

Ivey, G., & Broaddus, K. (2001). "Just plain reading": A survey of what makes students want to read in middle school classrooms. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 36, 350-377.

Keywords: content area literacy, culturally responsive instruction, diverse texts, motivation, response to reading

Summary: The study examined middle school students' responses about how their classroom environments motivated their own reading. A large-scale survey was followed by in-depth interviews with a small number of students, seeking information about the following:

- What makes you want to read in this class?
- What do you like most about the time you spend in this class?

Assumptions:

- Reading instruction often does not match student needs. This may be caused by differences in development and personal interest as well as by institutional demands in content areas and mandated curriculum and testing.
- Students can articulate useful guidelines for providing motivation for their reading.

Results:

- Students especially value independent reading and personal choice, the teacher's reading aloud, and engaging materials.
- Many students indicated that they were motivated to read by finding good materials to read and having choice in the selection of these reading materials.
- Students reported interest in reading diverse types of materials.
- Students often did not find the books they wanted to read in the classroom.
- Reading at home was diverse and clearly showed that students read to learn about information or for entertainment.

Conclusions:

- Reallocation of class time to include time for independent student reading may be difficult but ultimately beneficial to students' motivation and reading improvement.

Suggestions for Teachers:

- Provide a large variety of books on multiple topics for students.
- Allow student choice in reading material.
- Provide plenty of class time for independent reading and teacher read alouds.
- Encourage students to find books in which they have a high interest.
- Content-area instruction may also benefit from independent reading, teacher read-alouds, and a variety of good materials (e.g., newspapers, magazines, journals, etc.).

Suggestions for Literacy Leaders:

- Provide the necessary support for teachers to create large classroom libraries including fiction and non-fiction.
- Help teachers see how and why to include independent reading in their curricula.
- Help teachers explore the issue of choice in reading material.