CHAPTER 5

Setting the Stage for Literacy Assessment Through Affective Measures

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Common Core State Standards	
Comprehension and Collaboration	*SL.1.1* Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about *grade 1 topics and texts* with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
	SL.2.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about *grade 2 topics and texts* with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
	SL.3.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 3 topics and texts*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
	SL.4.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 4 topics and texts,* building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
	SL.5.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 5 topics and texts,* building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

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FOCUS QUESTIONS

1. How can a teacher use reading choices for reluctant readers?

2. What benefits can you name when employing reading interest and attitude surveys?

3. How could generating the characteristics of "strong" and "weak" readers help students as they progress into mature readers?

4. How can you envision using "buddy reading" in your classroom of fifth graders?

5. Explain your philosophy on using intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation with reluctant readers.

Words in Action

Affective Measures

As a new teacher in a fifth-grade classroom, Sheila's struggles include getting students into a reading regiment whereby they self-select books from the classroom library during their independent or free reading time at the end of the day. She notices smirks, frowns, and opposition when she announces free reading, especially from a small group of boys. Their resistance is palatable and makes for a difficult closing to the school day. Under-the-breath mutterings such as "Not again" and "Do we have to?" and other not-so-civilized terms are used. Sheila is in a quandary about how to make free reading enjoyable, yet instructional for students.

Thinking back to early in the school year, she had set up her classroom library with required fifth-grade text selections, as well as some fictional favorites of intermediate students. Where had she gone wrong? She steered away from informational texts because they were used for instructional resources. Sheila remembered students had asked if they could bring their own reading materials, but as a new teacher she was wary of the principal stopping by and seeing students reading *Car and Driver* magazine or some teenage fluff.

During the end-of-the-day reading, clock watching had become a favorite pastime of the students. *Gosh*, she thought, *when I was a student I looked forward all day to free reading. But is this really "free" for them? What steps can I take to reach a happy medium where students look forward to connecting with a good book? Or does that connection always need to be with a book? What will the administration or parents think if I allow other literacy resources such as comics, newspapers, magazines, graphic novels, or e-books on tablets?*

Sheila decided to reflect deeply on her quandary, ask other teachers what they did, and also approach her principal about the situation. Oh, yes, and she decided to ask the most important stakeholders—the students themselves.

Setting the Stage for Literacy Assessment Through Affective Measures

Research has confirmed that students who enjoy reading perform significantly better than those who do not. Unfortunately, 37% of the students in the study reported they do

not read recreationally at all (Gambrell, 2011). This could be attributed to lack of reading in the home; absence of books, magazines, or newspapers in the home; and low awareness of the genres of literature that students may find engaging. In Ontario, Canada, People for Education noted that in the group of third and sixth graders surveyed (240,000) only about half liked to read (Pattenaude, 2012).

However, reasons for the lack of student enthusiasm concerning reading can be varied and complex, as we shall see. Moreover, with the advent of Literacy 2014, educators need to embrace alternative methods of connecting students to reading through Internet resources, multimedia, as well as graphic novels, comic books, and magazines. Engaging students in various forms of literature is essential, especially when teachers can guide them in **purposeful reading**. For instance, introducing students to autobiographies, biographies, or memoirs is an opportunity for them to connect with subjects who may share similar traits, values, or cultural backgrounds. Literature and informational texts can also be purposeful for learning about other countries, states, or cities, and comparing and contrasting them with their own lives. Teaching students to read for purpose could increase their interest and motivation to read.

Reading motivation, or the likelihood of **engagement** in reading or choosing to read, is critical for students to develop their full literacy potential. Engaging in reading is even more important than a student's family background of strong literacy promotion. Thus, stressing the importance of reading and promoting many opportunities for reading is critical to students' academic success and, ultimately, to their success and contribution as citizens in their community. Student motivation to read at home and in school decreases as children get older. Regrettably, decline in reading motivation appears to be the greatest from first through fourth grade (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). Therefore, as teachers, we need to ensure that students find enjoyment, value, and authenticity in reading.

It is important that we ask students the following: What makes a good reader? What strategies are crucial in proficient reading? What are weak readers lacking (Johnson, 2005)? By allowing students to understand what strong readers do to process text—through **strategies** such as inferencing, making connections, visualizing, determining importance, synthesizing, questioning, and using effective text structures—weaker readers can be taught to approach text more like strong readers (p. 766).

Edmunds and Bauserman (2006) found that teachers voice definitive concerns about students' motivation, and it can be concluded that teachers must become active literacy educators in the classroom and promote the importance of literacy. In surveying teachers, they noted the need to

- foster a genuine love of literacy in the classroom;
- boost the confidence of reluctant readers;
- promote at-home recreational reading;
- stress intrinsic, instead of extrinsic, motivation to read;

- address peer reading opportunities; and
- turn negative comments about reading into positive ones.

As found in Edmunds and Bauserman's (2006) study, motivating students as readers is complex and requires a high level of literacy engagement that students will find interesting, relevant, and meaningful. Throughout this chapter, issues of reading engagement, motivation, and identity will be addressed.

