



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF
EDUCATION AND HUMAN ECOLOGY

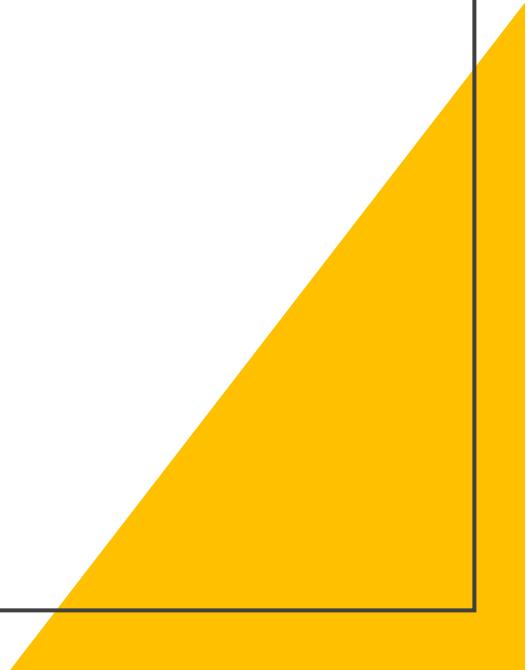
Supporting Student Motivation at Home and at School

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Ecology



Top 10 List

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Is each of these
statements about
motivation true or false?

1. Motivation is a characteristic of the student that generally can't be changed.



- Motivation is determined both by student characteristics AND environmental/contextual influences.
- Motivational patterns set during middle/high school are difficult to change.

- + . 2. Motivation is the
- same across all subject areas.



- No! Huge variation! *The subject matters.*
- Math, Language Arts, P.E., Music, Social Studies, Science, Foreign Language, etc.

3. Comparing student
performance enhances
motivation.

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- Some students respond well and are motivated by comparative data.
- Many students respond negatively to comparative data.
- Increase in comparative data as students move up through the grades



Let's do a brief
thought
experiment.....

Imagine that you are a first-year college student. When you are selecting your courses for the second semester, you notice a course that looks very interesting to you, and that is aligned with your probable major. You have heard from many of your friends that the course is challenging and quite difficult, but you decide to take it and give it a try. During the first 4 weeks of the semester, you work very hard and you find that the course is interesting, but is extremely challenging.

At the end of the 4th week of class, you have your first exam. You study for the exam, and after you take it, you just aren't sure how you did. You anxiously wait until you receive your score during the next class.....

- 15 A's
- 12 B's
- 10 C's
- 5 D's
- 1 F

- Janet: your paper contains a number of errors that are easily correctable. I can see that you are using some inefficient strategies to solve some of these problems. Please come by my office hours next week and let me go over this with you; I think I can really help you with this!

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Completed
100 Push
Ups
(* = 25
completed)

- Jeff Adams * * * *
- Linda Burns * * * *
- Denise Durham * * * *
- Eric Fletcher *
- Jana Glassman * * * *
- Missy Jones * *
- Ted Ruben * * * *

This is what Eric and Missy see:

- Jeff Adams * * * *
- Linda Burns * * * *
- Denise Durham * * * *
- Eric Fletcher *
- Jana Glassman * * * *
- Missy Jones * *
- Ted Ruben * * * *

4. A student's self-esteem isn't a major determinant of academic motivation and achievement.



- There is no research demonstrating that enhanced self-esteem leads to higher motivation, achievement, etc.
- There is some research linking high self-esteem to negative outcomes (e.g., violence).
- Be careful about “motivational speakers!”
 - **Fun Fact:**
 - Google: 75,600,000 hits,
 - *Handbook of Educational Psychology (APA)* : zero mentions

5. Daily feedback and brief interactions with students positively affect learning and motivation.

- Parents and teachers provide students with constant feedback.
- Parents and teachers send messages to students
 - Feedback on assignments
 - Grouping/Tracking
 - Comments about friends or siblings
 - Facial expressions



- Praise students for trying hard (effort), not for their abilities.

