching and Learning Link

Autumn 2 2023



Challenge: Sam Rasmussen

Student motivation is a key factor in academic success and well-being. Motivation can be defined as the 'drive or desire to engage in a certain activity or pursue a certain goal'. It can be influenced by various factors, such as personal interests, curiosity, self-belief, feedback, rewards, and personal support. It is often challenging to create and frustratingly changeable. With students, we play a crucial role in developing and enhancing motivation by creating a supportive and engaging learning environment, designing meaningful and challenging tasks, providing clear and constructive feedback, and recognising and rewarding achievement. In this Teaching and Learning Link, we explore some of the practices and strategies that can be used to motivate our students and encourage them to seek out greater challenge for themselves. I hope you find something amongst the ideas that motivates you to explore this further!

Strategies for motivation which our ECTs are trying

Kate Arnold, Music: Showcasing students' ideas

Recent training focused on the importance of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and how extrinsic motivations can be used to motivate pupils. I am going to try using examples of student work in my PowerPoints to motivate and perhaps also try out a 'copyright' post-it note idea that was shared. For the 'copyright' post-it notes, students who make a high-quality point can write it down on a post-it note, sign it, and then it is displayed on the board/wall of the classroom to signify that they have made an excellent contribution.

Matthew Bareham, PE: Using extrinsic motivational techniques

I like the idea of having an item which 'builds mystique' in the classroom such as the 'comfy chair' or the 'pen of honour', where the students aim to complete good work etc and get rewarded by it. Another idea from the training was to try using a small trophy which is displayed on the desk of the star team from the previous week. Other students strive to get the trophy, increasing extrinsic motivation for all.

John Naylor, PE: What motivates our students?

We completed a really interesting survey on what motivates us in the recent training and I tried something similar out with my form to learn about what works for students [see spotlight on John's work with this, below]. I also learned a few new techniques for motivation and have tried them with my groups. One example is a Quiz Quiz Trade revision idea where each student writes a subject specific question down, a clue and an answer. They find someone else in the room, each person asks their question and then they swap and go find someone else.

Isobel Wilson, Science: Motivating students to aim high

The idea of applying to Oxbridge can be extremely daunting, so supporting students to have aspirations to apply to some of the best universities in the world can be a huge motivation for 6th form students. Successful applications can also motivate students in the years below. There is a lot a teacher can do to help, including helping students aim high in the first place, offering help with applications and mock interviews, and giving plenty of encouragement to keep going when things feel challenging. Students also need to know that even applying is an huge achievement, no matter what happens.

Charlie Russell, English: Intrinsic motivation and revision

I have been exploring ways to motivate my Year 11 students to feel intrinsic motivation by taking responsibility for their own learning. In their revision lessons, I have offered supervised opportunities to access self-driven subject resources and strategies for independent active recall. This has also enabled them to reflect metacognitively on their own growth areas and find ways to address their gaps. This has worked well and is helping me to consider other ways in which we could be encouraging students to lead their own learning.

Jake Newton, Drama: Offering easy questions first

Using an idea from Craig Barton, I experimented with two of my Year 7 classes in the setting of a homework task. The LO was to write a paragraph-long critique of their own performances. With one group, I put this complex task first on the homework sheet, following it up with some easier questions about different drama skills relating to the same performances. With the other group, I reversed the task structure, offering shorter and easier questions first. I found that students produced better and faster answers with the second model, suggesting offering easy recap questions before tasks which require deep thought is a great way to scaffold and motivate.

<https://tipsforteachers.substack.com/p/43-ask-the-easiest-question-first>

A Pastoral Perspective

Sarah Butcher, Etheldreda SSA: What motivates young people?

From my experience, building relationships and getting to know young people starts the process of supporting their motivations to change. Working holistically to understand what is going on for the young person – meeting them where they are in that moment in time, and not only focusing on the future, and academic achievements - and involving family in the engagement makes all the difference.

Some simple praise, recognising small improvements, and noticing a difference in behaviours - and then supporting the young person to self-reflect on the catalyst for change is crucial too. Trying to keep discussions light-hearted, and interesting - so that the young person doesn't feel threatened or shamed is vital, as well as allowing them the opportunities to share their own ideas and goals, so that they feel heard and respected as individuals. Building their self-confidence, and getting them involved in things they may usually chose not to, to support them in feeling capable and to have self-belief, is a key factor too.

Ultimately though, showing that we will not give up on them, and we believe there is always the possibility of change is what makes the key difference.

Motivation and Engagement in Lessons – What works?

