The Relationship Between Motivation, Self-Perception and Literacy among Adolescents with Learning Disabilities

Author: Rebecca A. Louick

Boston College
Lynch School of Education

Department of
Teacher Education, Special Education, and Curriculum & Instruction

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MOTIVATION, SELF-PERCEPTION, AND
LITERACY AMONG ADOLESCENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

Dissertation
by

REBECCA A. LOUICK

submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

May 2017

This dissertation is dedicated to the students and families I worked with at the Gateway

School of New York, especially the expansion-years Classes of 2009 and 2010. I do what

I do in the hope of building more school communities like the one we built together.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MOTIVATION, SELF-PERCEPTION, AND
LITERACY AMONG ADOLESCENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

Rebecca A. Louick

Dissertation Chair: Dr. C. Patrick Proctor

Abstract

During adolescence, students engage in identity-formation processes that impact

motivation to learn, as well as education and career choices moving forward. Adolescents

with learning disabilities (LD) face particular challenges in developing a positive identity

as a learner: feelings of decreased academic competence (Gans, Kenny, & Ghany, 2003;

Terras, Thompson, & Minnis, 2009), increased school dropout rates (Deshler, 2005), and

decreased feelings of global self-worth (Boetsch, Green, & Pennington, 1996) as

compared to non-LD peers. Literacy is an area of particular concern. Given the

importance placed on literacy skills in our society, it is unsurprising that difficulties in

literacy learning impact the beliefs that students with LD develop about themselves

(Burden, 2008).

This study presents the results of an investigation into a group of students'

identity beliefs with regard to motivation, literacy and LD; how those beliefs were related

to one another; and how those beliefs both shaped, and were shaped by, literacy

experiences, using data collected during the 2014-2015 school year at one of the seven

schools participating in the National Center on the Use of Emerging Technologies to

Improve Literacy Achievement for Students with Disabilities in Middle School (CET;

CAST, Inc, 2015; PIs: David Rose and Ted Hasselbring). Data gathered for the 11

participants included a literacy motivation battery; classroom observations; student

interviews; and teacher interviews, informed by the Reading Engagement Index (REI;

Wigfield et al., 2008). Both directed content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) and thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) were used to analyze the data.

Developing a greater awareness of the role of motivation in the literacy practices of adolescents with LD will enable educators to better understand the conditions under which these students read and write most willingly. This knowledge can be incorporated into school-based curricula, interventions, and professional development, such that these students have reason both to value the learning challenges placed before them, and to expect to succeed at meeting those challenges.

Acknowledgements

First I'd like to thank my advisor, Dr. Patrick Proctor, whose ability to simultaneously support and challenge students is unmatched. Patrick, I've learned a lot from you about how to be a scholar, a teacher and a team leader. Thank you for all the opportunities you've given me, and for knowing when and how to build me up and push me forward.

To Dr. David Scanlon: thank you for helping me to understand special education from an academic perspective, and for taking your role as a mentor to future LD scholars so seriously. To Dr. Sami Daley: thank you for all the feedback and advice. Your support as I begin this next chapter of my career means so much to me. To Dr. David Connor: thank you for seeing me through both my masters and my dissertation. Your support throughout my professional career has been much appreciated.

In addition to my committee, I worked with several other wonderful faculty and staff at BC. To Ashana Hurd: Thank you for supporting me in my development of school-based leadership skills. To Dr. Kristen Bottema-Beutel: I admire the hard work you do, and am so fortunate to have been on Team Kristen for three years. To Dr. Marilyn Cochran-Smith: thank you for being my advocate and giving me both opportunities and sage advice. Your faith in me helped me to have faith in myself.

To Brenda McCormick, Marsha Biernat, Kristie Thayer and Moira Raftery: thanks for your organizational support, and for helping me to feel a part of the C&I community.

To Christine Leider and Paul Xu: Whether it was running items through stats programs or building the perfect graph, I knew I could count on your support with all things mathematical. Thank you, CAST buddies!

To Stephani Burton, Megina Baker, Meredith Moore and Christine Leider—and of course to María González-Howard, who read multiple drafts of every chapter of this dissertation (yes, every one!)— I'm thankful for everything you've taught me. It heartens me to know our doc-student years have just been the beginning of our collaboration as educators and, more importantly, the beginning of our friendship.

To Kim Rozanski, Ginny Nudell, and the other members of my Gateway coworker family: thank you for your faith, humor and love. You are the shining standard by which I measure myself and all other teachers.

To Dave, who now knows more about education theory than any other hydrologist around: thank you for being my graphics consultant, sounding board and personal chef. The joy you've brought into my life has strengthened and sustained me, and your comfort and encouragement help me keep my focus. I love you.

To my parents and sister: thank you for seeing me through the most difficult period in my life. You helped me charge ahead with my career choices when I wanted to throw in the towel. I love you, too.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

List of Appendices

Chapter 1: Introduction

"Well actually when I was little I liked books a lot. But when I started growing up I just started hating books… When I was twelve... it was like mad words and stuff so I couldn't—I started hating books." –Dorothy, age 13

Adolescence is a time of development and adjustment, during which students engage in important identity-formation processes that have an impact on their motivation to learn, as well as their education and career choices moving forward (Haverinen, Savolainen, & Holopainen, 2014; Matthews, Banerjee, & Lauermann, 2014). Researchers have begun to study the complex interrelationships between what adolescents think they can or cannot do, their motivation to engage in academic tasks, and their demonstration of skills and knowledge—that is, the connections between identity beliefs, motivation and learning. Successful learning experiences for adolescents involve the appropriate level of challenge and volume of specific learning strategies, as well as variation in cognitive activities; this allows these students to develop motivation to learn and succeed in the classroom (Eccles & Roeser, 2011). Indeed, these experiences even influence students' beliefs about themselves as learners—that is, whether or not they identify as being committed to succeeding in school (Eccles & Roeser, 2011)

However, research suggests that some school environments do not shift appropriately to meet students' changing abilities, experiences and interests as they move into the middle grades (Eccles & Roeser, 2011). Rather, many of the changes associated with the transition to middle school challenge students' self-efficacy beliefs (Matthews et al., 2014). The nature of these challenges differs among adolescents. In their article investigating the relationship between identity beliefs, the use of regulatory strategies,

and motivational orientation among African American and Latino middle school students, Matthews and colleagues (2014) emphasized "belonging" as an important component of identity beliefs, particularly for "marginalized and underachieving adolescents" (p. 2357). Their findings suggest that the degree to which an adolescent (particularly one from a marginalized group) identifies as a part of his or her community has a mediating effect on the relationship between motivation and school performance. This is in agreement with the findings of other motivation researchers, who suggest that "students are more likely to engage in classroom activities if they feel supported and valued" (Wentzel, 1997, p. 417).

A number of scholars argue that students with learning disabilities (LD) also face challenges in developing a positive identity as a learner. For some students with LD, these challenges involve feelings of decreased academic competence as compared to peers without LD (Gans, Kenny, & Ghany, 2003; Terras, Thompson, & Minnis, 2009). Other studies report increased school dropout rates (Deshler, 2005), decreased feelings of global self-worth (Boetsch, Green, & Pennington, 1996), and greater likelihood of suicidal thoughts or tendencies (Daniel et al., 2006) as compared to non-LD peers.

There has been a call for research that addresses the development of academic motivation and/or identity beliefs specifically among adolescents with LD (Burden, 2008; Deshler, 2005; Sideridis & Scanlon, 2006). Deshler and colleagues (Deshler, 2005; Deshler & Hock, 2007) argue that, although it is important to recognize and address LD early in a child's academic career, there are two main reasons to recognize the unique characteristics these students present during adolescence. First, even when a child with LD receives intervention during elementary school, evidence shows that these

interventions are not always provided effectively. Second, these students' disabilities do not disappear with age; this population continues to need interventions to support their learning. In fact, given all the emotional challenges related to adolescence, supports may be even more vital for these students than for their younger peers (Deshler, 2005; Deshler & Hock, 2007).

Literacy is an area of particular concern for adolescents with LD. Deshler and Hock (2007) contend that, in order to read effectively, students need not only reading skills, but also the motivation to become better and better at reading. Even quality reading instruction is only successful if it is delivered in an environment that meets students' motivational needs; and, because adolescents who struggle with reading each do so in unique ways, the appropriate intervention is often very case-specific (Deshler & Hock, 2007). Furthermore, as Burden (2008) argues, given the importance placed on literacy skills in our society, it is unsurprising that difficulties in literacy learning impact the beliefs that students with LD develop about themselves.

Clearly, it is important to determine how to appropriately support adolescents with LD, so that they can develop identity and motivation beliefs that foster literacy achievement. However, it is also important to define "literacy achievement" in a way that is appropriate to the literacy activities students engage in every day, and the ones they will need to engage in as they move into adulthood. The literacy skillset needed today is actually much broader than the one traditionally valued and taught in schools (Deshler & Hock, 2007). As Deshler and Hock (2007) explain:

Many of the literacy demands that students encounter in school are

focused on print-based texts, whereas out-of-school literacies often

involve non-print texts, media, and technology-based texts… adolescents

must be prepared to fluently and skillfully engage in and navigate a broad

array of literacy forms and formats. (pp. 121-122)

Therefore, information about adolescent literacy can and should be gained from

developing a solid understanding not just of how literacy is used in middle and high

school classrooms, but also of how struggling adolescent readers use literacy skills and

interact with literature outside of traditional academic texts and settings (Deshler & Hock,

2007; Neugebauer, 2013). Furthermore, Hall (2007) emphasizes the importance of

gathering data about adolescents' literacy motivation by speaking directly with

adolescents themselves, because these students' decisions about how they will engage

with literacy tasks are impacted by "the social and cultural worlds they occupy" (p. 426);

speaking with students will provide greater information about their concepts of those

social and cultural worlds.

Problem Statement

Questions about the relationship between literacy motivation and achievement

among students with LD require reconsideration of motivation constructs as they relate to

learner identity beliefs. Relatedly, educators need a solid understanding of the conditions

in which a student with LD will agree to read and write; these need to be clearly

distinguished from conditions in which the student will expect to fail at literacy tasks,

and/or will not place value on participating in the learning environment. These areas are

currently underdeveloped in the field. This study presents the results of an investigation

into a group of students' identity beliefs with regard to motivation, literacy and LD; how

those beliefs were related to one another; and how those beliefs both shaped, and were

shaped by, students' literacy experiences.

Statement of Purpose and Research Questions

The goal of this dissertation is to enable a better understanding of the

interrelationships between motivation, identity beliefs and literacy among adolescents

with learning disabilities. As such, the following questions will be investigated:

Overall Question: For students with learning disabilities, at a single middle school,

what is the nature of the relationship between literacy and motivation?

RQ1: What motivates these students to read and write?

RQ2: What is the nature of these students' perceptions of themselves as readers and

writers?

RQ3: What is the nature of the relationship between these students' motivation to

read and write, and the literacy experiences that impact their perceptions of

themselves as readers and writers?

Methods Overview

In the current study, the research questions were addressed using data collected

during the 2014-2015 school year, at one of the seven schools participating in the

National Center on the Use of Emerging Technologies to Improve Literacy Achievement

for Students with Disabilities in Middle School (CET; CAST, Inc., 2015; PIs: David Rose

and Ted Hasselbring). The methods used to collect and analyze data are summarized

briefly here; a detailed description of both collection and analysis methods can be found in Chapter 3.

There were 22 students participating in the CET at this school who had an LD classification on their IEP. Because this sample was too large for the intended study, exactly half (11 students) were selected. Data gathered for these students included a literacy motivation battery; classroom observations; student interviews; and teacher interviews, informed by the teacher's completion of the Reading Engagement Index (REI; Wigfield et al., 2008) for each student. Two cycles of qualitative coding, the first a directed content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) and the second a thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), were used to analyze the data.

Contribution to the Field

The current study has implications for both researchers and practitioners (such as teachers and school administrators). Developing a greater awareness of the role of motivation in the literacy practices of adolescents with LD will enable educators to better understand the conditions under which these students read and write most willingly. This knowledge can be incorporated into school-based curricula, interventions, and professional development, such that these students have reason both to value the learning challenges placed before them, and to expect to succeed at meeting those challenges.

Organization of the Dissertation

The problem of interest and purpose of study have been explained in this introductory chapter. In Chapter 2, relevant prior scholarship is discussed. The first section of Chapter 2 includes an explanation of expectancy-value theory, as well as

conceptual overviews of theory regarding the nature of literacy and learning disability, and the relevance of these theoretical and conceptual frameworks to the proposed dissertation. The second section of Chapter 2 is comprised of a review of relevant prior research. In Chapter 3, the methodology proposed to conduct the dissertation research is explicated. Chapters 4 through 6 provide the results of the analysis (Chapter 4 in reference to Research Question 1, Chapter 5 in reference to Research Question 2, and Chapter 6 in reference to Research Question 3). The dissertation concludes with a discussion, Chapter 7, that situates the findings within the current literature on the topic; explains the implications of the current study for both research and practice; and proposes a potential means of using expectancy-value theory in a professional development workshop to support literacy teachers of students with LD.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This dissertation presents an investigation of the literacy motivation beliefs of adolescents with LD, and how those beliefs shaped, and were shaped by, students' literacy experiences. The literature relevant to that investigation is addressed in this chapter, in two parts. The first part of the review addresses the theoretical and conceptual frameworks underpinning the study. The second part addresses relevant research that has already been done in, and across, key areas of focus (motivation, literacy, and learning disability).

Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

Words and phrases like "motivation," "learning disability" and "literacy" can take on different meanings, based on the context in which they are being used, as well as the beliefs of the person using them. As such, the "Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks" section of this literature review is intended to provide clear explanations of the perspectives used to define these key terms in the dissertation, and of justifications for doing so.

Expectancy-Value Theory of Motivation

Many models of motivation have been theorized and applied to education research. For example, attribution theory considers motivation as related to "perceived determinants of success or failure" (Weiner, 1979, p. 4), while theories of intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation focus on whether individuals are acting out of personal interest, or for a tangible reward (Wigfield, Eccles, Schiefele, Roeser, & Davis-Kean, 2007). These are only two from a myriad of options. Out of all the models of motivation, an

expectancy-value perspective (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002) was used in the current study because it allowed for close examination of the role of self-perception in literacy motivation. As such, expectancy-value theory provided the best opportunity for investigating the elements of motivation highlighted in the current study's research questions.

According to modern expectancy-value theory, attributed to Eccles and colleagues (Eccles, 2009; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000), motivation is based both on how capable someone feels of completing a task successfully (i.e. "expectancy" of success; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Pintrich & Schunk, 2002; Wigfield & Tonks, 2002) and the reasons he or she has for working on it (i.e. the "value" placed on the task; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Pintrich & Schunk, 2002). As indicated in Figure 1, both psychological and social/cultural determinants (i.e., "Sources of information") influence identity beliefs (i.e., elements of "Identity/Self-Perception") that, in turn, contribute to an individual's developing expectancy and value beliefs (i.e., "Motivation") (Eccles, 2009; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002).

In the next few paragraphs is an unpacking of these theoretical concepts, beginning with an explanation of how the construct "identity/self-perception" can be understood according to expectancy-value theory. This "identity/self-perception" discussion will incorporate the top and middle rows of Figure 1. Next, the reader will find a discussion of how the construct "motivation" is understood in expectancy-value theory, and how this understanding relates to concepts of "identity/self-perception."
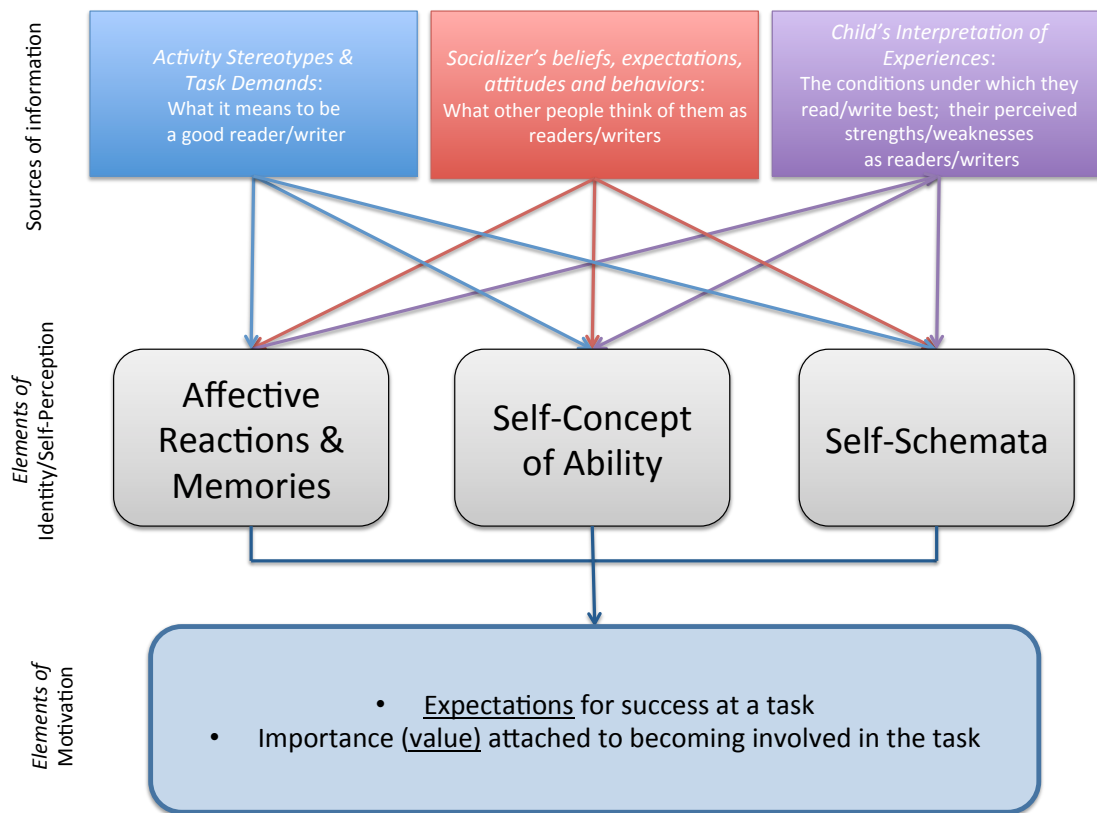
Figure 1. Relationship between sources of information, identity beliefs and motivation, as derived from Eccles (2009) and Eccles & Wigfield (2002).

Self-Perceptions/Identity. Identity is a multi-faceted construct that has been studied by many scholars in many different contexts, for many different purposes. In this dissertation, the focus is on the identity beliefs that Eccles (2009) distinguishes as being particularly relevant to motivation. She conceptualizes these identity beliefs in terms of

"self perceptions [that] inform both individuals' expectations for success

and the importance they attach to becoming involved in a wide range of

tasks… identity in terms of its influence on behavioral choices, that is, in

terms of its influence on motivated action." (p. 78)

Expectancy-value theorists talk about the sources from which students derive self-perceptions (top row of Figure 1), and the elements of self-perception itself (middle row of Figure 1).

Sources of information (top row, Figure 1). The sources of self-perception can be thought of in terms of activity stereotypes & task demands; socializer beliefs, expectations, attitudes & behaviors; and the child's interpretation of experiences (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002).

Activity stereotypes & task demands. When presented with a task, students make "judgments of the difficulty of the task… as well as other features of the task (such as how interesting the task appears)" (Pintrich & Schunk, 2002, p. 64). These judgments affect the degree to which students are motivated to engage in the task. For example, when presented with a writing assignment in class, students make decisions about what exactly will be entailed in their engagement in this task- what subskills will students need to be able to call upon? Is the topic one students will be interested in?

Socializer's beliefs, expectations, attitudes & behaviors. Students develop perceptions of themselves based on messages they receive from socializers, such as "parents, teachers, siblings, peers, and media" (Eccles, 2009, p. 79). The ways in which someone understands the outcomes of his or her previous experiences "are assumed to be influenced by socializer's behavior and beliefs and by cultural milieu and unique historical events" (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002, p. 119). In other words, students' beliefs

about themselves as readers and writers are influenced by their perceptions of the beliefs, expectations, attitudes and behaviors of those around them.

Child's interpretation of experiences. Students' beliefs about themselves are influenced by "their own interpretations of their previous achievement outcomes" (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002, p. 118). Eccles (2009) explains that students develop beliefs about their own literacy strengths and weaknesses by comparing how well or poorly they did on a given reading or writing task with how others did on that task. Additionally, students compare how well they themselves did at reading or writing in different contexts, and from their interpretations of these experiences, they develop beliefs about their own literacy strengths and weaknesses. That is, "these types of comparisons help individuals answer questions like: How good am I at X? and Which areas am I better at or more likely to do well at?" (Eccles, 2009, p. 81) These interpretations, which influence (and are influenced by) perceptions about activity task demands and socializer beliefs, are the foundations on which students develop self-perceptions as readers and writers.

Elements of self-perception (middle row, Figure 1). From the sources just described, expectancy-value theorists posit that students develop several elements of self-perception. This has been documented (in great depth) in the expectancy-value literature (e.g. Eccles, 2009; Eccles, Roeser, Vida, Fredricks, & Wigfield, 2006; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). For the purposes of summarizing all of this detailed theory so as to be most useful to this dissertation, the elements of self-perception (based on the work of Eccles & Wigfield, 2002) have been consolidated into three categories: affective reactions and memories of personal experiences; self-concept of ability; and self-schemata.

Affective reactions and memories of personal experiences. Eccles (2009) talks about emotional reactions to previous experiences of success and failure with literacy, and the impact these memories and reactions have on students' motivation to engage in similar reading and writing tasks in the future.

Self-concept of ability. Students develop perceptions of their own competence to complete a task successfully (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002). Eccles (2009) explains that "the individual's beliefs about his or her ability to enact… various behaviors" (p. 88) related to a task impact his or her motivation to engage in that task. That is, whether or not someone feels competent to read a particular passage or write a particular assignment has an effect on the level and kind of motivation he or she has to complete it.

Self-schema(ta). Eccles (2009) argues that "individuals develop a set of beliefs about who they are and who they would like to… become" (p. 81), and that these beliefs both impact, and are impacted by, their beliefs about themselves with regard to a specific task. Thus, particular reading or writing tasks could serve as opportunities to confirm, or disconfirm, these larger beliefs about oneself (called "self-schemata;" Eccles & Wigfield, 2002, pp. 119–120).

Motivation. As depicted in Figure 1, according to Eccles (2009) and Eccles & Wigfield (2002), an individual uses the self-perceptions described in the previous section as a basis for expectations as to whether or not he or she will succeed at a given task, and also decides what level of importance to attach to these beliefs (bottom row of Figure 1). In the expectancy-value model, the combination of someone's expectancy for success, and the value he or she places on the task, constitutes how motivated he or she is to

participate in it. Students' expectation of success at a task, and the way in which they do (or do not) value the task, are key concepts in this dissertation.

Expectancy (bottom row, Figure 1). Whether or not a person expects to succeed at a task depends on how that person has performed at comparable tasks in the past; how his or her performance compares to that of others; and social influences, including the statements of "parents, teachers and peers… based on stereotypes and other socially constructed belief systems" (Eccles, 2009, p. 82). These sources are outlined in greater detail in the preceding sections.

Value (bottom row, Figure 1). Eccles (2009) breaks subjective task value down into four parts: interest, attainment, utility and cost. Interest is the degree to which the individual anticipates deriving pleasure or enjoyment from the task. For example, a student interested in social interactions might decide to read a book on psychology. Over time, a task that started out having purely interest value may end up being of attainment value as well: that is, people "develop an image of who they are and what they would like to be" (Eccles, 2009, p. 83; in other words, current and ideal self-schemata beliefs), and they value tasks that are consistent with that image. For example, the student who read the psychology book might pursue additional experiences in the field, possibly hoping to one day become a psychologist. In addition, individuals may value tasks that help them meet goals that are important to them, but are "less personally central" (Eccles, 2009, p. 83); these are of utility value. An example of this might be the student taking a particular class to fulfill a requirement towards a psychology degree (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). The class itself might not be interesting to the student "for its own sake" (Eccles &

Wigfield, 2002, p. 120) but the degree is something he or she wants to attain. Finally, the value an individual places on a task is also related to the cost of participating in it—that is, any negative aspects that might be connected to participation. This might include how anxious the task makes the person feel, the social consequences of participation, and/or the loss of time or energy (as opposed to spending that time or energy on other activities; Eccles, 2009; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002). For example, the psychology student might be concerned about taking time away from other life goals in order to complete the schooling required to become a psychologist.

Connecting components of motivation, according to expectancy-value theory.

Eccles (2009) contends that, given one's expectations and values, one is motivated towards particular tasks, activities, and behavioral choices. In this way, "behavioral choices are a primary mechanism through which individuals enact their personal and collective/social identities and thus validate their identities" (Eccles, 2009, p. 79). Furthermore, individuals continually re-conceptualize their identities and, relatedly, what motivates them to take (or not take) certain actions. A "feedback loop" is established (Wigfield & Tonks, 2002, p. 56), meaning "that today's choices become part of tomorrow's history of experience" (Eccles, 2009, p. 80). Thus, beliefs regarding both identity and motivation change over time, as the tasks, activities and behavioral choices become additional "previous personal experiences" (Eccles, 2009, p. 79), and progress through the model begins anew.

Literacy

Literacy was once understood as being composed of reading and writing, with speaking and listening as related language abilities (Teale & Sulzby, 1986). Many more recent definitions have included speaking and listening as actually being part of the "literacy" concept itself (e.g. Sternberg, Kaplan, & Borck, 2007); furthermore, important work has been done calling for a focus on "multiliteracies" because, among other reasons, "increasing cultural and linguistic diversity in the world today call for a much broader view of literacy than portrayed by traditional language-based approaches" (The New London Group, 1996, p. 60). The decision was made to privilege two components of literacy in the current study—reading and writing— because they were the ones most relevant to the specific research questions being asked. Limitations associated with privileging reading and writing above other components of literacy are noted in Chapter 7.

Similar to McKenna, Conradi, Lawrence, Jang, and Meyer (2012), the term *literacy* was used in the current study to mean reading and writing for a variety of purposes and in a variety of contexts. These include reading school texts (e.g., textbooks or novels, in print or online); reading for pleasure (e.g., books, comic books, or magazines, in print or online); and conducting and writing up research or other class assignments (including the use of encyclopedias or dictionaries, with paper & pencil and other print resources, or online). Also included are several types of reading and writing that involve interacting with peers. These include socializing through instant message, email, text or other social media online; discussing something read or written for class, or for recreation; or to conduct group work for school.

Developing adolescent literacy skills presents challenges both for students, and for their teachers; as compared to elementary school literacy, "secondary school literacy skills are more complex, more embedded in subject matters, and more multiply determined" (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006, pp. 1–2). As students progress into middle and high school, they are increasingly expected to use text to develop knowledge of specific disciplines, each of which has its own specific reading and writing practices (Fang, Schleppegrell, & Lukin, 2008; Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008). These different kinds of reading and writing only multiply as technology evolves (McGeown, Duncan, Griffiths, & Stothard, 2015; Troia, Shankland, & Wolbers, 2012; Werderich & Armstrong, 2013).

Several researchers advocate recognizing and supporting a wider range of literacy skills and experiences. This involves reconsidering both what is counted as a literacy activity, and how being "good" or "bad" at literacy activities is defined. According to Werderich and Armstrong (2013), adolescents' judgments about the quality of a written text depends both on the context in which it is being read/written, and the person doing the writing (i.e. whether the individual adolescent doing the judging wrote the text him- or herself, or someone else wrote it).

Furthermore, as students enter adolescence, several researchers describe a gap that begins to develop between what are considered in-school and out-of-school literacy activities (e.g. Moje, Overby, Tysvaer, & Morris, 2008; Werderich & Armstrong, 2013). Out-of-school literacy activities tend to be devalued by schools, but not by adolescents themselves (Gambrell & Gillis, 2007; Ivey, 1999; Moje et al., 2008; Troia et al., 2012). Indeed, many scholars contend that out-of-school literacy motivation is an important

component of overall literacy motivation. Citing the vast array of skills needed to effectively find relevant information online as just one example of a complex literacy activity that many adolescents are motivated to engage in outside of school, McGeown and colleagues (2015) argue, "it is important to consider that different literacy experiences may utilize and develop different reading skills" (p. 548).

Ideally, if the value of these literacy activities were recognized, students would have the opportunity to incorporate an additional set of positive literacy experiences into their beliefs about themselves as readers and writers. This is particularly important in secondary settings designed for the provision of remedial reading supports to those who need them; in these settings, educators' focus tends to be on students' development of particular skills, and not on students' development of positive identity beliefs as readers (Frankel, 2016).

Learning Disability

Historically, LD has often been defined according to a discrepancy model (i.e. identifying a gap between a student's learning aptitude and achievement); in recent years, this model has been disputed (Scanlon, 2013). The National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities (NJCLD) provides a widely accepted LD definition: "a general term that refers to a heterogeneous group of disorders manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning, or mathematical abilities" (National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities, 1991, p. 18). A convention has been to state that these significant difficulties exist in "the absence of intellectual disability, sensory impairment, emotional disturbance, cultural deprivation, and

insufficient instruction" (Büttner & Hasselhorn, 2011, p. 76). All of the students who participated in the current study were deemed to meet these criteria and thus eligible for LD classification on their IEPs (Individualized Education Plans), based on evaluations by their school systems.

Some call for a scholarly approach to learning and disability that places these terms in "their cultural and historical contexts" (p. 112): that is, thinking about how normative understandings of these terms impact our conceptions of students with LD, as well as how these students develop beliefs about themselves (Connor, Gallagher, & Ferri, 2011). Connor and colleagues (2011) advocate thinking about LD as students, teachers, families, schools, and larger societal forces enact it every day. Questioning what it really means to learn, to learn differently, and even to be a "learner" in the first place (particularly with an LD label), they urge "the field to contemplate 'not learning' as a form of resistance to a culturally irrelevant or a potentially demeaning curriculum" (Connor et al., 2011). Thus, students with LD may respond to unsuitable learning environments by changing or reducing participation, appearing unmotivated when they are, in actuality, responding to an intolerable learning situation.

As a result, in this dissertation, participants were identified based on LD classification on their IEPs, but efforts were also made to give credence to contextual and societal factors influencing the definition of LD itself. Much like these students' teachers, researchers (such as myself) must constantly toe the line between understanding LD as it is represented by the bureaucratic system in legal IEP documents, and understanding LD as it is enacted in students' lives.

Connecting Expectancy-Value Theory, Literacy and Learning Disability

Figure 1 illustrates an expectancy-value perspective on the relationship between identity/self-perception and motivation; one of the main foci of the current study is examining the usefulness of such a perspective in developing a better understanding of the literacy motivation of adolescents with LD. Utilizing terminology from expectancy-value theory (Eccles, 2009; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002), this means considering questions such as: what affective reactions and memories make an adolescent with an LD feel unique as a reader and writer? As a learner with a disability? How do the beliefs, expectations, attitudes and behaviors of key socializers impact his or her self-concept as a reader and writer? As a learner with a disability?

It would be difficult (and, arguably, limiting) to try to address these questions separately from one another. As such, the review of literature relevant for the current study was guided by the Venn diagram in Figure 2. Prior work related to each of Figure 2's components (i.e. each of the three constructs individually; in pairs, as indicated in bold; and all together, as indicated in bold and italics) enabled the development of a more complete picture of the literacy motivation of adolescents with learning disabilities.
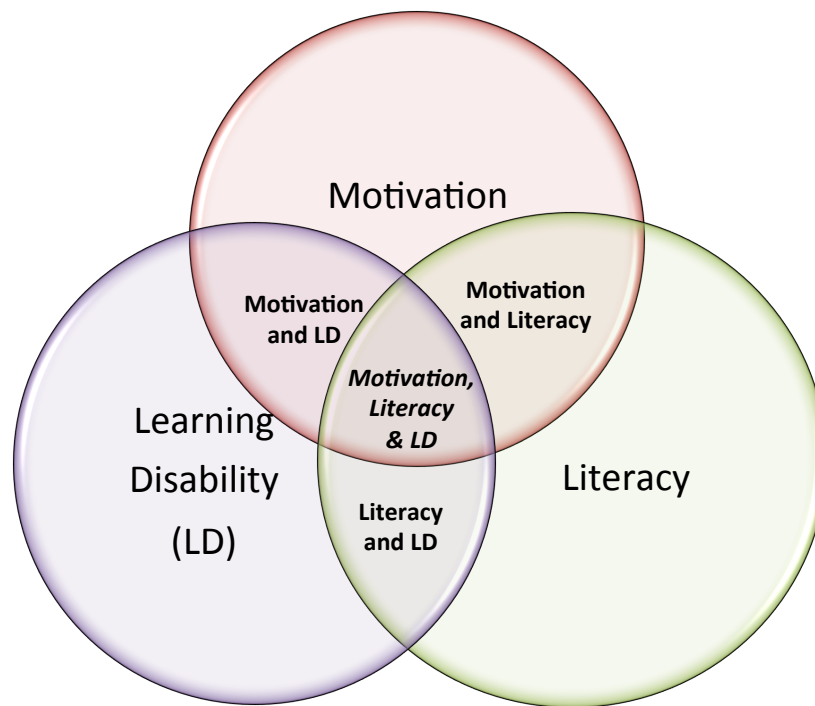
Figure 2. Interrelationships of constructs of interest.

Review of Research

As depicted in the Venn diagram in Figure 2, the literature relevant to this

dissertation includes that of adolescent motivation, learning disability, and literacy, given

an expectancy-value perspective on identity (see Appendix A for criteria for inclusion in

this literature review). The process of finding literature relevant to each pair of topics was

complicated by the multitude of definitions of "literacy," "learning disability," "identity"

and "motivation" used by scholars in the field, who have employed varying degrees of

care in explaining how the terms are being used. Take, for example, "literacy" and

"identity." Even as it has become popular to talk about the connections between these

two constructs, Moje and Luke (2009) caution that, for the discussion to be worthwhile,

identity- and motivation-related terms must be defined carefully. They contend that

"…the meanings of identity and related constructs are often taken for granted, resulting in a fair amount of slippage in how terms and constructs are used" (p. 417). Similar discussions concern the meaning of "literacy" that is being used in research, as described earlier in this chapter (See "Literacy").

Urging researchers to consider how their models of literacy and identity are shaping future work in this area, both in academia and in the classroom, Moje and Luke (2009) argue that

"the key to rigorous literacy-and-identity studies seems to lie in the recognition of what particular theories can *do* for our understanding of how literacy and identity work to develop one another and of our awareness of the limitations of a given metaphor and its methods of analysis and representation" (p. 432).

That is, researchers should articulate clear definitions of "literacy" and "identity" that are particularly relevant to the question(s) at hand. Only investigations that honor the parameters of their chosen terms will be able to use those terms towards providing useful information.

Heeding this warning, in this dissertation, every effort has been made to adhere to the theoretical framework, with regard to the possibilities it provides for addressing the current research questions. This requires recognition that some elements of literacy, motivation and learning disability are outside its purview. This review is structured so as to provide information about the literature of all possible intersections between the constructs. It will start with literature concerning motivation and literacy, then move to

literature concerning literacy and LD, and then motivation and LD (each presented in bold in Figure 2). The current study is intended to contribute information to the intersection of all three constructs (bold and italicized in Figure 2), where there is currently a need in the literature.

