

Running Head: Intrinsic Motivation Strategy

Increasing Motivation in Pre-Algebra:

A Motivational Strategy for Randy

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As stated in Courtney Foley's motivational case, Randy is an isolated seventh grade student who is unmotivated in pre-algebra class. The following plan will address the specific motivational issues outlined in the corresponding motivational assessment. A reasonable goal for Randy is to complete a classroom project/activity and increase effort and participation for one-two class periods. These are two things that Randy has difficulty demonstrating in his seventh grade pre-algebra class. In order to achieve this goal we have utilized the class texts to develop an appropriate plan of action to increase Randy's motivation to learn a given topic.

To enhance Randy's motivation to learn, the teacher should assist him in making a real world connection to pre-algebra. While doing this, the teacher is also integrating one of Randy's personal interests; art, which was highlighted in the motivational case and assessment. While studying ratios and fractions, Randy will be required to create equivalent fraction and manipulate fractions through addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. To increase his motivation to learn this topic, Randy will utilize his artistic talent and ability to create a scale model or drawing of an object of his choice. The following paragraphs outline a strategy to implement the lesson in order to address Randy's individual motivational issues.

First, the teacher shall "induce dissonance" by stating that today in pre-algebra we will be creating art with ratios. While ratios and fractions are familiar to students, connecting them with art is not. According to Brophy, pointing out this unexpected connection challenges students to pay attention to the lesson in order to "solve the mystery that underlies a paradox" (Brophy, pg.178, YEAR). Including this art activity within the pre-algebra class serves other motivational purposes, as well. Stipek states

that including connections between the subject and the real world is a way to increase intrinsic motivation. Demonstrating the role of fractions and ratios in creating scale models and drawing will do just this for Randy, as he is a talented and accomplished artist already aware of the connection between art and architectural design.

Stipek also suggests that teachers should offer challenging tasks that allow students to feel a “sense of competency” in order to increase motivation (Stipek, YEAR). Creating a scale model of a given process is an intricate process that requires several skills to be used at once. It is also an active task that requires much student participation. Students must find or decide upon an object to recreate, use appropriate measurement tools to measure the object or find it’s measurements from a reliable and credible source, use ratios to create scaled measurements, use measurement tools to create new model or drawing, then create an object that is aesthetically pleasing. This classroom activity uses many novel activities. While hands on activities are plentiful thanks to a generous block schedule, creative and artistic endeavors are practically non-existent. The lesson also incorporates Randy’s individual interests, but will also be challenging for Randy considering his past performance on fraction assessments and activities.

The assignment is completed as students present their models to the rest of the class. Each student will explain the process of creating the model, address difficulties and challenges, and items they felt confident in completing, and anything they would change about the process or final outcome. In addition, student’s final projects will be displayed in the classroom and adjoining hallway to be shared with the rest of the school community. If Randy presents his finished project to his peers, it can be assumed that he will feel some pride and acceptance due to the high level of artistic ability and the nature

of the remaining students in Randy's class. This social acceptance can serve as an extrinsic reward for Randy. Stipek discusses the importance of extrinsic social reinforcement in our class text. Perhaps this reward will serve as an extrinsic motivation for Randy to continue to finish projects to share with other students.

In conclusion, the above strategy outlines a lesson which is new, challenging, and incorporates Randy's individual interests. It promotes learning through a real world application of an abstract task. If implemented, this strategy should serve to increase Randy's motivation to learn and help him to achieve the goal of a completed class assignment and an increase in classroom participation.

References

Brophy, Jere. (1998). *Motivating students to learn*. Boston: McGraw-Hill

Stipek, Deborah. (2002). *Motivation to learn: Integrating theory and practice* (4th edition). Boston: Allyn & Bacon