Adolescent students who participate in programs that connect literacy with real-life out-of-school issues and personal interests indicate more positive feelings about reading and writing in school. (Ivey & Broaddus, 2001, p. 354)

Establishing Purposes for Reading and Writing

As you have learned in earlier chapters of this book, no two students are alike; thus, how teachers facilitate reading instruction in the classroom is critical to how students will approach reading and writing, specifically younger students. As teachers of reading, we have to guide students to become self-engaged readers. To engage students in becoming successful readers and writers, it is important to set the stage for reading and writing by providing them with skills and strategies for purposeful reading and writing. As children explore the academic content areas, they need to know and understand purposeful strategies for reading and writing that are based on context. These contexts should be authentic so that students can connect what they are learning and reading to their lives. These meaningful experiences can include learning about their community, learning about the sociocultural aspects of their lives, reading for entertainment, and reading for real-life experiences, such as desired careers.

Furthermore, teachers need to provide students with opportunities to explore various genres of reading and writing to pique their interest (Ivey & Broaddus, 2001). When students have a choice in reading and writing, engagement and motivation are dynamic. Ivey and Broaddus contend that teaching strategies for reading and writing are critical and "should be embedded in the context of diverse genres and multiethnic children's and adolescent literature that inspires students and evokes personal responses" (2001, p. 356). A growing body of research on motivation, choice, and interest is showing that young adolescents engage in purposeful and strategic reading outside of the classroom, further suggesting that when given a choice students possess the necessary skills to have good literacy experiences. For instance, young adolescent girls are more likely to choose books that relate to them socially, personally, or in their future career goals.

Therefore, children need to have a purpose for reading and writing to engage them in ways that motivate and interest them to read and write in the classroom. A study conducted by Fisher and Frey (2012) found that when students are given essential questions that evoke critical thinking, they are more likely to read for inquiry, which leads to reading with a purpose.

Allington and Gabriel (2012, p. 10) noted that the two most powerful design factors for improving reading motivation and comprehension were student access to many books and personal choice of what to read.

Reading is a multifaceted process involving word recognition, comprehension, fluency, and motivation. Learn how readers integrate these facets to make meaning from print. (Leipzig, 2001, para. 1)

As readers ourselves, we come to the act of reading with certain preconceptions and beliefs. It is critical to note that our students, likewise, enter into reading with various preconceptions (e.g., trepidation or enjoyment), specific interests (e.g., wolves or princesses), and motivations (e.g., "How fast can I get through this task?" or "How long will the teacher let us read?") that impact a classroom literacy community. The questions in Table 5.1 are designed to help you get a handle on your own preconceptions regarding reader preference.

Table 5.1 Prereading and Postreading Preference Guide

Directions: As you read Chapter 5, think about your preconceptions in the areas of student literacy interests, motivations, and sustaining a classroom literacy community.

After a collaborative discussion, label A for general agreement with the statement or D for general disagreement with the statement. The lines following the statements are provided for any "well . . . buts." After completing Chapter 5, go back to review your preferences and indicate an A or D on the second line. Be prepared to support you decision and/or revision in thinking.

_____ _____ 1. Engaged readers will always remain that way, while disengaged readers will remain unmotivated to read.

_____ _____ 2. Teachers should always choose books students should read during their sustained reading time; choices should be limited.

_____ _____ 3. Reading incentives such as small gifts to get students to read should be used to provide extrinsic motivation.

_____ _____ 4. A student's reading identity can be positive or negative; teachers should gather this information through individual conferences and surveys.

_____ _____ 5. Buddy reading activities can serve to benefit student efficacy in literacy.

Making Connections

Take a moment and work in small groups to discuss how content-specific reading and writing can be developed to engage students in purposeful activities that promote strong academic and literacy experiences. Think of essential questions that address students' social and personal lives and evoke purposeful reading and writing activities. Explain why and how those questions will arouse interest and motivation.

┌─ **Making Connections** ─────────────────────────────────

Now, reflect on your own unconscious process for purposeful reading and writing. What do you do that is automatic when you read? What is your conscious approach for purposeful reading and writing? Do you develop questions in your mind that keep your reading and writing focused on the overall purpose for reading? Write on your process for purposeful reading and writing, and then share with your colleagues.

Student Definitions of Reading and Writing

Definitions of reading and writing vary widely. Walcutt (1967) defined reading as the ability to decode symbols to develop mastery skills for comprehending printed materials. The development and teaching of reading is a complex process that involves skills and strategies to help students read fluently with comprehension. But it is not just the ability to decode symbols, read fluently, and comprehend what is read; it also involves sustaining engagement and motivation to read (Leipzig, 2001). As teachers, providing students with reading skills and reading strategies is essential to how they experience reading and reading success. Afflerbach, Pearson, and Paris (2008) offer two unique interpretations of reading skills and reading strategies:

- Reading skills are automatic actions that result in decoding and comprehension with speed, efficiency, and fluency and usually occur without awareness of the components or control involved.
- Reading strategies are deliberate, goal-directed attempts to control and modify the reader's efforts to decode text, understand words and construct meanings of test. (p. 368)

Effective reading instruction should engage students in authentic and meaningful skills and strategies that foster cognitive responses to reading, responses such as motivation, self-regulation, and self-assessment. Effective reading instruction should also influence students to automatically use good strategies for comprehension and reading for purpose (Cziko, Greenleaf, Hurwitz, & Schoenbach, 2000). When students are equipped with various strategies and the skills needed to decode text, engagement and interest are strengthened and students are able to experience various reading tools. They will have greater opportunity to try different skills when text meaning requires more complex thinking.