Adolescent Motivation and Literacy

Scholarship, curriculum development, and instruction regarding adolescent literacy would be incomplete without addressing motivation components (Hall, 2012c; Moje, 2015; Ruben & Moll, 2013; Troia et al., 2012), including the relationship between students' literacy motivation beliefs, and their beliefs about their own capabilities (Pajares & Valiante, 2008). Several researchers have investigated the relationship between students' beliefs about themselves as readers and writers, their motivation to read and write, and their literacy practices and achievement. In this section, notable studies that investigate adolescent literacy and motivation are discussed. Some look specifically at either reading or writing motivation; others look at literacy motivation more generally.

Studies have investigated the ways that both expectancy and value beliefs impact students' reading and/or writing. In their study of writing motivation and narrative quality among students in grades four through ten, Troia, Harbaugh, Shankland, Wolbers, and Lawrence (2013) found that students whose narrative writing quality was scored as "high" on the research team's scoring rubric had significantly higher self-efficacy beliefs than classmates whose narrative writing quality was scored as "poor." However, the research team also found that the instrument that they had created, the Writing Activity and

Motivation Scales (WAMS), only demonstrated strong internal consistency when its three components (self-efficacy, task interest/value, and attribution) were grouped together, and not when the components were separated. According to the authors, their findings are in line with prior research touting the importance of self-efficacy, but suggest that "when multiple aspects of motivational beliefs are measured simultaneously (as was done in this study), the effects of self-efficacy may be more nuanced" (Troia et al., 2013). They recommend that teachers attend to students' writing motivation in terms of interest/value, attribution, and self-efficacy at the same time.

In another study, Hall (2012a, 2012c) investigated how sixth graders' beliefs about whether or not they would achieve a social studies literacy task impacted their engagement with it. Student reading skills were assessed using the Gates MacGinitie (GM; MacGinitie, MacGinitie, Maria, & Dreyer, 2002) to determine whether each student was reading at, above, or below grade level; student beliefs about themselves as readers were assessed using the Reader Self-Perception Scale (Henk & Melnick, 1995) to determine if each student considered him- or herself a high, average, or low-performing reader (HPR, APR, LPR). Hall then arranged students in groups of three or four, according to their self-assessments of their own reading abilities (so an HPR group included students with a range of GM scores, who all rated themselves as high-performing readers). All students were taught a series of reading strategies, then asked to read texts and monitor their strategy use. After reading each text and taking notes, students met with their groups to discuss both the content of the text, and their strategy use. Results indicated that students in the HPR groups, regardless of GM reading score,

were more likely to utilize strategies in ways that deepened their understanding of the text than were students from the APR and LPR groups; HPR students with higher GM scores tended to do so from the beginning, and HPR students with lower GM scores tended to demonstrate these strategies as the study moved along.

Transcripts of their discussions indicated that students in HPR groups moved back and forth between text and discussion with groupmates both to clarify their understanding, and to support their own arguments; in comparison to their classmates, HPR group members described their strategy use in greater detail and at greater length (Hall, 2012c). Hall also found that, as the study went on, struggling readers began to take a more active role in group discussions; interview data indicated that these students "changed their interactions after witnessing their peers struggling with texts and using comprehension strategies" (Hall, 2012a, p. 307). This suggests that challenging students' definitions of what it means to be a "good" reader versus a "poor" one, by demonstrating that even good readers need to work at reading tasks, could help struggling readers to engage in classroom literacy activities.

McGeown and colleagues (2015) investigated the relationship between expectancy and value components of motivation, and several components of reading, among students aged 11-16 in the UK. Reading skills were assessed with the York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension Secondary (Stothard, Hulme, Clarke, Barmby, & Snowling, 2010); reading motivation and reading habits were assessed using the Motivation to Read Profile (Pitcher et al., 2007) and a researcher-generated questionnaire. McGeown et al. (2015) reported that "different dimensions of reading motivation and

reading habits emerged as significant predictors of different reading skills" (p. 564). For example, skills such as word reading, comprehension, summarizing and text reading speed "were significantly more closely related with reading expectancy than value" (p. 556), while value was significantly correlated with time spent engaged in particular kinds of reading, such as fiction book reading. This suggests that different components of motivation may impact reading differently:

> Reading motivation was more closely related to some reading activities than others. Reading motivation was significantly correlated with fiction and, to a lesser extent, with factual book reading but not with school book reading; as students have more autonomy over recreational reading activities, their reading motivation is likely to be more closely correlated with these activities. (McGeown et al., 2015, p. 564)

Given adolescents' burgeoning sense of autonomy, and the identity-development processes they are engaged in, it makes sense that they would be less likely to value literacy tasks they are assigned to do, as opposed to literacy tasks they have chosen.

In two studies of adolescents who demonstrate notable motivation to write, participants were most interested in writing "for their own authentic purposes" (Ruben & Moll, 2013, p. 12) and "about the thoughts, feelings and experiences that were of significance to them as adolescents" (Garrett & Moltzen, 2011, p. 172). However, in both of these studies, students reported that the only opportunities they had to write at school were on topics over which they felt little ownership or interest. Similar findings have also been reported with regard to reading. As students move into adolescence, they are less

likely to be motivated to make certain reading choices simply to comply with directions from an adult, and more likely to be academically motivated by opportunities to pursue their own interests, and/or opportunities to interact with peers (Bozack & Salvaggio, 2013; Wentzel, 1996).

Interactions with peers can have positive impacts, but they can also have negative ones, as reported in findings from a yearlong study of eighth-grade students about the impact of "disruptive talk" on student participation (Hall, 2016a, p. 76). In this study, Hall found that some students, who began the year with at- or above-grade reading skills, engaged in devaluing or dismissive talk in relation to the comments of students who began the year with poor reading identities or below-grade reading skills, when the latter group began to engage more frequently in class discussions.

Interestingly, the apparent decreased influence of a desire to comply with adult requests does not necessarily mean that the social influence of adults is unimportant for young adolescents. In a study of sixth- through eighth-grade students, Goodenow (1993) found that the degree to which students felt supported by their teachers explained more than a third of the interest, importance, and value they placed on doing academic work in that teacher's class. Such findings suggest that, "especially among young adolescents, motivation may be best understood as a phenomenon occurring not only within individuals but as developing in part out of the continuing relations between individual students and others in their social contexts" (Goodenow, 1993, p. 40).

This speaks to a number of important tasks set before content-area teachers in middle and high schools. In order to feel motivated to engage in reading and writing,

students need to be in environments with others who support their literacy pursuits (Davis & Forbes, 2016; Goodenow, 1993; Hall, 2016a); they also need their teachers to help them figure out how literacy relates to their own interests. Moje (2015) contends that, "rather than expecting youth to arrive in the classroom with a preexisting motivation to learn a discipline, teachers can apprentice and guide students into their own understanding of the value and purpose of disciplinary reading, writing, and speaking" (pp. 255-256). That is, understanding the "value" component of an expectancy-value perspective on motivation helps educators to support adolescents' disciplinary literacy needs.

Of late, particular attention has been paid to the motivation of adolescents who "struggle" with reading and/or writing (e.g. Moje et al., 2008; Richardson, 2016). Among the researchers conducting this work with struggling readers, opinions of the role of motivation in literacy development seem to turn on the cause to which those researchers attribute the "struggle" in the first place. Some contend that "the cognitive challenges faced by struggling readers may limit their capacity to increase their achievement as a consequence of the level of their motivation or engagement" (Klauda & Guthrie, 2014, p. 262), meaning that motivation plays less of a role for those who struggle; others argue that students with depressed expectancy or value beliefs towards literacy tasks are less likely to engage in those tasks, and thus can fall even further behind (Wolters, Denton, York, & Francis, 2014), suggesting that motivation may be an even more important factor for these students than for their non-struggling reader/writer peers.

The question of how to better support the literacy motivation and identity beliefs of struggling adolescent readers and writers as they navigate subject-specific texts is an important one. However, research with "struggling readers" includes students who struggle for a variety of reasons—for example, among the struggling readers in Klauda and Guthrie (2014)'s study, only 19.7% had IEPs. Even if all of the IEP students had LD, they would still constitute only a fifth of this struggling-reader group. Very little scholarship has focused specifically on the literacy motivation of adolescents with LD from an expectancy-value perspective. This dissertation will serve to address that gap.

Adolescent Literacy and LD

The literacy instruction of adolescents with LD is worthy of particular focus, as these students tend to face challenges in both reading (Ko & Tejero Hughes, 2015) and writing (Graham & Hall, 2016). Faggella-Luby and Deshler (2008) contend that, "to achieve independent living and economic self-sufficiency in the 21st-century job market, all adolescents, but especially those with LD reading below grade level, must acquire a sophisticated set of literacy skills" (p. 77). Given that, compared to their younger peers, adolescents have fewer years remaining in school, the usefulness of instructional time needs to be maximized; thus, it behooves everyone involved to know "the exact instructional conditions and levels of intensity that must be in place to achieve optimal outcomes" (Faggella-Luby & Deshler, 2008, p. 71). In other words, researchers would do well to provide information that is as specific as possible about these adolescents' literacy needs, and the best way to meet those needs.

Students with LD often continue to require instruction in foundational literacy skills during adolescence (Faggella-Luby, Drew, & Schumaker, 2015; Graham, Collins, & Rigby-Wills, 2017). However, they also need to learn strategies that support literacy development in specific disciplines, as reading expository texts becomes increasingly important in secondary-level classrooms (Faggella-Luby & Deshler, 2008; Kennedy & Ihle, 2012; Ko & Tejero Hughes, 2015). Explicit instruction in skills such as identifying the elements that distinguish narrative and expository text, discovering word meaning, and using cognitive strategies have been shown to help adolescents with LD make sense of content-area text (Faggella-Luby & Deshler, 2008; Faggella-Luby et al., 2015; Kennedy & Ihle, 2012), just as findings suggest that explicit instruction in skills such as planning, revising, and using a graphic organizer can effectively support the writing of students with LD (Gillespie & Graham, 2014). This type of explicit literacy instruction should happen consistently throughout the school day in order for adolescents with LD to fully benefit (Faggella-Luby et al., 2015; Kennedy & Ihle, 2012).

Unfortunately, research suggests that adolescents with LD have not been getting the support they need to successfully develop the literacy skills necessary for success in multiple content areas (Kennedy & Ihle, 2012). Problem areas include close reading and analysis/interpretation of text (Faggella-Luby et al., 2015) and processing complex language structures that are specific to particular subject areas (Kennedy & Ihle, 2012).

Several reasons for the continued difficulty that adolescents with LD demonstrate in developing needed literacy skills have been proposed. One suggestion has to do with location of literacy learning experiences: that special education teachers have been

sufficiently trained to support students' development of these skills in individualized, intensive sessions, but not in the content-area classroom (Berkeley, Marshak, Mastropieri, & Scruggs, 2011; Kennedy & Ihle, 2012), and, relatedly, that general education teachers have not yet been effectively trained "in setting up and running an effective process writing classroom" (Gillespie & Graham, 2014, p. 469). Another suggestion is that students are being taught strategies specifically in one content area, but are not being taught how to transfer these strategies to other content areas (Faggella-Luby & Deshler, 2008). Finally, educators may feel pressured to attend to topics being covered on state tests, at the expense of meeting IEP requirements for reading instruction (King-Sears & Bowman-Kruhm, 2011).

To address these issues, the literature outlines the conditions needed for both researchers and practitioners to better support the literacy needs of adolescents with LD. First, special and general educators working in inclusion settings need to authentically collaborate, so that students benefit from "the strengths and professional expertise of both the general educator (i.e. subject matter knowledge) and special educator (i.e., metacognitive strategies targeting language and learning)" (Kennedy & Ihle, 2012, pp. 49–50). Second, researchers should present their findings with specificity: they need to be clear about

> the types of learners for whom an intervention is designed, the context
> within which it should be taught, the content of the intervention, the
> pedagogy used to teach it, the fidelity required to achieve the desired
> outcomes, and the intensity required (i.e., the amount of instruction

provided at any one time, the intervals at which it should be provided, and

the duration of the instruction). (Faggella-Luby & Deshler, 2008, p. 71)

In other words, further research that presents promising findings without specific details

of the conditions in which they can be used successfully is of less use to the field than

research that fully describes the necessary conditions. The final recommendations have to

do with integrating the use of assistive and instructional technology into students'

classroom experiences, such as a computer-based graphic organizer (e.g. Evmenova et al.,

2016). These resources should grow from "theoretically based instructional principles;"

teachers should be provided with explicit and clear support in using the resources

effectively.

While the research community knows a great deal about both the importance of

supporting ongoing literacy development among adolescents with LD, as well as the

types of resources needed to provide specific interventions, there has been less

consistency in adequately explaining (and adhering to) the conditions required for

providing those resources effectively. Many of those conditions involve the creation of

learning environments that take motivational factors into account.

Adolescent Motivation and LD

Adolescents with LD are often at risk for motivational problems that impact

academic achievement (Graham et al., 2017; Sideridis, Morgan, Botsas, Padeliadu, &

Fuchs, 2006), particularly in terms of self-efficacy (Lackaye & Margalit, 2006; Sideridis,

2009). They tend to attribute academic successes to external variables such as luck

(Núñez et al., 2005; Sideridis, 2009) and failures to themselves (Tabassam & Grainger,

2002). Theories regarding the cause of these problems include academic skills that are incommensurate with taskwork (Roberts, Torgesen, Boardman, & Scammacca, 2008; Sideridis et al., 2006); weak metacognitive skills that inhibit self-regulation (National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities, 2008); a history of school failure (Lackaye & Margalit, 2006; Núñez et al., 2005; Roberts et al., 2008) that leaves students with fewer positive experiences from which to draw feelings of self-efficacy (Lackaye & Margalit, 2006); and possibly the "LD" label itself (Baird, Scott, Dearing, & Hamill, 2009). Regardless of the reasons for motivational decline among adolescents with LD, its impact on their academic success can be considerable. For instance, Roberts and colleagues (2008) articulate a downward cycle in which students who possess low levels of reading motivation end up reading less, which means their skills improve less, resulting in shallow reading gains, which in turn decreases motivation to read.

Notable research has been done regarding these students' motivational beliefs, using a wide variety of motivation constructs (for studies of goal orientation, please see the work of Sideridis and colleagues, such as Sideridis, 2003, 2006; Sideridis & Tsorbatzoudis, 2003). This dissertation presents findings about motivation beliefs (among adolescents with LD) as outlined in expectancy-value theory; these are of particular usefulness in investigating this project's research questions.

Several researchers have investigated the relationship between the expectancy beliefs of adolescents with LD, and their academic performance; however, these studies have had inconsistent findings. In two studies, Lackaye and colleagues documented a problematic trend they found among adolescents with LD: negative self-efficacy beliefs

that were not in line with level of academic achievement. In both studies, participants were seventh-grade students with and without LD. Lackaye, Margalit, Ziv, and Ziman (2006) found that students with LD had lower self-efficacy beliefs than their peers without LD, even when matched by school grades. Lackaye and Margalit (2006) reported similar findings: grouping students with and without LD according to their academic achievement (high, high average, low average, and low), the researchers found that students with LD in the low-average group demonstrated self-efficacy beliefs similar to those of students without disabilities in the low group. In both of these studies, students with LD had lower levels of self-efficacy than their non-LD peers, as related to level of academic achievement. On the other hand, studying the self-efficacy beliefs and spelling and writing achievement of eighth- and ninth-grade students with and without LD, Klassen (2007) found very different results. Among students without LD, there was a stronger relationship between notions of self-efficacy and spelling and writing abilities, as compared to their peers with LD. Here, students with LD over-estimated their own abilities; that is, their notions of self-efficacy were higher than their actual performance.

One possible explanation for these seemingly contradictory findings is the manner of assessing academic performance. Towards this end, Klassen (2010) looked at the relationship between self-efficacy and academic achievement among Canadian 8th- and 9th-grade students. Comparing students with and without LD, Klassen found significant differences in self-efficacy, reading comprehension, and end-of-term English grade according to LD status (with higher scores for those students that did not have LD). However, within the LD group, self-efficacy predicted English grade, but not reading

comprehension as measured by an adapted version of the Woodcock-Johnson III Tests of Achievement (Woodcock, McGrew, & Mather, 2001). In other words, regardless of students' actual reading comprehension skills, degree of self-efficacy was predictive of class grade for adolescents with LD. In this era of high-stakes testing, this is a particularly interesting finding that raises questions about what is being measured by standardized reading comprehension tests, and how it relates to what is actually going on in the classroom and how students feel about themselves as learners.

As outlined in Eccles (2009), an important factor in the development of identity beliefs that impact motivation is the memory of previous experiences. Jungert and Andersson (2013) conducted a study with Swedish fifth-grade students; participants included those with no LD, those with specific mathematics difficulties, and those with comorbid mathematics and reading difficulties. The researchers found that students with no LD had higher self-efficacy scores than their peers with LD; however, they also found that, when they controlled for math test performance, students with math difficulties displayed the same level of self-efficacy as their peers without LD. Among the possible explanations Jungert and Andersson offer is that students' level of self-efficacy, regardless of LD status, depends on mastery experience. The findings in this study suggest that the important factor is not whether or not a student has an LD, but whether or not he or she has prior experiences of success on which to build identity beliefs as someone with skills and competencies that can be brought to bear on the task. If learning environments are set up such that students with LD have enough options that they can

find a way to succeed at a task, perhaps their self-efficacy will be less likely to lag behind those of classmates without disabilities.

Clearly, the nature of the motivational beliefs held by students with LD has an impact on their academic achievement, but the relationship between these factors is complicated. The literature collected here suggests that it takes considerable time to effectively understand and address problematic motivational profiles among this group of students. This dissertation contributes towards that end by focusing in particular on the role of identity beliefs in the development of motivation among adolescents with LD.

Adolescent Motivation, Literacy and LD

The out-of-school literacy activities that are frequently valued by adolescents are often not included in traditional conceptions of a "good" reader or writer (Hall, 2012b). When forms of literacy other than the ones conventionally valued in schools go unrecognized, students develop beliefs about themselves that do not take into account a particular and important group of potential strengths. Hall (2012a, 2012b) sees this as a major stumbling block in addressing the needs of struggling adolescent readers, arguing that schools create conditions in which certain students see themselves as "poor readers" even when they have literacy abilities that can and should be utilized.

Given the importance placed on literacy skills in our society (Burden, 2008; Faggella-Luby & Deshler, 2008), Burden (2008) calls for a research approach or theoretical framework that addresses the development of academic identity beliefs specifically among students with dyslexia. This dissertation extends that call to include students with other LD as well. Because literacy skills are so valued and necessary to

post-secondary success, the difficulties that individuals with LD have with literacy (at least as "literacy" is traditionally conceived) impact the beliefs that they develop about themselves as learners (Burden, 2008). These beliefs are likely to impact how engaged students with LD are in school, as well as their success in postsecondary settings (Zheng, Gaumer Erickson, Kingston, & Noonan, 2014). Outside of the work of Burden, and the researchers whose literacy-related work is discussed in the "Adolescent Motivation and LD" section of this chapter, an expectancy-value perspective on identity and motivation has not previously been specifically applied to literacy among adolescents with LD.

Chapter 3: Methods

Chapter 2 included a review of what is already known about the development and impact of literacy motivation among adolescents with and without LD. In the remainder of this dissertation, the interrelationships between motivation, LD and literacy among a particular group of students are explored further. As indicated earlier, the following research questions were used to guide the current study:

Overall Question: For students with learning disabilities, at a single middle school, what is the nature of the relationship between literacy and motivation?

RQ1: What motivates these students to read and write?

RQ2: What is the nature of these students' perceptions of themselves as readers and writers?

RQ3: What is the nature of the relationship between these students' motivation to read and write, and the literacy experiences that impact their perceptions of themselves as readers and writers?

This chapter begins with a broad summary of the study design. More specific information about each step of the study (including both the data sources and collection methods, as well as the analytic process) is then provided.

Rationale for Research Approach

Figure 3 is a visual representation of the components of the current study, and how they relate to one another. While a general overview of the figure is provided initially, a more detailed description of each part of Figure 3 follows in the remainder of this chapter.
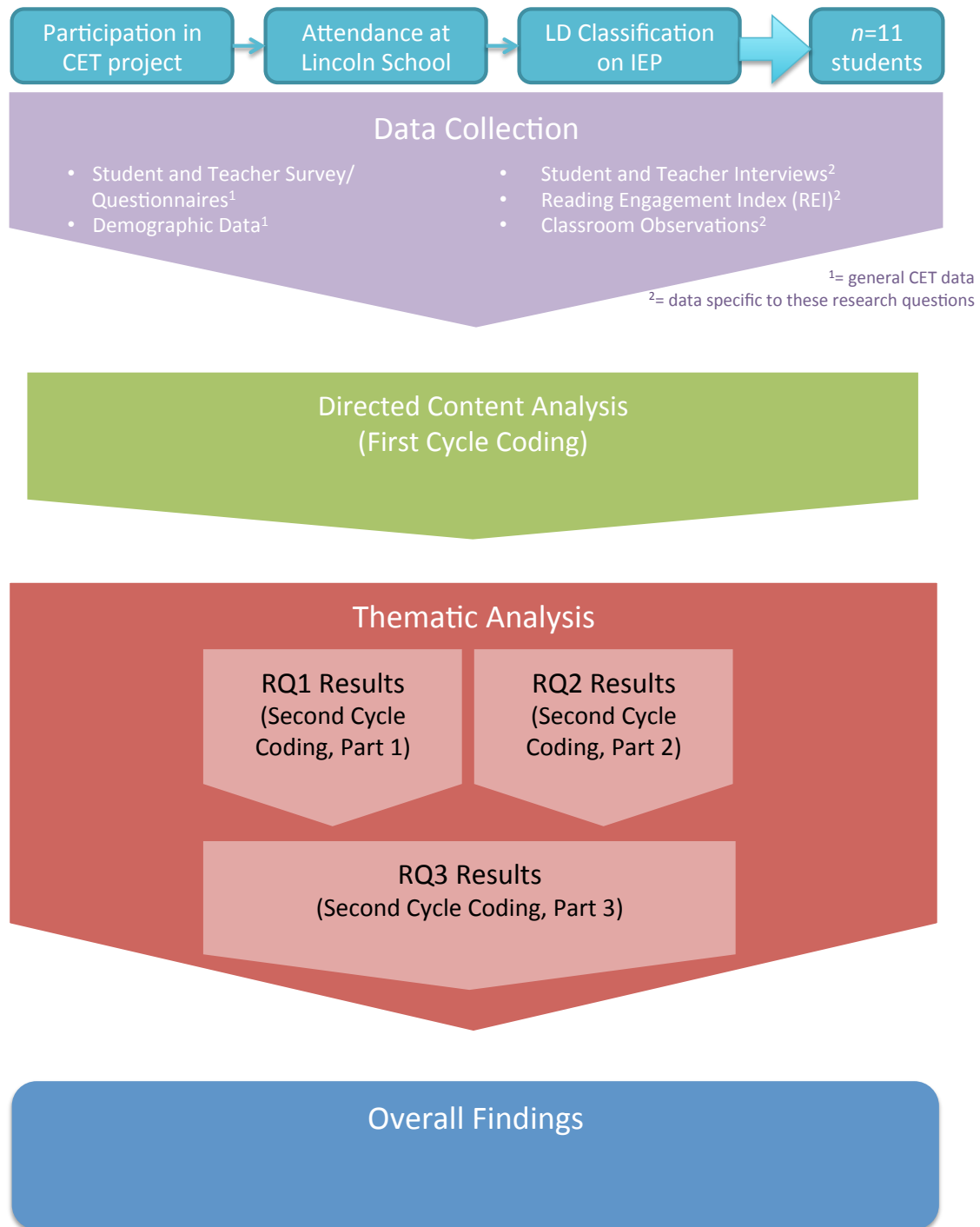
Figure 3. Visual representation of study design.

The boxes at the top of Figure 3 document the criteria for inclusion in the study. As part of a larger study (see "Research Context"), data were collected from 11 students, as displayed in the purple box. Following approval of the dissertation proposal, the data were analyzed, as displayed in the green and red boxes. First cycle coding (green box) took a directed content analysis approach (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) and was anchored in the expectancy-value theory of motivation (Eccles, 2009; see "Directed Content Analysis (First Cycle Codes)"). Second-cycle coding (red box) built on first-cycle findings, documenting patterns and, ultimately, larger themes regarding motivation and self-perception among study participants (Braun & Clarke, 2006; see "Thematic Analysis (Second Cycle Codes)"). This research design is appropriate to the exploratory research questions in the current study. Using a directed content analysis approach initially, followed by thematic analysis, enabled the exploration of expectancy-value theory's usefulness in understanding the reading and writing motivation of this group of adolescents with LD (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

Researcher Positionality

Because "scholarly analyses are always (in part) political, value-laden, biased, and shaped by the worldviews, perspectives, positionalities, and subjectivities of researchers" (Cochran-Smith & Dudley-Marling, 2012, p. 237), it is important to clarify my own positionality before moving forward with this dissertation. I am an English-speaking, Caucasian woman born in the United States. Prior to my doctoral studies, I was a teacher at independent schools specifically designed for students with LD (two years in a high school setting, six years in a middle school setting). During this time, I had first-

hand experience with the individualized supports necessary for students with significant LD, whose learning profiles necessitated small and highly specialized learning environments, and the impact having those supports made on students' confidence in their ability to succeed (and, subsequently, their perceptions of themselves as readers and writers). However, my masters and doctoral studies have increased my awareness of the social justice concerns inherent in separating students based on disability status, and the impact such separation might have on students' beliefs about themselves as readers and writers. My background in, and affinity for, both of these points of view helped me to take on multiple perspectives as I considered related issues that arose during the course of this study. Potential instances of the impact of my positionality on my analyses and findings are addressed in the limitations section of my discussion chapter (see Chapter 7).

Research Context

The data for the current study were gathered as part of a larger research project, the National Center on the Use of Emerging Technologies to Improve Literacy Achievement for Students with Disabilities in Middle School (CET; CAST, Inc., 2015; PIs: David Rose and Ted Hasselbring). CET researchers at the Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) studied the motivation of middle grade learners, and investigated how digital tools could be used to foster student motivation and reading outcomes. The larger study provided an ideal context for researching the current study's questions, by focusing particularly on literacy motivation among a group of adolescents with LD.

The CET project resulted in the development of Udio, a computer-based literacy intervention program. Data for the present study were collected during the 2014 – 2015

academic year using an initial version of Udio in 7 schools (located in Massachusetts,

New York and California). Participating students were in the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades, with

some participating classrooms comprised of remedial reading settings, while others were

English Language Arts classes (students did not participate in more than one classroom).

For the larger project, participating students included those with and without disabilities.

      The dissertation study included data collected at Lincoln School[1], one of the

seven schools from the larger project. Lincoln is a pilot school serving grades 6-12 in a

large urban center in the Northeast United States. According to demographics

information provided by the public school system, during the 2014-2015 school year,

21.6% of Lincoln's 985 students were classified as students with disabilities, 56.9% were

classified as economically disadvantaged, and 24.6% were classified as English

Language Learners. Of the seven CET schools, Lincoln was chosen for this study

because a large proportion of its students participating in the CET project had IEPs, and

because a working relationship had already been established with both the students and

their teacher, Ms. Hathaway.

      Ms. Hathaway taught 6th- and 7th-grade remedial reading during the 2014-2015

school year; she had been a teacher for 36 years, six of them at Lincoln. She held a

bachelor's degree in special and elementary education; a master's degree in counseling;

certifications in Special Education and General Education (Grades 5 through 9); and a

sheltered English immersion (SEI) endorsement. Depending on attendance, the number of

---

[1] All names are pseudonyms

students in Ms. Hathaway's classes ranged from approximately eight or nine to no more than 14.

Participants

Of the 34 Lincoln School students participating in the larger study, 25 were receiving special education services, and 22 were designated as having an LD on their IEP. (Beyond LD classification on the IEP, IRB restraints prevented seeking more detailed educational evaluation information about the participating students' disabilities.) Gathering and analyzing data for this entire group of students with LD was beyond the scope of the current study, so half (11 students) were randomly selected to comprise the sample. One of these students declined to participate. Another student was selected from the original group of 22, so that the sample would be exactly half of the group of possible participants in the study.

Demographic information for the 11-student sample is summarized in Table 1. Of the 11 students, four were female; five were in grade 6, while six were in grade 7; four were classified as English language learners; and 10 qualified for free or reduced lunch. The sample was generally comparable to overall school demographics. There were slightly fewer girls (approximately 36% of study participants, compared to 46% Lincoln overall) and slightly more English Language Learners (36% study participants, 25% Lincoln overall).

Table 1

Demographic Information for Study Participants (N=11)

Characteristic	*n*	*%*
Sex		
Female	4	36
Male	7	64
Grade		
6	5	45
7	6	55
Age		
11	1	9
12	3	27
13	3	27
14	2	18
15	1	9
ELL	4	36
FARMS	10	91

Data Sources and Collection Procedures

Data for this study were collected from a variety of sources as part of the larger CET project. A literacy motivation battery was given as part of a set of assessments intended to inform all of the CET's research questions. These assessments were given during 45-minute class sessions over the course of two to three school days; this occurred twice, once in November 2014 and once in May 2015. During both the November and the May assessments, sessions were scheduled within as close proximity to one another as possible, with no more than a week between assessment days. The literacy motivation battery consisted of a literacy motivation questionnaire and an attitudes survey. There were items on the questionnaire and survey that addressed reading motivation/attitudes, and items that addressed writing motivation/attitudes. Each student used a laptop

computer for the assessments, all of which were administered via an online survey platform. A CAST researcher was present in the classroom during assessments and read all items aloud.

A second set of data was collected to inform the particular research questions being addressed in this dissertation. These data, collected in May and June of 2015, included interviews, observations, and a teacher questionnaire.

One challenge faced in this dissertation was simultaneity in measuring students' beliefs with regard to each of the three constructs of interest (literacy, motivation, and LD). Table 2 indicates which of the measures were used to investigate each of these three constructs; further detail about the information provided by each measure, for each construct, is presented in that measure's narrative description section.

Table 2

Measures Used to Investigate Key Constructs

Measure		Construct of Interest		
		Literacy	Motivation	LD
Literacy Motivation	MRQ	X	X	
Battery	Reading Attitudes Survey	X		
Interviews	Student Interviews	X	X	X
	REI	X	X	
	Teacher Interviews	X	X	X
Observations		X	X	

Literacy motivation battery. Students were administered a self-report survey regarding their reading and writing attitudes, as well as a self-report questionnaire regarding their motivation to read and write. Both were adapted from previous research. There were 8 items based on the Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ; Wigfield

& Guthrie, 1997), all of which came from the Self-Efficacy portion of the MRQ (Proctor, Daley, Louick, Leider, & Gardner, 2014). The MRQ has been used and developed by Wigfield & Guthrie (1997); further research by Unrau and Schlackman (2006) supports the construct validity of this instrument. For items based on the MRQ, students responded to statements (such as "I like it when the questions in books make me think") on a 4-point Likert-type scale. There were 27 items based on the Reading Attitudes Survey (McKenna et al., 2012), for which students responded to questions (such as "How do you feel about reading a book in your free time?") on a six-point Likert-type scale of desirability. The Reading Attitudes Survey has been used and developed by McKenna and colleagues, who provided evidence of the reliability and validity of the measure through factor analysis and the computation of reliability coefficients (McKenna et al., 2012).

All elements of the Literacy Motivation Battery were group administered, and students were informed that their answers would be de-identified (see Appendix B for the directions that students heard). Items were read aloud by a CAST researcher as the students completed the survey/questionnaire online, and are consistent with the definitions of key constructs in this dissertation (as described in the theoretical framework section of Chapter 2). As such, these items allowed measurement of the intensity and direction of students' motivation beliefs regarding reading and writing (Gable, 1986).

As indicated in Table 2, with regard to the three constructs of interest, the MRQ was designed to provide information about students' literacy and motivation beliefs, while the Reading Attitudes Survey was designed to primarily provide information about

students' literacy beliefs. Having information from these previously-validated measures of literacy and motivation was essential in understanding student motivation from the standpoint of the majority of research done in the field.

Interviews. The interview protocols are available in Appendices C and D; Table 3, adapted from Anfara, Mangione and Brown (2002), represents the relationship between the research and interview questions.

Table 3

Research Questions in Relation to Interview and REI Questions

Research Question	Student Interview Questions	REI Questions (Teacher)
RQ1: What motivates these students to read and write?	3, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, Reading Scenario	1, 2, 4, 7, 8
RQ2: What is the nature of these students' perceptions of themselves as readers and writers?	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, Reading Scenario	none
RQ3: What is the nature of the relationship between these students' motivation to read and write, and the literacy experiences that impact their perceptions of themselves as readers and writers?	all	all

Student interviews. As advocated by Connor and colleagues (2011), the voices of students with LD themselves are needed to understand whether and how having an LD shapes literacy experiences and motivations to read and write. This includes the development of a better understanding of possible relationships between literacy motivation and self-perceptions regarding reading and writing. As such, student interviews targeted respondents' literacy experiences over time, as well as their feelings, beliefs and preferences regarding literacy. As indicated in Table 2, information about all three constructs of interest (literacy, motivation and LD) were gathered during student

interviews. All interviews were audio-recorded except for one—in that case, the student

requested that the interview not be recorded, so detailed written notes were taken during

the interview instead. I conducted these interviews in the hallway, just outside Ms.

Hathaway's classroom.

The student interview protocol (available in Appendix C) was initially piloted

with two adolescents with LD who did not attend Lincoln, as part of a project for a

qualitative research methods class. The questions were adapted from literature reviewed

in Chapter 2, as well as questionnaire items and interview questions used in previous

research (Nolen, 2007; Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997). They were designed to address

components of the expectancy-value model of motivated behavioral choice (Eccles,

2009; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; see Chapter 2).

The first set of questions in the interview protocol asked students to describe their

early experiences with books; what they remembered about the process of learning to

read and write; and the nature of the reading they did currently. This corresponds to the

"affective reactions and memories" component of identity development in the

expectancy-value model, particularly in terms of the "child's interpretation of

experiences" (Eccles, 2009; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; see Figure 1). The second set of

questions asked students what word(s) they might use to describe themselves as readers

and writers, addressing the "self-concept of ability" and "self-schemata" components of

identity development in the expectancy-value model; for example, items asking students

to explain their understanding of terms such as "a good reader" and "a challenging

reading/writing task" in relation to their own skills were particularly designed to address

"activity stereotypes & task demands," while items in which students were asked to describe the relative importance of literacy and literacy tasks & measurements (including grades and standardized test scores) in various parts of their lives were particularly designed to address the "distal cultural milieu" components of "socializer's beliefs, expectations, attitudes and behaviors" (Eccles, 2009; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; see Figure 1). Finally, students were shown pictures of adolescents reading in three different situations (alone, with a peer, or with a group of peers) and asked to choose the situation they preferred and explain their preference. This last set of questions (adapted from Nolen, 2007) was designed to again address the "socializer's beliefs, expectations, attitudes and behaviors" components of the model (Eccles, 2009; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; see Figure 1). The overall goal of the interview was to gather detailed information, in students' own words, regarding each student's self-perception as a reader and writer, as well as how those beliefs were related to his or her expectancy to succeed and the value he or she placed on such success (i.e. his or her literacy motivation).