Jane Kelleher, RE

Motivation and the desire to engage come from a few different places in school. Strategically, we should consider our curriculum design – selection and organisation of content. Are we presenting our students with interesting, thought-provoking and well-designed lessons? We could consider framing our lessons with interesting questions to give students something tangible and thought-provoking. We could also begin a lesson with a 'mystery object' – something we encourage them to talk about as they come into the classroom.

I find that motivation and engagement can be tricky to maintain as students progress through KS4, even though the stakes are higher than they have ever been. It is therefore worthwhile nurturing intrinsic motivation throughout all the years at secondary school – we are learning this because we find it fascinating; because it allows us to learn something about human nature; because it helps us decode and understand the world around us.

Some useful references here:

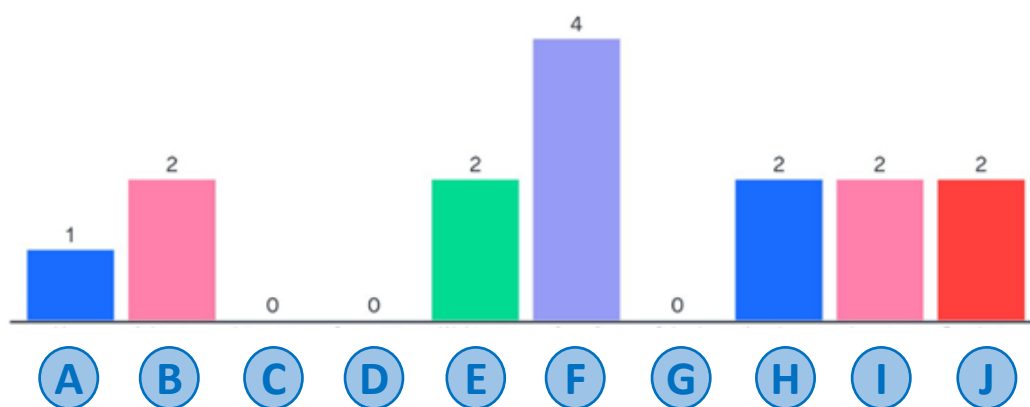
<https://achemicalorthodoxy.co.uk/2021/08/04/engagement-is-not-a-dirty-word/>

<https://carlhendrick.com/2015/03/22/engagement-just-because-theyre-busy-doesnt-mean-theyre-learning-anything/>

John Naylor, PE, investigated motivation with his form group.

Thought-provoking results, even with this small-scale study:

Q: What motivates you at school?



A: Parents' attitudes

B: Achieving a goal

C: Interest in subject

D: Competition with peers

E: Desire to please or impress

F: Fear of failure

G: College points system

H: Avoidance of sanctions

I: Learning something new

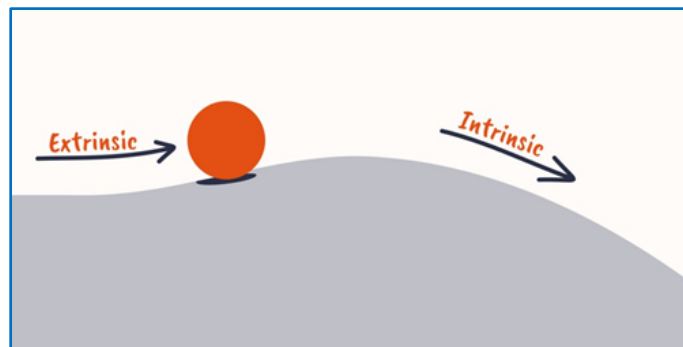
J: Developing as a person



Pedagogy Focus: Teacher educator Peps Mccrae on motivation

In a recent blog-post, Mccrae uses the metaphor of a ball being pushed to explain how we can move our students from extrinsic to intrinsic motivation. Here is his summary of this process:

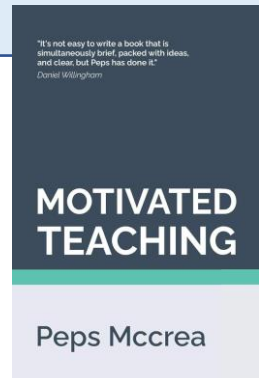
- Both intrinsic and extrinsic sources of motivation have an effect, but they differ over time.
- Extrinsic motivation is easy come, easy go... Intrinsic motivation is much longer lasting.
- If we need to use extrinsic motivation to get the ball rolling, we should then withdraw it as the ball picks up momentum.



Book review: Sam Craven, AP, Science *Motivated Teaching*, by Peps Mccrae

Peps Mccrae's *Motivated Teaching* is a quick and powerful tour through strategies for cultivating and maintaining student (and teacher) motivation. Peps highlights the importance of five core drivers for student motivation: securing student success; building routines that make the process of learning easier while keeping the content challenging; the power of norms and how to make the most of them; earning and keeping the trust of your students by building belonging; and finally boosting student buy-in, not by giving them more choices but by explaining the benefits of the choices you've made for them.