We now know with greater certainty that children who have made positive associations with reading tend to read more often, for longer periods of time, and with greater intensity. (Henk & Melnick, 1995, p. 470)

┌─ **Making Connections** ─────────────────────────────────

With a partner, identify effective skills and strategies that promote children's reading for purpose, develop comprehension, and encourage motivation. How do you know that these serve those purposes?

Literacy Agency Self-Assessment: Self-Efficacy

Students' self-perceptions of their ability to read influence their reading experiences. Henk and Melnick (1995) suggest that students who perceive high self-efficacy in their reading abilities are more engaged than those students with low self-efficacy in their reading abilities. Consequently, self-efficacy will have a huge impact on how students experience the text and their motivation to read. Thus, providing students with ways to affirm their beliefs about their reading abilities could be beneficial not only for the students but also for the teacher. The Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS; Henk & Melnick, 1995) measures how students perceive themselves as readers. Reading success or lack thereof could be attributed to the students' perception of their reading. The RSPS is based on four sources:

1. Progress: A child's perception of present reading performance compared with past performance.

2. Observational comparison: How a child perceives his or her reading performance as compared with those of classmates.

3. Social feedback: Direct and indirect input about reading from teachers, classmates, and people in the child's family.

4. Physiological states: Internal feelings the child experiences during reading (p. 472).

The RSPS can be a valuable tool in the classroom to inform and perhaps affirm students' perceptions of themselves as readers (see Table 5.2). Teachers can then use the information to develop instruction and strategies to help engage struggling readers with more positive reading experiences.

Literacy Self-Regulation

Starting young readers on the path to **self-regulated learning** is a critical component of literacy instruction that begins in preschool (McTigue, Washburn, & Liew, 2011). This means a student should strive to maintain a positive attitude when encountering reading difficulties, remaining flexible and seeking support when needed. Furthermore, **eco-resiliency** is the ability to exert control over the reading task when called for (Block & Block, 1980). Coupled with academic resiliency (defined in the next paragraph), students intuitively recognize the difference between conscious behaviors in a reading setting and those on the playground. Underlying all is the socioemotional skill of self-esteem, which gives students confidence that they can reach their reading goals through self-monitoring and checking.

In a responsive classroom, students are engaged in literacy tasks, yet do not hesitate to seek help from knowledgeable others. This may be the teacher, aide, another student, or a classroom volunteer. In this manner, students develop **academic resiliency**—that is, the ability to persevere through challenging academic tasks. Table 5.3 contains a checklist of academic resilient behaviors observed during literacy activities.

Table 5.2 Reader Self-Perception Scale

Student:_____Grade:_____

Date: _____ Teacher: _____

Answer each question.

1. How often do you read per week?

2. What do *you* like to read (text genres: fiction, fantasy, biography/autobiography, informational; other media: comic books, magazine articles, blogs, e-books, etc.)?

3. What was most memorable for you in your recent reading? *Why* was that?

4. Who are *two* of your favorite writers?

5. Where do you find your favorite reading material (e.g., online, magazines, books, library)?

6. What do you do well as a reader? What would you like to improve?

7. What have you *learned* as a reader that makes you proud (e.g., better comprehension, fluency, inference)?

8. What literacy skills have helped you with your fictional reading?

9. What literacy skills have helped you with your informational reading?

Teacher's comments:

Source: Adapted from the *Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System*.

Table 5.3 Teacher Checklist of Academic Resilient Behaviors in Literacy

Engagement

☐ Eager for reading time (teacher read-alouds, partner reading, books on tape, literature circles, guided reading, or other literacy tasks)
☐ Needs only occasional teacher redirection to stay on task
☐ Enjoys teacher or student read-alouds, reader's theatre, or poetry, and reacts appropriately to the text (nonverbally or verbally)
☐ Other evidence:

Self-Monitoring

☐ Recognizes meaning-changing errors and tries to self-correct during oral reading
☐ Strives for correct syntax through paragraphs and sentences
☐ Rereads own writing in response to reading and can identify parts that may confuse another reader
☐ Other evidence:

Help-Seeking

☐ Uses class resources (e.g., dictionary, Internet) for academic growth
☐ Asks other students or adults for explanations when confused
☐ Other evidence:

Source: Adapted from McTigue et al. (2011).

Making Connections

Reflect on your own experience as a reader and/or writer, and write about that experience. Think about a time when you were successful, and then think about a time when you were not as successful. Describe specific literacy incidents demonstrating self-regulated learning, eco-resiliency, self-efficacy, and academic resiliency. How have these incidents changed your notions of reading and seeking support when confused?

Enjoyment of Reading: Interest and Attitudes

Greenwood (2007) and his in-service teachers had pupils in Grades 1 through 8 complete the sentence stem, "Reading is . . . " (p. 37). This research acknowledged how critical it is to converse with students about their definitions of reading and to take the time to listen to their responses, noting the variety of definitions and complexities of literacy. Some powerful definitions of reading begin this section. Interesting to note is the **transformational literacy** perspective these students choose to include.