Given that the sample was comprised by students with LD, and based on interview experiences during the pilot study, accommodations for multiple methods of language processing were part of the protocol design, to offer students multiple opportunities to convey their experiences and beliefs. As such, there were multiple formulations of several of the interview questions (see blue text in Appendix C; confirmed as comparable by two special education teachers). The additional formulations were substituted/added at the interviewer's discretion, based on the communication patterns, preferences and inclinations demonstrated by the student.

Reading engagement index. Ms. Hathaway completed the Reading Engagement Index (REI; Wigfield et al., 2008) for each of the 11 students. The REI is "intended to reflect the behavioral, motivational, and cognitive characteristics of engaged reading" (Guthrie, 2004) and evidence for the validity of the measure has been published (Guthrie et al., 2007; Wigfield et al., 2008). On the REI, the teacher read a statement regarding reading engagement, such as "often reads independently." Using a 5-point Likert-type scale, the teacher rated how "true" he or she found the statement to be with regard to a specific student, with 1 indicating that the statement was "not true" of the student, and 5 indicating that the statement was "very true" of the student (items 2-4 were undefined). Statements on the REI concern characteristics of engaged reading, including how hard and independently the student worked at reading tasks, the depth with which the student engaged with reading content, and the distraction level the student demonstrated while trying to read. As indicated in Table 2, in keeping with the developed aims of the REI, information about literacy and motivation and were gathered using the REI (this measure was not designed to assess teacher perceptions of LD).

Teacher interviews. While filling out the REI, Ms. Hathaway was interviewed in a private setting; with her permission, these interviews were audio-recorded. As Ms. Hathaway completed each Likert-type prompt for a given student, she was asked if she wanted to explain her choice for that student in greater detail. Although this question was kept as consistent as possible, as Charmaz (2006) recommends, efforts were also made to keep the interview conversational, and additional questions were asked for clarification as they arose.

At the close of the REI for each student, before Ms. Hathaway moved on to the next student, she answered additional teacher interview questions, adapted from Nolen (2007). These concerned instructional strategies that worked well for the individual student, and the student's progress in Ms. Hathaway's class. They were designed to develop a fuller picture of the student's engagement and participation in the learning environment. The teacher interview protocol is available in Appendix D; item 1 (building on the REI) was designed to gather information about literacy and motivation, while item 2 was designed to gather information about LD.

Classroom observations. Each of the 11 students was observed twice during the spring 2015 semester, in Ms. Hathaway's class. Ms. Hathaway told the class that the observations were part of the CET project; no specific instructions were given to students regarding the observations. One observation occurred before the student interview, and one afterward. Observations occurred within a three-week window on either side of the interview (with one exception, in which case, due to scheduling conflicts, the interview was within four weeks of the first observation). Notes from each student's first observation were reviewed prior to that student's interview, as well as his or her second observation.

Classroom observations were conducted for two main purposes. The first purpose, drawing from Nolen (2007), was to gain a better sense of each particular student in his or her remedial reading classroom environment: his or her manner of engagement in literacy activities, as well as interactions with teacher and peers. The second was to gain further insight into student interview responses: to document the extent to which student actions,

as well as interactions with peers and teacher, were (or were not) in sync with statements made in interviews. Observations thus provided an opportunity to discern whether or not students' expressed literacy self-perceptions and motivations were reflected in their classroom behavior (see Table 2).

An observation template adapted from Heath and Street (2008; sample available in Appendix E) was used to take fieldnotes, which served as a "running account of events in real time" (Heath & Street, 2008, p. 77). They included records of both individual and collective actions; anecdotes and observations to trigger memories of classroom happenings; and particular attention to participants' language use (Charmaz, 2006). In the larger, left-hand column were in-the-moment notes taken during class. In the right-hand column were notes recorded directly after class (items that it was not possible to record at the exact moment they were happening). If Ms. Hathaway had a free period after the observation, and the observed students were discussed further, follow-up notes were recorded in the right-hand column of the fieldnotes template.

Analytic Overview

This section of the methods chapter provides an explanation of the qualitative analysis methods used to address the research questions for the current project. First is a general overview of how data collected from each source was used in analysis. Subsequent sections consist of an overview of the coding and thematic-development processes.

Analytic Overview by Data Source

The data sources used in this dissertation were the literacy motivation battery, the REI, student interviews, teacher interviews, and classroom observations.

Literacy motivation battery. Results from the adapted MRQ and Reading Attitudes survey were used to index students' self-reported levels of self-efficacy toward literacy, as well as their stances towards reading and writing tasks. Information from the literacy motivation battery was used in conjunction with interview data to better understand how students interpreted the survey and questionnaire items; defined specific motivation-related terms; and perceived themselves as readers and writers.

Reading engagement index. Results from the REI contextualized teacher characterizations of student engagement in reading and writing. In other words, Ms. Hathaway's ratings enabled a better understanding of exactly how strongly she felt that the student exemplified each statement.

Interviews and observations. According to Anfara and colleagues (2002), the analytic process is designed to bring "meaning, structure and order to data" (p. 31). The authors describe establishing codes that can be used to organize qualitative data such as interviews and observations into "meaningful chunks," and using those chunks of data to bring "meaning and insight…to the words and acts of the participants" (p. 32) that ultimately contribute to the development of themes. Towards this end, a two-cycle process of coding interviews and observations was employed in this dissertation (Saldaña, 2013). First cycle codes were established using directed content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; see "Directed Content Analysis (First Cycle Codes)") and served to locate and organize data related to "motivation" as defined in the literature. Review of

this data, as it specifically related to aspects of motivation, resulted in ideas that led, in turn, to a second round of coding using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; see "Thematic Analysis (Second Cycle Codes)"). This second-cycle coding involved the development of themes from emergent patterns in the data. Explanations of how each of the codes was developed are provided in the sections of this methods chapter labeled "Directed Content Analysis (First Cycle Codes)" and "Thematic Analysis (Second Cycle Codes)." Saldaña (2013) writes that a code is only as useful as the "written reflection on the deeper and complex meanings it evokes" (p. 42). As such, analytic memos were written to document the coding choices made, and the ways codes were strengthened over time; ideas and concepts that were developing through reading and re-reading of the data; the integration of those ideas with one another; and thoughts about how the dissertation might be organized or structured (Charmaz, 2006; Saldaña, 2013).

Analytic Overview of Coding and Thematic Development

The aim of this section of the methods chapter is to provide "clarity on process and practice of method" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 80). Following an explanation of the first cycle coding process (directed content analysis; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) is an explanation of the second cycle coding process and the development of themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Simultaneous Coding (Saldaña, 2013) techniques were also used throughout this analysis, meaning that data excerpts received more than one code where appropriate.

Directed content analysis (first cycle codes). One of the goals for this dissertation was to develop a better understanding of expectancy-value theory's

usefulness with regard to reading and writing motivation among adolescents with LD. As such, directed content analysis was employed. This can be used "to validate or extend conceptually a theoretical framework or theory" (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1281). The first step of directed content analysis is establishing operational definitions for codes using the theory of interest. The analyst then codes as much of the data corpus as possible, identifies elements of the data that cannot be analyzed with these codes, and evaluates this data to see "if they represent a new category or a subcategory of an existing code" (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1282).

Initial codes were drawn from the literature of expectancy-value theory. Through iterative rounds of directed content analysis, the first-cycle codes in Table 4 were developed (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). As described in subsequent sections of this chapter, these included both codes that came directly from the literature of expectancy-value theory, and, ultimately, an emergent code that resonated both with expectancy-value theory, and with other elements of motivation theory. Findings from these first-cycle codes enabled the development of second-cycle codes (See "Thematic Analysis- Second Cycle Codes").

Each of the first-cycle codes will now be explained in more detail. These were used, along with HyperResearch software (*HyperRESEARCH*, 2015), to organize student interview, teacher interview, classroom observation, and survey/questionnaire data.

Table 4

First Cycle Codes (Directed Content Analysis)[2]

Code	Description	Sample Coded Data
Beliefs and Behaviors of Key Socializers- Literacy Importance	Messages the student perceives from others about literacy's importance (by statement or action): the degree to which reading or writing should be a priority • Includes conception of societal priority	"My mom used to like—she used to when we come home when we finish our work she used to like sit down at the table and she would like sign out the word and make us like try to read it" (Jennifer, student interview)
Interest Value	Student demonstrates positive feelings towards, or as a result of, engagement in a literacy task	Teacher: "Dude what are you looking at over there?" "A book." "Are you looking at black history?" "Yeah." Asks for "Kennedy books" which the teacher doesn't have, but she recommends an American history book. Devin picks up that book and returns quietly to a chair. (Devin, observation 1)
Utility Value	Task perceived as useful: • "for accomplishing personal goals, either in everyday life or in the future" (Durik et al., 2015, p. 104) • "beyond the immediate situation, for other tasks or aspects of a person's life" (Hulleman et al., 2008, p. 398)	"It really matters in order to get a job and to go to the next grade level you have to get good grades." (Abigail, student interview)
Attainment Value	Relationship between the opportunities presented by the task at hand, and "salient and valued characteristics of the self" (Eccles et al., 1983, p. 89)	[Prompt: How important is it to you to see yourself as a good reader and writer?] "It will see—it will be, like, good, because I know I practiced… And so, like, my accom- my goal went up and I accom-- accomplished it" (Danielle, student interview)
Interpersonal Value	• Literacy task creates opportunity for social interaction, emotional connection, or conflict with others • Literacy outcomes (success/failure) linked to relationship to others	"When you're reading, you want to share the story that you read so other people can get what you are reading" (Kyle, student interview)

---

[2] See narrative explanations for each code for additional citations indicating works from which each code was derived.

Things a good reader/writer does	• Stereotypes regarding the nature of abilities to read and write • Student beliefs about what capable readers and writers do	[Prompt: asked why he considers a particular classmate a "good reader"] "Um, like, when he's reading, he read fast, and he can explain the reading to you" (Kyle, student interview)
Beliefs and Behaviors of Key Socializers- self as reader/writer	Messages the student perceives from others about him- or herself as a reader/writer • what support services imply about student as reader/writer • Grades/tests (imply/don't imply capability level) • Stories from others about students' previous literacy struggles/successes • Others position student as someone who should/should not think of self as reader/writer • Others connote student's literacy achievement with other desired characteristics	"Sometimes the kids or the grownups think negative… Like they say something negative like 'Oh you can't read' or they say 'Oh this book is too hard for you so (you) can't read it.' " (Julian, student interview)
Self as reader/ writer	Person characteristics: • student description of strengths/weaknesses as a reader/writer • conditions under which student can do his or her best reading/writing	"I just go back from the past, like, I didn't know how to read and I- and I practiced and practiced and practiced until I got to know how to talk and read, so, like, ever since I know how to read, now I'm reading more and more, so it takes practice to read." (Danielle, student interview)

Beliefs and behaviors of key socializers- literacy importance. According to expectancy-value theory, the beliefs and behaviors of key socializers are an important component of motivation (Eccles, 2009). This code was used for messages that students said they received from others about the importance of literacy. At times, these messages were ones that others had explicitly stated (e.g. "if I don't get to be a good reader I might not pass this grade"); at times, these messages were inferred from others' actions (e.g. Jennifer's description of how her mother prioritized reading practice at home; see Table 4). These messages provided information to the student about the degree to which (and contexts in which) others believed that reading or writing should be prioritized. Included in this code were student conceptions of the importance society places on reading and writing.

Interest value. Expectancy-value theorists describe interest value as "the inherent, immediate enjoyment one gets from engaging in [a literacy] activity" (Eccles et al., 1983, p. 89). This code was used when students demonstrated positive feelings towards, or as a result of, engagement in a literacy task (e.g. Devin's demonstrated interest in reading about John F. Kennedy; see Table 4).

Utility value. In the expectancy-value literature, the term "utility value" indicates that someone finds a task valuable "for accomplishing personal goals, either in everyday life or in the future" (Durik et al., 2015, p. 104). Put another way, these tasks are "useful and relevant beyond the immediate situation, for other tasks or aspects of a person's life" (Hulleman et al., 2008, p. 398). This code was used to indicate instances in which students perceived engagement in reading or writing as being instrumentally useful

towards either an everyday goal, or a larger career or life goal (e.g. Abigail's discussion

of the relationship between grades, school promotion, and job prospects; see Table 4).

Attainment value. Expectancy-value theorists use the term "attainment value" to

describe a relationship between the opportunities presented by the task at hand, and

"salient and valued characteristics of the self" (Eccles et al., 1983, p. 89)—that is, both

academically and socially, the kind of person an individual believes him- or herself to be

right now, and/or would like to be in the future (Pintrich & Schunk, 2002; Wigfield,

Tonks, & Klauda, 2009). Guided by this conception of attainment value, instances

indicating a relationship between a student's engagement in a reading or writing task, and

some element of his or her ideal self, were coded (e.g. the pride Danielle felt in being

someone who could accomplish literacy tasks; see Table 4).

Interpersonal value. As first-cycle coding (with the codes listed above) got

underway, data that required an additional code was identified. These data included

instances in which students demonstrated motivation to engage in literacy tasks that

offered them an opportunity for interpersonal interaction. For example, a statement might

indicate interest value, specifically in the context of a shared interest with others; or, it

might indicate utility value, towards the specific goal of fostering or further developing a

relationship with someone else.

As such, the next step of directed content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005)

involved returning to the literature to investigate how the coding scheme might be refined

to better address the research questions. Publications by scholars such as Anderman and

Anderman (1999), Horst, Finney, and Barron (2007) and Ryan, Kiefer, and Hopkins

(2004) proved particularly useful. In their work, these researchers employed tenets of expectancy-value theory alongside other elements of the literature of motivation. Based on their work, the "interpersonal value" code was developed to indicate the role of interpersonal relationship development in motivating students to engage in literacy tasks.

In instances in which the "interpersonal value" code was used, the data indicated that literacy tasks were creating the opportunity for social interaction, emotional connection, or conflict with others (e.g. "When you're reading, you want to share the story that you read so other people can get what you are reading"). This code was also used when students explicitly linked a particular literacy outcome (be it success or failure) to their relationships with others (e.g. Danielle describing how she liked reading in a group because classmates "will help you… to read the words").

Things a good reader/writer does. Expectancy-value theory indicates that students draw information from the "distal cultural milieu," including "stereotypes of activities and the nature of abilities," that are fundamental to their development of motivation beliefs regarding those activities (Eccles, 2009, p. 80). As such, instances in which students described capabilities or actions that a good reader or writer generally demonstrates were identified. These included students' descriptions of stereotypes regarding the nature of abilities to read and write, as well as students' statements of belief about what capable readers and writers do (e.g. Kyle explaining that he knew someone was a good writer because "he read fast, and he can explain the reading to you"; see Table 4).

Beliefs and behaviors of key socializers—self as reader/writer. This code was used for statements students made about messages they had received about their own literacy skills from the people around them (e.g. family and community members, teachers, peers). Examples of data that received this code include times when a student recalled another person positioning him or her as a reader or writer (e.g. Danielle recalling that her mother bought her a journal, where Danielle now records "personal things… I just write down the things that's goin in school and life"), as well as student statements about the feedback they received from others (e.g. Julian asserting that if someone told him an upcoming literacy task was challenging, they were really telling him that they thought he wouldn't be able to do it; see Table 4).

Self as reader/writer. Expectancy-value theory lists "person characteristics" such as "aptitudes," as well as "previous personal experiences" (Eccles, 2009, p. 80), as important elements to consider in developing an overall understanding of a student's motivation. Statements that received this code thus included students' descriptions of their own strengths and weaknesses as a reader and/or writer (e.g. Danielle's description of her perseverance as a reader; see Table 4), as well as the conditions under which students said they could do (or did do) their best reading and/or writing (e.g. Julian explaining that he preferred "reading outside because it's quiet").

Thematic analysis (second cycle codes). During second cycle coding, the analyst "reorganiz[es] and reanalyz[es] data coded through First Cycle methods" (Saldaña, 2013, p. 207). In the case of this dissertation, such reorganization and reanalysis was done through thematic analysis—that is, the recognition of "repeated patterns of meaning"

across the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 15). This section provides an explanation of efforts towards that end—first, creating a summary table of first-cycle coding work; then, generating questions and ideas based on that summary table; next, reorganizing the data according to second-cycle codes that arose from attempts to address those emergent questions and ideas; and finally, building to larger themes that addressed the overall research questions.

In the sections that follow, methods for thematic analysis are presented according to Braun and Clarke's (2006) six phases. These phases begin with initial passes through first-cycle-coded data, continue into the iterative development of codes, and culminate in the identification and clarification of themes.

	Jennifer	Dorothy	Joseph
Attainment Value	• Qualities she demonstrably values: independence, ★ diligence, humor, ★ persistence, ★ being knowledgeable & applying that knowledge to own life ★★ • Literacy as opportunity to better understand her own feelings & experiences ★ • Identifies literacy as an important part of who she is ★ • Wants to be recognized for academic progress ★	• Qualities she demonstrably values: humor ★, independence ★★ • Likes feeling capable of meeting decoding challenges ★ • Socialization with friends is priority-particularly interested in literacy when it is a means to that end ★ • Literacy as opportunity to better understand own feelings & experiences ★	• Qualities he demonstrably values: humor, persistence ★ • Distances himself from literacy (something apart from who he is) ★ • Invested in in-class task accomplishments ★ • Literacy as opportunity to express feelings ★
Interpersonal Value	Literacy activities as opportunity for connection to others ★★	• With friends/family, literacy as opportunity for support & connection to others ★★★ • With teacher(s), literacy as opportunity for conflict ★★★	Reading with others as opportunity for • support in area of struggle ★ • connection to others ★★★
Utility Value *Literacy/academic success as means towards stated objectives*	• go to college ★ • everyday practicalities (e.g. get, and succeed at, a job) ★ • is means to learn difficult things ★	• avoid summer school, repeating a grade ★ • is means to learn difficult things ★	• pass class/grade ★ • Doesn't seem convinced that reading will enable him to learn difficult things ★

Figure 4. Sample of initial summary table for Research Question 1.

Thematic analysis, phase 1. Braun and Clarke (2006) describe the first phase of thematic analysis as one in which the researcher familiarizes her- or himself with the data, noting initial ideas. Towards this end, a summary table was constructed for each research question, using both the first-cycle coded data, and memos written during first-cycle coding (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014; for a sample, see Figure 4). The table contained a brief summary of the key findings for each participant, for each first-cycle code (e.g. key findings for Jennifer in terms of attainment value, key findings for Dorothy in terms of attainment value, etc.). A colored star indicated the data source (green = student interview, red = classroom observation, blue = teacher interview, yellow = survey/questionnaire).

Through the process of creating the summary table for each research question, several questions arose. For example, for Research Question 1, these questions included but were not limited to: which students demonstrated an interest in using literacy to establish their own independence, and in what ways did they do this? Which students saw literacy tasks as a chance to connect with others, and what did that connection look like? Such questions drove the second phase of the Thematic Analysis.

Thematic analysis, phase 2. According to the procedure outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006), the second phase of thematic analysis involved generating codes for themes, and organizing the data relevant to those codes.

A final list of second-cycle codes, generated through many rounds of iterative analysis, appears in Table 5. Note the close relationship between these, and the first-cycle codes in Table 4 that were derived from motivation theory through directed content

analysis (for example, the second-cycle codes "conditions for reading/writing success," "strengths" and "weaknesses" in Table 5 are the same as the bullets in the description for the first-cycle code "self as reader/writer" in Table 4). Second-cycle coding enabled a closer look at the theoretical concepts that were examined with first-cycle codes, this time doing so in a way that enabled more specific findings.

Tabletop categorization. The "tabletop categories" (Saldaña, 2013, p. 205) technique was used to re-organize the data so as to begin addressing the questions that had emerged in Phase 1 of the Thematic Analysis. For each of the questions that arose based on the summary table, an index card was made for each student. Each student's index card listed the elements of the summary table that were relevant to that question. Cards for each question were laid out on a large table, and organized into groups for similarity and difference. From these tabletop categories, initial second-cycle codes were generated; during the rest of the thematic analysis process, these codes were eventually refined into the ones that appear in Table 5.

Most of the information presented from second-cycle coding was gathered from student and teacher interviews, as well as observations. However, there were certain areas in which interviews and observations provided insufficient information. For example, it was hard to use interview data to develop an understanding of certain students' feelings regarding literacy-based interactions with others, as well as the conditions in which these interactions were (or were not) motivating for further literacy engagement. However, survey and questionnaire data enabled a comparison of these students' attitudes towards

engaging in literacy activities in their free time, with or without interaction with others (see Chapter 4).

Unfortunately, since the importance of "interpersonal motivation" was not evident until data analysis began, the surveys and questionnaires used in this study did not specifically assess this type of motivation. Nevertheless, using multiple sources of data enabled identification of patterns in the interaction between attitudes towards literacy, literacy motivation, and interpersonal interaction for all participating students. Even the students who did not expound upon their feelings about reading in their interviews still demonstrated instances of being interested in engaging in literacy tasks as a means of connection to others (see Chapter 4 for more detail).

Second-cycle codes will now be explained in greater detail. These were used, along with HyperResearch software (*HyperRESEARCH*, 2015), to organize data.

Table 5

Second Cycle Codes (Thematic Analysis)

Code	Description	Sample Coded Data
Engage in area of shared interest	Literacy task served to establish or strengthen an area of shared interest with another	[Says] "Who else read double dutch before?" … Examines cover of book and says something about double dutch, [classmate] eventually responds and they have a small conversation." (Abigail, classroom observation)
Demonstrate reading skills to others	Literacy task as opportunity to • demonstrate reading skills to another • receive others' recognition for literacy skill	When he gets an answer right, he pumps his fist and looks over at me to make sure I've seen him. (Julian, classroom observation)
Get support from others	Literacy task as opportunity to be assisted/strengthened by others	"if you don't know a word in the story like partners like they help you with a word they try to help you figure out what the word is… And they uh and you read the story more faster? And you get like kind of like more interest… in the story." (Devin, student interview)
Make others proud	Literacy task as opportunity to gain another's good opinion	[Prompt: is it important to you that other people think you're a good reader and writer?] "my teachers cuz they see they see me um focusin on what I have to do…they will say 'Oh she's doin good so I know she'll become a good reader'… and my family they they cuz my dad and my mom say like 'Oh my daughter she did what she had to do and she keeps on practicing practicing and she never falls back on what she has to do or what she needs to reach' so it will be good." (Danielle, student interview)
Meet reading/decoding challenges	Literacy task as opportunity to • prove, to self, ability to do difficult literacy tasks • establish literacy skill level relative to others	[Prompt: How important is it to you to see yourself as a good reader?] "Very important… Because I just wanna learn more words so I know how to pronounce them properly" (Jordan, student interview)
Document feelings/experience	Literacy task as opportunity to record • own account of events • emotional reaction to events	"Writing? I love writing. I always write in my journal… I have like three diaries. One is when I—when I get bored and the second one is the people that I don't like and the third one is about my feelings." (Dorothy, student interview)

Share feelings/experiences	Literacy task as opportunity to convey to others • own account of events • emotional reaction to events	"Sometime when I'm at my house um when I when I have nuttin to do I just take some papers and write some poem… like when some other people reading your poetry they um they can learn some (lesson) in it… The poetry can get in their feeling and they like it" (Kyle, student interview)
Emotions associated with the beliefs, expectations, attitudes and behaviors of others	Expressed reaction (or lack thereof) to others' opinions or expectations of student reading/writing ability	"Like, you, now you know that you have people that, like, are see you're good at something? ... Make you feel, like, g- um better… About yourself." (Devin, student interview)
Qualities of a good reader/writer	Distinguishing characteristics of someone who is capable at reading and/or writing	[Prompt: What makes them a good reader?] "… They just read every day." (Julian, student interview
Emotions associated skill at reading and/or writing	Discussion of emotions related to being good at literacy tasks	"to see yourself as a reader you have to be a-a kind of smart, um, you have to be proud of what you're doing." (Abigail, student interview)
Conditions for reading/writing success	Particular tool/strategy/support described in relation to student reading/writing achievement	"I like when—when they put some picture that can make me understand the reading more easier." (Kyle, student interview)
Strengths & Weaknesses		
Remember/Understand/ Apply	Students' beliefs about their own strengths and/or weaknesses at skills lower on Bloom's Taxonomy (Krathwohl, 2002)	• Strength: "I know how to spell good…" (Julian, student interview) • Weakness: [Prompt: would you describe yourself as a good reader?] "I suck… ((laughs))… A little bit cuz I, like, stop, like, every word when I get confused." (Joseph, student interview)
Analyze/Evaluate/Create	Students' beliefs about their own strengths and/or weaknesses at skills higher on Bloom's Taxonomy (Krathwohl, 2002)	• Strength: "when I'm writing, I always, like, imagine stuff, like—like, writing, like, a story? I always imagine, like, what happens, or something like that." (Devin, student interview) • Weakness: " if a teacher tells me to write a—a summary? …Sometimes it's kinda hard… And, like, ((pause)) I don't know what to do sometimes." (Jordan, student interview)
Demonstrates Metacognitive Knowledge	"knowledge of cognition in general as well as awareness and knowledge of one's own cognition" (Krathwohl, 2002, p. 214)	• Strength: "… at first I was just like, I don't wanna read, I don't wanna do this, but now I do. I have courage in myself and I never give up so I'm just—I'm just smart." (Danielle, student interview) • Weakness: "I dislike… when we hafta teach ourselves to write something… and you have to write a lot." (Jordan, student interview)

Engage in area of interest. This code was used when students indicated that they saw a given literacy task as a chance to engage with someone else in an activity (or regarding a topic) that both enjoyed. In other words, the literacy task served to establish or strengthen an area of shared interest with another. An example of data that received this code is presented in Table 5 (classroom observation of Abigail, with regard to a book about double dutch jump-roping).

Demonstrate reading skills to others. This code was used when students indicated that they saw a given literacy task as a chance to demonstrate their reading skills to someone else. It was also used when students indicated that their engagement in a literacy task served as a means of getting others' recognition of their own reading skill. For example, Julian was observed looking up from his work and around his classroom, to see if an adult had noted his success at a literacy task (see Table 5).

Get support from others. This code was used when students indicated that they saw a given literacy task as a chance to feel supported by peers or adults. It often involved students recounting a time when someone else made an effort to support their own efforts to read or write. For example, Devin described his interactions with other students during group reading activities (see Table 5).

Make others proud. This code was used when students indicated that they saw a given literacy task as a chance to earn someone else's good opinion. An example of data that received this code were comments Danielle made about the many people whose good opinion she wanted to earn and/or maintain by engaging in literacy (see Table 5).

Meet reading/decoding challenges. This code was used when students indicated that a given reading task provided an opportunity to either a) prove to themselves that they could do difficult reading tasks (e.g. have a feeling of accomplishment that they read a difficult word or

set of words), or b) establish their skills in relation to others (e.g. place themselves within the upper or lower echelon within their class or grade in terms of reading or decoding skill). For example, Jordan discussed his desire to know how to pronounce words properly (see Table 5).

Document feelings/experiences. This code was used when students indicated that they saw a given literacy task as a chance to document their own feelings and experiences. This included various forms of literacy (e.g. journaling, writing/discussing poetry, drawing). An example of data that received this code was Dorothy's discussion of her journaling practices (see Table 5).

Share feelings/experiences. This code was used when students indicated that they saw a given literacy task as a chance to share feelings and experiences with others. In some instances, these others were adults (e.g. family members, teachers, members of the community); in other instances, these others were peers. For example, Kyle talked about how he used poetry to communicate his ideas to others (see Table 5).

Emotions associated with the beliefs, expectations, attitudes and behaviors of others. Data was coded to identify areas where each student talked about the beliefs, expectations, attitudes and behaviors that others displayed towards his or her literacy abilities. Much of this data had to do with the level and kind of importance that students said they placed on others' opinions. For example, Devin said that knowing others think of you as being capable at literacy tasks "make[s] you feel, like, g- um better… About yourself" (see Table 5).

Some students gave examples of specific feedback they remembered others giving them about their reading and/or writing skills (see Table 5). Coding of this data happened in two rounds. In the first round, data was coded as to whether it came in the form of statements another person made (which the students perceived as being indicative of what that person thought about

them as a reader and/or writer, e.g. Jack remembering praise from his teacher when he first

learned to read) or actions that another person took (which the students perceived as being

indicative of what that person thought about them as a reader and/or writer, e.g. Danielle's

discussion of how her father recognized that she was struggling with reading and found tutoring

services for her). Once categorized as being actions or statements, the feedback that students

reported was then further classified as having connotations that were positive (e.g. Abigail

explaining that being given a grade of B+ in ELA indicated to her that "On ELA I'm pretty much

a pro") or negative (e.g. Julian explaining that others "say something negative like 'Oh you can't

read' or they say 'Oh this book is too hard for you so you can't read it'").

Qualities of a good reader/writer. This code was used to identify statements in which

students explained their own understanding of what makes a person a good reader/writer. Some

of these statements described a particular set of skills that such a person has demonstrated, either

now or in the past (e.g. ability to decode big or complicated words). Some of these statements

described the actions that such a person has taken, either now or in the past (e.g. when asked

what makes someone a good reader, Julian responded, "…They just read every day").

Emotions associated with being skilled at reading and/or writing. This subcode from

"Qualities of a good reader/writer" was used to identify data where students discussed emotions

related to being good at literacy tasks. Examples of this were when Jennifer and Devin each

talked about the pleasure that good readers take in reading (see Chapter 5).

Conditions for reading/writing success. This code was used to identify data in which

students demonstrated the belief that a particular tool, strategy or support was especially

effective for them when they engaged in literacy tasks. In other words, in these data, students

identified the conditions conducive to their feeling most competent as readers and/or writers. For

example, students described texts having amenable features (see Kyle's description of the impact of pictures on his comprehension, Table 5), as well as reading locations that were free of distractions (e.g. Julian's comment that he preferred to read "somewhere, like, that's quiet, because my house is loud;" see Chapter 5). In addition, students described things they did, or needed to do, to support their own reading and/or writing (e.g. Jennifer describing how interest in reading as a younger child supported her current reading activities; see Chapter 5), as well as actions taken by others.

Strengths and weaknesses. Data in which students indicated that they believed they had a literacy strength or weakness were coded accordingly. Once statements indicating either self-perceived strength or self-perceived weakness had been identified, these were further coded based on the revised version of Bloom's Taxonomy (Krathwohl, 2002).

The code "Remember/Understand/Apply" was used to indicate a student describing skills or abilities related to lower-level cognitive processes, such as recognizing and recalling relevant knowledge, or carrying out a procedure (Krathwohl, 2002). In the examples presented in Table 5, Julian describes his perceived strength at spelling, while Joseph describes his perceived decoding weaknesses. The code "Analyze/Evaluate/Create" was used to indicate a student describing skills or abilities related to higher-level cognitive processes, such as breaking a task or concept down into parts, or putting ideas together to create something cohesive (Krathwohl, 2002). For example, as indicated in Table 5, Devin described how being imaginative was a quality that helped him write fiction, while Jordan expressed concern about how to independently generate writing. The code "Demonstrates Metacognitive Knowledge" came from the knowledge dimension of the revised version of Bloom's Taxonomy (Krathwohl, 2002), in which it is described as "knowledge of cognition in general as well as awareness and knowledge of one's

own cognition" (p. 214). Danielle's description of the changes she made in her self-talk during reading tasks (see Table 5) is an example of data that received this code.

How second-cycle coding took place. For each student, HyperResearch (*HyperRESEARCH*, 2015) reports of all first-cycle-coded excerpts were printed. Excerpts were organized by first-cycle code (e.g. in each student's report, there was an "Attainment Value" section, an "Interest Value" section, a "Utility Value" section, and so on). Two-thirds of each page had text, and the other third was left blank for notes and second-cycle coding (Saldaña, 2013). Each report was then coded, by hand, for second-cycle codes. Once all reports had been reviewed, second-cycle coding was entered into HyperResearch (*HyperRESEARCH*, 2015) so that the data could be better organized.

Thematic analysis, phases 3 and 4. Once initial codes have been established, Braun and Clarke (2006) indicate that the next step in thematic analysis is to "collate codes into potential themes" (p. 87), and then review these themes to make sure they work both with the coded data, and with the rest of the data set. Again, the tabletop categorization (Saldaña, 2013) was used, this time to help organize the codes into candidate themes. Candidate themes were then evaluated to see if there was enough data to support them, and if some could be collapsed into each other, or broken into separate themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Re-evaluating themes and checking them against the larger data set provided an opportunity to ensure that findings were consistent with the original data collected; indeed, changes were made to codes and themes to reflect information gathered by revisiting the data set as a whole. The codes presented in Table 5 reflect the final codes, that is, the ones settled on after multiple rounds of second-cycle analysis.

Thematic analysis, phase 5. Braun and Clarke (2006) call for the next step in the thematic analysis to be "going back to collated data extracts for each theme, and organizing them

into an internally consistent account, with accompanying narrative" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 22). For the purposes of the current project, this resulted in an outline that included each theme, the data relevant to that theme, and a brief written explanation of why that data was relevant to the theme. This provided an additional opportunity to check the work done up to this point, and make sure contentions made in the themes were indeed fully supported by the data.

Thematic analysis, phase 6. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), the final phase of thematic analysis is producing the report. Findings for the current study appear in Chapters 4-6 of this dissertation.

Study Trustworthiness

As in any study, it was important to be mindful of potential threats to validity. Thus, several steps were taken to ensure that the results were trustworthy.

Addressing Validity Concerns

Multiple sources of data, including student and teacher interviews; classroom observations; data from the REI; and data from the adapted MRQ & Reading and Writing Attitudes Survey, were triangulated to promote construct validity (Yin, 2003). Reliability was promoted by thoroughly documenting the procedures used in each stage of the analysis. This included an ongoing record of the element of data being analyzed, the date on which the analysis took place, a summary of the steps taken on that day, the file name under which any related analysis has been saved and location of the file, and any follow-up plans that were made. These practices were followed so as to "maintain a chain of evidence" (p. 105), offering other researchers the opportunity to directly review the evidence and follow the data from collection, through analysis, to conclusions (Yin, 2003).

As possible conclusions were drawn, efforts were made to look for discrepant evidence and negative cases in the data that might challenge those conclusions (Maxwell, 2013). Also, the advice of critical colleagues was sought, including colleagues on the CET research team and dissertation committee members, so that analyses could be tested against alternative explanations and rival hypotheses (Locke, Spirduso, & Silverman, 2014; Yin, 2003). These processes enabled defensible decision-making about appropriate interpretation of the data.

Chapter 4: Research Question 1 Results

In this chapter, I present findings related to Research Question 1: "What motivates students with learning disabilities, at a single middle school, to read and write?" These findings are meant to document participants' literacy motivations as indicated by interviews, observations and surveys/questionnaires. I conducted thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), as described in Chapter 3, that resulted in the development of three themes, presented in Table 6 and discussed in greater detail in the remainder of this chapter.

Table 6

Research Question 1 Themes

Theme 1	All students expressed motivation to engage in literacy tasks that provided an opportunity to establish a connection with others.
Theme 2	Students expressed a variety of other motivations to read and/or write, including a) improving word-reading skills, b) meeting norm- or criterion-referenced goals, and c) documenting feelings and experiences.
Theme 3	Students who expressed word-reading or criterion-referenced goal motivations tended not to express motivation to document feelings and experiences, and vice versa.