6. Relationships between teachers and students don't really matter.

- Positive relationships between teachers and students are important
- Students need to feel that adults in the school care about them *as learners*.
- It isn't enough to just be a good teacher of "content" – students won't learn or work hard for teachers whom they don't like, and whom they perceive as not caring about them.
- As a parent, what can we do to foster positive teacher-student relationships?



7. Academic
cheating is beyond
the parents' or
teachers' control.

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- Cheating is for the most part unrelated to gender, achievement, socioeconomic status, race, religion, etc.
- Students cheat when they have a reason to cheat!
- Stressful classes induce cheating.
- A focus on testing may induce cheating.
- Cheating related to emphasis on tests/grades
- Focus on mastery helps!

8. Students are motivated by rewards.



It depends.....

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- Research suggests that rewards decrease intrinsic motivation.
- Rewards often more important than the task.
- Students become addicted to the rewards.
- Over-reliance on rewards
- Sends a message to students about what we value

- 9. Students will learn more effectively when parents and teachers accommodate students' preferred learning styles.



- Visual
- Auditory
- Kinesthetic
- Etc.

Learning Styles

- Really just preferences
- Problem is teaching “to” a learning “style”
- Rogowsky, Calhoun, & Tallal, 2015, *Journal of Educational Psychology*
- Many people believe this is real, and they feel confirmed from their own experiences.
- Big business
- Google search: 7,590,000 hits
- *Handbook of Educational Psychology* (2015)
 - - Appears twice in entire *Handbook*, both indicating that they don’t work.

• 10. Parents can have a positive effect on children's and adolescents' motivation.



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What is student motivation?

Beliefs about their abilities

Beliefs about why they succeed and fail

Beliefs about the importance of what they are learning

Beliefs about whether they are learning something because they want to learn it, or because they'll get a reward (or avoid a punishment) if they do.

Goals when doing school work

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How Can Parents/Families Support Students' Motivation?

1. If you use rewards, give them when kids have truly accomplished something (learned something new), not just for getting an “A” or finishing homework.

2. Praise is important, but don't overuse praise. Praise should be specific and meaningful and sincere. Praise students for trying hard, not for being "smart."

"Awesome, what a great short story! You really incorporated great new vocabulary words."

"Great job with that math problem. You really took it step by step, and did all the right things to solve and check your work!"

Don't do this:

"Wow, great job, you're really good at math."

"Awesome, you are so smart!"

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- 3. Help kids set short-term, reachable goals.

“Let’s memorize 5 definitions per night”

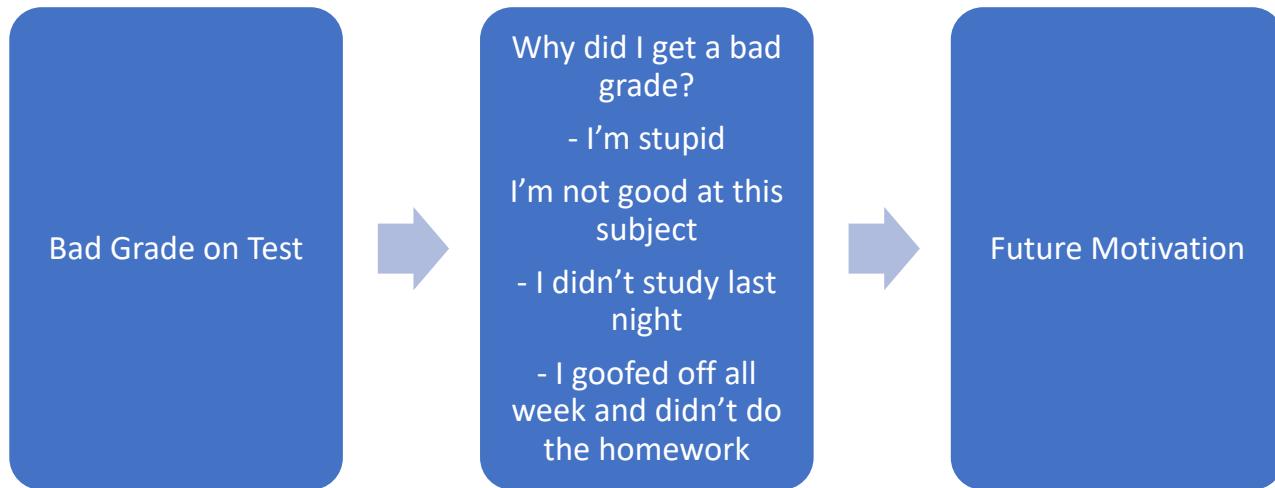
INSTEAD OF

“You have to memorize 25 words this week.”