- "Reading is a separate definition for everyone because when people read they see different things than those around them."
- "Reading is powerful words on a page to transform a reader."
- "Reading is staying up all night to find out what happens next."
- "Reading is comprehension and understanding of text. Though to many reading a book can mean simply saying aloud the words, truly understand[ing] the words is a bigger part of reading. In addition, thinking afterwards about what you read is a big part of the reading process." (p. 37)

In this chapter's introduction, we provided quotes citing the declining lack of interest in text-based reading, as well as ongoing teacher concerns about reader motivation, negativism, goal setting, confidence, and **extrinsic rewards** for reading, especially for reluctant and/or struggling readers. We should note, students who are strong readers but choose not to pick up a book for leisure reading were previously labeled **alliterate**, able to read but choosing not to. We prefer to call them **reluctant readers**.

We highly recommend, as the school year starts, that teachers take the time to understand their students' interest or lack of interest in reading, as well as their attitudes when approaching reading tasks. There are various ways to uncover interest in and attitudes about reading for diverse learning styles: drawing pictures, performing oral reading,

employing symbols, and observing body response, as well as using traditional questionnaires or surveys. The data from these interest and attitude questionnaires and surveys will determine how instruction is designed. Additionally, the information gathered will provide teachers with information as to who is struggling, who is a reluctant reader, and who lacks motivation. Our advice is to make use of ongoing observations of readers through on-the-spot analysis of responses and to make the inventory sessions engaging for students.

What Makes a Good Reader?

Little information is available on how to assess student understanding of what makes a proficient reader. Johnson (2005) developed a "good reader" open-ended series questionnaire (see Table 5.4) to name some things students have observed strong and poor readers do.

Table 5.4 What Makes a Good Reader?

1. Do you know any good readers? Who?

2. How do you know he or she is a good reader?

3. Name some things good readers do when they read.

4. Name some things poor readers do when they read.

5. What kind of reader are you? Tell why.

Source: Johnson (2005).

Johnson administered the questionnaire at the beginning of school in August, then readministered it in January to note changes in responses. Overall "good readers" were found to have the following characteristics:

- Read with expression
- Make no mistakes/read fast
- Read a lot
- Memorize
- Correct/reread
- Sound out
- Don't skip pages
- Monitor/don't give up
- Ask questions/make connections
- Take their time/understand
- Use strategies/infer
- Overview/preview
- Retell

On the other hand, "poor" readers exhibited the following characteristics:

- Read with little expression/read too fast
- Don't read a lot/pretend to be done
- Don't correct
- Become bored with reading
- Don't select "just right" books
- Don't enjoy reading
- Don't finish books

- Don't make connections/use strategies
- Don't ask questions
- Only look at pictures
- Sound out/skip parts
- Don't understand what they read
- Don't monitor or go back
- Can't finish/get stuck
- Read slowly

The changing definitions of students as strong or weak readers evolved as students observed peer literacy behaviors. By watching peers and conversing about the current reading selection, a powerful connection with literacy was established. Moreover, students developed **stamina** as they followed a classroom schedule assigning reading times. They became more aware that they have control over their reading behaviors and gained resiliency and became mature readers.

Reader's Interest Inventory Analysis

We developed a Reader's Interest Inventory to learn more about students and also to help discern their affective responses to questions. This inventory elicits verbal responses, but as an observant teacher, you can also learn about students through their affective reactions. Oftentimes, students will give answers they believe the teacher wants to hear; however, nonverbal cues may yield more authentic reactions. Using verbal and nonverbal cues may yield more accurate information needed to develop instruction for students. This is especially important in working with English language learners (ELLs).

The Reader's Interest Inventory Analysis in Table 5.5 is meant to be administered orally prior to an individual reading case study and contains 16 broad-based questions (that can be shortened) to prompt student responses. Observational opportunities exist for teachers to note an **affective** responses based on each question, along with a 4-point

Table 5.5 Reader's Interest Inventory Analysis

Teacher: _____ Grade: _____

Study Pseudonym: _____ Date: _____

1. Do you like reading?

Response:

4-Scale Rating	Affective Response
3—High Reading Interest 2—Moderate Reading Interest 1—Low Reading Interest 0—No Reading Interest	☺ ☺ ☹

(Continued)

Table 5.5 (Continued)		
2. What is your favorite thing about reading?		
Response:		
4-Scale Rating	**Affective Response**	
3—High Reading Interest 2—Moderate Reading Interest 1—Low Reading Interest 0—No Reading Interest	☺ ☐ ☹	
3. What is your least favorite thing about reading?		
Response:		
4-Scale Rating	**Affective Response**	
3—High Reading Interest 2—Moderate Reading Interest 1—Low Reading Interest 0—No Reading Interest	☺ ☐ ☹	
4. What is your favorite book you have ever read?		
Response:		
4-Scale Rating	**Affective Response**	
3—High Reading Interest 2—Moderate Reading Interest 1—Low Reading Interest 0—No Reading Interest	☺ ☐ ☹	
5. Do you have books of your own? What types?		
Response:		
4-Scale Rating	**Affective Response**	
3—High Reading Interest 2—Moderate Reading Interest 1—Low Reading Interest 0—No Reading Interest	☺ ☐ ☹	

6. What do you like to do in your free time?	
Response:	

4-Scale Rating	Affective Response
3—High Reading Interest 2—Moderate Reading Interest 1—Low Reading Interest 0—No Reading Interest	☺ 😐 ☹

7. Do you like to go to the library? Why? Why not?	
Response:	

4-Scale Rating	Affective Response
3—High Reading Interest 2—Moderate Reading Interest 1—Low Reading Interest 0—No Reading Interest	☺ 😐 ☹