Theme 1: Students expressed motivation to engage in literacy tasks that provided an opportunity to establish a connection with others.

Analyses indicated that students were motivated to engage in literacy tasks because those tasks enabled them to interact with others. This was evident in the survey data, as well as in the interviews and observations.

Results from survey data. Some items on the reading and writing attitudes survey asked students to describe their attitude towards literacy activities that they participated in on their own; others asked students to describe their attitude towards literacy activities that they

participated in with others. Figure 5 shows each participant's average rating for reading or writing solo (blue bars), as compared to reading or writing with others (purple bars).
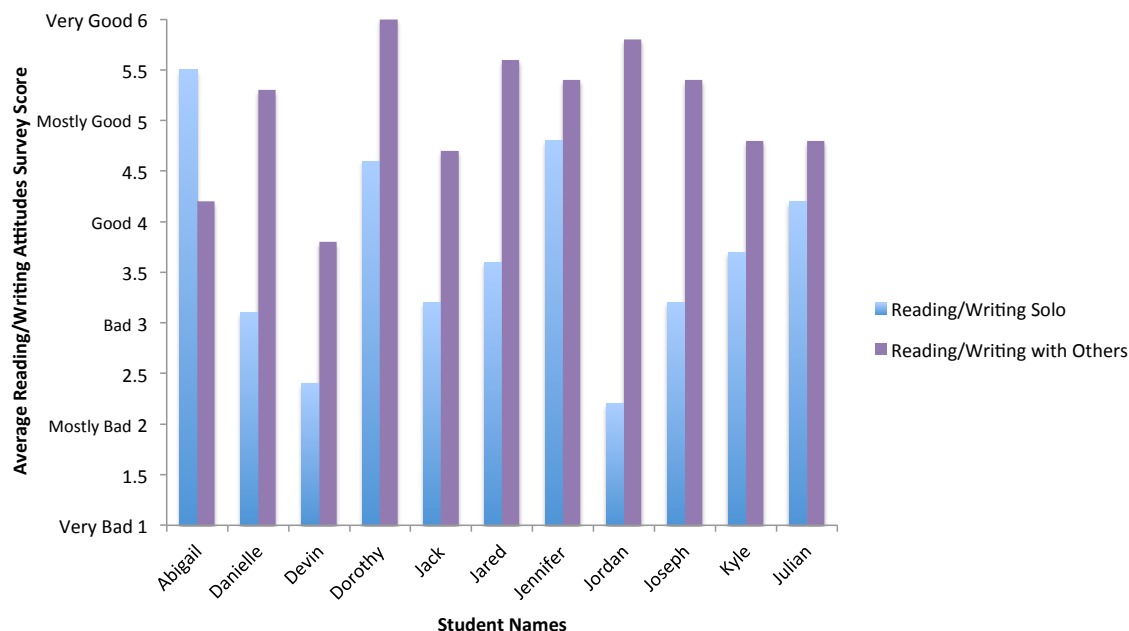
Figure 5. Reading and writing attitudes as related to interpersonal interaction.

With very few exceptions, students gave high ratings to items that involved interpersonal interaction. This was true even for a student like Jared, who indicated in his interview that he enjoyed reading with a peer, and that he had good memories of reading with a parent, but did not elaborate further during the interview (even when prompted). For questionnaire items related to using literacy to interact with others in his free time, Jared chose all "Good" responses, including 4 out of 5 "Very Good" responses (see Table 7). These responses were higher, overall, than those Jared gave for the items that did not specifically indicate interacting with others.

Table 7

Jared's Reading/Writing Attitudes Questionnaire Responses

Survey question	Rating	Description
How do you feel about writing something in your free time?	5	Mostly Good
How do you feel about writing for fun on a Saturday?	1	Very Bad
How do you feel about reading a book in your free time?	3	Bad
How do you feel about reading a book for fun on a rainy Saturday?	3	Bad
How do you feel about reading anything printed (books, magazines, comic books, etc.) in your free time?	6	Very Good
How do you feel about sharing something written during your free time with friends?	6	Very Good
How do you feel about instant messaging or e-mailing friends in your free time?	4	Good
How do you feel about texting friends in your free time?	6	Very Good
How do you feel about being on social websites like Facebook or MySpace in your free time?	6	Very Good
How do you feel about talking with friends about something you've been reading in your free time?	6	Very Good

Note. Blue text= items that do not involve interacting with others; purple text= items that involve interacting with others.

Results from interviews and observations. Results from student interviews, teacher interviews and classroom observations indicated that students demonstrated motivation to read or write for several different purposes that involved interacting with others. These included engaging in a shared interest; receiving recognition of reading ability from others; getting support from others; and making others proud.

Engaging in a shared interest. Students demonstrated motivation to engage in literacy tasks that allowed them to interact with others about a topic or activity of shared interest. For example, during the "free reading" portion of one of her classroom observations, Abigail was reading a book about double dutch jump-roping; she asked aloud, "who else read double dutch before?" and engaged in a conversation about the topic with a classmate. She could thus be understood as seeking connection to a peer as motivation to engage in the task.

When responding to the Reading Engagement Index (REI) prompt "enjoys discussing books with peers," Ms. Hathaway discussed other instances in which students were motivated to read because of a shared interest. For instance, she talked about how Joseph enjoyed discussing Minecraft books with classmates, and reported that Devin liked discussing books with her directly. This motivation to engage in literacy tasks with others was clear in Devin's classroom observations. During his assigned class time using the online reading program READ180 (Hasselbring & Goin, 2004), he sought out opportunities to work with peers. Each online module began with a video, and Devin was observed discussing a video with his classmate instead of watching it on his own. During free reading time, after an initial search for books on his own, Devin asked Ms. Hathaway for books about John F. Kennedy; they proceeded to look at an American history book together. Either with the teacher or with their peers, participants demonstrated motivation to interact with others over literacy tasks in all of these instances.

In addition to topics of interest, students also demonstrated motivation to engage in literacy tasks that allowed them to have shared experiences, and strengthened their ties to others. Kyle explained that "when you're reading, you want to share the story that you read so other people can get what you are reading." He also expressed motivation to write poems and then share them with others because "the poetry can get in their feeling and they like it." In other words, writing and sharing poetry was something Kyle wanted to do because it enabled him to establish or maintain an emotional connection to his readers.

Other students were less explicit about making direct links to others' emotions and feelings. However, they nevertheless demonstrated motivation to read or write because it would give them an opportunity for emotional connection. Dorothy described her reaction when an afterschool mentor recommended a book to her:

Dorothy:	I read, uh, this book—I was really into it, cause it—I belong to the boys and girls' club on [street name] and there was this—you know, there was this, she's like my aunty slash friend… and so she told me about this movie… And we started talkin about it and she was like, "That was a good book," and then I was like, "Okay," and then I started reading it and all of a sudden I finished the book that night… cause I was really into it, I just kept on ((chuckles)) flippin pages. Well I was flippin pages and reading them at the same time.
Becca:	Wow. So sounds like sometimes you really do enjoy books.
Dorothy:	Yeah. It was like—it was three hundred and ninety four pages, I was like—((chuckles)) I can't believe I read that many pages.

Here, Dorothy described voraciously reading a book recommended to her by someone she liked.

Elsewhere during her interview, she recounted how much she loved to read with a family friend when she was young, detailing how they would dress up and act out the stories together.

Becca:	Did you read by yourself or did you read with somebody else?
Dorothy:	With my, um, my uncle's girlfriend.
Becca:	Oh yeah? Was she a good reader? Did you enjoy it when she read to you?
Dorothy:	Mm hm. We would read something and act it out after.
Becca:	Yeah? Oh yeah? Was that fun?
Dorothy:	Yeah, we used to go upstairs to my grandmother's room… Go in her closet, get, like, half of her dresses and stuff and, like, act out the characters and stuff.

The reading tasks Dorothy seemed motivated to engage in were ones that were based in having opportunities to connect with trusted adults. Another example of her use of literacy activities as a means of connection occurred during her first classroom observation. Dorothy and her friends entered the room singing a take-off on a popular song and chatting about it (it was unclear if they had been coming up with the new lyrics themselves, or were repeating what they had heard elsewhere). She continued singing the song along with another classmate during class. When finished with her Do Now assignment and waiting for teacher feedback, Dorothy flipped over her paper and started writing out the take-off song lyrics. It is highly likely that the interaction with peers had inspired her to engage in this spontaneous literacy activity.

Receiving recognition of reading abilities from others. Literacy tasks served as valued opportunities for many students to demonstrate their reading abilities to others, and get others' recognition. This was especially clear in observations of students using READ180. For instance, during a classroom observation of Abigail, she frequently announced her own progress in the program, then looked around for recognition from her peers or from her teacher (or from both). Similarly, during a classroom observation of Julian, he sought my acknowledgement of his READ180 progress, as documented in observation notes:

> Logs into R180 and quietly and efficiently begins working. Asks me for help with a spelling word. Once I help him, says, "I'm Julian." I misunderstand and say "I know, I was just telling [another student]…" And he says "No, I'm just saying, I'm Julian." I say "It's nice to meet you Julian, I'm Becca," and he repeats my name back. He turns back to his computer; when he gets an answer right, he pumps his fist and looks over at me to make sure I've seen him. (Observation notes, Julian Obs 1)

Julian could thus be understood as being motivated to engage in the literacy task, at least in part, in order to demonstrate his reading ability. This interaction is also a good example of a student seeking support for a reading task, the topic discussed next.

Getting support from others. The participating students all have learning disabilities, and, when faced with challenging literacy tasks, they often used interaction with others to support their own efforts. This was evident in Ms. Hathaway's description of how Danielle negotiated reading tasks in the classroom:

> Danielle is a kid that needs to talk things through. So she'll—she'll, um, so she's reading something, she'll ask. She'll, um, she'll, uh, check her own comprehension. And she'll do that by asking questions. She'll wanna know, y'know, is this, she'll—sometimes she'll ask if this, is this right, or other times she'll kind of explain her thinking? (Teacher Interview)

Ms. Hathaway thus described Danielle as someone motivated not just to "do" the reading, but to better understand it by checking in with others. Other students described occasions when they

sought out help not from their teachers, but from members of their families. Jordan and Joseph

both mentioned specific occasions when they were struggling with a difficult word, and a parent

helped them figure out what the word was. For instance, when describing reading experiences as

a child, Jordan expressed, "I read with my mom… cause she would help me with the words… if

I didn't get one that was long and confusing." Similarly, Joseph poignantly described the loss of

quality time with his father in terms of reading support he no longer received:

Becca:	Ok, in your head I want you to think of somebody who's a really good reader—you don't have to tell me who they are, it could be you, it could be somebody you know, just think of that person. Have you thought of that person?
Joseph:	Yeah.
Becca:	Ok, what makes them a good reader?
Joseph:	Like, they—they, like, um, every word? Like, I ask them—I *used* to cuz my dad lives somewhere else… I used to tell him, oh can you help me with this word, and he would help me.

With regard to Research Question 1, certain responses were particularly relevant: those in which

opportunities to get support from an adult actually motivated a student to read, or to keep reading.

Jennifer recalled her parents carving specific time out of the day to help her develop reading

skills during her childhood:

Becca:	Tell me about when and how you learned to read.
Jennifer:	Think when I was, like, four?... I learned to read?... Cuz (oooh) my mom used to, like—she used to, when we come home, when we finish our work, she used to, like, sit down at the table and she would, like, sign out the word and make us, like, try to read it…
Becca:	How did you feel about that?
Jennifer:	Excited… cuz I could spend more time with my mom and learn stuff.
Becca:	…It sounds like you were involved, your mom was involved, was there anybody else who was really a big part of you learning to read?
Jennifer:	Um, my dad.
Becca:	Yeah? Wudjer dad do?

Jennifer: He, like, helped us out when my mom, like, he would probly—if
              my mom is tired, he would probly take over and try to, uh, make us
              read—read the words.

Jennifer thus suggested that getting the chance to spend time with her parents was as motivating

as having the opportunity to gain more knowledge (note that she was "excited… cuz I could

spend more time with my mom and learn stuff"). Like Joseph, she had literacy memories that

were intertwined with her connection to her parents; however, she specifically described these in

terms of motivation to engage in a literacy task.

Family members were not the only people with whom students were motivated to read in

order to get support. Part of the student interview involved showing students pictures of

teenagers reading under three different circumstances—by themselves, with one peer, or with a

group of peers— and asking which situation they most preferred (Nolen, 2007; see Chapter 3 for

greater detail). Several students described benefits to reading in the two situations that involved

peers. They gave varied reasons for this, but frequently the reasons had to do with making the

reading process easier. Danielle said that reading in a group was preferable because "they will

help you to under- to read the words and stuff." Jack, too, saw working with a group as a means

of negotiating decoding issues. However, he made decisions about whether or not to read with

others based on the task at hand. In this exchange, he explained his thought process when

looking at the three reading scenario pictures (the first solo, the second with one peer, the third

with several peers):

Jack: I like all three.
Becca: You like all three? Whaddayu like about each one?
Jack: Well, like, some time I do things like the first one? And, like, when
          the book's hard… You would do the second and third one… Like,
          um, like, if you readin a big chapter book… You can be, like,
          witcher friends and stuff, but if you be, like, reading a book with
          just, like, 10 pages? …You can read that by yourself.

Jack said he liked reading with others because they helped him with major reading challenges;

however, at the same time, he expressed interest in solitary reading as well. Devin echoed Jack's

belief that there were some circumstances in which he liked to read on his own, but others in

which he liked to read with a group:

> Mmm cuz you, like, you get, like, the some—like, if you don't know a word in
> the story like partners like they help you with a word they try to help you figure
> out what the word is…And they uh and you read the story more faster? …And
> you get like kind of like more interest… In the story? (Devin, student interview)

Devin seemed motivated to read with a peer group when they could serve as a means of

overcoming decoding challenges. Given that support, he said he could get to the "interesting"

part of reading.

    Making others proud. Several students described occasions when they were motivated to

read or write because they knew that doing so would make others think well of them. Devin,

Kyle and Danielle explained that others' good opinion of them made them feel better about

themselves. Danielle listed several adults whose opinion she valued, then explained how that

related to her own reading and writing choices:

Becca:	Is it important to you that other people think you're a good reader and writer?
Danielle:	Mmm, I don't think so, but, um, my teachers and my family, yeah, so
Becca:	Yeah? How come them?
Danielle:	Because my teachers, cuz they see—they see me, um, focusin on what I have to do …And um ,they was like, they will say, "Oh she's doin good so I know she'll become a good reader" … "And she reads more so I know she become a good reader" and my family, they—they—cuz my dad and my mom say, like, "Oh my daughter, she did what she had to do and she keeps on practicing, practicing, and she never falls back on what she has to do or what she needs to reach," so it will be good.

Presented in this way, earning parents' and teachers' good opinion seemed so important as to

make students feel they should continue the hard work of literacy. This kind of motivation

seemed to be related to being a particular kind of person with laudable characteristics, valued by the people around them, as explained by Devin:

Becca:	Is it important to you that other people think you're a good reader?
Devin:	Uh, some people would like to have—I would say yes …Like, you, now you know that you have people that like, are, see you're good at something? … Make you feel, like, g- um better… About yourself.

This raises important questions about the relationship between literacy abilities and sense of self, the subject of Research Question 2.

Theme 2: Students demonstrated a variety of other motivations to read and write.

Students indicated that there were times when they were motivated to engage in a literacy task because it allowed them to demonstrate, develop or work towards something they deemed especially salient or valuable. In some instances, the students saw an opportunity to demonstrate or develop reading skills. In other instances, students saw an opportunity to meet norm- or criterion-referenced goals. In still other instances, they saw opportunities to document their experiences and express their feelings.

Theme 2a: Students were motivated to read and write in order to improve their word-reading skills. Jack and Jordan demonstrated motivation to read specifically in order to improve their own word-reading skills. For both students, their motivation to read seemed specifically limited to decoding the words, not to learning the meaning of the words themselves. They both tended to define the ability to read, at least in part, as the ability to identify any and all words. Being able to succeed at decoding complicated words now could thus serve as confirmation that they could handle similar challenges that came their way later on. For example, Jordan expressed relief that decoding words in books was a manageable task:

Becca:	Do you remember when you felt like you really knew how to read?
Jordan:	Yeah.

Becca:	How did that feel?
Jordan:	Good?
Becca:	Yeah why good?
Jordan:	Cuz I felt that I can just, like, say any word in a book.

Given this understanding of reading, any reading task could be conceived as a chance to prove one's decoding abilities to oneself. For these two students, such a perception of reading often translated into a motivation to read specifically in order to become even better at decoding and identifying words. Jordan explained, "I just wanna learn more words so I know how to pronounce them properly." Jack described the satisfaction he felt in adding to his own bank of known and understood words.

Jack:	Reading in general—it's good.
Becca:	It's good? Whaddayu like about it?
Jack:	That, um, I get to, like, if I—if I don't know that word, I get to, like, know it, like… and if I'm, like, reading a book… and I didn't know that word, and now I know it and I can read it and remember it?

Jack thus expressed motivation to read because it allowed him to increase the number of words he knew how to read. Both for him and for Jordan, word learning was a worthwhile end in and of itself: they seemed motivated to read so that their text-based reading abilities could grow. They demonstrated motivation to engage in reading tasks because those tasks allowed them to reinforce their own belief in themselves as capable decoders.

Between the two students, there was only one comment that possibly alluded to an interest in word meaning: Jordan explained that he liked learning to read because "there were some interesting words that I really didn't know, like 'confuse.'" It is conceivable that Jordan was implying here that the word "confuse" was interesting to him because of its meaning (although it could also be that the word interested him for some other reason).

Theme 2b: Students were motivated to read and write in order to meet norm- or criterion-referenced goals. Abigail, Julian and Jennifer demonstrated motivation to engage in a reading task specifically for the purpose of establishing their reading skills in relation to others. This was particularly apparent during class "Do Now" activities, in which students read a short passage silently, answered four multiple-choice comprehension questions, and then got verbal feedback from the teacher about how many questions they had answered correctly. During this part of the daily lesson, Abigail was observed announcing her own "four for four" score aloud, and exulting in her success. When asked about the general qualities of a "good reader," Julian referred to these Do Now activities as a way to determine students' relative ability (including his own):

Becca:	How do you decide who's a good reader—what makes them a good reader?
Julian:	I dunno they just read every day.
Becca:	They read every day? And why are—what is it about them that it – what makes you—
Julian:	They, um, they always get four for—well ((says classmate's name))—most of them always get four for four.
Becca:	Oh. So you can tell that—because they got all the questions right on the Do Now, they must be a good reader?
Julian:	Yeah.
Becca:	Yeah?
Julian:	I—I sometimes get four for four.

Do Now scores were a concrete indicator to Julian of whether or not someone demonstrated reading comprehension skills. He was paying attention to his classmates' scores on a regular basis and could indicate who "always" got a perfect score. It is noteworthy that Julian followed up this Do-Now-based definition of a "good reader" by comparing his own results to those who were regularly successful on Do Now activities. Recognition of reading skill relative to peers was a topic he described more than once. When asked to think of a good reader ("It could be

someone in your family, it could be a classmate, or a teacher, or—"), Julian began listing

students in his class who he considered "good readers," eventually including himself on his list:

> Well, I know how to spell and read… well I know how to spell good, but I don't
> know about reading, I'm still working on that… but I'm gonna put me with the
> good readers. (Julian, student interview)

Julian thus saw a hierarchy in the classroom, with students grouped by perceived ability level,

and was concerned about his position in that hierarchy. He was motivated to "work" on his

reading skills so that he could "put [himself] with the good readers." For him, it seemed

important not only to get the right answers, but to get them at a rate commensurate with the

"good readers" in his class. Perceiving himself as one of the more competent readers in his class,

then, seemed to serve as motivation to read in and of itself.

In-classroom competition was not the only way students described their reading skills in

relation to a particular bar that they were motivated to reach. Jennifer, for example, explained

that she was motivated to demonstrate reading skills in relation to particular scores on a

standardized test:

> Becca: Is it important to you that your reading scores get better?
> Jennifer: Yeah.
> Becca: How come?
> Jennifer: Cuz I don't want to be in a score that's, like, below my score I
>   apposed to be on, so it's very important to me.

Here, Jennifer demonstrated an awareness of societal expectations about what her reading scores

were "supposed" to be; she had internalized the idea that it was important to meet these norms.

In all of these examples, students demonstrated motivation to read in order to prove that they

could read, and that they could do it well. Whether it was succeeding at a Do Now, or getting a

high score on a standardized test, demonstration of reading skill was something they considered

a worthy end in and of itself.

Theme 2c: Students were motivated to read and write in order to document feelings and experiences. Some students demonstrated motivation to read or write because they seemed to see, in these tasks, an opportunity to document their own feelings and experiences. Joseph indicated such an inclination with regard to reading, explaining that during the reading process, "I express myself, and I, like, every time I close my eyes, or every time I close my eyes, I see, like, pictures." Other students described literacy, particularly writing, as useful for documenting their own experiences. When asked how much she wrote, Danielle explained:

> Danielle: Um, well, I write every night because I have a journal… So I just write about my day…
> Becca: And do you write—is your journal something you just do for you, or is it part of school, or—how come you keep your journal?
> Danielle: Um, it's for me and my personal things, but I just—uh, I just write down the things that's goin in school and life.

Writing was an activity Danielle seemed motivated to pursue, even if it wasn't for a school assignment, because she wanted to chronicle what had happened to her, and what she thought about it. This writing was for her own benefit ("it's for me and my personal things"), not to fulfill someone else's expectations. Dorothy expressed a similar motivation when asked how she felt about reading and writing:

> Writing? I love writing. I always write in my journal and it was like, I would have a diary…And then I would have a, like, another diary, like, important stuff and I would have, like, one diary write about, like, what I hate and blah blah blah that… And then one that was a diary about my feelings and stuff and who I liked and stuff like that… I have, like, three diaries. One is when I—when I get bored, and the second one is the people that I don't like, and the third one is about my feelings. (Dorothy, student interview)

Here, Dorothy said she wrote rather prolifically—writing was an activity she "loved" enough to warrant three diaries, each serving a different purpose. Like Danielle, she seemed to choose to write in her free time so that she could express her opinions and feelings.

Similarly, Jennifer explained that "sometimes if you're in a bad mood you could just write and express yourself." Having previously identified poetry as a reading genre she liked, explained the purpose that writing poetry served for her.

Becca:	Do you like writing poetry too? Or just reading it?
Jennifer:	Writing poetry.
Becca:	Yeah? Whaddayu like to write about?
Jennifer:	My feelings and splainin- like, I always, something will come to my mind and I would just write it down cuz I love poetry.

Kyle's feelings about the opportunities afforded by writing poetry were similar. He suggested that this motivation to write poetry had been consistent throughout his time at Kennedy, starting when he was in a Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) class (he referred to this as "upstairs" because the school's SEI program was on the top floor of the building) and continuing into his current placement in a more traditional classroom.

Kyle:	Sometime when I'm at my house, um, when I—when I have nuttin to do, I just take some papers and write some poem.
Becca:	… Do you like writing poetry?
Kyle:	Mm hm.
Becca:	Whaddayu like about it?
Kyle:	Um, like, when some other people reading your poetry, they, um, they can learn some lesson in it, ummm… the poetry can get in their feeling and they like it.

In this exchange, Kyle explained his motivation to use writing as a means of documenting what he knew and had experienced. He seemed to feel not only that it was enjoyable for him to write, but that engaging in writing allowed him to explain what he knew to others, both to teach them what he himself understood ("they can learn some lesson in it") and to make them feel good ("the poetry can get in their feeling and they like it"). For Kyle and the other students described here, writing (and, to a lesser extent, reading) seemed to provide an outlet for self-expression. The students were motivated to engage in literacy tasks that allowed them to explore their thoughts, and, often, to put those thoughts into words.

Theme 3: Students who expressed word-reading or criterion-referenced goal motivations tended not to express motivation to document feelings and experiences, and vice versa.

Students who described being motivated to become better word-readers, or to meet norm- or criterion-referenced goals, rarely also described motivation to use literacy as a means of documenting feelings and experiences. The reverse was also true: students who described being motivated to read or write in order to document feelings or experiences rarely described motivation to read or write in order that they might decode better, or meet norm- or criterion-referenced goals. Dorothy provided a clear example of this in discussing her reading motivation (or lack thereof).

Becca:	Do you remember how you felt when you felt like you really knew how to read?
Dorothy:	Good.
Becca:	Good? What was good about it?
Dorothy:	That I could read big words and stuff?
Becca:	Yeah?
Dorothy:	Mm hm.
Becca:	That's good. Um, how much would you say you read now?
Dorothy:	About, like, ((pause)) I wouldn't remember cause I don't read that much.
Becca:	You don't read that much?
Dorothy:	I only read my homework and that's the only thing I do.
Becca:	You only read your homework and that's everything you do?
Dorothy:	I don't like reading books.

At first glance, Dorothy seemed as though she might be someone who demonstrated motivations in both categories. As detailed earlier, she said she sought out literacy tasks that offered her the opportunity to express feelings or document experiences, particularly in writing; and in this exchange, she, like the students who were motivated to demonstrate their decoding skills, associated positive feelings with recognizing her own ability to decode complicated words. However, unlike the students in that group, Dorothy did not subsequently translate these positive feelings about developing decoding skills into actual motivation to work at text-based tasks. Far

from being motivated to learn to decode more and more words, Dorothy specifically explained that she had no interest in such tasks. In fact, she set in-class reading and writing tasks directly in contrast to one another, explaining that "hard writing" was something she was willing to do regardless, while "hard reading" at school was an unpleasant chore.

Becca:	When someone asks you to do some hard reading task at school, or writing task, how do you feel?
Dorothy:	Mad, but writing? I'm okay with writing cause I always write all the time so.
Becca:	I see. So if it's a challenging—if it's a hard—
Dorothy:	If it's reading then I would be like, um, can we do something else?
Becca:	I see, but if it's a hard writing task?
Dorothy:	I'd still do it anyway.
Becca:	Awesome. How come?
Dorothy:	I dunno. I just like writing a lot.

We already know about Dorothy's writing motivations: as explained earlier, she said she wrote in multiple diaries, as a means of self-expression. The question here is whether she was also motivated by the positive feeling that she associated with "reading big words," and in this part of her interview she seemed to make it clear that this, in fact, did not motivate her with regard to challenging reading tasks.

Only two students possibly bridged this divide between motivation for decoding/norm- and criterion-referenced goals, and motivation to document feelings and experiences. The one who did so clearly was Jennifer; as described earlier, she seemed motivated to work on literacy skills so that she could exhibit them at levels that were aligned with societal expectations about what someone her age should be able to do (exemplified through standardized test scores), and she also demonstrated motivation to write poetry so that she might express her feelings. It is also possible that Abigail indicated motivations in both areas. As described earlier, Abigail seemed very committed to getting perfect scores on Do Now assignments, and she said she needed to

"get good grades" in order to "go to the next grade level" and "in order to graduate." She also

described herself as a

> creative, fun writer because you could talk about, you can, I mean, you can write
> about what's going on, like, if it's a problem or something, kinda do it. If it's just
> free write, like, anything surprising, I'll write about it. (Abigail, student interview)

The challenge with understanding Abigail's comments here is parsing out whether she actually

wanted to engage in these activities, or whether she was doing them to comply with the

expectations of an assignment. Indeed, the role of choice and control loomed large in these

students' motivation to read and write, an issue further addressed in Chapter 6.

Chapter 5: Research Question 2 Results

One of expectancy-value theory's strengths is its recognition and explanation of how students develop self-perceptions that are directly relevant to their motivation to engage in particular tasks. As described in Chapter 2 (see Figure 1), expectancy-value theory characterizes these self-perceptions in terms of three key elements: a person's affective reactions and memories of previous experiences; his or her self-concept of ability (i.e. beliefs about whether or not one is capable of "perform[ing] specific tasks… or role-appropriate behaviors; Eccles et al., 1983, p. 82); and his or her self-schemata (beliefs about valuable and salient characteristics of self; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002). By taking into account a person's emotional response to previous experiences, and feelings about his or her own ability to do a task, as well as whether or not engaging in that task will align with characteristics of self that are most important to that person, expectancy-value theory allows for a robust understanding of his or her motivation to do the task.

The three key elements just described, which will frame this chapter's findings regarding Research Question 2 ("What is the nature of students' perceptions of themselves as readers and writers?"), are presented in the gray boxes of Figure 1 (presented originally in Chapter 2, and reproduced in this chapter for the reader's ease of use/access).
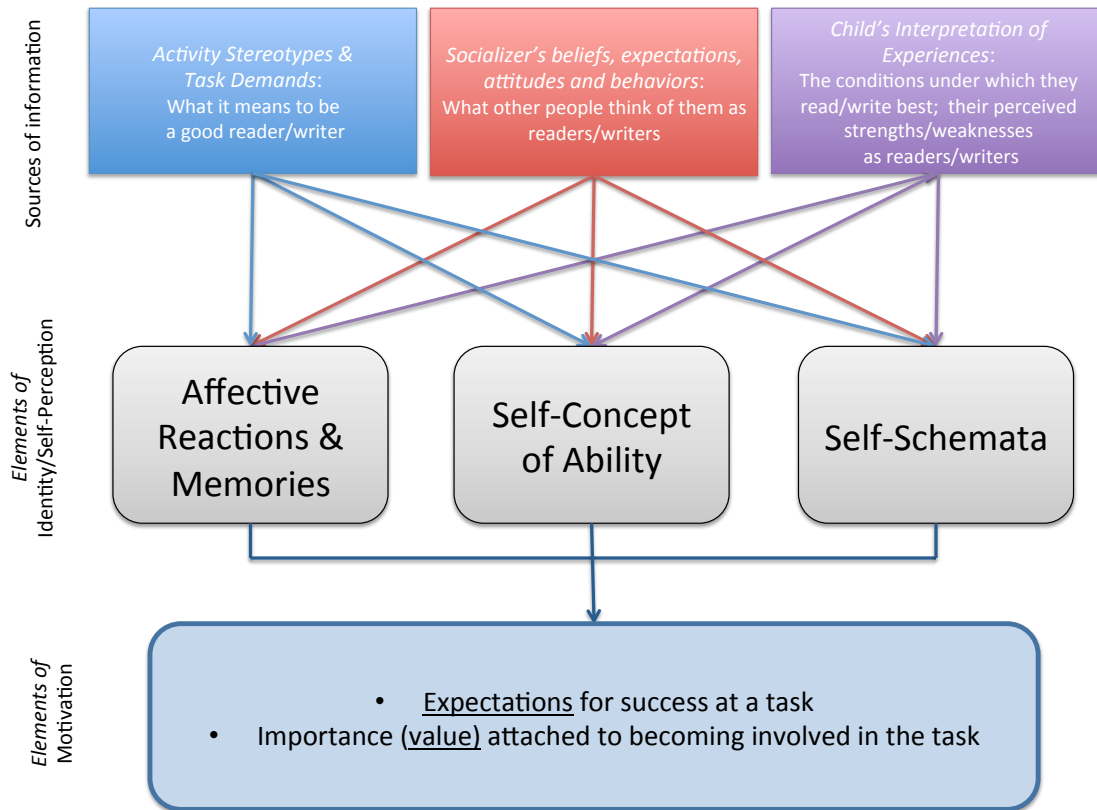
*Figure 1. R*elationship between sources of information, identity beliefs and motivation, as derived from Eccles (2009) and Eccles & Wigfield (2002).

According to expectancy-value theory, individuals develop beliefs in these key areas based on their perceptions of three sources of information. These sources, depicted in the colored boxes at the bottom of Figure 1, are "activity stereotypes and task demands," "socializer's beliefs, expectations, attitudes and behaviors," and "child's interpretation of experiences." In other words, students develop their own perceptions of what a task requires, what the people around them think of their ability to do that task, and what their previous experiences tell them about their own ability to do that task; all of those perceptions impact their development of affective memories and reactions, self-concept of ability, and self-schemata.

In the literature of expectancy-value theory, each of the three sources of information is discussed in terms of perceptions regarding "tasks" generally; however, I wanted to use them to talk about perceptions regarding a particular set of tasks (i.e. reading and writing). For that reason, I honed each one to be about reading and writing:

- *Activity Stereotypes and Task Demands (blue box, Figure 1):* What it means to be a good reader/writer

- *Socializer's beliefs, expectations, attitudes and behaviors (red box, Figure 1):* What other people think of them as readers/writers

- *Child's Interpretation of Experiences (purple box, Figure 1):* The conditions under which they read/write best; their perceived strengths and/or weaknesses as readers/writers

Using the data collected regarding student perceptions in each of these areas, I conducted thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), as described in Chapter 3. This analysis resulted in one theme per key element of self-perception, as depicted in Table 8. In the remainder of this chapter, I will provide detailed results supporting each of these themes.

Table 8

Research Question 2 Themes

Affective Reactions & Memories	Theme 1	While some students' emotional reactions to reading- and writing-related experiences were consistent across tasks and situations, other students' reactions varied based on task/situation.
Self-Concept of Ability	Theme 2	Students identified a wide variety of skills related to reading and writing; they tended to self-identify weaknesses in low-level literacy skill areas, and self-identified strengths in higher-level literacy skill areas.
Self-Schemata	Theme 3	Students spoke of particular literacy strengths or weaknesses that resonated with other salient beliefs they held about themselves.

Theme 1 (Affective Reactions and Memories): While some students' emotional reactions to reading- and writing-related experiences were consistent, other students' reactions varied based on the task and situation.

In describing what makes someone a "good reader and/or writer" (blue box in Figure 1), as well as in describing their perceptions of others' opinions of them as readers and writers (red box in Figure 1), students indicated affective reactions to, and memories of, reading and writing experiences. Their affective reactions and memories are explored in this section of Chapter 5.

Emotions associated with being skilled at reading and/or writing. Some students characterized good readers and writers by their emotional reaction to literacy activities. For Jennifer and Devin, an important component of being a "good reader" was being someone who enjoys reading. When prompted to think of a good reader and then explain what made that person a good reader, Jennifer said, "Cuz they like reading. Cuz they like reading… And they read a lot." Devin conveyed similar beliefs about good readers in the following exchange:

Becca:	Can you think of a word that describes you as a reader? Like, are you a good reader, a bad reader, a happy reader, strong reader, an—a bored reader
Devin:	I would say, like, a good reader?
Becca:	How come?
Devin:	Uh, like, I dunno, but it—I like, like, reading stuff? …A lot. I get interested in the reading book.

In a similar vein, Abigail described a good writer as someone who takes pride in his or her writing: she indicated that "to see yourself as a reader you have to be a-a kind of smart, um, you have to be proud of what you're doing." In all of these instances, students associated a positive emotional response with feeling like a good reader.

Emotions associated with the beliefs, expectations, attitudes and behaviors of others. Many of the students' affective reactions to, and memories of, reading and writing were

connected to their perceptions of what other people thought about them as readers and writers.

Findings regarding student perceptions of what others thought of them as readers and/or writers

are divided into two sections. The first section looks at the feedback that students reported

receiving from others about their reading and/or writing skills. The second section looks at the

level and kind of importance students said they placed on that feedback.

