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Jordan Collins
*Western Oregon University*, jcollins13@mail.wou.edu

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Reading Motivation and Engagement in the High School English Language Arts Classroom

A Curriculum Project By Jordan Collins
Western Oregon University

Research Question
What strategies can be used in the English Language Arts classroom to improve students’ interest in reading material in order to motivate and engage students in the required readings?

Methods - Strategies:
Design: To be implemented consistently over 4 years of high school. This unit covers 10 lessons in a sophomore year.

Strategies:
1. **Personal Book Choices** – Allows students to make a personal connection with the text and provides a sense of autonomy (Kittle, 2013).
2. **Goal Journals** - Helps students feel a sense of accomplishment and track reading successes (Kittle, 2013).
3. **Book Talks** – A book browsing in the classroom with a wide variety of book topics can ensure that students are exposed to books that will eventually interest students of all levels (Kittle, 2013).
4. **Literature Circles** - Small, peer-led discussion groups whose members have chosen to read the same story, poem, article, or book (Daniels, 2002).
5. **Preteaching Vocab/Historical Info** - Preparing students for a new text by exploring the themes and vocab present in the text before reading it helps students understand what to expect and also gets them thinking about the topic and questions they may have related to it (Berg & Wehby, 2013).

Collection of Evidence
- Informative Author’s Purpose Essay
- Daily Journal Responses
- Goal tracking
- Literature Circle Role assignments
- Literature Circle discussions
- Book Talk presentation

Big Ideas
- Achievement is directly affected by students’ willingness or unwillingness to interact with difficult texts.
- When students make their own learning and reading decisions they are more likely to engage with the books and discussions through a sense of responsibility.
- Developing reading interest is a slow process where success relies on everyone from teachers and students to parents and peers.
- The point in this project is not to reinvent the wheel but to improve it.

References