8. Do you read at home or read with your family? How so?	
Response:	

4-Scale Rating	Affective Response
3—High Reading Interest 2—Moderate Reading Interest 1—Low Reading Interest 0—No Reading Interest	☺ 😐 ☹

9. Do you like to read at school? Why? Why not?	
Response:	

4-Scale Rating	Affective Response
3—High Reading Interest 2—Moderate Reading Interest 1—Low Reading Interest 0—No Reading Interest	☺ 😐 ☹

(Continued)

Table 5.5 (Continued)

10. What school subject(s) do you like the most?

Response:

4-Scale Rating	Affective Response		
3—High Reading Interest 2—Moderate Reading Interest 1—Low Reading Interest 0—No Reading Interest	☺	⊡	☹

11. What do you do well when you are reading?

Response:

4-Scale Rating	Affective Response		
3—High Reading Interest 2—Moderate Reading Interest 1—Low Reading Interest 0—No Reading Interest	☺	⊡	☹

12. What's your favorite thing to do during reading instruction? Why?

Response:

4-Scale Rating	Affective Response		
3—High Reading Interest 2—Moderate Reading Interest 1—Low Reading Interest 0—No Reading Interest	☺	⊡	☹

13. How do you feel when you are reading?

Response:

4-Scale Rating	Affective Response		
3—High Reading Interest 2—Moderate Reading Interest 1—Low Reading Interest 0—No Reading Interest	☺	⊡	☹

14. If you could change one thing about your reading class, what would you change? Why?		
Response:		

4-Scale Rating	Affective Response		
3—High Reading Interest 2—Moderate Reading Interest 1—Low Reading Interest 0—No Reading Interest	☺	😐	☹

15. What do you feel about reading different kinds of books?		
Response:		

4-Scale Rating	Affective Response		
3—High Reading Interest 2—Moderate Reading Interest 1—Low Reading Interest 0—No Reading Interest	☺	😐	☹

16. What goals would you like to set with me to accomplish by the end of the year?		
Response:		

4-Scale Rating	Affective Response		
3—High Reading Interest 2—Moderate Reading Interest 1—Low Reading Interest 0—No Reading Interest	☺	😐	☹

rating scale to quickly check as each question is addressed. We recognize the importance of analyzing student responses for facial and body responses—hence the inclusion of the scale and affective check-offs.

Using Visuals to Gauge Reading Engagement

When teachers match learning styles with interest inventory preferences, there is greater opportunity to determine how best to encourage reading engagement and results in gaining feedback that acknowledges and respects students' diversity. For younger students, familiar pictures and bright colors can bring into play a level of comfort in making choices about early reading endeavors. The Butterfly Visual Learning Styles Inventory

queries use learning style choices: tactile (teddy bear), visual (lots of pictures), listening (reading aloud), or musical (songs and music). This inventory could elicit a discussion about various ways young children connect to reading, why differing approaches all contribute to a life of literacy, and how they can value them. Teachers can find various templates that relate to the pictures or themes in a **picture book** and develop their own visual learning styles interest inventory. The sample provided in Figure 5.1 was developed by graduate student Alicia Sherman, MST program, SUNY Plattsburgh (2011).

Figure 5.1
Butterfly Visual
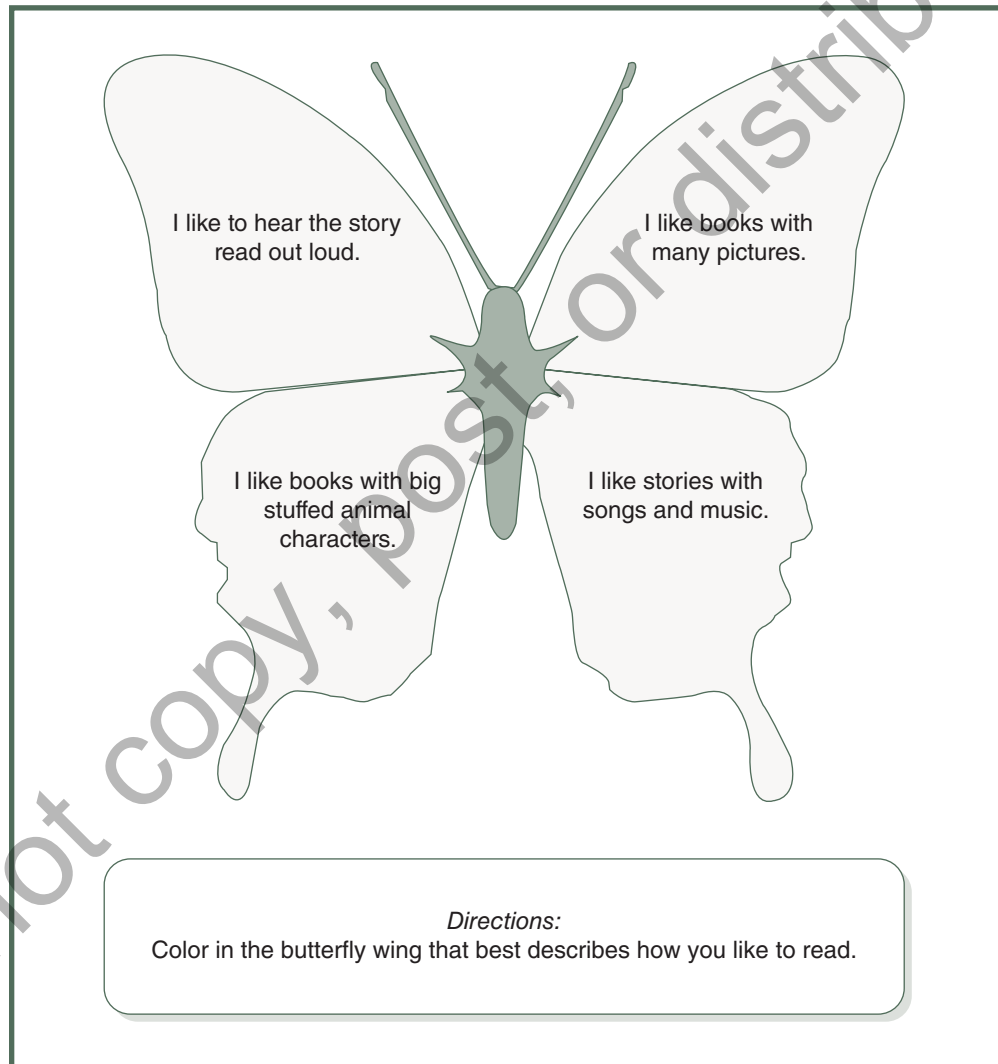
Thought-Bubble Picture Self-Assessment