Others' feedback as heard/experienced by students. A summary of the literacy feedback

students said they heard or experienced from others is presented in Table 9. Students were more

likely to talk about feedback that someone else had given them (e.g. Abigail talked about getting

good grades from teachers, saying, "On ELA I'm pretty much a pro, I just get, like, B+") than

they were to talk about actions someone had taken because they recognized the student as being

capable of, or having difficulty with, doing a literacy task (e.g. Danielle explained how hard

reading was for her initially, then said, "my dad, he, um, did a count, um, a tutor for me to learn

how to read… So that's when I got more practice and practice and practice, so that's why, so I

know how to read now").

Table 9

Literacy Feedback Students Heard/Experienced from Others

Student	Actions		Statements		None
	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	
Abigail	X	X			
Danielle	X	X	X	X	
Devin					X
Dorothy			X		
Jack			X	X	
Jared					X
Jennifer					X
Jordan					X
Joseph				X	
Julian				X	
Kyle		X			

Note. X= positive feedback only; X= negative feedback only; X= both positive and negative feedback; X= no feedback

There was wide variety in terms of the nature of feedback students reported receiving. Some students reported getting only positive or negative feedback about their literacy skills; others reported a mix of both positive and negative feedback. Still others made no references to specific feedback they had gotten from others about their own reading and/or writing ability. They did not describe a time that someone else took an action that indicated the other person's feelings about their own literacy abilities; they did not mention a time when a family member, community member or teacher made a statement about their reading and/or writing.

Level/kind of importance students placed on feedback. Students' explanations of how they felt about others' opinions of them as readers and writers are depicted in Table 10. Although the majority of this information came from student responses to the interview question, "Is it important that others think you're a good reader/writer?" (and follow-up prompts regarding "Who?" and "Why?" as relevant), the rest of the interview data were also examined for

additional student descriptions of the relative importance they placed on others' opinions about their reading and/or writing abilities.

Table 10

Level/Kind of Importance Placed on Others' Feedback

Student	Feel pleased others' good opinion	Feel badly about others' negative opinion	Defy others' negative opinion	No stock in others' opinion	Noncommittal
Abigail	X		X		
Danielle	X	X	X		
Devin	X				
Dorothy					X
Jack	X	X		X	
Jared			X		
Jennifer				X	
Jordan	X				
Joseph		X		X	
Julian			X		
Kyle	X				

Note. X= only one, positive category; X= only one, negative category; X= multiple categories; X= neither positive nor negative description of importance placed on others' feedback

Feel pleased about others' good opinion. Some students described wanting others to think they were capable readers and/or writers (or, at the very least, feeling good when they found out somebody else thought so). Abigail and Jordan couched this in terms of others' good opinion leading to their own material gain. Jordan described wanting his family to reward him with prizes for demonstrating literacy skill (explaining that he wanted members of his family to think he was a good reader "because then ((pause)) because they would… Buy me something good"). Abigail talked about the value of showing others you are a good reader/writer so that you can manage life skills; when asked if it was important to her that others thought she was a good reader and writer, she said that it

> doesn't really matter, but what people care mostly about is education, and so it's
> important. To get in life you have- in order to read in order to be smart, you have
> to –you have to learn what you gotta learn about, add and subtract and multiply

your money and stuff, so yeah. (Abigail, researcher's notes from student interview)

Danielle, Devin, Jack and Kyle indicated that getting praise for their reading and/or writing ability made them feel good. Jack said he felt good when he read in front of his teacher for the first time and she responded, "good job." Both Devin and Danielle explained in detail how others' good opinions of their reading/writing efforts and abilities reinforced their own pride in themselves, in their responses to the prompt, "Is it important to you that other people think you're a good reader and writer?"

> Uh, some people would like to have—I would say yes… Like, you, now you know that you have people that, like, are see you're good at something? ... Make you feel, like, g- um better… About yourself. (Devin, student interview)

> Mmm, I don't think so, but, um, my teachers and my family, yeah, so… Because my teachers, cuz they see, they see me, um, focusin on what I have to do… And, um, they was like, they will say, 'Oh she's doin good so I know she'll become a good reader… And she reads more so I know she become a good reader' and my family, they, they, cuz my dad and my mom say, like, 'Oh my daughter she did what she had to do and she keeps on practicing, practicing, and she never falls back on what she has to do or what she needs to reach' so it will be good. (Danielle, student interview)

In these quotes, Devin and Danielle explained that others' commendations of their reading and writing had a positive impact on their beliefs about themselves. Devin situated these feelings in the context of others acknowledging his skill (he liked it when he had "people that, like, are, see [I'm] good at something"), while Danielle situated these feelings in the context of their acknowledgement of her actions ("Oh my daughter… she keeps on practicing, practicing, and she never falls back on what she has to do"). In both cases, the students seemed to take pride in others' good opinion of their literacy abilities.

Feel badly about others' negative opinions. Some students recounted the negative feelings they had when others critiqued their work. Joseph spoke specifically about teacher

feedback on his writing, explaining that what he didn't like about writing is when "like, you have

to, like, put apostrophes at the end… And the teacher makes too much in corrections." Danielle

painted a vivid portrayal of her emotional state when enduring critique from peers.

> In school? Um, it's ha- it's hard because people make funna you if you don't know how to read or some- or read the big word that they know, but you don't know, so it's, like, hard to- to read out loud in the class and stuff, or just anywhere, like, people are like, 'No, like, that's not how it is' and then after that so… Kids would tease you of your reading, like, so it's—it's really hard. (Danielle, student interview)

Jack pointedly described the impact that others' feedback had on his own perceptions of himself

as a writer in this exchange, which began with Jack asserting that he did not really like to write.

Becca:	Ok. What don't you like about it?
Jack:	Um, like, like, sometimes, like, I feel like I spelled the words wrong? …So I really don't like to write.
Becca:	I see. So …would you say "I'm a good writer," "I'm a bad writer," "I'm a bored writer," "I'm an interested writer"
Jack:	I'm a bad writer.
Becca:	A bad writer… Cuz of the spelling part?
Jack:	Yeah.
Becca	What if spelling didn't matter?
Jack:	Mmm, then I would've been a good writer.
Becca:	How come?
Jack:	Cuz, like, spelling ain't right—like, sometimes they be like, "write about a story" or something… And my story be interesting
[intervening dialogue]	
Becca:	… But, so, if spelling didn't matter, you'd feel like you'd be a good writer?
Jack:	Yeah.
Becca:	Because you have—because why?
Jack:	Mmm because, like, people might be in my story and stuff and I get to, like, say it out loud? … Like, read it myself? … And read it to everybody else and stuff and they won't have to, like, "wha'd that word means?" And stuff… And "that's not how you spell it."

Jack said he felt capable of coming up with interesting stories that others got invested in when

they heard the stories aloud. However, he also felt that, regardless of the compelling nature of his

ideas, his poor spelling skills precluded him from being considered a good writer. For a moment,

he considered what it would be like if others judged his abilities based on hearing his writing aloud, instead of seeing it in print; however, he quickly brought his focus back to the feedback he actually got from others, criticizing his spelling. All of these students thus expressed awareness and understanding that at least one other person felt they were not strong readers and/or writers.

Defying others' negative opinions. Some students indicated that they felt good about their own reading and/or writing abilities, in spite of receiving messages to the contrary from others. Abigail presented this as just a subtle jab at her own classification as requiring support services (describing herself as a "great reader because even though I take speech it's not really hard for me to read"). Julian and Danielle both described facing down others' criticism, while maintaining their own belief in themselves. When asked, "Is it important to you that other people think you're a good reader and writer?" Julian responded as follows:

Julian:	No cuz I don't care what they think.
Becca:	Yeah- kids, grownups, doesn't matter?
[intervening dialogue]	
Julian:	Sometimes the kids or the grownups think negative.
Becca:	Whaddayu mean?
Julian:	Like, they say something negative like, "Oh, you can't read," or they say, "Oh, this book is too hard for you, so you can't read it."
Becca:	How do you feel about that?
Julian:	Um, I don't feel—I feel fine about that… Because I don't care what they say… Because I th—I believe that I read and, and write the way I like to… I want to.

Here, Julian attributed others' claims that he had weak literacy skills to their "think[ing] negative." He set their beliefs about his ability to read and write in juxtaposition to his own, defying others by thinking his own way about himself as a reader and writer.

When asked how she felt when she finally knew how to read, Danielle, too, talked about defying others' criticisms, couching her defiance in terms of her insistence on participation in class activities:

…It felt good cuz I didn't stutter or, like, I wasn't scared to, like, not raise my hand, cause I know people was gonna tease me but I was like, "I got this." And then so, like, I just started reading… And raising my hand. (Danielle, student interview)

Like Julian, Danielle specifically explained that she knew other people thought negatively about her reading abilities, but she refused to buy into their assessment of her skills. She attributed her increased participation in class to having convinced herself that she was capable, no matter what others said.

Placing no stock in others' opinions. Some students proclaimed that they placed no importance on others' opinions of their reading and/or writing abilities. Joseph attributed his lack of interest in others' opinions of his reading skills to his dislike of reading overall:

Becca:	Is it important to you that other people think you're a good reader?
Joseph:	No.
Becca:	No? Doesn't really—not just kids but, like, adults too, it doesn't really matter?
Joseph:	Mm-mm.
Becca:	How come?
Joseph:	Cuz I really don't care about—I really don't like reading.

In this excerpt, Joseph indicated that reading wasn't a skill or activity he found desirable, so it didn't matter to him whether or not others thought he was capable of doing it. Jack and Jennifer took a different approach: they explicitly stated that their opinions of themselves, and others' opinions of them, existed independently from one another. They spoke not of valuing or devaluing the reading or writing skill in question, nor of being bothered by others' judgments, but instead of thinking for themselves. Here are their responses to the question, "Is it important to you that other people think you're a good reader?"

It doesn't matter… Because, like, some people like to have they own opinions? … but it doesn't matter, like, what they think, it's like, yeah, it matters what I think. (Jack, student interview)

> No… some people, they won't probly think I am, some people would… it's not really important—it's not, cuz it's not—thinkin' that you gotta show people that you're a good writer, if you know you're a good writer and reader then… you believe that. I don't have to make someone else to believe it. (Jennifer, student interview)

In these quotes, Jack and Jennifer acknowledged a variety of beliefs that others could (or perhaps do) have their own reading or writing skills. However, they placed themselves at a distance from these beliefs. They contended that their beliefs about themselves as readers and writers were not dependent on whether or not others agreed with them.

Noncommittal about others' opinions. In her interview, Dorothy did not discuss how she felt about others' opinion of her literacy skills. When asked directly, she did not take a side one way or another.

Becca:	Is it important to you that other people think you're a good reader?
Dorothy:	Ummmm I dunno that one.
Becca:	You dunno?
Dorothy:	No.

Given this data, it was not possible to analyze the level or kind of importance Dorothy said she placed on others' feedback about her abilities as a reader and/or writer.

Overall findings: Students' affective reactions to, and memories of, reading and writing. Reading and writing were clearly areas in which students had strong emotional responses to their experiences. The most compelling findings in this area were in reference to the feedback they had received from others (see Tables 9 and 10). Some students' statements regarding the level or kind of importance they placed on others' feedback fell neatly into one category or another. For example, Julian spoke only of defying others' negative perceptions of him as a reader and/or writer; Jordan and Kyle spoke only of seeking others' good opinions of their reading and/or writing skills; and Jared and Jennifer only said that they placed no stock in others' opinions of them as readers and writers.

Other students, however, made comments that fell into multiple categories. Some of this may have been due to the fact that students were talking about reading in one instance, and writing in another. For example, on the one hand Joseph talked about disliking the negative feedback he received about his written work, while on the other hand he said that others' opinions of his reading abilities did not matter to him. In other cases, however, students made differing statements about similar tasks. Jack, for instance, spoke at length about how others' assessments of his poor spelling skills were the reason he considered himself a bad writer, but also talked about being uninterested in other people's opinions of his abilities. Danielle said that she felt good when she earned others' praise for her hard work as a reader; badly when others critiqued and made fun of her reading aloud; and proud and capable when she overcame others' opinions and read aloud anyway. Her affective reaction to others' assessments of her own literacy skills could thus be categorized as changing and situationally-based.

Theme 2 (Self-Concept of Ability): Students identified a wide variety of skills related to reading and writing; they tended to self-identify weaknesses in low-level literacy skill areas, and self-identified strengths in higher-level literacy skill areas.

Most of the data related to student "self-concept of ability" beliefs came from two sources of information: student perceptions of activity stereotypes and task demands related to reading and writing (blue box in Figure 1), and student interpretations of their own reading and writing experiences (i.e. the conditions under which they believed they read and/or wrote best, and their perceived strengths and weaknesses as readers and/or writers; purple box in Figure 1). At the end of this section, relevant elements of students' reported perceptions of socializers' beliefs, expectations, attitudes and behaviors (red box in Figure 1) are also included.

Qualities of a good reader/writer. Student descriptions of the qualities possessed by a good reader/writer fell into three component areas (see Table 11), each of which will be described in turn.

Table 11

Student Description of Qualities Possessed by a Good Reader/Writer

Student	Has a particular set of skills	Takes Specific Actions	Associates a particular emotion with reading/writing
Abigail		X	X
Danielle	X	X	
Devin	X		X
Dorothy	X		
Jack	X		
Jared		X	
Jennifer	X	X	X
Jordan	X		
Joseph	X		
Julian		X	
Kyle	X		

Students mentioned the demonstration of particular literacy skills in their descriptions of what makes someone a good reader or writer. This was particularly true in terms of reading. Good readers were portrayed as demonstrating skills in a number of areas, including decoding big or complicated words, reading fluently, having an extensive vocabulary, and comprehending (understanding and/or being able to explain the key points of a reading).

In terms of writing, students identified fewer specific skills. These included having neat handwriting and spelling accurately. Dorothy was the only student to talk about a more abstract writing ability that talented writers possess.

Becca:	Can you think of a word that would describe you as a writer?
Dorothy:	Funny.
Becca:	Funny? How come?
Dorothy:	I dunno cause people call me their day-maker.
Becca:	…How come?

> Dorothy: Cause I'm really funny, like—it's like, me and my brother… we make a—we make up these jokes? Like, from mad young we make up jokes and be laughin' at each other and we make faces at each other.

In this case, when explaining what made her a skilled writer, Dorothy described her ability to generate ideas that brought happiness to others.

When asked what made someone a good reader or writer, some students listed specific actions that such a person took. A good reader was described as someone who read often (as Julian explained, "…They just read every day") and independently (when asked how she felt about reading, Abigail responded, "…great because you can read to yourself"). Dorothy explained the focus with which she did her best reading:

> Becca: …What word would you use to describe yourself as a reader?
> Dorothy: Uh ((pause)) Whaddayu call a person that's really focused into the book?
> Becca: "Focused" is pretty good.
> Dorothy: Yeah, I don't like to be disturbed.
> Becca: You don't like to be disturbed?
> Dorothy: Sometimes, when I was reading *Flowers in the Attic*, I don't like to be disturbed at all.

To Dorothy, then, concentration was essential to good reading. Examples of actions good writers took included expressing ideas (Jared said he considered himself an "excellent" writer because "I just write stuff that's on my mind") and continuing to write, even when it took extensive effort (Danielle explained, "I would describe myself as a good writer…Because I write a lot, though it hurts my, my fingers… and my hand I still write"). Some students also characterized good readers and writers by their emotional reaction to literacy activities (see "Emotions associated with reading and/or writing skill").

Not all students had the same amount to say about what makes someone a good reader or writer; in fact, they ran the gamut in terms of articulating their opinions on this subject. Jared's opinions about what makes someone a good reader were especially difficult to parse.

Becca:	What word describes you as a reader?
Jared:	Awesome?
Becca:	… Why'd you choose awesome?
Jared:	Cuz I know I'm awesome at reading? and I could read well.
Becca:	… when you said, "I'm awesome at reading, I'm an awesome reader, I read really well," different people mean different things when they say, "I read really well." What do you mean when you say, "I read really well?"
Jared:	I do a great job?
Becca:	You do a great job?
Jared:	Yeah.

Here, Jared used synonyms to stand in for the "good" in "good reader" (e.g. "awesome," "great") but these words did not provide additional meaning to the term. On the other hand, Jared made a clearer statement about what makes someone a good writer, one that provided more insight into what the term meant to him:

Becca:	What kind of a writer would you say you are?
Jared:	Uh, excellent?
Becca:	Excellent? What makes you an excellent writer?
Jared:	I just write stuff that's on my mind.

Here, Jared offered a concrete example of something he does that makes him qualify as an "excellent" writer—expressing his thoughts in writing. However, he provided no such examples for reading.

By contrast, Danielle had a great deal to say on the subject of how she knows that someone is (or is not) a good reader or writer. When asked to think of a good reader, and then explain why she chose that person, she said:

> Because he like he's, like, he knows how to read and, um, like, on big words he gets ((snaps)) 'um like that… And it's like, he does, he r- he reads so fast… He reads fast, like, you don't- like you might not even understand him, like the things

he (be) sayin, like, you like, what? Like, he's already on the, what, you thinkin he's on the first page but he's already on the fourth page… That's how fast a reader he is so he's a good reader. (Danielle, student interview)

Far from stopping her description of being a "good reader" with the fluency and decoding skills that such individuals have, Danielle went on to talk in detail about the actions good readers and writers take, as well.

Danielle:	I would describe myself as a good writer.
Becca:	…How come?
Danielle:	Because I write a lot though it hurts my, my fingers… and my hand, I still write… a lot.
Becca:	Would you describe yourself as a good reader?
Danielle:	Um, I still need more practice, but I'll say ok.
Becca:	…How come?
Danielle:	Because, um, like, sometimes I do stutter on my words and sometimes, like, it—I read kinda slow, but—because it won't get to my head fast—but once I start reading more or do it again, then it'll click to my head…

In this description, Danielle explained that she did, indeed, consider herself a capable reader and writer. However, this time she characterized "good reader" in terms of actions, detailing the hard work and perseverance it took for her to demonstrate the skills necessary to earn her own classification as a capable reader and writer. Take, for example, her characterization of herself as a reader ("I still need more practice but I'll say ok"). She had a clear sense of the bar she needed to reach to consider herself a "good reader," and was taking specific actions towards that end— reading more frequently, and reading repeatedly, until the information "click[ed] to my head." This statement suggests that she had a literacy goal in mind; reaching it might be laborious, but was achievable.

Jennifer's statements about what makes someone a good reader and/or writer were less numerous than Danielle's; however, in contrast to Jared, she nevertheless painted a full picture of who a good reader/writer might be, by noting one skill, one action, and one emotional response

she associated with literacy. She described herself as "very good" at reading and writing, because "instead of writing sloppy I write neat and nice" (a skill) and because "I get to read a lot… and it brings up my score" (an action). Also, when prompted to choose someone she considered to be a good reader, Jennifer explained, "Cuz they like reading. Cuz they like reading… and they read a lot." According to Jennifer, then, a good reader and writer is someone who engages in literacy tasks frequently, who holds high standards as to how those tasks should be done, and who enjoys doing them. Her description of a "good reader and writer" was both holistic, and succinct, with specific and achievable parameters for success.

Conditions for reading and writing success. As displayed in Table 12, students described the conditions under which they felt like they were capable readers and/or writers. Each of the conditions listed in Table 12 are described in turn.

Table 12

Conditions Conducive to Student Feelings of Literacy Competence

Student	Amenable text features	Actions taken by others	Actions taken oneself	Being free of distractions
Abigail				X
Danielle	X	X	X	
Devin	X	X	X	
Dorothy	X			X
Jack	X	X	X	
Jared		X		
Jennifer	X	X	X	X
Jordan	X	X		
Joseph	X	X	X	X
Julian	X	X	X	X
Kyle	X	X		

Amenable text features. Almost all of the students described text elements that made it notably easier for them to engage in literacy activities. Some specifically mentioned the power of visuals to support their reading. Joseph said that he enjoyed his father reading to him when he

was little, but disliked learning to read at school "cause it had too much words… and less

pictures." Julian explained, "I still read picture books cuz they're easier," and Kyle said that

visuals provided an anchor for his understanding ("I like when I'm reading to see some picture…

I like when—when they put some picture that can make me understand the reading more easier").

Other students mentioned their affinity for computer-based literacy activities. Jordan

explained that when he was little, he was "into computers," and then recounted early experiences

learning to read via websites on his aunt's computer. Joseph distinguished his feelings about

writing based on whether or not he was using a computer:

Becca:	So what kinda writer would you say you are?
Joseph:	Um, bored.
Becca:	A bored writer? Ok. How come a bored writer?
Joseph:	Cause I don't like writing a lot. I'd rather read.
Becca:	You'd rather read than write.
Joseph:	Or do it on the computer.
Becca:	Ok how bout- how bout when you're writing on the computer, though?
Joseph:	It's better?
Becca:	It's better? What kinda writer are you then?
Joseph:	A happy writer.

Joseph thus explained that the medium through which he was writing fundamentally changed his

feelings towards the task— he initially assumed question was about print-based writing, which

he disliked, but once the idea of writing on the computer occurred to him, it elicited a much more

positive response. Similarly, Jack seemed much more interested in computer-based literacy than

print-based literacy. At first he discounted his computer-based reading, but then he gave himself

credit for it:

Becca:	How much would you say you read now?
Jack:	Not a lot.
Becca:	Not a lot? Yeah? How come you don't read a lot?
Jack:	Well you gotta—yeah, I do read a lot, cuz, like, I stay, like, on social media, and that reading.

Later in the interview, he expanded on the kinds of reading he does through social media:

Becca: What's one example of something you might read on your own?

Jack: I might read, like, mmmmm, like, sometimes I be, like, on social media and there on the news? … And stuff, like, it tells, like, what happened… and how it'd be interesting to read it.

Jack cited specific social media outlets such as Twitter and Facebook as places where news stories he was interested in reading "just popped up on my page." This type of reading appeared to be both appealing and accessible to him.

Another preference expressed among students was avoiding texts that were either extensive, or had words that were difficult to decode or understand.

When I'm reading I hate like finding some vocabulary words I don't even know… And that (me) don't understand the reading. (Kyle, student interview)

Um reading- if the book is too long… Like a lotta pages? …I don't really like it. (Jennifer, student interview)

Similarly, Devin explained that he preferred texts that were short or had easily-decoded words:

Becca: Is there anything you don't like about reading? Or you like everything about reading.

Devin: Mmmm, I like everything but, like, sometimes they be putting, like, hard words? …Like, but sometimes they make the story or the sentence really shorter?

Becca: Yeah, that would be nicer if they were shorter.

Devin: Yeah.

Devin thus set up a contrast between texts he did, and did not, find amenable to his reading effectively; this contrast had to do with the length of both individual words, and full sentences. Like Kyle and Jennifer, he was less interested in long and/or complicated texts.

Actions taken by others. Almost all of the students described situations in which someone else's actions influenced their own reading or writing success. Often, this took the form of support directly received from adults or peers. For example, Danielle and Joseph both described how the instruction they had received from teachers in syllabication strategies helped

them learn to read. Devin explained how working with a group of peers made reading easier for him:

> …If you don't know a word in the story, like, partners, like, they help you with a word, they try to help you figure out what the word is… and they, uh, and you read the story more faster? …And you get, like, kind of, like, more interest …in the story? (Devin, student interview)

The influence of others was sometimes characterized in negative terms as well. Some students mentioned specific circumstances in which they directly connected particular instances of reading or writing challenge to mean-spirited actions others had taken. Danielle described the challenge posed by peers' teasing when she was trying to read aloud (see "Feel badly about others' opinions"). Julian attributed his poor grades in ELA class to his teacher's actions ("I like ELA but Ms. Ross is, uh, being rude to me, so… I end up getting bad grades").

Actions taken oneself. Another frequently-discussed topic was the actions students said that they themselves could take, to create conditions in which they were better able to read and/or write. These included using decoding strategies; verbalizing their ideas; and reading in short spurts instead of for a long stretch of time. Several students indicated that they believed the more they engaged in literacy, the better their literacy skills became. For example, Jennifer felt that her enjoyment of, and penchant for, literacy enabled her to develop better and better literacy abilities: "when I was little I always loved to read and write, so when I get older, I just get good to it." Joseph expressed a similar idea, but not in terms of an experience he had already had; instead, he described actions he needed to take in the future in order to improve his reading skills. "If I don't get to be a good reader, I might not pass this grade," he explained. "…I neeeduh read more… so I can, like, get back on track."

Being free of distractions. Several students indicated a preference for being somewhere that was free of noise, cramped quarters or other distractions in order to read successfully. When

presented with pictures of someone reading alone, with one other person or with a group (based

on Nolen, 2007), Jennifer said she preferred the first situation:

> Cuz, like, you get to lay down in your bed and, like, do and read stuff… And you
> (image) stuff from there instead-uh, like, having someone next to you and you be
> crowded, and you be by yourself… and you have space to yourself. (Jennifer,
> student interview)

Abigail said they she preferred the first two situations (individual and with-one-other) to the third

(with a group): by herself "because that's the time where you can concentrate and be focused,"

or with one other person because "that way there's no commotion." Joseph said he preferred the

with-one-other scenario for similar reasons: "Cuz, like, if I have a group, they might, like, shout

it out and then and then I could—I might not, like, hear it. I'd rather be with my friend or my

parents…". Julian also explained he sought out reading situations where he could avoid

distractions ("I just read outside downs- in my room… Um, or somewhere, like, that's quiet,

because my house is loud…"). All of these students emphasized the importance of minimizing

distractions so that they could do their best reading.

      Tables 13 and 14: Strengths and weaknesses. Students' self-described strengths and

weaknesses as readers and writers are displayed in Tables 13 and 14, where they are categorized

based on the revised version of Bloom's Taxonomy (Krathwohl, 2002; see Chapter 3 for more

detailed code description).

      Comparing Tables 13 and 14, it is interesting to note that student-described weaknesses

tended to cluster in the "Remember/Understand/Apply" category, while student strengths tended

to cluster in the "Analyze/Evaluate/Create" and "Demonstrate Metacognitive Skills" categories.

That is, students seemed to identify their own weaknesses in low-level skill areas, but also point

to their own strengths in higher-level skill areas; for example, they might believe they were poor

spellers but excellent creative writers, or poor decoders but strategic and self-reliant readers.

Table 13

Students' Self-Perceived Strengths as Readers and Writers

	Remember/Understand/Apply	Analyze/Evaluate/Create	Demonstrate Metacognitive Knowledge
Abigail	• Comprehend text	• Complete assignments • Generate imaginative/ interesting writing	• Work independently
Danielle			• Ignore negativity/have faith in self • Humor • Perseverance/strength • Use decoding strategies
Devin		• Generate imaginative/ interesting writing	• Enjoyment/pleasure
Dorothy		• Generate writing others enjoy	• Humor
Jack	• Remember & apply words learned previously	• Generate writing others enjoy	
Jared		• Document events/express ideas	
Jennifer	• Handwriting	• Document events/express ideas	• Enjoyment/pleasure
Jordan			• Perseverance/strength
Joseph			
Julian	• Spelling		
Kyle		• Generate writing others enjoy	• Perseverance/strength

Table 14

Students' Self-Perceived Weaknesses as Readers and Writers

	Remember/Understand/Apply	Analyze/Evaluate/Create	Demonstrate Metacognitive Knowledge
Abigail			
Danielle	• Fluency • Handwriting • Read big/hard words • Test-taking		
Devin	• Read big/hard words		
Dorothy	• Read big/hard words		
Jack	• Read big/hard words • Spelling	• Complete writing assignments	• "I get lazy" • Work independently
Jared			
Jennifer			
Jordan	• Read big/hard words	• Complete writing assignments • Prepare for/anticipate assignments	
Joseph	• Punctuation • Read big/hard words		• Work independently
Julian	• Handwriting		
Kyle	• Read big/hard words • Vocabulary • Test-taking		

Remember/Understand/Apply. Examples of skills/abilities the students mentioned that fell into this category include decoding and/or identifying a particularly challenging word; reading words aloud with accuracy and fluency; spelling correctly; writing neatly; and accurately following punctuation rules. It was common for students to specifically mention weaknesses in decoding and/or identifying difficult words. For example, when asked what he did not like about reading, Jack responded, "the hard words;" Jordan said that he liked reading with his mother "cause she would help me with the words… if I didn't get one that was long and confusing." At one point, Danielle mentioned decoding difficulties, but was then quick to also mention how she addressed them: "To me, big words, it's kinda hard, but then in my head I break it down, then I know how to—then I know how to say it, so reading is kinda challenging, but it's not at the same time to me." In other words, Danielle recognized a "remember/understand/apply" weakness, but then also recognized her own metacognitive strength in knowing when and how to use a strategy to solve her problem (see "Demonstrate metacognitive knowledge").

A few students also mentioned strengths in this area. Abigail felt she was good at comprehending text ("I'm reading chapter books and it makes a lot of sense"); Jack recognized his ability to grow his own vocabulary, saying what he liked about reading was that "if I'm, like, reading a book… and I didn't know that word, and now I know it and I can read it and remember it." Julian recognized a strength and a weakness simultaneously, saying, "Well, I know how to spell and read… Well, I know how to spell good, but I don't know about reading, I'm still working on that."

Analyze/Evaluate/Create. Many students mentioned being strong at a writing skill that fell into this category. Examples of such skills/abilities included preparing for assignments and following them through from beginning to end, as well as generating imaginative ideas and

sharing them with others. Students referenced their own creativity (Abigail described herself as a "creative, fun writer," and Devin explained, "when I'm writing, I always, like, imagine stuff, like—like, writing, like, a story? I always imagine, like, what happens, or something like that"); their abilities to document their feelings and experiences (see Chapter 4); and the capacity of their writing to bring pleasure to others (Kyle spoke about his affinity for writing poetry, because "when some other people reading your poetry, they, um, they can learn some lesson in it… the poetry can get in their feeling and they like it").

There were students, Jordan and Jack, who mentioned weaknesses in skills that fell into this category. Jack described a frustrating experience he had had with a recent writing assignment (see "Theme 3(Self-Schemata)" section of this chapter for related transcript excerpt). Jordan said he would describe himself as an "okay" writer "because sometimes like if—if a teacher tells me to write a—a summary? …Sometimes it's kinda hard… And, like, ((pause)) I don't know what to do sometimes." These two students thus reported having difficulties when they were required to analyze the components of a complicated writing task and create a response.

Demonstrate metacognitive knowledge. In categorizing student statements regarding their own strengths and weaknesses as readers and writers, I came across several statements that were not just about particular skills or abilities, but about when and how the students felt they learned best, and what they felt that meant about them in a larger sense. Krathwohl's (2002) metacognitive dimension of knowledge, which includes understanding strategies and how and when to use them effectively, as well as understanding oneself as a learner, aptly describes these statements. Findings about this data can be found in the "Self-Schemata" section of this chapter.

Overall findings: Self-concept of abilities. Two students, Jennifer and Julian, were remarkably consistent in their self-perceptions as readers and writers. Jennifer's self-perception was generally positive. She did not specify any particular areas of reading or writing weakness; in terms of strengths, she ascribed abilities to herself in terms of both low-level and high-level cognitive processes, and was confident that she could make her own decisions about her reading and writing abilities, unrelated to what others said or thought. Julian's self-perception was also generally positive, but his beliefs were decidedly in defiance of the negative statements that he felt other people made about his abilities. When describing his self-perceived strengths and weaknesses, he focused on low-level cognitive processes (strength in spelling and weakness in handwriting).

The rest of the students (the majority of those in the study), however, demonstrated far more complicated self-perceptions in terms of their abilities as readers and writers. Students reported getting both positive and negative feedback from others about their abilities; they tended to vary in terms of the level and kind of importance they placed on others' feedback (Jack, for example, said at one time that others' feedback made him feel good, at another that it made him feel badly, and at a third time that it was not important to him at all). Many also believed themselves to have low-level reading/writing weaknesses and high-level reading/writing strengths. Students thus perceived a confusing collection of mixed messages about where they stood as readers and writers, resulting in changing and inconsistent ideas about their own literacy abilities.

Theme 3 (Self-Schemata): Students spoke of particular literacy strengths or weaknesses that resonated with other salient beliefs they held about themselves.

According to Eccles and Wigfield (2002), developing and using self-schemata involves connecting beliefs about methods or experiences with reading and writing to other valued characteristics. Findings regarding students' metacognitive knowledge (see Tables 13 and 14) regarding their reading and writing strengths and weaknesses provide a window into their self-schemata: that is, occasions when students spoke of particular literacy strengths or weaknesses that resonated with other salient beliefs they held about themselves. For example, Danielle and Dorothy both described themselves as "funny" people, whose sense of humor was evident in their writing. When prompted to think of a word that described him as a reader and writer, Kyle responded "strong;" when asked why, he said, "Umm, like, when I'm reading… I put all my effort in it to, like, just read." Danielle, too, used discussion of her literacy to indicate that she was a strong person who implemented strategies when needed, and persevered through challenge. Given the same prompt about what word described her as a reader and writer, she chose the word "smart:"

> …because I know how to read… I just go back from the past, like, I didn't know how to read and I- and I practiced and practiced and practiced until I got to know how to talk and read, so, like, ever since I know how to read, now I'm reading more and more, so it takes practice to read… And at first I was just like, I don't wanna read, I don't wanna do this, but now I do. I have courage in myself and I never give up so I'm just—I'm just smart. (Danielle, student interview)

Abigail felt that her abilities to read and write were indicative of what an independent person she could be (see previous discussion of Table 11). When asked how she felt about writing, she reported feeling "good," "great," "awesome" and "powerful" because "you can write anything you want." On the other hand, Joseph expressed concerns about whether he could work independently. He had already been clear when asked whether or not he thought he was a good reader:

Joseph: I suck. ((laughs))

Becca:	Really? What makes you say that?
Joseph:	A little bit cuz I, like, stop, like, every word when I get confused.

Later, when describing his ideal reading scenario, Joseph explained how this feeling of reading-

based confusion led to his feeling dependent on others for support.

Joseph:	I'd rather be with my friend or my parents or my ( )
Becca:	Yeah? How come you prefer that to reading by yourself
Joseph:	Cuz if no one's wit me um I might just get stuck on a word… And then who'm I gonna tell?

Thus, Joseph expressed doubts about his own ability to be an independent reader. Jack, too,

seemed to have concerns about his independence in relation to literacy, explaining, "What I

dislike is, like, when we hafta teach ourselves to write something… and you have to write a lot."

At another point in the interview, Jack went so far as to attribute his writing difficulties to

"laziness."

Becca:	How do you feel when you're asked to read and write things that are challenging?
Jack:	Bad?
Becca:	Bad why?
Jack:	Mm because them be like, I had to write, it's, like, hard… I'm be like, who was it, last week on Monday night? … I had to do, like, two paragraph for ELA… And one paragraph for science, and I didn't feel like doin' it, cause it, like, hard? … So it was, like, a lot to write?... And it was, like, too much for me, so, like, I ain't wanna do it.
Becca:	You didn't wanna do it, that makes sense. Um, what is it about that challenging stuff that makes you feel like you just don't wanna do it?
Jack:	I dunno. I get lazy.
Becca:	You think that's what it is?
Jack:	Yeah.

Jack described a long assignment as "hard" and "too much for me," saying "I ain't wanna do it"

and ultimately characterizing himself as "lazy." It is interesting to compare this to Danielle's

description of how she regularly faced down literacy challenge: "…at first I was just like, I don't

wanna read, I don't wanna do this, but now I do. I have courage in myself and I never give up so

I'm just— I'm just smart." These students' differing beliefs about literacy strengths and weaknesses they possessed led to the reinforcement of different beliefs about themselves more globally.

