One reason I might not participate is because… “I am ready for recess”:

Increasing Motivation to Participate in the Classroom

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Table of Contents

Description of Teaching Context ........................................3

Wonderings and Questions

   Main Question .............................................................4

   Sub Questions ...........................................................5

Data Collection

   Clear Description of Data Collection ...............................5

      Before .................................................................5

      During ..............................................................5

      After ...............................................................7

Data Analysis

   Steps Taken to Analyze the Data .................................7

Explanation of Findings

   Claim #1 ...............................................................12

   Claim #2 ...............................................................13

Reflection and Implications for Future Practice ......................13

Appendices.................................................................15
**Description of Teaching Context**

As a Penn State student in the PDS program, I have been working with a third grade class in the 2008-2009 school year at Park Forest Elementary School. My class is a self-contained, which consists of twenty-one students, twelve of which are females and nine are males. There are a large variety of students within my classroom. Out of these twenty-one third grade students there are two students with disabilities, one of which was diagnosed with autism and the other displays characteristics of Asperger’s Disorder. Both of these students are paired with a paraprofessional who assists them with their everyday school activities. Other variations among the third grade students include their academic abilities as well as the social characteristics of each individual.

Based on observations and conversations with my mentor, I have noticed there is a wide range of academic learning abilities among the students that contributes to the diversity of the classroom. Five of the students display high levels of academic achievement. Out of these five students, four attend the Math Enrichment program once a week. This program challenges their mathematic abilities. Out of the sixteen remaining students, eleven show an average level of academic success. Four other students in the class display low levels of academic achievement. Of these four students, three attend Title I services including math and reading. Another student in the class is given autistic support throughout the day to assist him with the topics we are discussing in class such as reading, writing, math, science, and social studies.
When comparing participation in both large and small groups, there tends to be substantial differences. During large group instruction, about \( \frac{1}{4} \) of the students are continuous participants in the classroom. These active participants tend to contribute their thoughts and ideas to the majority of subjects throughout the school day. Approximately \( \frac{1}{2} \) of the students in the class will participate occasionally, but not on a consistent basis. The other \( \frac{1}{4} \) of these students need to be asked or strongly encouraged to participate. In a small group setting, such as reading groups, about \( \frac{3}{4} \) of the students will volunteer and participate in discussions more frequently. Approximately \( \frac{1}{4} \) of the students are still hesitant, or choose not to contribute to the small group discussion. Most of these students will show that they are fully attentive but just deciding not to participate throughout the entire lesson. These small groups are typically made up of five or six students. Among these third grade students, there are several who display strong personalities and show dynamic characteristics. These students always have something to say to the group even if the topic is not relevant to the current discussion.

Overall, the class has a wide variety of students that vary in performance both educationally and socially. There are many aspects of participation within the classroom setting. Each student reacts differently to certain situations, and it is important to understand these unique differences. (See Appendix A for full inquiry brief)

**Wonderings and Questions**

**Main Wondering**

My inquiry focuses on participation occurring in a third grade classroom. I was curious to find out more about what motivates students to participate. Often I noticed the same students would participate over and over again. I wanted to come up with a way that all students would feel comfortable and want to participate.
In what ways will implementing techniques to increase motivation and participation affect the overall participation in a third grade classroom?

Sub-Wonderings

- What motivates students to participate?
- What do students believe is the definition of participation?
- What are students’ thoughts and feelings on participation in the classroom?
- What prevents students from participating?
- How can we, as teachers, give students who do not feel comfortable raising their hand and discussing ideas with the whole class, another chance to participate?

Data Collection

Clear Description of Data Collection

During my inquiry I collected many forms of data to fully explore and understand many aspects of participation in my classroom. Data collection took place before, during, and after the implementation of my strategies.

BEFORE

Prior to any execution I began taking both observation and anecdotal notes about the participation that was already occurring in my classroom. This became my baseline data, which helped me to better understand the participation that was taking place before any strategies were implemented.