Many readers have positive literacy identities; however, many reluctant readers do not. As struggling students progress through the grades, they become adept at hiding their true feelings about the act of reading. "As teachers, we need to recognize the importance

of how students perceive reading and the emotions they feel" (Zambo, 2006, p. 802). The following scenario describes the feelings and actions of a struggling student:

> A fifth grade student, Lee, feels no joy in reading. He has struggled as a reader since first grade and feels overwhelmed by the demands of science and social studies texts. Consequently, he avoids reading for pleasure, even though he loves to know about NASCAR. He is convinced he will never be a good reader and when he is in guided reading, he often stares around the room, asks to go to the bathroom, or puts his head down on the table. He becomes anxious when he hears the teacher call for guided reading groups to form. In his mind, reading is linked to failure and negative experiences. (p. 798)

Zambo (2006) suggests that teachers gauge their students' perceptions about reading through thought-bubble pictures. Samples of blank thought bubbles are provided in Figures 5.2 and 5.3. Thought bubbles can contain negative or positive perceptions

Figure 5.2
Sample Thought-Bubble: Boy

Directions:
Pretend this boy is you reading a book. Draw his expression, including his eyes and mouth. Then write or draw what he is thinking about while reading.

Figure 5.3

Sample Thought-Bubble: Girl

Directions:
Pretend this girl is you reading a book. Draw her expression, including her eyes and mouth. Then write or draw what she is thinking about while reading.
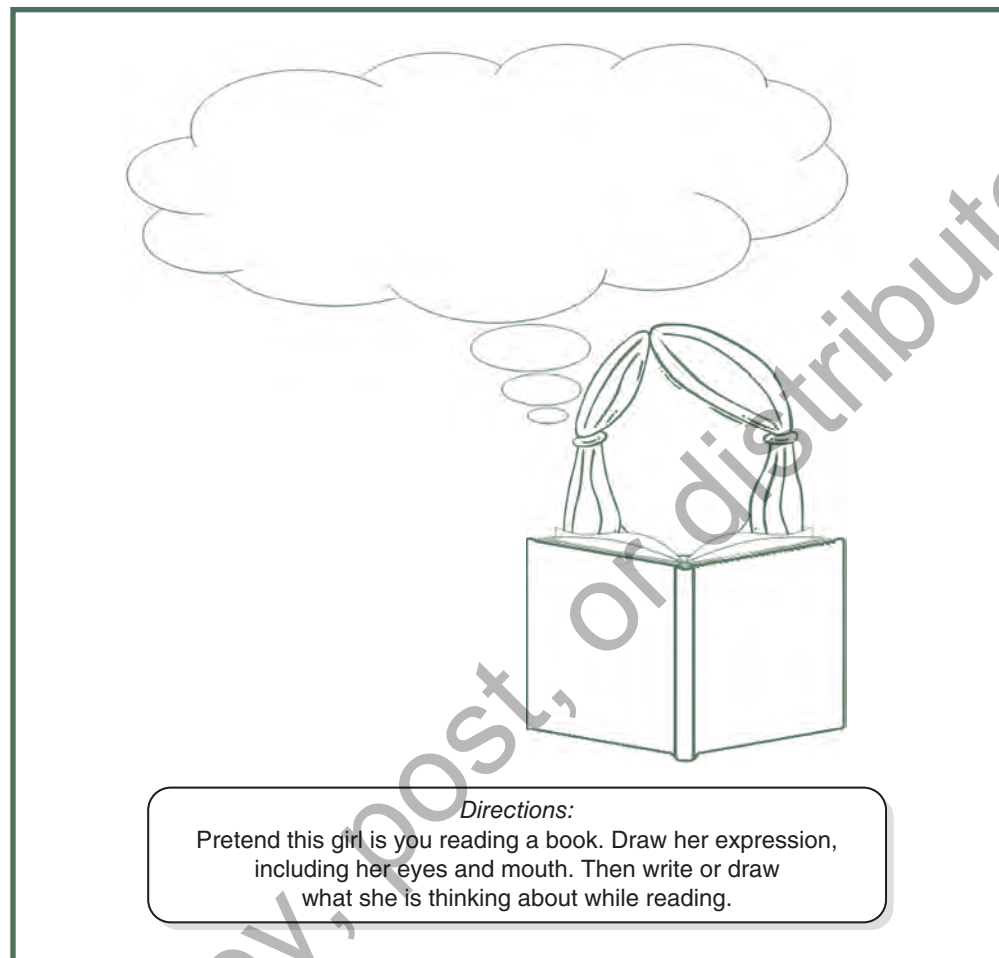
and emotions concerning reading. Through drawings and captions, readers are encouraged to express what a character (they as readers) is thinking or feeling during the act of reading.