We thus begin to see how students' self-perceptions as readers and writers (in terms of affective memories and reactions, self-concept of abilities, and self-schemata) are inter-related with larger beliefs they hold about themselves. In Chapter 6 (Research Question 3 Results), I will consider how the students' self-perceptions as readers and writers influence, and are influenced by, their motivation to read and write.

Chapter 6: Research Question 3 Findings

In Chapter 4, I investigated what motivated the students who participated in this study to read and write; while students expressed a wide variety of literacy motivations, they were all motivated by opportunities to establish or strengthen a connection with others through literacy. In Chapter 5, I examined the self-perceptions that students had developed as readers and writers, finding that they spoke of particular literacy strengths and/or weaknesses that resonated with other salient beliefs they held about themselves. Now, in Chapter 6, I turn to exploring the relationship between literacy motivation and literacy self-perception.

Among the majority of participating students, there were two areas of self-perception that seemed especially relevant to literacy motivation: those areas were related to

- previous experiences of literacy success, and

- literacy experiences in which students felt a sense of agency.

Moreover, I found two general trends related to these areas: 1) When beliefs in either or both of these areas made positive contributions to students' self-perceptions as readers and writers, the students tended to demonstrate literacy motivation. 2) However, when students were faced with challenges to self-perception in either or both of these areas, their motivation to read and/or write seemed to be compromised or impacted negatively.

In this chapter, I will explain these findings in greater detail, in service of addressing Research Question 3: "What is the nature of the relationship between these students' motivation to read and write, and the literacy experiences that impact their perceptions of themselves as readers and writers?" Teasing apart the two trends outlined above, Table 15 presents three themes for Research Question 3 that emerged from my thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006); I will explore each theme in turn.

Table 15

Research Question 3 Themes

Theme 1: *Experiences Related to Success*	Students' literacy motivation was impacted by particularly salient experiences of literacy success or failure.
Theme 2: *Experiences Related to Agency*	Students' literacy motivation was impacted by particularly salient experiences in which they did (or did not) feel that they had agency in their own literacy activities.
Theme 3: *Inconsistent Experiences*	Inconsistency in students' literacy experiences, with regard to success and/or agency, complicated the relationship between students' perceptions of themselves as readers/writers and their literacy motivation.

The first two themes stemmed from student descriptions of literacy experiences that were especially salient to their perceptions of themselves as readers and/or writers. With regard to Theme 1, students tended to cite previous experiences of success as a source of literacy motivation, and previous experiences of failure as an explanation for a lack of literacy motivation. With regard to Theme 2, many students cited experiences in which they felt a sense of agency as a source of literacy motivation; when either their ability to make their own literacy choices was jeopardized, or their capacity to establish accurate beliefs about their own reading and writing abilities was questioned, students tended to exhibit a lack of motivation to read and/or write. Note that several students described salient experiences related to both success and agency that contributed to their overall self-perception as readers and writers (consequently impacting their literacy motivation); thus, findings for these students appear in both Theme 1 and Theme 2.

The third theme emerged with regard to students whose descriptions of previous literacy experiences, in terms of success and/or agency, were inconsistent; that is, they mentioned their

successes directly alongside discussions of their own perceived weaknesses and faults. For these students, the relationship between self-perception and motivation was compromised.

Although the main data source used to investigate Research Question 3 was student interviews (so that the students' beliefs were documented in their own words), classroom observations and teacher interviews were also used to provide further evidence where relevant.

Theme 1: Experiences Related to Success

Some students indicated that previous experiences of success, which provided an opportunity to perceive themselves as capable readers and writers, positively impacted their motivation to read and write. For example, as presented in Chapter 5, Jennifer cited enjoyable experiences with reading and writing when she was younger, to explain her motivation to engage in literacy activities now ("when I was little I always loved to read and write, so when I get older, I just get good to it"). Ms. Hathaway (who was teaching Jennifer for the second straight year) explained that she felt Jennifer had become more academically-focused this year, as a seventh-grader, than she had been as a sixth grader; she contended that Jennifer "is incredibly motivated right now. And it's because of the success that she's been having." In this way, when seeking to explain Jennifer's current motivation to read and write, both Jennifer and her teacher pointed to previous instances of her having a positive experience with literacy.

At another point in her interview, Ms. Hathaway said of Jennifer, "She's motivated because she's seeing—I think the—I think the motivation has come in… this year I think she's seeing that when she invests her energy in a different way, it pays off." Ms. Hathaway thus again suggested that previous experiences of success were motivating Jennifer to continue working hard, an idea Jennifer herself corroborated when she explained, "I get to, like, read a lot? … and

it brings up my score." Having had the experience of seeing her "score" go up, Jennifer

connected this result to the work she had previously done as a reader.

Similar to Jennifer, Danielle provided specific descriptions of previous experiences of

success at reading and writing, and suggested that she saw opportunity in literacy. She said she

often wrote in a journal her mother had given her as a gift several years earlier:

Danielle:	…And so for now I'm writing in my journal and it helps me so.
Becca:	What does it help you with?
Danielle:	It helps me, like, reading, I just go back over, over the old stuff… That at how, how my writing was when I was little, like, from now, so it just is different. It just—I don't know. It's just fun to read my old handwriting and new handwriting because it helps me get more and more, um, like, how to say? Um, I don't know how to say it. To come out more, to talk more… It, like, um, it helps me read other words too. So yeah.

Here, Danielle explained that she was motivated to write in her journal, because it provided an

opportunity to reflect on changes in her own writing ("I just go back over, over the old stuff…

how my writing was when I was little, like, from now, so it just is different"), which in turn

helped her to improve her literacy skills ("it helps me read other words too") and express herself

("it helps me…to come out more, to talk more"). This was consistent with other elements of her

self-perception, such as her faith in her ability to use strategies she had learned to address

decoding weaknesses (see Chapter 5). She also described reading as an occasion to reinforce

positive beliefs about herself:

Danielle:	…Sometimes I do stutter on my words and sometimes like, it, I read kinda slow but, because it won't get to my head fast, but once I start reading more, or do it again, then it'll click to my head so…
Becca:	…Um, how important is it to s- to you to see yourself as a good reader and writer?
Danielle:	It will see- it will be, like, good because I know I practiced… And so, like, my accom- my goal went up and I accom—accomplished it… So yeah. It will be good to.

Danielle recognized the considerable effort that had paid off in past experiences ("I do stutter on my words and… I read kinda slow but… once I start reading more, or do it again, then it'll click to my head"); she was motivated to continue employing that work ethic, so that she might have similar experiences in the future ("It will be, like, good because I know I practiced…My goal went up and I accom—accomplished it").

Jennifer and Danielle thus seemed buoyed by previous experiences of success, building positive literacy self-perceptions based on readily-accessed recollections of previous literacy successes, and leveraging these into motivation to engage in further literacy activities. Unfortunately, among the students who participated in the study, there was also an example of the opposite situation: when readily-accessed recollections were ones of overwhelming literacy struggle, and literacy motivation was low. As described in Chapter 5, Jack described his spelling skills as being so bad as to overcome any good ideas that he had, making him "a bad writer." His negative feelings about himself as a writer were evident to Ms. Hathaway, especially in comparison to peers:

> Devin will write… Jack, no… It's—it's painful for him…And I think it's painful because he doesn't have the structure, he doesn't have… The spelling, there's things that he just… Doesn't, doesn't have. (Teacher interview)

Ms. Hathaway's description of Jack's reluctance to write was consistent with his own, extremely negative perception of himself as a writer, which, in turn, was aligned with experiences in which he had found writing assignments prohibitively difficult. As also indicated in Chapter 5, Jack detailed a pair of recent writing assignments, and then described his lack of motivation to engage in them.

> Jack:　　　I didn't feel like doin it cause it, like, hard? …It's, like, a lot to write so I just, I dunno …So it was, like, a lot to write? …And it was, like, too much for me, so, like, I ain't wanna do it.

Becca:	You didn't wanna do it, that makes sense. Um, what is it about that challenging stuff that makes you feel like you just don't wanna do it?
Jack:	I dunno. I get lazy.
Becca:	You think that's what it is?
Jack:	Yeah.

Ultimately, then, Jack used this memory of a writing challenge to assign himself a shortcoming, suggesting that the bad feelings he had about the challenge were a result of his own "laziness," as opposed to saying he was possibly in need of further support.

Summary. This section provided evidence as to the role played by experiences of success and failure in students' self-perceptions as readers and writers, and the way those elements of their self-perception might have impacted students' literacy motivation. Students who had salient memories of success at reading and/or writing described the role these played in their motivation for further literacy work; however, when salient experiences were ones of a task to which a student did not feel equal, self-perception was low, and literacy motivation was significantly compromised.

Theme 2: Experiences Related to Agency

Experiences in which students felt powerful or in-control as readers and writers tended to be ones in which they demonstrated literacy motivation. Dorothy explained that when she was reading or writing on her own terms, she did so willingly and for long stretches of time; as noted in Chapter 4, she explained that she "love[d] writing" and kept three different diaries outside of school. Also as noted in Chapter 4, Dorothy described how, when a mentor from an afterschool program recommended a book, she was motivated to read the entire volume in one evening ("I started reading it and all of a sudden I finished the book that night… cause I was really into it"). In both cases, Dorothy was undaunted by—in fact, seemingly proud of—how she had used literacy to pursue something she was interested in (in the case of diary-writing, as a chance to

express her feelings; in the case of novel-reading, as an opportunity to pursue the

recommendation of a trusted adult). These were situations in which Dorothy perceived herself as

someone making her own literacy choices, and she was motivated to engage in reading and

writing.

Kyle, too, described literacy as a source of agency, but for him it was a different kind of

agency: literacy as a means of establishing himself as someone with important things to say. As

indicated in Chapter 4, he talked about prior experiences with writing as being times when he not

only passed along his own knowledge, but also engendered an emotional response in others.

Kyle:	Sometime when I'm at my house, um, when I when I have nuttin to do, I just take some papers and write some poem.
Becca:	Do you like writing poetry?
Kyle:	Mm hm.
Becca:	Whaddayu like about it?
Kyle:	Um, like, when some other people reading your poetry they, um, they can learn some lesson in it, ummm …The poetry can get in their feeling and they like it.
Becca:	Good for you. Do you ever share your poems with anybody, or no?
Kyle:	Yeah I share my poems.
Becca:	Yeah? Who do you share them with?
Kyle:	Mmm, my teachers.

Kyle thus described how others' positive feedback about his writing ("they like it") motivated

him to write more ("I just take some papers and write some poem"). Imbued in his comments

was the sense that he felt he could use literacy to convey important information to others ("they

can learn some lesson in it… The poetry can get in their feeling"), reinforcing the idea that he

was a knowledgeable writer.

In a similar way, Jennifer spoke proudly of instances in which reading and writing served

as affirmations that she was capable and independent. As indicated in Chapter 5, she described

several literacy strengths that she felt she had ("My writing is good… and my reading is good…

instead of writing sloppy, I write neat and nice"). Her feelings of empowerment in the writing

process seemed to motivate her to engage in writing activities, enabling her to demonstrate both

what she felt, and what she knew.

> Jennifer: I like writing.
> Becca: You like writing? What do you like about it?
> Jennifer: Cuz you get to, like, um, es- sometimes if you're in a bad mood,
>   you could just write and express yourself? …And you get to, like,
>   know words more and get to know, um, to be a fluent while
>   writing instead-uh, like, you don't siddown and don't write, you
>   don't, like, know nothin.

In this exchange, Jennifer demonstrated seeing herself as a knowledgeable person, capable of

both informing and expressing herself; she said she was motivated both to share her own feelings,

and to learn more, through literacy. She indicated that she viewed literacy as an opportunity for

her not just to tell others what she was thinking or feeling ("if you're in a bad mood, you could

just write and express yourself"), but also to build her own knowledge ("you get to, like, know

words more").

Jennifer's perception of herself, as someone who could leverage her own literacy

knowledge and capability to learn more, seemed vital to her motivation to engage in reading and

writing. Jennifer described reading assignments in which she was motivated to engage at school:

> Jennifer: …it was, like, a fun book cuz it was about poetry …And we get to,
>   like, write about, like, what happened, and we may need to keep up
>   with the pace about the book.
> Becca: Ok. Did you like it?
> Jennifer: Yeah I liked it.
> Becca: Wudju like about it?
> Jennifer: Cuz it has poetry and I like poetry a lot, so …It splained, it just
>   splained that, you know, like, some, some things that, something
>   that happen to teens nowadays. It talked about, like, what's goin on,
>   and it tells you that, like, back in the, you know, like in the nine-
>   nineties …It's, like, the same thing happened to teens now so it's
>   good …Like gang violence …And, um, like, some, like, your
>   father's not there.

In this exchange, Jennifer explained how she utilized reading to develop a more nuanced

understanding of events or experiences, placing them in their historical contexts (e.g. "…it tells

you that, like, back in the…nine-nineties... It's like, the same thing happened to teens now… like

gang violence"). She also demonstrated motivation to read when she was not in the classroom,

again because it gave her a feeling of agency in terms of developing more in-depth knowledge:

Becca:	…Do you ever read outside-uh school?
Jennifer:	Yeah.
Becca:	Yeah? Whaddayu like reading?
Jennifer:	I like reading, um, like, Chicago, stuff about Chicago… And about, like, learning about what's goin down there. I like reading those.
Becca:	So do you- so you do, like, reading news about what's happening there now, or history about what happened in Chih--
Jennifer:	Yeah, like history that happened, or made up stories that really happened, but it's not the person.

As seen in this example, Jennifer indicated that she was motivated to read in order to establish

herself as an informed person ("learning about what's goin down there… like history that

happened") regarding topics of her own interest. Devin also expressed motivation to engage in

literacy in order to pursue areas of interest to him (see Chapter 4). He seemed to feel in-control

of his own literacy actions, an independent agent motivated to engage in reading and writing

specifically because he had made his own decisions to do so. In the exchange below, he alluded

to the role feeling "interested" played in his motivation to read and write challenging material,

which he perceived himself as "ready" to take on:

Becca:	…when someone describes a task in reading or writing as challenging, what would you say that means?
Devin:	Uh, like, the writing, like, if it might be an essay, something like that.
Becca:	Uh huh. ((pause)) When you know you have to do something challenging, how do you feel?
Devin:	I feel, like, ready, something.
Becca:	You do?
Devin:	Yeah.

Becca:	Good, good for you. Umm, what is it about challenging stuff that makes you feel ready?
Devin:	Like, if the writing is… if the thing I have to write is interested? …Then, if I like it? …Like, I will write.
Becca:	Okay, that makes sense. So I'm gonna ask you about reading and writing in general. What's something you like about reading and something you don't like about reading?
Devin:	Mmm, I like that, when, like, when you're writing stuff, like, you can imagine, uh, like a story? …Writing about it and you can imagine a story in your head.
Becca:	…Is there anything you don't like about writing? Or you like everything about writing.
Devin:	Mmmmm, I don't think, like, I have something bad about writing.
Becca:	Yeah? How bout reading, what's something that you like about reading and something you don't like about reading?
Devin:	I like, uh, how the authors be, like, trying to get you… in the story? …Like, try to make you feel, uh, interested?

For Devin, perceiving himself as capable/powerful and being interested in reading and writing seemed to be intertwined. He expressed motivation to engage in literacy activities when he had a personal affinity to the topic or content (e.g., he said that what made him feel "ready" to write is "if the thing I have to write is interested… Then if I like it… Like, I will write"). He also described the people who wrote the stories as striving to earn his attention ("I like, uh, how the authors be, like, trying to get you… in the story? …Like, try to make you feel, uh, interested?"). His descriptions of what he liked about writing and reading were filled with the language of agency (e.g. "when you're writing stuff… you can imagine a story in your head"). He thus seemed especially motivated to engage in literacy activities in which he perceived himself as being an in-control reader and writer.

Another important dimension of the data was the interaction between Devin's motivation to learn more about topics he had selected as being of interest, and his acceptance of support from others. He appeared to view seeking support as a useful means of validating his own interests and taking action towards self-selected goals (promoting positive self-perception). For

example, as indicated in Chapter 4, Devin said he liked reading with peers because having their

support enables "you [to] read the story more faster? …And you get, like, kind of, like, more

interest… In the story?" In this way, Devin seemed to be depicting such peer work as a form of

literacy in which he purposefully engaged because it promoted his own interests, which were

vital to his literacy motivation.

During an observation in Devin's classroom, I noted his ongoing interaction with Ms.

Hathaway regarding his locating an independent reading option that was of interest to him:

> [Devin] goes over to bookshelf, picks one up and considers it, then takes out a
> picture book and does the same thing. Teacher: "Dude what are you looking at
> over there?" "A book." "Are you looking at black history?" "Yeah." [Devin] asks
> for "Kennedy books" which the teacher doesn't have, but she recommends an
> American history book… Shows him the section that is about his topic of interest
> and turns to the page he is interested in. Opens to first page re: Kennedy and
> previews it with him. He thanks her for her preview and help. Reads attentively…
> When gets to the end, gets up, waits near teacher to put it away. Teacher asks if
> there is a book he would like her to get. Looks at another book on the shelf.
> Teacher: "Devin?" "Yeah" Teacher: "Think about it and tell me if you want to get
> them at the bookstore." (Observation Notes, Devin Obs 1)

In this interaction, Ms. Hathaway seemed invested in helping Devin find an independent reading

text on a topic he valued, and he accepted her support to pursue literacy areas of interest. It could

be argued that, given the experience of a teacher seeking out and validating his interests, Devin

was able to feel in control of his own reading, while still receiving support.

Like Devin, Danielle also suggested feeling a sense of agency when she received help

from other individuals. She described seeking support as an action she could take to build her

own capacity as a reader (again, promoting positive self-perception). During her interview, when

shown a series of three pictures of adolescents reading (one solo, one with a peer, and one with

several peers) and asked which one she preferred, Danielle chose the one with several peers:

> Because it's a group and you get to, like, sp- um, like, spread, like—they get to
> hear you read… And, like, you're all reading in a circle… So, you know, like, um,

so they will unders- like- they- they will help you—they might not, but—they will help you under- to read the words and stuff… So it will be good. And, like, you get to read out loud… And take turns. (Danielle, student interview)

Danielle's description of the positive impact of getting support from others ("it will be good"), particularly in terms of her portrayal of participating in a group reading task as a specific action she took in order to learn more from a text ("they will help you under- to read the words and stuff"), rang true with Ms. Hathaway's description of Danielle's ability to work jointly and strategically on reading tasks. As described in Chapter 4, Ms. Hathaway described Danielle as a student who sought comprehension support from the teacher when needed ("she'll, uh, check her own comprehension… and she'll do that by asking questions… sometimes she'll ask if this, is this right, or other times she'll kind of explain her thinking"). I asked Ms. Hathaway to provide further detail about the nature of Danielle's comprehension check-ins.

Becca:	Has she—does she come to you in sixth grade that way, or is that something that she's been taught?
Ms. Hathaway:	No, that's been, I think it's, I think it's something that's, um, been taught? But also it was something that I think she always had? …But needed to be nurtured? … So that she knew how to kinda advocate for herself? And ask questions for herself.

Here, Ms. Hathaway presented Danielle's utilization of others' support as an empowering act, commending Danielle's ability to "advocate for herself… and ask questions for herself." In this way, the teacher corroborated Danielle's assertion that appropriately seeking others' support could (and, indeed, should) make Danielle feel more in-control as a reader and writer.

There were also situations in which students described feeling as though they had much less agency as readers and/or writers; in such circumstances, their literacy motivation was negatively impacted. Kyle, for example, described reading challenges imposed by school that prevented him from exploring other reading opportunities:

Becca: …How do you feel when you're asked to read things that you find challenging in school?
Kyle: Mmm
Becca: Is that exciting, or is it annoying?
Kyle: Uhhhh, annoying.
Becca: Annoying? How come?
Kyle: Uhh because you're gonna have to put a lot of time in it, like, you can take the whole years reading that thing… And never get a chance –chance to read other books.

Here, Kyle expressed decreased motivation to engage in challenging reading tasks at school

("Annoying… because you're gonna have to put a lot of time in it, like, you can take the whole

years reading that thing…"), because it meant he had less control over his own reading choices

("…And never get a chance – chance to read other books").

Concern about control of literacy actions was also salient to Dorothy. She described

herself as an avid writer (and, in selected cases, a willing reader) when she was outside of school

and felt independent. The only time she said she was willing to do an in-school literacy task was

when she felt she was her own agent, making the choice to engage in an area of personal interest

to her. As indicated in Chapter 4, she drew clear distinctions between in-school writing activities

in which she would willingly engage, because she would have been doing them anyway ("I'm

okay with writing cause I always write all the time… I just like writing a lot"), and reading

activities she would not, because they were being imposed (she said they made her "mad," and

that "if it's reading then I would be like, um, can we do something else"). During a classroom

observation, Dorothy was noted looking for ways to make the choice to write when the teacher

had instructed the class to read:

Teacher: "all you have to do is take a book out and read." Dorothy walks to the back of the room, to the bookshelf… Dorothy returns to her seat without having chosen a book. Looks at the Encyclopedia of Language Arts that's next to her desk, puts it back. Teacher: "Dorothy, get a book" Dorothy: "Can I write please" Teacher: "No get a book please" (Observation notes, Dorothy Obs 2)

In both her own comments and in classroom observation, Dorothy thus presented as someone who was interested in writing. Ms. Hathaway's characterization of Dorothy, however, was not consistent with this:

Becca:	Do you ever see her writing? What is her writing like?
Ms. Hathaway:	No. She doesn't write.
Becca:	Wow that's so--
Ms. Hathaway:	She—she is not a writer… It's, uh it's ((pause)) it's a struggle to get 'er to do ((pause)) anything cause she wants to—like, the other day she got mad at me because I asked her to do—I think it was—I wanted her to do some reading… And what she wanted to do was write, um, draw hearts on 'er hand… And I'm like, "I don't—that's not what I asked", and she was like, "I don't, well, I'm writing," and I go—
Becca:	"No."
Ms. Hathaway:	"No, I didn't ask you to draw on your hand."

The contrast between Dorothy's reported self-perception as someone who kept three diaries and said "Writing? I love to write" and her teacher's description of her as someone who "doesn't write," "is not a writer" and tried to pass off idly drawing pictures as "writing" is striking. Although Dorothy read and wrote outside of school, in the classroom, she seemed to engage in a tangle for control over what she would, or would not, do. Perceiving herself as a self-directed reader and writer, making her own choices about what she was reading and writing, thus seemed crucial to Dorothy's demonstrating literacy motivation.

Julian's feeling of lack of agency was related to situations in which his own perceptions of himself as a reader and writer conflicted with what he believed to be others' perceptions of him. For instance, during his interview (with frustration in his voice), he directly contrasted his own opinions of himself to the ones he said others held about him:

…they say something negative, like "Oh you can't read," or they say, "Oh this book is too hard for you so you can't read it" …I don't care what they say… Because I th—I believe that I read and, and write the way I like to. (Julian, student interview)

As described in Chapter 5, Julian thus asserted his own ability to assess his reading and writing

prowess, not just regardless of what other people thought, but in spite of it. It makes sense, then,

that he saw others' presentation of literacy challenge as an attack on his own abilities:

Becca:	If somebody said, "Hey, check out this book, it's really challenging," what would they be saying?
((pause))	
Becca:	What would they be saying?
Julian:	Well, they'd technically be saying that I can't read.
Becca:	That you can't read it? So--
Julian:	Yeah.
Becca:	The word "challenging" means you can't read it?
Julian:	It technically means that, because if they're saying that this book is challenging… Uh, that means that someone's saying that you can't read it.
Becca:	Oh, not everybody feels that way about the word "challenging" but you—but that—((Julian raises his hand)) Are you raising your hand because you do?
Julian:	Yes.

Unlike Devin, who said that he felt "ready" to take on literacy challenges when they were

presented to him, Julian reported that the people who presented him with a challenge probably

deemed him incapable, thus contradicting his self-perception as a capable reader. Like Dorothy,

Julian's discussion of when and how he was motivated to read focused on the circumstances in

which he felt in-control as a reader:

> Well, reading, I like about it, what I like about it is that when I read… Um, ummmm, I don't—I read for, like, one minute and then stop… And also I read, um, if I want to, like, if I'm bored and I want to read? …At home so I can get my reading out of the way… I just read outside downs- in my room… Um, or somewhere, like, that's quiet, because my house is loud… (Julian, student interview)

Julian focused his discussion of favorable reading situations on those in which he got to read in a

manner of his own choosing ("I read for, like, one minute and then stop"), in a location of his

own choosing (I just read outside downs- in my room… Um, or somewhere, like, that's

quiet")—that is, those situations in which he perceived himself as being more in-control.

   Summary. A feeling of agency seemed important to these students' literacy motivation.

Similar to many other adolescents (see Chapter 2), these students demonstrated an interest in

feeling capable and independent. When these feelings were validated, it seemed to positively

influence their motivation to engage in literacy activities (and, sometimes, their willingness to

seek and/or accept support towards that end). However, when students felt like they had less

control, or were less respected as individuals making autonomous literacy-related decisions, they

seemed less motivated to engage.

Theme 3: Inconsistent Experiences

   In contrast to the students described in Themes 1 and 2, there were other students who

mentioned an array of different, and often contradictory, experiences and beliefs about

themselves when describing their reading and writing. Jordan, for example, was a student whose

perceptions of himself as a reader and writer seemed tinged with confusion. Although he used

some positive words when he described his literacy abilities, Jordan tended to couch these in

qualifications. Take, for instance, the following exchange about Jordan's reading self-perception:

Becca:	So you know more about you than anybody. So what word would you use to describe yourself as a reader?
Jordan:	Good.
Becca:	Good? How come?
Jordan:	Cuz still, like, a lotta long words… That I really don't know—that and I try to pronounce them out and then I say, yeah, so yeah.

Jordan chose the word "good" to describe himself as a reader, but his explanation of why

he chose that word highlighted what he perceived as his own *lack* of knowledge ("still

like, a lotta long words… That I really don't know"). He was motivated to give reading

challenges a shot ("I try to pronounce them out…") but did not provide information about

whether or not those efforts ended up being worthwhile ("…and then I say, yeah, so

yeah"). Directly after this question about reading, I followed up with a similar question

about his writing self-perception.

Becca:	Okay, how bout as a writer, what kinda word would you use to describe yourself as a writer?
Jordan:	Okay?
Becca:	Okay? How come okay?
Jordan:	Because sometimes, like, if—if a teacher tells me to write a—a summary? …Sometimes it's kinda hard… And, like, ((pause)) I don't know what to do sometimes.
Becca:	…When you're asked to do something, or read or write something, that's challenging, how do you feel?
Jordan:	I feel a little okay.
Becca:	A little okay, that's an interesting way to describe it. Why'd you say a little okay?
Jordan:	Because sometimes I don't like study for it or …it just came out of the blue.

When asked to describe himself as a writer, Jordan first used a neutral adjective ("okay") to

describe his abilities; then, when asked why he chose that word, he launched into a discussion of

the weaknesses he perceived in himself as a writer ("Sometimes it's kinda hard… And, like,

((pause)) I don't know what to do sometimes"). He thus cited negative experiences to explain his

writing self-perceptions, even though his initial assessment of himself as a writer sounded far

less negative.

Similarly, Jordan's description of previous success was intertwined with description of

previous struggle:

Becca:	Do you remember when you felt like you really knew how to read?
Jordan:	Yeah.
Becca:	How did that feel?
Jordan:	Good?
Becca:	Yeah why good?
Jordan:	Cuz I felt that I can just, like, say any word in a book?
Becca:	Uh huh.

Jordan:	And then sometimes I—then sometimes I didn't.
Becca:	Uh huh.
Jordan:	Then ((pause)) yeah.

Here, Jordan expressed pride in his abilities ("[Felt] good… cuz I felt that I can, just, like, say any word in a book") but that pride was shortlived ("and then sometimes I—then sometimes I didn't"). Taken together, Jordan's statements indicated a confusing situation in which he seemed to perceive himself as possibly incapable of completing some literacy tasks, even when he was motivated to give them a try (as when he described trying to pronounce long words).

Like Jordan, Joseph had some seemingly contradictory things to say about himself in terms of literacy. As indicated in Chapters 4 and 5, he described himself as a "happy reader" who liked to visualize what he was reading, and a "happy writer" when he had access to a computer. When describing his approach to difficult literacy tasks, he characterized himself by dedication and hard work:

Becca:	When someone describes a reading task or a writing task as challenging, what does that mean?...
Joseph:	Um, like, it's hard?
Becca:	Yeah, it's hard? Yeah? How do you feel when you're ask to read things that are challenging?
Joseph:	I, like, sound it out first in my head.
Becca:	Oh, you sound it out in your head, that's smart. Um, if you know that there's, like, a challenging thing coming up that you're gonna have to do, how do you feel?
Joseph:	A little bit good to do it.
Becca:	Yeah. How come a little bit good?
Joseph:	Cuz I can't, like, give up. I have to, like, try again.

Joseph identified a strategy he was supposed to use when he ran into a decoding problem ("I, like, sound it out first in my head"), and said he believed it was important to persist when faced with such challenges ("I can't, like, give up. I have to, like, try again"). However, like Jordan, he did not describe anticipating a positive outcome. Jordan had been non-committal about whether or

not his efforts to "pronounce… out" complicated words were effective; Joseph's stated beliefs

about what would come from his efforts were even more bleak.

Becca:	Would you describe yourself as a good reader?
((pause))	
Becca:	How come?
Joseph:	I suck. ((laughs))
Becca:	Really?
Joseph:	A little bit cuz—
Becca:	What makes you say that?
Joseph:	I, like, stop, like, every word when I get confused.
Becca:	Oh. Cause it sounds to me like you try pretty hard.
Joseph:	Mmm.
Becca:	Yeah? Um, is it important to you to be a good reader?
Joseph:	Yeah.
Becca:	How come?
Joseph:	It's important, um, because, um, ((locker slams)) because, um, ((locker slams)) because to be a good reader, like, I really, like, if I don't get to be a good reader I might not pass this grade… I needuh, um, read more… So I can, like, get back on track.

Joseph was critical of himself and his reading abilities ("I suck… a little bit cuz… I, like, stop,

like, every word when I get confused"). He expressed a desire to be capable, but spun the

language in terms of what would happen if he didn't succeed ("…if I don't get to be a good

reader I might not pass this grade"). His doubtful self-perception also seemed to impact his

perception of the role of support from others. When presented with the same series of three

pictures of adolescents reading that the other students had seen (one solo, one with a peer and

one with several peers), and asked which one he preferred, Joseph explained:

Joseph:	Reading with a person, like, one person.
Becca:	How come one person?
Joseph:	Cuz, like, if I have a group they might, like, shout it out and then, and then I could, I might not, like, hear it. I'd rather be with my friend or my parents…
Becca:	…How come you prefer one person to by yourself?
Joseph:	Cuz if no one's wit me, um, I might just get stuck on a word… And then who'm I gonna tell?

Joseph seemed focused on the doubt and vulnerability associated with support being potentially ineffective ("they might, like, shout it out and then… I might not, like, hear it") or absent ("if no one's wit me, um, I might just get stuck on a word… And then who'm I gonna tell?"). He expressed motivation to try at literacy tasks in the future ("I needuh read more"), but concerned about the potential outcome ("I might not pass this grade"), particularly when he needed to be independent.

Summary. Although the students in Theme 3 expressed literacy motivation, that motivation was muted by doubt-filled self-perceptions about who they were as readers and writers, and what they should expect of themselves. The experiences that they called on to support their beliefs in their own literacy skills left them unsure about whether or not they were in control of their reading and writing outcomes.

Conclusion

One important element of expectancy-value theory is recognition of the role of prior experiences in shaping one's perceptions of oneself, and how those, in turn, affect one's motivation to engage in similar experiences in the future. This perspective has compelling implications for students with LD, who have often experienced notable reading and writing challenges that could impact their beliefs about themselves as readers and writers (see Chapter 2).

In Themes 1 and 2, situations in which students described experiences of success and/or agency (and demonstrated motivation to read and write) were examined, as were situations in which students described experiences of failure and/or a lack of agency (and demonstrated much less motivation to read and write). As illustrated in Theme 3, there were also instances in which students mentioned their successes directly alongside discussions of their own perceived weaknesses and faults, and in such situations, the role of motivation was especially complicated.

Where students like Danielle and Jennifer described looking back on times when hard work had enabled them to be successful at literacy tasks, Joseph and Jordan did not refer to any such experiences. These students both described trying hard to accomplish tasks, but neither seemed convinced that such efforts would enable them to achieve what they wanted. Kyle and Dorothy both demonstrated that their motivation to engage in literacy tasks changed based on whether or not they felt like they were making their own choices—that is, whether or not they felt in-control of what they were doing as readers and writers. Other findings had to do with student conceptions of support; students like Danielle and Devin saw support as a means of establishing greater control, while Joseph seemed most concerned about what he would do if the support were missing. Jack, meanwhile, wrote himself off as a writer without even mentioning the possibility of potential for success if given support, and Julian expressed concerns that others were convinced he was incapable (which, from a teacher's perspective, presumably creates a barrier when trying to support him).

These students were navigating adolescence, already a time of uncertainty, with the added challenge of valuing themselves as learners in a system in which they were considered LD. As this chapter made clear, the students did so in different ways, and with varying degrees of success. In Chapter 7, I will discuss how my findings in Chapters 4-6 relate to current research trends, and what the implications are for various stakeholders involved in the development of literacy among adolescents with learning disabilities.

Chapter 7: Discussion

This dissertation study was designed to provide an in-depth look at the literacy motivations of a group of adolescents with learning disabilities. Of particular interest was how the students' literacy motivations both shaped, and were shaped by, the beliefs they held about themselves as readers and writers. Expectancy-value theory of motivation (Eccles, 2009; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000) was used, because of the opportunities that use of this theory affords in terms of exploring related elements of self-perception. Following on the work of other researchers, who recognize the opportunity in gathering data from students with disabilities themselves (e.g. Connor et al., 2011), all efforts were made to honor student voice and student conception of disability; as a result, in this study, students' beliefs were presented in their own words (at times, comparing and contrasting these with the observations of adults).

The discussion chapter begins with a look at this study's results in relation to other research in the fields of motivation, literacy and LD, highlighting two key findings that offer particular contributions to the literature. For each of these two findings, implications for both research and practice are discussed. The study's theoretical dimension is considered next. Specifically, the ways that expectancy-value theory provides a helpful and necessary lens for understanding the motivation of adolescents with LD are discussed, as are areas where knowledge from the LD research community could strengthen expectancy-value theory's applicability for a wide range of students. In the next section, a potential method for using information from expectancy-value theory for professional development among literacy teachers of adolescents with LD is proposed. Finally, limitations of this study and suggested directions for future research are discussed.

Keys to Literacy Motivation:

Fostering Student Feelings of Connection and Control

Teaching literacy skills to adolescents is challenging in and of itself (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006; Fang et al., 2008; Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008), and taking students' learning disabilities into account provides other elements for educators to consider. Adolescents with LD require learning supports to be successful in educational settings; however, these students are also in the midst of the same processes of establishing feelings of independence (and fuller understandings of themselves) as are their peers without LD. Although there were a multitude of factors that contributed to literacy motivation among participants in this study, two factors stood out as particularly noteworthy: the degree to which literacy activities provided students with an *opportunity to connect with others*, and the degree to which students felt *in control of literacy activities*. Students seemed motivated to engage in literacy activities that strengthened (as opposed to jeopardized) their feelings in these two areas, each of which will now be explored in turn.