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- 4. Allow kids to make choices, particularly as they get older.

- Choices about how to approach homework
- Choices about what classes to sign up for
- Choices about how to balance time with friends and time studying
- Choices about family activities

5. Help students make healthy attributions:



When students make attributions to things that they can control, they'll be more likely to be motivated in the future.

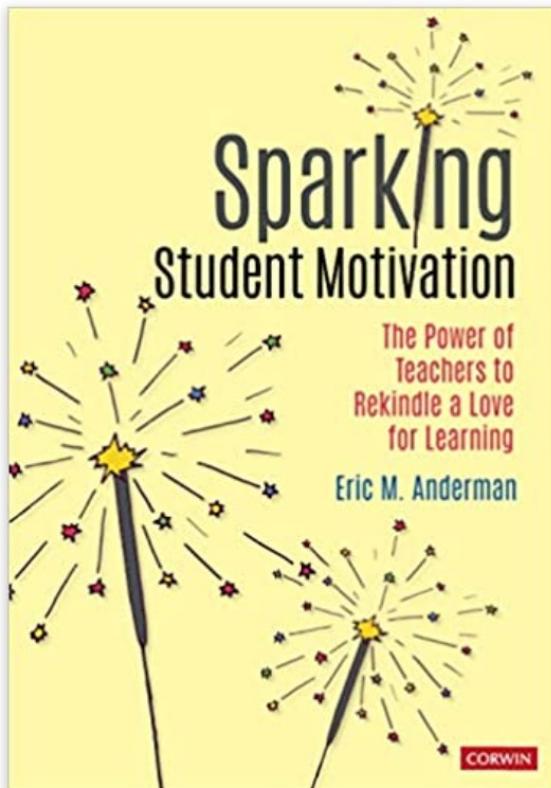
+ • 6. Help
° students
see the
value of
what
they are
learning

- Parents can help kids understand that what they are learning is:
 - Useful
 - Interesting
 - Important
 - Worth the time investment

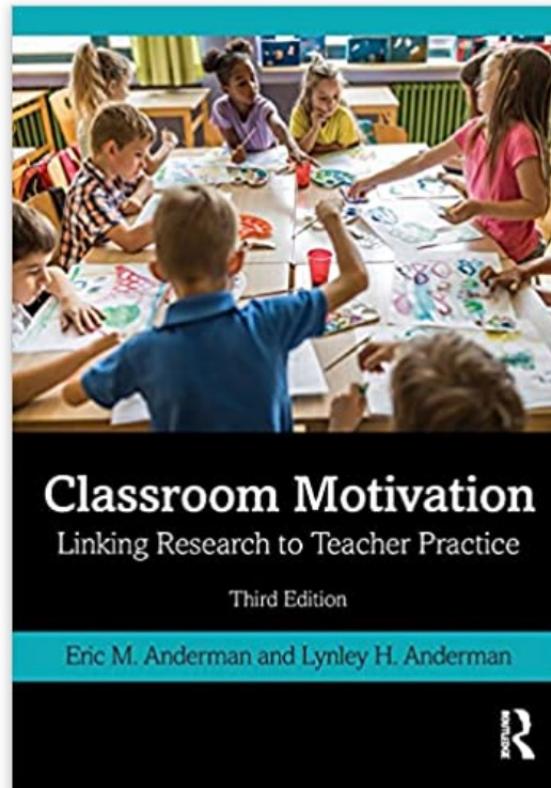
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 - 7. Parents and teachers need to be sending the same messages to students about motivation.
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- Regular communication
 - In person
 - E mail
 - Text messages
 - Phone
 - Zoom

If you are interested in reading more....



ISBN-13: 978-1071803189
ISBN-10: 1071803182



ISBN-13: 978-0367821265
ISBN-10: 0367821265

Thank you!

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