Zambo (2006) cautions teachers to ensure the reliability and validity of their interpretations by asking another observer to score the bubbles. Positive, neutral, and negative ratings based on physical features of characters, as well as symbols, signs, and emotive words, aid teachers in interpreting student self-assessment of their reading. Thought bubbles serve as a valuable check for positive reading attitudes and negative reactions. Teachers can offer varied reading choices, including graphic novels, comics, and e-texts, to stimulate reading interest.

Motivation: Reading Resiliency and Maturity

Reading resiliency is a critical habit that supports a love of reading. However, reluctant readers do not habituate resiliency since their negative attitudes about reading prevail. As noted, there are many reasons for student pessimism, but as facilitators of literacy, we

hold the key to turning that attitude around. One fun and easy way to change student attitudes is through buddy reading.

Buddy Reading

Along with book choice and allocating chunks of time for pleasure reading during the school day, setting up a **buddy reading** program can foster positive attitudes toward reading, improve confidence, develop a love of books, and perk up self-esteem (Friedland & Truesdell, 2004). There are many configurations of cross-age reading—older students with primary students or high school students with intermediate or middle school students—however, the point of the program is promoting an experience of mentorship or **reading resiliency**. Some caveats for a successful student program include these basic elements:

- Primary students should have the ability to read independently.
- Grade levels should be spaced out enough to provide a mentoring experience—for example, second grade and sixth grade.
- Partners should remain together throughout the program and be same-gender pairs.
- The program should span several months and consistently occur at a designated time and day (for about 30 minutes).
- Buddies should have a quiet, comfortable place to read.
- A significant number of books should be available for self-selection, with a variety of reading levels and genres represented.
- Materials should be stored together, including a large plastic bag to tote books, reading logs, and writing materials (Friedland & Truesdell, 2004).

Cross-age tutoring can be beneficial for both students involved, with the positive elements of reading aloud to and with younger students, appropriate book choices, reading with fluency and expression, and follow-up questions. A reading log that lists the books read and how well the students liked each book is recommended. Teacher modeling of the procedure as well as monitoring of the relationships in student pairs is essential. Obtaining feedback midway through the program will gauge students' interest and engagement in the process (Friedland & Truesdell, 2004). A Buddy Reading Survey can provide a clue to the reluctant reader's resiliency and maturity in taking on the mentorship of a younger student (see Table 5.6).

Buddy reading is a powerful motivator for students disinclined to read. When such a reader engages in reading aloud to a younger student a text he or she has practiced reading and feels a level of comfort with, that reader will experience a measure of success. As Vacca, Vacca, and Mraz (2010) contend, "Reading aloud can spur student interest in a topic. After hearing a book read aloud, students are much more likely to pick up books on this topic, and related ones, on their own" (p. 383). **Maturity** in making informed book choices is the sign of an advancing reader. With maturity, students are aware of their reading abilities, including likes and dislikes, strengths and limitations. For example, students might recognize that informational books on choice topics are more engaging to them than fairy tales or tall tales. Moreover, they discover that informational books contain glossaries of challenging terms to support fluency.

Table 5.6 Buddy Reading Survey

Student:_____Date:_____

Reading Buddy: _____

Please answer the following questions about your buddy reading experience.

1. Do you look forward to your buddy reading? Why or why not?

2. What do you think you do well in your buddy reading program? How is working with a reading buddy helping you improve?

3. Is your reading buddy a good reader?

4. What does your reading buddy do well? What are you helping him or her improve?

5. Do you ever come to something you don't know? What do you do about it?

6. Does your reading buddy ever come to something he or she doesn't know? What does he or she do about it?

7. Do you practice reading your material aloud before your buddy session? _____ Yes _____ No

8. What kinds of questions do you ask your reading buddy during or after your reading?

9. Do you think you are a good reading buddy?

10. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest, how would you rate your buddy reading experience?

    1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

11. What do you like and/or dislike about buddy reading?

Reading Choice

Reluctant oral readers should be supported by the teacher in their choice of what to read aloud to the class, an activity suggested by Hurst, Scales, Frecks, and Lewis (2011). By signing up beforehand for a designated day and time to read aloud to the class, students have the opportunity to prepare for their performance. **Reading choice** can be a powerful motivating factor; however, students must explain their rationale for choosing that particular text, song lyrics, script, letter, book series, children's book, joke, quote, excerpt from a novel, piece from a magazine or the Internet, or poem (Hurst et al., 2011). "The reading aloud activity cultivates civility toward classmates through audience participation, fosters reading confidence, and provides a platform for social learning" (p. 442).