Opportunity to Connect with Others

All of the students who participated in this study expressed motivation to engage in literacy activities that provided them with an opportunity to connect with others. This aligns with findings from previous research, in which students demonstrated increased motivation to participate in literacy activities that involved positive interactions with others (Bozack & Salvaggio, 2013; Casey, 2008; Goodenow, 1993; Guthrie & Humenick, 2004; Hall, 2012a; Jagenow, Raufelder, & Eid, 2015; Moje et al., 2008; Raufelder, Jagenow, Drury, & Hoferichter, 2013; Wigfield, Eccles, & Rodriguez, 1998).

Some research has reported on investigations of literacy motivation as related to students seeking positive interactions with (or connections to) peers through reading and/or writing (e.g. Casey, 2008; Hall, 2012a). Consistent with this published work, and as illustrated in Chapter 4, students in the current study demonstrated an interest in using literacy to connect with peers. The finding that some participants expressed motivation to read or write so as to build or strengthen relationships with adults also resonates with prior work in the field (e.g. Jagenow et al., 2015; Raufelder, Jagenow, et al., 2013; Wigfield et al., 1998). In their review of literature about the influence of social organization of classrooms/groups on student motivation, Wigfield and colleagues (1998) reported that "positive and emotionally warm relations with teachers relate to students' motivation and adjustment in the classroom" (p. 98).

It makes sense that, if students perceive interactions with teachers as ones in which they can feel connected and learn something, they would likely be motivated to take up teacher suggestions, follow through on teacher requests, and seek teacher interactions in the future. Bergman (2017)'s multiple-case study, of two adolescents with LD who were able to maintain motivation and improve their reading skills over time, provides an interesting example of this. Bergman found that both students not only were motivated by a curriculum they found directly relatable to their own lives, but also that they "frequently cited teacher involvement as a motivational factor and appeared to view these interactions as being closely tied to their reading improvement" (p. 187). In the current study, Danielle's interactions with trusted adults, both as Ms. Hathaway describes them, and as Danielle describes them herself (see Chapter 4), provide another good example of how such teacher-student interactions might play out in practical terms.

Another set of recent studies further investigated the nature of the relationship between students' academic motivation and their connections to others, including teachers. In their studies

of social interaction and motivation, Jagenow, Raufelder and colleagues (Jagenow et al., 2015; Raufelder, Jagenow, et al., 2013) used four different motivation profiles: they described students who were teacher-dependent, peer-dependent, teacher-and-peer dependent, and teacher-and-peer independent in terms of their scholastic motivation. It would be useful for future research to look at the interaction between these motivation profiles, that have been theorized and studied previously, and students' beliefs about themselves as readers and writers—that is, how the impact of connections to others on literacy motivation, and the impact of connections to others on literacy self-perception, might relate to one another. Among the students who participated in the current study, the data indicated that several students were inconsistent in their depiction of the relationship between the beliefs demonstrated by others, and their beliefs about themselves as readers and writers. For example, Jack said at one point that others' opinions of his literacy abilities were the reasons he considered himself a bad writer, and then said at another point that others' opinions of him did not impact his literacy beliefs about himself at all. If one's academic motivation profile is different depending on the value placed on interactions with (or the demonstrated beliefs of) others, then this inconsistency would presumably impact one's motivation to read and write.

Like their peers, adolescents with LD are trying to figure out how to establish appropriate relatedness to others; however, they are also faced with the reality that they require unique learning supports. These potentially contradicting needs and desires were evident in the student interviews conducted for this study. Some students found a balance between the two that resulted in motivation to read and/or write, while for others this was not the case. For instance, Danielle described how utilizing reading supports made her feel that "I never give up so I'm just—I'm just smart" (see Chapter 6); on the other hand, Julian felt that "the kids and the grownups think

negative" about him as a reader, and was set to defy their beliefs ("I don't care what they say…

Because I th—I believe that I read and, and write the way I like to… I want to"; see Chapter 5).

Such a perspective on interactions with others does not set up a situation in which teacher and

student work together easily and amicably to support student motivation and learning. The

tension between desired autonomy and needed support inevitably influences the interactions that

students with LD have with peers and teachers, and both previous research, and findings from

the current project, indicate that there may indeed be a connection between the nature of students'

interactions with others, and their academic motivation.

In terms of specific reasons as to why adolescents demonstrate social motivations for

engaging in literacy activities, many of the findings in this study were consistent with those of

Hall (2012a). Hall found that sixth-grade students whose reading skills were below grade level

were initially reluctant to participate in small groups, but gradually increased their participation

and effective use of strategies, and even took on leadership roles. When she interviewed these

students, they expressed motivation to engage with on-grade level and above-grade level peers

because they could learn strategies from their peers; these students demonstrated interest in

belonging, and contributing, to a supportive group. Similarly, in the current study, students

described seeking opportunities to work with peers who would support their learning (e.g. Jack

explaining how working with peers made longer chapter books easier to read).

One area of difference, however, was that Hall's below-grade-level readers eventually

felt they were making a contribution to others; in this study, only Kyle and Dorothy made

statements to this effect, and neither did so in the context of sharing knowledge with school peers

(Kyle discussed adults learning from his poetry; Dorothy described how she and her brother

brought others pleasure with their jokes). Given that Hall's (2012a) study specifically included

struggling readers who did not have disabilities, while the current study involved *only* students with LD, this raises questions about how students with LD perceive their role in the classroom, and whether they see opportunities to convey academically useful information to others. Helping students with LD to find situations in which they feel they can contribute, or helping them to be aware of the times when they are contributing, is crucial to their developing the self-concept beliefs fundamental to literacy motivation (as conceived in an expectancy-value model).

Increasing moves towards inclusion-oriented classrooms provide ample opportunities to create environments for students to learn from one another (and take pride in helping one another). However, educators and researchers would do well to remember that this may be a particular area of concern for adolescents with LD, and inclusion circumstances should be fostered carefully to support these students' feeling not only like they can learn from their peers, but that their peers can benefit from what they, themselves, do, say and know. It is not enough to simply put students all together in the same classroom, with no further structure, scaffolding or design of activities/learning environments taking individual and diverse learning profiles into account. Likewise, it is unrealistic to expect one teacher to create and maintain such a learning environment for a large group of students with and without disabilities all by him- or herself. Creating such an environment requires regular and close communication between general and special educators working in the same classroom.

Unfortunately, the prior studies discussed in this section did not specifically involve students with LD. Although they sometimes involved "struggling readers," there were very rarely indications of these students' disability status (and, indeed, some authors specifically pointed out that their "struggling readers" were students who were not classified as having a disability). The findings in this dissertation provide further support for Bozack and Salvaggio's

(2013) call for investigations into how information about social motives for literacy can be used to support student learning. These authors suggested using what we now know about the importance of social motives for general literacy interventions; the findings of the current study suggest potential usefulness in extending such a suggestion to the design of interventions for students with LD in particular. By nature of their disabilities, students with LD need unique supports that often require interactions with adults. The terms on which the particular students in the current study were able to use (and, in many ways, seemed to be seeking) literacy activities as a means of positive connections with adults, in-school and out-of-school, have important potential implications for the development of successful relationships between students with LD, and the educators who support them.

Feeling In Control of Literacy Activities

Another area in which this study's findings were consistent with those about adolescents in general had to do with students demonstrating literacy motivation in situations in which they felt like they had agency or control. Just as this data indicated that students were motivated to engage in literacy activities of their own choosing (for example, Dorothy described the reading and writing she did of her own accord outside of school), Ruben and Moll (2013) found that adolescents (who had volunteered to join a writing group) indicated that autonomy was one of their primary motivations to participate.

Also similar to this dissertation study, prior studies have indicated that, during adolescence, students are more interested in reading material they chose themselves, and less interested in completing a reading task because their teachers have assigned it; many students have described the reading they do at school as imposed by a teacher, and not necessarily useful to address things important to them personally (Bozack & Salvaggio, 2013; Garrett & Moltzen,

2011; Hall, 2012b). However, work from Wolters and colleagues (2014) raised an added challenge for "struggling readers:" their feelings of wanting to be in control are sometimes complicated by doubts about whether or not they would be able to achieve success at a given reading task if they chose to engage in it. Findings about the adolescents with LD who participated in the current study are consistent with this (for example, it resonates with the doubt expressed by Joseph and Jordan).

Once again, however, the research described in this section did not address students' disability status. Researchers in LD have developed strategy instruction techniques that take self-efficacy beliefs into account; their important work has resulted in the development of cognitive strategy interventions that have been shown to improve the ability of students with LD to meet criteria set by teachers, schools and researchers. For example, building on findings from many fields, including the study of self-efficacy beliefs, Graham, Harris and colleagues have published numerous studies (e.g. Graham & Harris, 1989a, 1989b; Sawyer, Graham, & Harris, 1992) about the usefulness of cognitive strategy instruction, particularly in terms of self-regulation strategies (such as "criterion setting and self-monitoring", Graham & Harris, 1989a, p. 354). Such studies have established that when we teach students with LD to use sound strategies effectively, those students feel they have more control over their own ability to complete literacy tasks. However, the research community has not provided sufficient information about the motivational components involved in students with LD being invested in learning those strategies and participating in those literacy tasks in the first place.

This is not to suggest an educator can "teach" motivation; the "grit" (Duckworth, 2016) and/or "growth mindset" (Dweck, 2008) narratives that have gained popularity among some educators are not being advocated here. Instead, the current argument is that, as educators, we

should be aware of what it generally takes for people at the adolescent level of development to be motivated to engage in literacy, and we should incorporate that understanding into the way we present strategies and materials to students with LD. In other words, instead of a teacher believing that he or she can (or should) teach a student *how* to be motivated to do a literacy task or use a literacy strategy, the teacher should know about the motivational factors that are generally important to adolescents (for example, feeling in control), get to know how those factors play out for each student as an individual, and appeal to those motivations as reasons for the student to learn and use a literacy strategy. This is not a one-shot deal (as in, "Today is Motivation Day" or "Here is the lesson or worksheet with which I'm going to establish your level and type of reading/writing motivation") but, instead, a philosophy with which teachers should approach their interactions with their students on a regular basis. If teachers continually made efforts, both big and small, to understand and recognize students with LDs' *own* reasons for wanting to engage, it would make instruction in literacy strategy more meaningful, because it would help students see those strategies as genuinely useful and worth learning.

We are fortunate to be teaching at a time when the education community has already provided a plethora of information about how, when and why students engage in learning activities successfully. There is a great deal of guidance for teachers about how to create motivating learning environments for the general student population, ones in which students have choices in terms of what they read and how they present what they know (e.g. Daniels, 2010). There is also a great deal of guidance about how to teach strategies to students with LD so that those students can learn literacy skills (e.g. Faggella-Luby & Deshler, 2008; Faggella-Luby et al., 2015; Kennedy & Ihle, 2012), as well as monitor their own progress (e.g. Graham & Harris, 1989a, 1989b; Sawyer et al., 1992). It would be helpful for future research to more

directly combine these two components: that is, learning environments that are motivating in that they provide students with choice and autonomy, while still taking into account the very real and specific learning needs of students with LD; or, put another way, techniques for teaching literacy strategies to adolescents with LD in a way that recognizes their developmentally-appropriate need to feel personally interested and in-control as a key element towards success.

The Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework (CAST, 2011; Coyne et al., 2006) provides a philosophical foundation for this kind of approach, in its recognition of the need for teachers to provide students with multiple means of representation of key ideas, action/expression, and engagement. As it currently stands, the UDL framework does not provide specific guidance about the problem at hand (i.e. helping adolescents with LD find the motivation to learn, and use, the direct and cognitive-strategy instruction techniques most needed for their literacy development). However, the framework's basic tenets might be useful to educators hoping to help students develop meta-cognitive skills; once these skills are more readily in place, students will hopefully recognize the utility of learning which specific strategies work for them as individual learners, as they work towards goals that they, themselves, value.

Conducting effective research at this intersection will require that researchers in the fields of expectancy-value theory and LD reconsider their own work from the perspective of the other; the more they communicate, the more they will be able to learn from one another's knowledge base. Educators and researchers focused on adolescents with LD need to help these students feel a sense of ownership and investment in the literacy outcomes towards which they are working. Just like other adolescents, they are in the midst of seeking independence and control over who they are and what they want to do, an endeavor in which educators could be of tremendous support. Researchers should develop interventions for students with LD that simultaneously use

a direct instruction approach, *and* support students' views of themselves as people capable (and worthy) of being in control of their own learning (as, for example, Ms. Hathaway did for Danielle).

While addressing students' academic learning needs, teachers also need to "apprentice and guide students into their own understanding of the value and purpose" of reading and writing tasks (Moje, 2015, pp. 255–256). Teachers need to enable students with LD to see themselves as people who can learn literacy strategies that enable their development of knowledge and skills that the students, themselves, have decided is important to them. This, in turn, will enable students to feel control over their literacy decisions, in that they are choosing to participate so that they can work towards some of their own interests, not just goals or outcomes imposed by others.

Motivation Theory and LD

Understanding what motivates students with LD is important; recognizing the sources from which they develop perceptions of themselves as readers and writers is important, too. As exemplified in this dissertation study, expectancy-value theory is a useful tool towards both of these objectives, in that it recognizes the role of self-concept and self-schemata in students' development of literacy motivation (see Chapter 2). This section of the discussion chapter begins with an explanation of the applicability of different facets of expectancy-value theory to the student population of interest in this study—that is, findings from the current study will be used to discuss how such a theoretical approach could inform work done in the LD research community. Following this is a consideration of the knowledge that the LD research community has to offer to expectancy-value motivation theorists—that is, areas in which expectancy-value

theorists could further strengthen their theory using knowledge developed in studies of students with LD.

Expectancy-Value Theory: Implications for Learning Disabilities Research

An expectancy-value perspective provides unique opportunities for better understanding the literacy motivation of adolescents with LD. As discussed in Chapter 2 (see, in particular, Figure 1), expectancy-value theorists (Eccles, 2009; Eccles et al., 1983; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002) posit that:

- Students draw on their perceptions of a) activity stereotypes and task demands; b) the beliefs, expectations, attitudes and behaviors of socializers and the larger cultural milieu; and c) their strengths and weaknesses as readers and writers, as well as the conditions under which they read and write best.

- From these perceptions, students develop affective reactions and memories, self-concepts about their own literacy abilities, and self-schemata beliefs about how their literacy self-perceptions relate to larger beliefs about themselves.

- Such affective memories, self-concepts and self-schemata beliefs are the underpinning for students' motivation to learn: that is, the likelihood students associate with their being successful at a task (expectancy) and the degree to which, and reasons why, they think the task is worth doing (value).

The reason this theory matters for educators and researchers focused on adolescents with LD is that it offers a way not only to specifically investigate the contexts in which these students develop and hone motivation beliefs, but also to anticipate the implications of students' current motivation beliefs for future learning experiences.

For example, in the current study, students like Danielle, Devin and Jennifer drew on previous experiences and/or messages they had perceived from others to develop self-concepts as readers/writers who could become even better at literacy, and achieve literacy outcomes they found desirable, by using strategies others had taught them, and by engaging further with helpful peers and adults. Meanwhile, previous experiences and/or messages perceived from others led students like Jack, Joseph and Jordan to develop literacy self-concepts in which they felt that others' strategies and offers of support were not enough to make a continued and significant difference in their literacy success. Still other students (e.g. Dorothy, in the school setting, and Julian) had experiences, and perceived messages, that led them to develop literacy self-concepts in which they felt that interactions with others served to belittle them, or were nothing more than attempts to control them. For all of these students, motivation for further engagement in literacy was bound up in the self-concepts they had developed as readers and writers (and, ultimately, their self-schemata more generally).

Thus, while perceptions of previous experiences, task demands, and the expectations/beliefs of others are important for understanding the literacy motivations of all students, they could be especially key for adolescents with LD, because they are crucial to whether or not students feel connected and in-control, even under unique learning circumstances. This could mean the difference between effective use (and continued seeking) of literacy supports, and appearing unmotivated to engage with those who could provide the supports necessary for effective engagement in literacy tasks.

Learning Disabilities Research: Implications for Expectancy-Value Theory

Research demonstrates not only that students with LD require systematic and direct instruction for literacy skills, and that those needs continue into adolescence (Faggella-Luby et

al., 2015), but also that students with LD are capable of applying and successfully utilizing high-quality interventions to support their own literacy development, if given explicit instruction (Faggella-Luby & Deshler, 2008; Gillespie & Graham, 2014; Kennedy & Ihle, 2012). However, research also indicates that students with LD often develop negative concepts of their own abilities, and then fail to use available resources to support themselves (Gillespie & Graham, 2014, found this particularly in terms of writing). Hall (2016) presents important information about the conditions teachers can create to support students' development of positive reading identities, but she limits her work to students without diagnosed LD. What guidance might expectancy-value theory provide in terms of the experiences and beliefs students *with LD* must have in order to reap the benefits of receiving the supports they require (which may be different than those required by their peers without LD), while still maintaining the self-concept and self-schemata beliefs necessary for literacy motivation?

It would be beneficial if expectancy-value theorists could highlight when and how students develop beliefs about the kinds of literacy outcomes that are worthwhile and within reach *when the path to those outcomes requires alternative methods* (or an alternative pace, or additional effort) as compared to those implemented by peers. That is, given variations in adolescents' manners of learning, there are students with LD who require special education services, but are nevertheless able to become competent and interested readers and writers—what enables some of these students to remain motivated, while others are not?

In this way, expectancy-value theory could be an extremely helpful tool in debunking the deficit model of learning disability. By specifically considering the development of affective memories, self-concept and self-schemata among students with LD, who are capable but require unique learning environments, theorists in this area could expand expectancy-value's already far-

reaching implications and applicability even further. For instance, they might highlight examples of means that students and teachers used to preserve students' literacy motivation, despite the need for learning supports.

Practical Implications for Teachers

In an effort to demonstrate the direct relevance of this study to work in schools, materials were developed for use in professional development settings (see Figures 6, 7 and 8). These are designed as a practical means by which a professional developer could lead teachers in considering methods of creating learning environments, and developing teacher-student connections, that promote literacy motivation among adolescents with LD. More specifically, building from Figure 1 (Chapter 2), these materials are designed to help teachers target the sources of information from which students with LD develop perceptions of themselves as readers and writers: to take each of the "sources of information" in expectancy-value theory (colored boxes in Figure 1, Chapter 2) and propose ways that they could help teachers better understand students' day-to-day lived experiences and beliefs regarding literacy (corresponding colored boxes in Figures 7 and 8).

Figure 6 introduces the meanings of the key terms from expectancy-value theory. The middle row of colored boxes in Figure 7 is a series of questions students might be asking themselves about reading and writing, that teachers could use to better understand their students' self-perceptions. The middle-row blue box in Figure 7, "What does it mean to be 'good' at reading and writing?" is meant to help teachers think about the activity stereotypes and task demands that their students attach to reading and writing (Figure 1). The middle-row red box in Figure 7, "What do other people think of me as a reader/writer?" is meant to help teachers unpack the influence of socializers' beliefs, expectations, attitudes and behaviors on students'

perceptions of themselves as readers and writers (Figure 1). The middle-row purple box in Figure 7, "What do I think about myself as a reader/writer?" is meant to help teachers identify how students have interpreted their own literacy experiences, including the conditions under which they read and write best, and their perceived literacy strengths and weaknesses (Figure 1). The bottom row of Figure 7 is a series of boxes meant to support teachers in thinking critically about the corresponding questions in the middle row; Figure 8 has corresponding questions that do so in even greater detail. These questions were developed both from understandings of the expectancy-value theory literature, and from findings in the current study.

These materials are designed for use over a series of professional development sessions, so as not to overwhelm teachers with too much information at once. The first session might involve working only with Figures 6 and 7, discussing the relationship between students' perceptions of their interactions and experiences, and their motivation to engage in literacy activities. Subsequent sessions might each focus on one colored column from Figure 8. After watching a video (or reading a transcript) of a conversation with a student about his or her literacy experiences and beliefs, teachers would think about the questions from that day's column that they could or could not answer based on the information they had, and how they might go about addressing the unanswered questions if they were that child's teacher. Depending on the openness of the participating teachers, the professional developer might extend this activity, and have teachers do it again, this time thinking about particular students in their own classes, instead of the anonymous student whose interview they heard earlier.

Understanding the Literacy Motivation
of a Student with LD
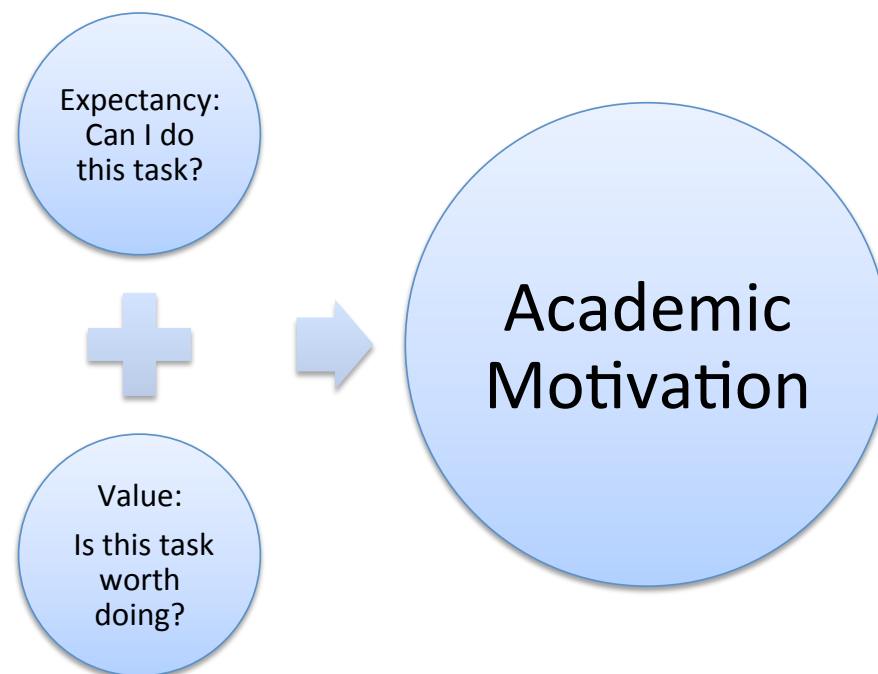
Figure 6. Professional development handout 1- key terms from expectancy-value theory.

Understanding the Literacy Motivation
of a Student with LD

Students *expect* and *value* literacy success

based on their perceptions in three key areas:

What does it mean to be "good" at reading/writing?	*What do other people think about me as a reader/writer?*	*What do I think about myself as a reader/writer?*
1: Students' beliefs about what it means to be a good reader/writer 2: Teacher beliefs about what it means to be a good reader/writer 3: The elements of being a "good reader/writer" that a particular task requires	4: The interactions in which students get messages about themselves as readers/writers 5: The content of the messages students get about themselves as readers/writers 6: How students respond when they need support	7: Students' beliefs about themselves as readers/writers 8: Teacher beliefs about students as readers/writers 9: Reconciling teacher and students' beliefs about students as readers/writers

Figure 7. Professional development handout 2- student sources of self-perception.

Questions Teachers Can Ask Themselves

What does it mean to be "good" at reading/writing?

1: My student's beliefs about reading/ writing
- What does my student think it means to be a "good reader/writer?"
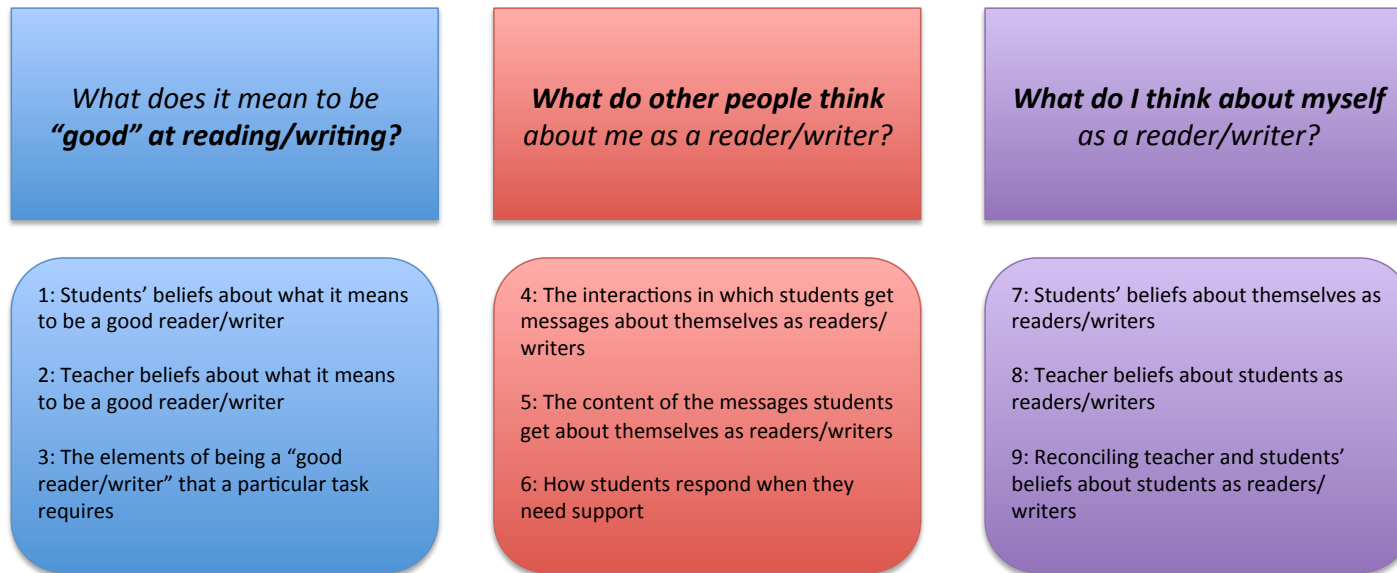- What kinds of reading/writing tasks does he/she value?
- Does he/she think there's a relationship between doing this task, and becoming a better reader/writer in the ways that interest him/her?

2: My beliefs about reading/writing
- What do I think it means to be a "good reader/writer?"
- What kinds of reading/writing tasks do I value?
- Are my beliefs the same as my student's? Why/why not?

3: The task at hand
- Which parts of the "good reader/ writer" definition does this task require of my student?
- Which parts of the "good reader/ writer" definition are unaddressed?
- What value do I (and does my student) place on the parts of the definition that are being highlighted here?

What do other people think about me as a reader/writer?

4: Interactions with others
- Where does my student get information about him/herself as a reader/writer?
- Whose opinions does he/she look to on this subject?

5: Messages from others
- What messages does this student get from others about him/herself as a reader/writer?
- How do I convey my beliefs about this student as a reader/writer to him/her?
- Which of these messages resonate with him/her and why?

6: When in need of support, my student
- Asks me for help
- Asks someone else for help (Who?)
- Tries to work through the problem on his/her own (How?)
- Looks like he/she is opting not to do the task (Why?)

What do I think about myself as a reader/writer?

7: This student's beliefs about him/ herself as a reader/writer
- What would this student say are his/her strengths as a reader/writer?
- What would this student say are his/her weaknesses as a reader/writer?
- Under what conditions does this student think he/she does best at reading/writing reading/writing? Are those conditions being met during this task?
- What experiences led the student to hold his/her beliefs?

8: My beliefs about this student as a reader/writer
- If I answered the questions in 7 about this student myself, how would our answers compare?
- Do the student's beliefs about him/ herself as a reader/writer impact my own?

9: Reconciling our beliefs
- How can my student and I agree on valuable literacy outcomes?
- How can my student and I agree on what needs to happen for him/her to have these outcomes?

Figure 8. Professional development handout 3- student sources of self-perception (extended)

Limitations and Topics for Further Study

It was a great privilege to be allowed into the classroom by these eleven students, their

teacher, and their school more generally. Inherent in doing such a study were certain limitations,

related to the small sample size and the specificity of this particular context; future studies that

used different techniques and a larger sample size might produce more generalizable results.

However, given the nature of students' learning and expression styles, there were some instances

in which even the level of detail used in this project did not fully capture the extent of students'

motivation beliefs (see Chapter 6, where findings for only 9 of 11 students provided enough

detail to address Research Question 3). Future studies would do well to consider the possibilities

of other methods of data collection, such as ethnography, that might afford researchers the

opportunity to see students in multiple contexts, to engage them in multiple conversations, and to

gather even more detailed information about their beliefs, so as to overcome any challenges

posed by receptive or expressive language barriers.

Another area worth mentioning is the potential impact of my own positionality. While my

life experiences provided me with a unique perspective on the literacy motivation of adolescents

with LD (see Chapter 3), they could have also presented limitations to my work. For example,

would interviews with, or observations of, the participants have yielded different results if I (the

researcher) were of the same racial and/or socioeconomic background as the students? If I was a

regular member of the school community, instead of someone who only appeared in the

classroom occasionally? If I were someone the participants' age, instead of an adult? Would my

analysis have been different if the "teacher" lens I brought to the study had come from teaching

experiences in public or charter schools, instead of teaching experiences in independent schools?

As acknowledged in Chapter 3, all researchers are inextricably bound by positionality as they

engage in their work (Cochran-Smith & Dudley-Marling, 2012). I am hopeful that future studies by researchers of many different positionalities will shed light on questions such as these, providing the field with even richer information about the literacy motivation of adolescents with LD.

Other challenges faced in conducting this research had to do with how terms were operationalized. The term "literacy," for example, was used to mean reading and writing in the current study so as to maintain focus on the particular research questions at hand. However, as mentioned in Chapter 2, the definition of "literacy" can also include speaking and listening as well (Sternberg et al., 2007). Beyond these four components, some argue that researchers should actually be exploring "multiliteracies" for a myriad of reasons, including the need to recognize cultural and linguistic diversity in the literacies developed and valued in different communities (The New London Group, 1996). Although exploring all these literacies (and elements of literacy) was beyond the scope of this study, follow-up studies could provide greater insight into the motivation of adolescents with LD with respect to a wider range of literacies and literacy components.

Also, given the extensiveness and complexity of theories of motivation, only one motivation lens in particular was used in this study—that of expectancy-value theory—in order to see what that approach offered in terms of developing a better understanding of the literacy motivation of students with LD. However, committing to that theory meant that it was not possible to fully incorporate how other theories of motivation deal with the relationship between motivation and connection to others, as well as the relationship between motivation and feelings of control. Using a different theoretical approach to understanding academic motivation among adolescents with LD would shed further light on the topic; for example, work done by

researchers and theorists using a self-determination theory approach (e.g. Daniels, 2010; Deci, Hodges, Pierson, & Tomassone, 1992; Ryan & Pintrich, 1997; Stroet, Opdenakker, & Minnaert, 2013) could provide another extremely helpful lens because of these researchers' emphasis on autonomy and its relationship to motivation.

Similarly, given the particular importance of connectedness to others for participants in the current study, a dive into the literature of the interaction between students' attitudes towards school/learning, their beliefs about themselves, and their relationships with others (e.g. Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Glenn & Ginsburg, 2016; Ladd, Herald-Brown, & Kochel, 2009; Wentzel, Battle, Russell, & Looney, 2010; Zimmer-Gembeck, Chipuer, Hanisch, Creed, & McGregor, 2006) is also warranted—one that focuses on the implications for adolescents with LD. The literature on teacher-student relationships, and their interaction with motivation and motivation-related concepts, is robust (e.g. Gelbach, Brinkworth, & Harris, 2012; Goodenow, 1993; Juvonen, 2007; Majorano, Brondino, Morelli, & Maes, 2017; Raufelder, Bukowski, & Mohr, 2013; Wentzel, 1998), and important for special education researchers and professionals to evaluate in terms of its usefulness for better understanding their own student populations of interest. Findings from the current study suggest that participants valued using literacy to connect with peers, but some also valued using literacy to connect with adults; since students with LD often require more (or different) support from their teachers than do peers without a disability, it would be helpful if teachers could capitalize on this type of motivation.

Conclusion

…youth read and write for social, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual purposes.
Their reading and writing practices foster communication, relationships, and self-
expression among peers and family members; support their economic and

psychological health; and allow them to construct subjectivities and enact

identities that offer them power in their everyday lives. (Moje et al., 2008, p. 149)

Moje and her colleagues argue for the importance of adolescents perceiving themselves as adept

readers and writers, people capable of (and motivated towards) using literacy to learn, to express

themselves, to engage with others, and to work towards the things they want. This dissertation

includes both a review of prior research, and a presentation of original research, suggesting that

this is just as true for students who have LD as it is for students who do not. Thus, literacy

educators who work with adolescents with LD are tasked not just with knowing the most up-to-

date techniques and theory for supporting students' reading and writing skills, but also with

understanding students' developmental needs given their age, and helping them to cultivate

perceptions of themselves as capable and invested readers and writers.

A hopeful finding in this study was participants' inclination to use literacy as a means of

building and strengthening relationships with peers, teachers, and/or family & community

members. Researchers, interventionists and classroom teachers would do well to capitalize on

students' desire to use literacy as a means of connection. If adolescents with LD require unique

supports or learning environments, *and* they are seeking connections to others (in many cases,

adults included), then educators should create situations where these students meaningfully

connect with people who provide them with the supports they need to feel like autonomous and

powerful readers and writers. We know a great deal about what those supports look like for this

student population, but perhaps having a better understanding of literacy motivation (specifically,

from an expectancy-value perspective) will enable us to deliver those supports even more

effectively.

Hopefully, through this line of research, the education community can learn not just from the teachers and researchers within its own ranks, but also from students themselves. Additionally, as Dorothy demonstrated in the current study, partnerships with important people outside of school (i.e. people with whom students have connected in alternative programs, like her Boys & Girls Club) might be useful in learning about how to foster literacy-rich relationships between adults, and students with LD who are currently feeling at odds with their school communities. The more all of this knowledge is incorporated into school-based curricula, interventions, and professional development opportunities for teachers and administrators, the more educators could enable adolescents with LD to feel that their literacy interactions with teachers are ones that offer opportunities to build connections, and feel empowered.

References

Anfara, V. A., Brown, Kathleen M., & Mangione, T. L. (2002). Qualitative analysis on stage:

Making the research process more public. *Educational Researcher, 31*(7), 28-38.

Anderman, L. H., & Anderman, E. M. (1999). Social predictors of changes in students'

achievement goal orientations. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *24*(1), 21–37.

https://doi.org/10.1006/ceps.1998.0978

Baird, G. L., Scott, W. D., Dearing, E., & Hamill, S. K. (2009). Cognitive self-regulation in

youth with and without learning disabilities: Academic self-efficacy, theories of

intelligence, learning vs. performance goal preferences, and effort attributions. *Journal of

Social and Clinical Psychology*, *28*(7), 881–908.

https://doi.org/10.1521/jscp.2009.28.7.881

Bergman, D. (2017). "It's easier when it's personal:" What made reading real for two tweens

with learning disabilities. *Language Arts*, *94*(3), 180–189.