This book has made a tremendous impact on my teaching, not only by introducing new strategies, but also, and perhaps more crucially, by providing an analytical framework I can apply to the strategies I was already using so that I can improve them.



Want more?

Mccrae also suggests reading the following research review on the neuroscience of intrinsic motivation:
https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fnhum.2017.00145/full?utm_source=snacks.pepsmccrae.com&utm_medium=newsletter&utm_campaign=motivational-handover

Further ideas on the blog: <https://snacks.pepsmccrae.com/>

Latest TeachMeet: How can we motivate our students?

Eliza Bernal, Psychology, Sociology and English and Sam Manning, CL Science

Many colleagues gathered in the Pod recently for our first TeachMeet of the year. In a lively session we covered aspects of behaviour and motivation as well as using formative assessment to raise students' self esteem which in turn leads to motivation. We also looked at the differences between disengaged, neutral and engaged behaviour and discussed strategies. We had the opportunity to talk about the behaviour of students at Ely specifically with our Behaviour Lead which was very insightful.

Throughout the session we explored the importance of positive praise, teacher presence and adaptive teaching. Circulation of the room also came up as a key strategy for motivation. Adaptive teaching was another key area of discussion as a way to build students up and support them to access their learning journeys successfully.

Resources used in the session can be found in the files of the QUILT channel on the Staff Teams Page.

Suggested blog read from Sam Craven linked to the themes of this session:

<https://peerreviewededucationblog.com/2023/05/13/internal-school-avoidance-how-pupils-avoid-paying-attention/>

Next TeachMeet: 7th March in the Pod, 3.15 – 4.15. **ALL WELCOME!**

Is it time to showcase your practice more widely?

The Link is great – but we want to do more!
 In January we are launching a **new ECA T and L Blog** for longer pieces of writing, starting with fantastic posts from Gosia Bates and Jane Kelleher.

We are actively seeking further contributions – contact Sam C and Charity if interested.

January will also see the start of our **new T and L Writing Club**, every Wednesday at 3.15 in the Pod. Join a relaxed group of colleagues for peer-support in writing blog posts, articles for academic journals and so on.

Expert advice and experience on offer from staff who have already published.

Motivation through Mini-Goals: Charity Novick, English

Where would teachers be without To-Do lists? You only have to glance round a staff meeting to see how much we all rely on them. There is no way to keep all the things we need to do in our heads and it feels motivational to get work organised and even more motivational to tick tasks off. Completed To Do lists are physical manifestations of the job well done, the hard work achieved.

We can offer this same sense of motivation and achievement to our students through the use of Mini-Goals. They can effectively operate as the To-Do list of the lesson. As Keeley explained in recent training, Mini-Goals support TA practice, but I think they have much wider potential too. They can improve our teaching structures and keep the pace high. When every activity in our lessons is explicitly intentional, driving forcefully towards the learning objective, energy builds. There is a sense of shared purpose between students, teacher and TA. Low level behaviour issues tend to drop away as the class understands that there is a certain amount to get through on the path to achievement and that the steps are within their grasp. Even when we don't complete all the goals, we can take time at the end of the lesson to celebrate progress and plan collaboratively for next time.

I'm currently sharing Mini-Goals throughout my lessons, consolidating them with reflective plenaries, **as shown here**. If you've tried Mini-Goals too, please let us know: it would be good to explore this deceptively simple technique in more detail in future Links.

L/O: To be able to use language techniques to argue your point of view.

1. Do now task – checks and ticks from yesterday's summary.
2. Hearing some more summaries to recap our work so far.
3. Recap of key persuasive techniques
4. Practice with key persuasive techniques
5. Writing prompt – an email from a friend
6. Write your response, arguing your point of view
7. Annotate and label the techniques you have used

This completes the LO.

Assessing our LO:

I completed ____ mini goals / 7 today.

I feel ____% confident with using persuasive techniques.

NEXT TIME... Join in too!

Showcase **your amazing practice** and contribute to the vibrant T and L culture around college!

The next edition will be on **dialogue** and we need your expert answers to all these questions:

How do you make Academic Mentoring work for you?

How do you maximise impact in your mocks feedback?

How do you make the most of your limited time in parents' evening slots?

What mechanisms do you use to share best practice across your teams?

What makes a good staff meeting?

The T and L Link is edited by **Charity Novick and Sam Craven**. Please email us with **your plentiful ideas and contributions** or come and have a chat.