Reading Incentives

Teachers struggle with decisions about the use of reading incentives. Various groups offer reading incentives, some dubious or even detrimental to true literacy motivation. Other incentives support reading recognition, expertise, and celebration. Typical incentives include the following:

- Classroom incentives: "Place a check on our classroom reading chart for completing the book. Good work!" (Recognition)
- Reader's chair: Like writer's chair, the student highlights the book read. (Expertise)
- Home-based incentives: "If you finish reading your chapter, we will go get ice cream." (Food) "You cannot go out to play with Sam until the book is read." (Leisure time)
- District incentives: "Let's turn in our parent-signed reading sheets toward our Pizza Hut reading points." (Group pressure)
- Community incentives: "Join us Tuesday, November 12 for our Celebration of Literacy at the Rotterdam Library." (Celebration of literacy)
- Commercial incentives: "Let's get on the computers to use Accelerated Reader." (Commercial reading incentive program software; not recommended)

Our advice is to carefully consider the use of reading incentives and check with parents/guardians about their allocation of incentives. Also, remember that the previous grades' teachers may have used incentives that benefited students. Find out what incentives were used and why. Reading motivation can be broken down into two main components: intrinsic and extrinsic (Hilden & Jones, 2011). As teachers, our primary aim is to nurture the intrinsic love of reading and book choice over other activities.

Teachers' Questions About Reading Motivation

1. *Should I provide rewards for student reading?* Books as prizes are the best! Offer students rewards that are directly related to the act of reading, such as a bookmark or book cover. Check out the Scholastic Reading Club, which offers teachers inexpensive book sets.

2. *What intrinsic rewards can teachers employ to engage reluctant readers?* Social motivation to read can act as an intrinsic reward. To boost intrinsic motivation, allow students to share with others through book chats, while eating lunch with the principal, or by turning a book into a reader's theatre enactment.

3. *What can I do to help a young reader who has consistently received extrinsic rewards from parents for at-home reading?* What well-meaning parents do to provide incentives is a family matter; however, if students react when no extrinsic reward is given for reading in the class, the teacher may discuss with parents his or her viewpoint as far as reward giving in school.

4. *What is the reward proximity hypothesis (Gambrell, 1996)?* This hypothesis suggests that the type of reward for reading can influence the type of motivation engendered. According to this hypothesis, if a book is given as a reward, students will be more likely to read than if given a token such as candy or a pencil.

English Language Learners and Motivation to Read

ELLs' motivation to read may rely on dynamic variables different from those for a first-language learner. A study by Protacio (2012) found variables that focused on ELLs' acclimatization to American schooling and social networks as a rationale for reading motivation. She identified instrumental motivation—meaning that reading is taken on for the value of the task tied to academics, such as passing a test. Another motivation for ELLs concerns integrative motivation, or using reading to acclimate and learn about a new culture. Another factor to consider is the second-language student's perceived competence in the reading task. Sometimes levels of higher English proficiency account for higher reading motivation but not always. Coupled with this factor is the use of engaging and exciting reading materials for ELLs.

Here are some factors Protacio (2012) identified through her research study of six male ELLs. After each factor, some activities to support reading motivation are also listed.

- Sociocultural environment—ELLs are motivated to read because of family members and friends in their immediate environment.
  - Families are encouraged to share in at-home reading with students, check homework, and read aloud in their native language and English at home.

- Integrative orientation—ELLs use reading as a way to form bonds with their American peers and learn more about their new culture.
  - Buddy reading is the perfect reading venue to connect with peers. Consider reader's theatre and dramatic readings.

- Instrumental motivation—ELLs are motivated to read because they realize the value of reading in further developing their competence in English.
  - Celebrate small steps in the acquisition of English for students, label classroom objects in other languages, and support cultural exchange opportunities.

- Perceived competence—ELLs' perception of their English abilities is related to their motivation to read in English.
  - Discuss student's perceptions of their reading abilities to form a plan for progress, highlight student readers as experts in student read-alouds, and have students journal about their reading successes.

In sum, this chapter provides usable ideas, assessments, and strategies to support reading motivation, as research clearly validates the affective nature of reading. Getting students to a level of self-regulated learning and academic resiliency is crucial to developing goal-oriented readers as well as circumventing resistance to reading. Work hard to develop drive to read as a top priority in your daily literacy dialogue with students.

Key Terms

academic resiliency	purposeful reading
affective	reading choice
alliterate	reading motivation
buddy reading	reading resiliency
eco-resiliency	reluctant readers
engagement	self-regulated learning
extrinsic rewards	stamina
maturity	strategies
picture book	transformational literacy

Website Resources

- **International Children's Digital Library**

More than 4,000 children's books from 64 countries in 54 languages are available at this site, located at **en.childrenslibrary.org.**

- **Google Books**

Children can read sample chapters or even full texts of a number of books. Search for a specific topic or browse the list of available titles at **books.google.com.**

- **Project Gutenberg**

Project Gutenberg is a collection of more than 36,000 free e-books in the public domain. Access the collection at **www.gutenberg.org.**

- **Wonderopolis**

This is a website created by the National Center for Family Literacy that can help parents and teachers draw elementary-age children into literacy-strengthening conversations and activities too fun to resist. Find a wealth of resources at **wonderopolis.org.**

Student Study Site: Visit the Student Study Site at **www.sagepub.com/grantlit** to access additional study tools including eFlashcards, web resources, and online-only appendices.