Berkeley, S., Marshak, L., Mastropieri, M. A., & Scruggs, T. E. (2011). Improving student

comprehension of social studies text: A self-questioning strategy for inclusive middle

school classes. *Remedial and Special Education*, *32*(2), 105–113.

https://doi.org/10.1177/0741932510361261

Biancarosa, G., & Snow, C. E. (2006). *Reading next-- A vision for action and research in middle

and high school literacy: A report to Carnegie Corporation of New York* (2nd ed.).

Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education.

Boetsch, E. A., Green, P. A., & Pennington, B. F. (1996). Psychosocial correlates of dyslexia

across the life span. *Development and Psychopathology*, *8*(03), 539–562.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0954579400007264

Bozack, A. R., & Salvaggio, A. N. (2013). Relational effects of reading motivation and academic

    achievement among adolescent boys. *Reading Psychology*, *34*(6), 507–522.

    https://doi.org/10.1080/02702711.2012.660302

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in

    Psychology*, *3*(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Burden, R. (2008). Is dyslexia necessarily associated with negative feelings of self-worth? A

    review and implications for future research. *Dyslexia*, (14), 188–196.

    https://doi.org/10.1002/dys.371

Büttner, G., & Hasselhorn, M. (2011). Learning disabilities: Debates on definitions, causes,

    subtypes, and responses. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*,

    58(1), 75–87. https://doi.org/10.1080/1034912X.2011.548476

Casey, H. K. (2008). Engaging the disengaged: Using learning clubs to motivate struggling

    adolescent readers and writers. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *52*(4), 284–294.

    https://doi.org/10.1598/JAAL.52.4.2

CAST. (2011). *Universal design for learning guidelines version 2.0*. Wakefield, MA: Author.

CAST, Inc. (2015). CAST: Closing the literacy gap. Retrieved from http://www.cast.org/our-

    work/research-development/projects/literacy-udio-center-emerging-technology-middle-

    school-disabilities.html#.VTViLGaCBW2

Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory*. London ; Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage

    Publications.

Cochran-Smith, M., & Dudley-Marling, C. (2012). Diversity in teacher education and special

    education: The issues that divide. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *63*(4), 237–244.

    https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487112446512

Connor, D. J., Gallagher, D., & Ferri, B. A. (2011). Broadening our horizons: Toward a plurality of methodologies in learning disability research. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, *34*(2), 107–121. https://doi.org/10.1177/073194871103400201

Coyne, P., Ganley, P., Hall, T., Meo, G., Murray, E., & Gordon, D. (2006). Applying universal design for learning in the classroom. In D. H. Rose & A. Meyer, (Eds.), *A practical reader in universal design for learning* (pp. 1–13). Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Daniels, E. (2010). Creating motivating learning environments: What we can learn from researchers and students. *English Journal*, *100*(1), 25–29.

Daniel, S. S., Walsh, A. K., Goldston, D. B., Arnold, E. M., Reboussin, B. A., & Wood, F. B. (2006). Suicidality, school dropout, and reading problems among adolescents. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, *39*(6), 507–514. https://doi.org/10.1177/00222194060390060301

Davis, A., & Forbes, L. (2016). Doing the impossible: Motivating middle school students. *Voices from the Middle*, *23*(4), 14–18.

Deci, E. L., Hodges, R., Pierson, L., & Tomassone, J. (1992). Autonomy and competence as motivational factors in students with learning disabilities and emotional handicaps. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, *25*(7), 457–471.

Deshler, D. D. (2005). Adolescents with learning disabilities: Unique challenges and reasons for hope. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, *28*(2), 122–124. https://doi.org/10.2307/1593609

Deshler, D. D., & Hock, M. F. (2007). Adolescent literacy: Where we are, where we need to go. In M. Pressley (Ed.), *Shaping literacy achievement: research we have, research we need* (pp. 98–128). New York: Guilford Press.

Duckworth, A. (2016). *Grit: the power of passion and perseverance* (First Scribner hardcover edition). New York: Scribner.

Durik, A. M., Shechter, O. G., Noh, M., Rozek, C. S., & Harackiewicz, J. M. (2015). What if I can't? Success expectancies moderate the effects of utility value information on situational interest and performance. *Motivation and Emotion*, *39*(1), 104–118. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11031-014-9419-0

Dweck, C. S. (2008). *Mindset: the new psychology of success* (Ballantine Books trade pbk. ed). New York: Ballantine Books.

Eccles, J. (2009). Who am I and what am I going to do with my life? Personal and collective identities as motivators of action. *Educational Psychologist*, *44*(2), 78–89. https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520902832368

Eccles, J., Adler, T. F., Futterman, R., Goff, S. B., Kaczala, C. M., Meece, J. L., & Midgley, C. (1983). Expectancies, values, and academic behaviors. In J. T. Spence (Ed.), *Achievement and achievement motives: psychological and sociological approaches*. San Francisco: W.H. Freeman.

Eccles, J. S., & Roeser, R. W. (2011). Schools as developmental contexts during adolescence. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, *21*(1), 225–241. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1532-7795.2010.00725.x

Eccles, J. S., Roeser, R. W., Vida, M., Fredricks, J., & Wigfield, A. (2006). Motivational and achievement pathways through middle childhood. In L. Balter & C. Tamis-Lemonda (Eds.), *Child psychology: A handbook of contemporary issues* (2nd ed., pp. 325–255). New York: Psychology Press.

Eccles, J. S., & Wigfield, A. (2002). Motivational beliefs, values, and goals. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *53*(1), 109–132. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.53.100901.135153

Evmenova, A. S., Regan, K., Boykin, A., Good, K., Hughes, M., MacVittie, N., Sacco, D., Ahn, S. Y., & Chirinos, D. (2016). Emphasizing planning for essay writing with a computer-based graphic organizer. *Exceptional Children*, *82*(2), 170–191. https://doi.org/10.1177/0014402915591697

Faggella-Luby, M. N., & Deshler, D. D. (2008). Reading comprehension in adolescents with LD: What we know; What we need to learn. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice*, *23*(2), 70–78. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5826.2008.00265.x

Faggella-Luby, M. N., Drew, S. V., & Schumaker, J. B. (2015). Not such a simple story: Contradictory evidence from a review of story structure research for students at-risk. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice*, *30*(2), 61–75. https://doi.org/10.1111/ldrp.12057

Fang, Z., Schleppegrell, M., & Lukin, A. (2008). *Reading in secondary content areas: a language-based pedagogy*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Frankel, K. K. (2016). The intersection of reading and identity in high school literacy intervention classes. *Research in the Teaching of English*, *51*(1), 37–59.

Furrer, C., & Skinner, E. (2003). Sense of relatedness as a factor in children's academic engagement and performance. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *95*(1), 148–162. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.95.1.148

Gable, R. K. (1986). *Instrument development in the affective domain*. Hingham, Mass: Kluwer-Nijhoff; Distributors for the U.S. and Canada, Kluwer Academic.

Gambrell, L. B., & Gillis, V. R. (2007). Assessing children's motivation for reading and writing. *Classroom Literacy Assessment: Making Sense of What Students Know and Do*, 50–61.

Gans, A. M., Kenny, M. C., & Ghany, D. L. (2003). Comparing the self-concept of students with and without learning disabilities. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, *36*(3), 287–295. https://doi.org/10.1177/002221940303600307

Garrett, L., & Moltzen, R. (2011). Writing because I want to, not because I have to: Young gifted writers' perspectives on the factors that "matter" in developing expertise. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*, *10*(1), 165–180.

Gelbach, H., Brinkworth, M. E., & Harris, A. D. (2012). Changes in teacher-student relationships. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, *82*, 690–704.

Gillespie, A., & Graham, S. (2014). A Meta-Analysis of Writing Interventions for Students With Learning Disabilities. *Exceptional Children*, *80*(4), 454–473. https://doi.org/10.1177/0014402914527238

Glenn, W. J., & Ginsburg, R. (2016). Resisting readers' identity (re)construction across English and young adult literature course contexts. *Research in the Teaching of English*, *51*(1), 84–105.

Goodenow, C. (1993). Classroom belonging among early adolescent students: Relationship to motivation and Achievement. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, *13*(1), 21–43.

Graham, S., Collins, A. A., & Rigby-Wills, H. (2017). Writing characteristics of students with learning disabilities and typically achieving peers: A meta-analysis. *Exceptional Children*, *83*(2), 199–218. https://doi.org/10.1177/0014402916664070

Graham, S., & Hall, T. E. (2016). Writing and writing difficulties from primary grades to

    college: Introduction to the special issue. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, *39*(1), 3–4.

    https://doi.org/10.1177/0731948715592154

Graham, S., & Harris, K. R. (1989a). Components analysis of cognitive strategy instruction:

    Effects on learning disabled students' compositions and self-efficacy. *Journal of*

    Educational Psychology, *81*(3), 353–361. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.81.3.353

Graham, S., & Harris, K. R. (1989b). Improving learning disabled students' skills at composing

    essays: Self-instructional strategy training. *Exceptional Children*, *56*(3), 201–214.

Guthrie, J. T. (2004). Reading Engagement Index (REI). John T. Guthrie.

Guthrie, J. T., Hoa, A. L. W., Wigfield, A., Tonks, S. M., Humenick, N. M., & Littles, E. (2007).

    Reading motivation and reading comprehension growth in the later elementary years.

    Contemporary Educational Psychology, *32*(3), 282–313.

    https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2006.05.004

Guthrie, J. T., & Humenick, N. M. (2004). Motivating students to read: Evidence for classroom

    practices that increase reading motivation and achievement. In P. McCardle & V.

    Chhabra (Eds.), *The voice of evidence in reading research* (pp. 229–254). Baltimore,

    MD: Brookes.

Hall, L. A. (2007). Understanding the silence: struggling readers discuss decisions about reading

    expository text. *The Journal of Educational Research*, *100*(3), 132–141.

    https://doi.org/10.3200/JOER.100.3.132-141

Hall, L. A. (2012a). Moving out of silence: Helping struggling readers find their voices in text-

    based discussions. *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, *28*(4), 307–332.

    https://doi.org/10.1080/10573569.2012.702037

Hall, L. A. (2012b). Rewriting identities: Creating spaces for students and teachers to challenge the norms of what It means to be a reader in school. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *55*(5), 368–373. https://doi.org/10.1002/JAAL.00045

Hall, L. A. (2012c). The role of reading identities and reading abilities in students' discussions about texts and comprehension strategies. *Journal of Literacy Research*, *44*(3), 239–272. https://doi.org/10.1177/1086296X12445370

Hall, L. A. (2016a). "I don't really have anything good to say:" Examining how one teacher worked to shar middle school students' talk about texts. *Research in the Teaching of English*, *51*(1), 60–83.

Hall, L. A. (2016b). The role of identity in reading comprehension development. *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, *32*(1), 56–80. https://doi.org/10.1080/10573569.2013.861332

Hasselbring, T. S., & Goin, L. I. (2004). Literacy instruction for older struggling readers: What is the role of technology? *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, *20*(2), 123–144. https://doi.org/10.1080/10573560490262073

Haverinen, K., Savolainen, H., & Holopainen, L. (2014). Do reading disabilities explain the increase of depressive symptoms in late adolescence? *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, *19*(2), 174–189. https://doi.org/10.1080/02673843.2014.913255

Heath, S. B., & Street, B. V. (2008). *On ethnography: Approaches to language and literacy research*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Henk, W. A., & Melnick, S. A. (1995). The reader self-perception scale (RSPS): A new tool for measuring how children feel about themselves as readers. *The Reading Teacher*, *48*(6), 470–482.

Horst, J. S., Finney, S. J., & Barron, K. E. (2007). Moving beyond academic achievement goal measures: A study of social achievement goals. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *32*(4), 667–698. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2006.10.011

Hsieh, H.-F., & Shannon, S. E. (2005). Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*, *15*(9), 1277–1288. https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732305276687

Hulleman, C. S., Durik, A. M., Schweigert, S. B., & Harackiewicz, J. M. (2008). Task values, achievement goals, and interest: An integrative analysis. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *100*(2), 398–416. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.100.2.398

HyperRESEARCH. (2015). (Version 3.7.3). ResearchWare, Inc.

Ivey, G. (1999). Reflections of teaching struggling middle school readers. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *42*(5), 372–381.

Jagenow, D., Raufelder, D., & Eid, M. (2015). The development of socio-motivational dependency from early to middle adolescence. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *6*. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2015.00194

Jungert, T., & Andersson, U. (2013). Self-efficacy beliefs in mathematics, native language literacy and foreign language amongst boys and girls with and without mathematic difficulties. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, *57*(1), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1080/00313831.2011.621140

Juvonen, J. (2007). Reforming middle schools: Focus on continuity, social connectedness, and engagement. *Educational Psychologist*, *42*(4), 197–208. https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520701621046

Kennedy, M. J., & Ihle, F. M. (2012). The old man and the sea: Navigating the gulf between special educators and the content area classroom. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice*, *27*(1), 44–54. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5826.2011.00349.x

King-Sears, M. E., & Bowman-Kruhm, M. (2011). Specialized reading instruction for adolescents with learning disabilities: What special education co-teachers say. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice*, *26*(3), 172–184.

Klassen, R. M. (2007). Using predictions to learn about the self-efficacy of early adolescents with and without learning disabilities. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *32*(2), 173–187. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2006.10.001

Klassen, R. M. (2010). Confidence to manage learning: The self-efficacy for self-regulated learning of early adolescents with learning disabilities. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, *33*(1), 19–30. https://doi.org/10.1177/073194871003300102

Klauda, S. L., & Guthrie, J. T. (2014). Comparing relations of motivation, engagement, and achievement among struggling and advanced adolescent readers. *Reading and Writing*, *28*(2), 239–269. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-014-9523-2

Ko, T., & Tejero Hughes, M. (2015). Reading comprehension instruction for adolescents with learning disabilities: A reality check. *Education Sciences*, *5*(4), 413–439. https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci5040413

Krathwohl, D. R. (2002). A Revision of Bloom's taxonomy: An overview. *Theory Into Practice*, *41*(4), 212–218. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip4104_2

Lackaye, T. D., & Margalit, M. (2006). Comparisons of achievement, effort, and self-perceptions among students with learning disabilities and their peers from different achievement

groups. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, *39*(5), 432–446.

https://doi.org/10.1177/00222194060390050501

Lackaye, T., Margalit, M., Ziv, O., & Ziman, T. (2006). Comparisons of self-efficacy, mood, effort, and hope between students with learning disabilities and their non-LD-matched peers. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice*, *21*(2), 111–121. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5826.2006.00211.x

Ladd, G. W., Herald-Brown, S. L., & Kochel, K. P. (2009). Peers and Motivation. In K. R. Wentzel & A. Wigfield (Eds.), *Handbook of motivation at school* (pp. 323–348). New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.

Locke, L. F., Spirduso, W. W., & Silverman, S. J. (2014). *Proposals that work: A guide for planning dissertations and grant proposals* (Sixth edition). Los Angeles: SAGE.

MacGinitie, W., MacGinitie, R., Maria, K., & Dreyer, L. (2002). *Gates Mac-Ginitie Reading Tests* (4th ed.). Itsaca, IL: Riverside.

Majorano, M., Brondino, M., Morelli, M., & Maes, M. (2017). Quality of relationship with parents and emotional autonomy as predictors of self concept and loneliness in adolescents with learning disabilities: The moderating role of the relationship with teachers. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, *26*(3), 690–700. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-016-0591-6

Matthews, J. S., Banerjee, M., & Lauermann, F. (2014). Academic identity formation and motivation among ethnic minority adolescents: The role of the "self" between internal and external perceptions of identity. *Child Development*, *85*(6), 2355–2373. https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.12318

Maxwell, J. A. (2013). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach* (3rd ed). Thousand Oaks, Calif: SAGE Publications.

McGeown, S. P., Duncan, L. G., Griffiths, Y. M., & Stothard, S. E. (2015). Exploring the relationship between adolescent's reading skills, reading motivation and reading habits. *Reading and Writing*, *28*(4), 545–569. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-014-9537-9

McKenna, M. C., Conradi, K., Lawrence, C., Jang, B. G., & Meyer, J. P. (2012). Reading attitudes of middle school students: Results of a U.S. survey. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *47*(3), 283–306. https://doi.org/10.1002/rrq.021

Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: a methods sourcebook* (Third edition). Thousand Oaks, Califorinia: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Moje, E. B. (2015). Doing and teaching disciplinary literacy with adolescent learners: A social and cultural enterprise. *Harvard Educational Review*, *85*(2), 254–278. https://doi.org/10.17763/0017-8055.85.2.254

Moje, E. B., & Luke, A. (2009). Literacy and identity: Examining the metaphors in history and contemporary research. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *44*(4), 415–437. https://doi.org/10.1598/RRQ.44.4.7

Moje, E. B., Overby, M., Tysvaer, N., & Morris, K. (2008). The complex world of adolescent literacy: Myths, motivations, and mysteries. *Harvard Educational Review*, *78*(1), 107–154. https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.78.1.54468j6204x24157

National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities. (1991). *Learning Disabilities: Issues on Definition* (No. RP1991-00209). Rockville, MD: American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. Retrieved from http://www.asha.org/docs/html/RP1991-00209.html

National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities. (2008). *Adolescent Literacy and Older Students With Learning Disabilities* (No. TR2008-00304). Rockville, MD: American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. Retrieved from http://www.asha.org/docs/html/TR2008-00304.html

Neugebauer, S. R. (2013). A daily diary study of reading motivation inside and outside of school: A dynamic approach to motivation to read. *Learning and Individual Differences*, *24*, 152–159. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lindif.2012.10.011

Nolen, S. B. (2007). Young children's motivation to read and write: development in social contexts. *Cognition and Instruction*, *25*(2-3), 219–270. https://doi.org/10.1080/07370000701301174

Núñez, J. C., González-Pienda, J. A., González-Pumariega, S., Roces, C., Alvarez, L., González, P., … Rodríguez, S. (2005). Subgroups of attributional profiles in students with learning difficulties and their relation to self-concept and academic goals. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice*, *20*(2), 86–97. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5826.2005.00124.x

Pajares, F., & Valiante, G. (2008). Self-efficacy beliefs and motivation in writing development. In C. A. MacArthur, S. Graham, & J. Fitzgerald (Eds.), *Handbook of writing research* (paperback ed., 2. print, pp. 158–170). New York: Guilford Press.

Pintrich, P. R., & Schunk, D. H. (2002). *Motivation in education: Theory, research, and applications* (2nd ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.

Pitcher, S. M., Albright, L. K., DeLaney, C. J., Walker, N. T., Seunarinesingh, K., Mogge, S., … Dunston, P. J. (2007). Assessing adolescents' motivation to read. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *50*(5), 378–396. https://doi.org/10.1598/JAAL.50.5.5

Proctor, C. P., Daley, S., Louick, R., Leider, C. M., & Gardner, G. L. (2014). How motivation

    and engagement predict reading comprehension among native English-speaking and

    English-learning middle school students with disabilities in a remedial reading

    curriculum. *Learning and Individual Differences*, *36*, 76–83.

    https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lindif.2014.10.014

Raufelder, D., Bukowski, W. M., & Mohr, S. (2013). Thick description of the teacher-student

    relationship in the educational context of school: Results of an ethnographic field study.

    Journal of Education and Training Studies, *1*(2). https://doi.org/10.11114/jets.v1i2.108

Raufelder, D., Jagenow, D., Drury, K., & Hoferichter, F. (2013). Social relationships and

    motivation in secondary school: Four different motivation types. *Learning and Individual*

    Differences, *24*, 89–95. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lindif.2012.12.002

Richardson, E. M. (2016). Motivating struggling adolescent readers: An action research study.

    Kappa Delta Pi Record, *52*(3), 126–131.

    https://doi.org/10.1080/00228958.2016.1191900

Roberts, G., Torgesen, J. K., Boardman, A., & Scammacca, N. (2008). Evidence-based strategies

    for reading instruction of older students with learning disabilities. *Learning Disabilities*

    Research & Practice, *23*(2), 63–69. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5826.2008.00264.x

Ruben, B., & Moll, L. (2013). Putting the heart back into writing: Nurturing voice in middle

    school students: The authors share five areas of inquiry that emerged as the result of a

    voluntary weekly before-school writing program. *Middle School Journal*, *45*(2), 12–18.

Ryan, A. M., Kiefer, S. M., & Hopkins, N. B. (2004). Young adolescents' social motivation: An

    achievement goal perspective. *Advances in Motivation and Achievement*, *13*, 301–330.

Ryan, A. M., & Pintrich, P. R. (1997). "Should I ask for help?" The role of motivation and

attitudes in adolescents' help seeking in math class. *Journal of Educational Psychology*,

89(2), 329–341. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.89.2.329

Saldaña, J. (2013). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks,

CA: Sage Publications Inc.

Sawyer, R. J., Graham, S., & Harris, K. R. (1992). Direct teaching, strategy instruction, and

strategy instruction with explicit self-regulation: Effects on the composition skills and

self-efficacy of students with learning disabilities. *Journal of Educational Psychology*,

84(3), 340–352.

Scanlon, D. (2013). Specific learning disability and Its newest definition: Which is

comprehensive? and which is insufficient? *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, *46*(1), 26–33.

https://doi.org/10.1177/0022219412464342

Shanahan, T., & Shanahan, C. (2008). Teaching disciplinary literacy to adolescents: Rethinking

content-area literacy. *Harvard Educational Review*, *78*(1), 40–59.

https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.78.1.v62444321p602101

Sideridis, G. D. (2003). On the origins of helpless behavior of students with learning disabilities:

avoidance motivation? *International Journal of Educational Research*, *39*(4-5), 497–517.

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2004.06.011

Sideridis, G. D. (2006). Achievement goal orientations, "oughts," and self-regulation in students

with and without learning disabilities. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, *29*(1), 3–18.

https://doi.org/10.2307/30035528

Sideridis, G. D. (2009). Motivation and learning disabilities: Past, present, and future. In K. R. Wentzel & A. Wigfield (Eds.), *Handbook of motivation at school* (pp. 605–625). New York: Routledge.

Sideridis, G. D., Morgan, P. L., Botsas, G., Padeliadu, S., & Fuchs, D. (2006). Predicting LD on the basis of motivation, metacognition, and psychopathology: An ROC analysis. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, *39*(3), 215–229. https://doi.org/10.1177/00222194060390030301

Sideridis, G. D., & Scanlon, D. (2006). Motivational issues in learning disabilities: Editors' introduction to special issue. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, *29*(3), 131–135. https://doi.org/10.2307/30035503

Sideridis, G. D., & Tsorbatzoudis, C. (2003). Intra-group motivational analysis of students with learning disabilities: A goal orientation approach. *Learning Disabilities: A Contemporary Journal*, *1*(1), 8–19.

Sternberg, B. J., Kaplan, K. A., & Borck, J. E. (2007). Enhancing adolescent literacy achievement through integration of technology in the classroom. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *42*(3), 416–420.

Stothard, S. E., Hulme, C., Clarke, P., Barmby, P., & Snowling, M. (2010). York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension. Secondary Test. GL Assessment.

Stroet, K., Opdenakker, M.-C., & Minnaert, A. (2013). Effects of need supportive teaching on early adolescents' motivation and engagement: A review of the literature. *Educational Research Review*, *9*, 65–87. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2012.11.003

Tabassam, W., & Grainger, J. (2002). Self-concept, attributional style and self-efficacy beliefs of students with learning disabilities with and without attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, *25*(2), 141–151.

Teale, W. H., & Sulzby, E. (Eds.). (1986). *Emergent literacy: writing and reading*. Norwood, N.J: Ablex Pub. Corp.

Terras, M. M., Thompson, L. C., & Minnis, H. (2009). Dyslexia and psycho-social functioning: an exploratory study of the role of self-esteem and understanding. *Dyslexia*, *15*(4), 304–327. https://doi.org/10.1002/dys.386

The New London Group. (1996). A pedagogy of multiliteracies: Designing social futures. *Harvard Educational Review*, *66*(1), 60–93. https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.66.1.17370n67v22j160u

Troia, G. A., Harbaugh, A. G., Shankland, R. K., Wolbers, K. A., & Lawrence, A. M. (2013). Relationships between writing motivation, writing activity, and writing performance: effects of grade, sex, and ability. *Reading and Writing*, *26*(1), 17–44. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-012-9379-2

Troia, G. A., Shankland, R. K., & Wolbers, K. A. (2012). Motivation research in writing: Theoretical and empirical considerations. *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, *28*(1), 5–28. https://doi.org/10.1080/10573569.2012.632729

Unrau, N., & Schlackman, J. (2006). Motivation and its relationship with reading achievement in an urban middle school. *The Journal of Educational Research*, *100*(2), 81–101. https://doi.org/10.3200/JOER.100.2.81-101

Weiner, B. (1979). A theory of motivation for some classroom experiences. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *71*(1), 3–25. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.71.1.3

Wentzel, K. R. (1996). Social and academic motivation in middle school: Concurrent and long-term relations to academic effort. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, *16*(4), 390–406.

Wentzel, K. R. (1997). Student motivation in middle school: The role of perceived pedagogical caring. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *89*(3), 411–419. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.89.3.411

Wentzel, K. R. (1998). Social relationship and motivation in middle school: The role of parents, teachers, and peers. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *90*(2), 202–209.

Wentzel, K. R., Battle, A., Russell, S. L., & Looney, L. B. (2010). Social supports from teachers and peers as predictors of academic and social motivation. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *35*(3), 193–202. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2010.03.002

Werderich, D. E., & Armstrong, S. L. (2013). Examining the conceptualizations, perceptions, and practices of adolescent writers. *Literacy Research and Instruction*, *52*(4), 339–373. https://doi.org/10.1080/19388071.2013.812167

Wigfield, A., & Eccles, J. S. (2000). Expectancy–value theory of achievement motivation. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *25*(1), 68–81. https://doi.org/10.1006/ceps.1999.1015

Wigfield, A., Eccles, J. S., & Rodriguez, D. (1998). The development of children's motivation in school contexts. *Review of Research in Education*, *23*, 73–118.

Wigfield, A., Eccles, J. S., Schiefele, U., Roeser, R. W., & Davis-Kean, P. (2007). Development of Achievement Motivation. In W. Damon & R. M. Lerner (Eds.), *Handbook of Child Psychology* (pp. 93–1002). Hoboken, NJ, USA: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. Retrieved from http://doi.wiley.com/10.1002/9780470147658.chpsy0315

Wigfield, A., & Guthrie, J. T. (1997). Relations of children's motivation for reading to the amount and breadth or their reading. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *89*(3), 420–432. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.89.3.420

Wigfield, A., Guthrie, J. T., Perencevich, K. C., Taboada, A., Klauda, S. L., McRae, A., & Barbosa, P. (2008). Role of reading engagement in mediating effects of reading comprehension instruction on reading outcomes. *Psychology in the Schools*, *45*(5), 432–445. https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.20307

Wigfield, A., Tonks, S., & Klauda, S. L. (2009). Expectancy-Value Theory. In *Handbook of motivation at school* (pp. 55–75). New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.

Wigfield, A., & Tonks, S. M. (2002). Adolescents' expectancies for success and achievement task values during the middle and high school years. In F. Pajares & T. Urdan (Eds.), *Academic motivation of adolescents* (pp. 29–52). Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing.

Wolters, C. A., Denton, C. A., York, M. J., & Francis, D. J. (2014). Adolescents' motivation for reading: group differences and relation to standardized achievement. *Reading and Writing*, *27*(3), 503–533. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-013-9454-3

Woodcock, R. W., McGrew, K. S., & Mather, N. (2001). *Woodcock-Johnson III Tests of Achievement*. Itsaca, IL: Riverside.

Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: Design and methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc.

Zheng, C., Gaumer Erickson, A., Kingston, N. M., & Noonan, P. M. (2014). The relationship among self-determination, self-concept, and academic achievement for students with

learning disabilities. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, *47*(5), 462–474.

https://doi.org/10.1177/0022219412469688

Zimmer-Gembeck, M. J., Chipuer, H. M., Hanisch, M., Creed, P. A., & McGregor, L. (2006).

Relationships at school and stage-environment fit as resources for adolescent engagement

and achievement. *Journal of Adolescence*, *29*(6), 911–933.

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2006.04.008

Appendix A. Criteria for inclusion in literature review.

Literacy:

- Specifically investigates reading and/or writing activities

- The student reading and/or writing being studied is in print, or online

Learning Disability

- Students have been assessed as having difficulties with listening, speaking, reading, writing, or reasoning

- These difficulties are not based in intellectual disabilities, sensory impairment, emotional disturbance, cultural deprivation, and/or insufficient instruction

- Terms/phrases that typically indicate inclusion in this literature review:

  o IEP or school classification as having learning disability (LD) or specific learning disability (SLD)

  o Dyslexic or dyslexia

Motivation

- Investigates self-perceptions of ability or aptitude

- Investigates how these self-perceptions relate to student's decisions about which tasks, activities, or behavioral choices are worth participating in

- Terms/phrases that typically indicate inclusion in this literature review:

  o Citation of Eccles and/or Wigfield re: motivation theory (citation must be accurate)

  o Expectancy-value theory (explanation must be accurate)

  o Self-concept (as reader/writer)

Appendix B. Administrator instructions for literacy motivation battery.

These instructions were taken from the larger CET Assessment Administrator Instructions; instructions for items that were part of assessments other than the Literacy Motivation Battery, and thus not relevant to the current study, are not included in this Appendix.

Day 1- Assessments

[do not need to do this word for word, but here is the gist] "Hi. My name is _____. I'm from CAST. Your teacher has talked with you about your class participating in a project with us this year. Soon, you will have the chance to try out a new online reading program we have been developing. We are really excited for you to start with that. Before we get started, though, we need to learn a little about you. Over the course of two class periods, we will ask you to do a few different activities. These will include telling us about yourself, doing some reading and listening, and doing some writing. I will walk you through all of the instructions. Please let me know if you have any questions along the way. And, please know that you will enter your name at the beginning. But, your name will actually be removed as soon as we get back to the office, and you will be identified by an ID number. Please do your best and answer honestly."

WRITING SURVEY (20 items)

1. Introduce writing questions: *"Next, you are going to answer some questions about writing. Each question asks you to rate from 1 (very bad) to 6 (very good). You can choose any number from 1 to 6. There are no right or wrong answers. Please just tell us about yourself."*

2. Read aloud each question from 21 to 29. Please read the scale for the first two questions, then you can read just the question.

3. *"Now, we are going to answer some more questions with a little bit different set of answer choices." [read aloud the instructions on the screen]*

4. Read aloud each question from 30 to 40.

5. *Great! Everyone should now see the "You've finished!" message. If you don't see that message, please raise your hand.*

Day 2

READING SURVEY

1. *Next, we are going to answer some questions about your reading. [read instructions for reading survey]*

2. Read aloud each question (1-19)

3. Another set of instructions will appear. Read aloud.

4. Read each questions aloud (20-27)

Appendix C. Student interview protocol.

Hi [student's name], thanks for agreeing to talk with me today. I really appreciate your taking the time to share your opinions and experiences with reading. If you're at all uncomfortable with any question, you can decline to answer it, and for any reason, you can end our interview at any time.

First I'd like to learn a little bit about your reading over time.

1. What do you remember about seeing and using books when you were little?

   What memories do you have about books when you were a little kid?

   o Can you tell me about some memories you have of either reading, or being read to, as a young child?

   o Do you remember how you felt about books then?

   ▪ Did you look forward to it? Did you have lots of favorite books?

2. Tell me about when and how you learned to read.

   Do you remember the process of learning to read? How old were you? How did you learn to read?

   o Was learning to read something you enjoyed, or something you didn't enjoy? (Can you tell me more about why?)

   So if you had to finish the sentence, when I was learning to read, I felt…

   o Who else was involved in your process of learning to read? (Was anyone helpful in your learning to read? How were they helpful?)

   o Do you remember when you felt like you really knew how to read? How did that feel?

Can you tell me a little more about when you knew you could understand what you were reading? Do you remember how old you were, or what you were reading that finally made sense?

3. How much would you say you read now? (Scaffold if necessary: not much, a little, a lot)

   o How often do you read in school? (Do you ever read things that aren't books? What kinds of things do you read in school?)

   o How often do you read outside of school? (What kinds of things do you read outside of school? Or, skip if not at all)

So now that we've talked about your reading experiences, I'm going to shift gears and ask you about the way you feel about reading.

4. You know more about yourself than anyone else. Think about a word or a couple words that describe who you are as a reader. What word or words would you use?

   o Can you tell me about why you chose that word?

   o How do you know you are a _____ reader?

5. When someone describes a reading task as "challenging," what would you say that means?

   If I were to say to you, "[Student] have you heard about this book, it's really challenging", what would I be saying to you? Would you want to read it?

6. How do you feel when you're asked to read things that you find challenging in school?

   If you know there's a challenging reading assignment coming up in class, how do you feel?

   o What is it about materials you find challenging that makes you feel _____?

7. How do you feel about reading in general?

   o What do you like about reading?

   o What do you dislike about reading?

8. If you are interested in something, do you read more about it on your own?

   o What sorts of things do you read?

   What do you like reading?

   (Or, if does not read, How do you find out more about things you're interested in?)

9. In your head, think of someone who's a really good reader. What makes them a good reader?

10. Would you describe yourself as a good reader? Why or why not?

11. How important is it to you to see yourself as a good reader?

    o Can you tell me why it's _____ to be a good reader?

12. Is it important that others think you're a good reader?

    o Who?

    o Why?

13. How important is it to you that you get a good grade in your English class?

14. Is it important to you that your reading score on state tests gets better?

    o Why or why not?

Reading Scenario: Based on Nolen (2007)

Prompt: "The last thing we're going to do is, I'm going to show you pictures of different ways that people read, and I want you to choose the one that you prefer."
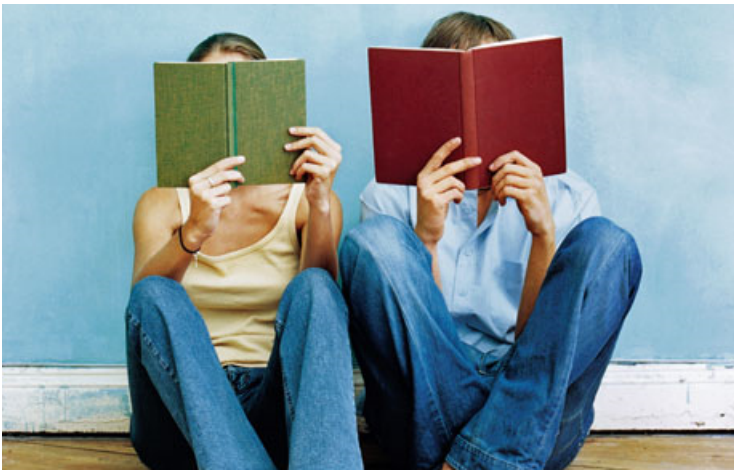
Is there anything else you'd like to share about reading that we didn't cover? (Scaffold: Like good or bad experiences)

Thanks [Student's name]!

Appendix D. Teacher interview protocol.

Hi [teacher's name], thanks for agreeing to talk with me today. I really appreciate your taking the time to share your opinions and experiences. If you're at all uncomfortable with any question, you can decline to answer it, and for any reason, you can end our interview at any time.

1. Let's talk about [Student's Name]. Is there anything else this survey brought to mind about [Student's Name] that you'd like to say more about?

2. Tell me a little bit about

   a. the instructional techniques that work for [Student's Name].

   b. The progress [Student's Name] is making.