Also, I conducted a survey on participation with all the students in my classroom to help me gain a better understanding of their thoughts and ideas behind participation. The survey questions focused on the definition students associated with participation, the subjects they feel most comfortable participating in, as well as how often they feel they are participating during an average school day. Students were asked to further describe their favorite and least favorite
subject in which they participate. My hope in conducting this survey was to acquire a solid understanding of how students are feeling about the participation occurring in our classroom. I was curious to find out anything that may increase or even decrease their participation. (See Appendix B-D for Participation Survey, a student example, as well as results from the survey)

DURING

The majority of my data was collected throughout the process of my inquiry. I decided to interview four students to help me to further understand how students are feeling about participation. The four students that I chose had a response on their survey, which caught my attention and led me to want to find out more. One student stated in their survey, “One reason I might not participate is because…I am ready for recess.” This student is academically successful and always seems to give their full attention to the speaker and the lesson. This response caught me off guard because I felt as if this student was always engaged, but I found out recess must be quite a distraction. Another student explained that they are often afraid to participate because they are afraid to get the wrong answer. This response surprised me because this student always seemed confident in everything they shared with the class. I prompted to find out more about the answers these students recorded on their survey. These four students helped to further explain their thoughts about participation in our classroom as well as ideas to increase participation in the room. (See Appendix E for Interview 1 Questions)

The surveys and interviews assisted me in deciding upon an implementation I wanted to put into practice. During the time of my inquiry, my students were working on a reading strategy called, “Say Something.” This strategy encouraged students to “say something” about
the book they were reading. Students could choose to ask a question, say a prediction and/or connection with the story. The students really seemed to enjoy this strategy during reading time, and I decided this would be a good strategy to use to increase participation in the room.

I created a jar called the “Say Something Jar.” This jar could be used to ask a question, make a prediction, and/or make a connection to a topic we were discussing in class. Students were given specific times throughout the day that they could add to the jar. This jar could be used if they did not get a chance to share their idea or thinking during the lesson or even if they were not feeling comfortable in sharing their idea with the whole class. (See Appendix H-J for “Say Something Jar”)

During the process of my inquiry, I also continued to take observational notes as well as anecdotal notes about the participation that was taking place in the classroom. In order to keep track of my notes in an orderly fashion, I created a matrix to help me keep track of the number of students participating during an instructional period. I would mark down the teacher instructing, the subject, the date as well as the length of time I was observing. I felt it was important to observe different subjects and different time periods throughout the school day. While taking notes, I would watch the number of students volunteering to participate in the discussion. I also would notice the students who were distracted and were not giving the speaker their full attention. (See Appendix F-G for Observational notes and data collected from notes)

One final implementation I tried during my inquiry was the “think-pair-share” strategy. Some students previously explained in the survey and the interviews that they did not always feel comfortable with participating because they might have the wrong answer. Throughout my lessons during inquiry I would ask students a question to get them thinking, take note of the students participating, ask them to share with a partner, and finally I would ask the same question
again to the class, to record the new number of students who were volunteering. Next, I compared the results when the students were asked to participate individually to the results after they had a chance to discuss with a partner. *(See Appendix K for “Think-Pair-Share” results)*

**AFTER**

Once all my data was collected, I was excited to find out if students had seen an increase in participation in our classroom. Students had contributed to the “Say Something Jar” and seemed to respond well to the “think-pair-share” strategy. Once again I conducted the same participation survey with all of the students in the classroom to notice if any of the responses from the students had changed over the period of my inquiry. *(See Appendix D and L for results from Survey 2 and a Student example of the Participation Survey 2)*

I also interviewed the same four students that I had previously interviewed at the beginning of my inquiry. I prompted these students with more in-depth questions compared to the Participation Survey 1 to help me to gain a better understanding of their thinking. This helped me to understand the difference and similarities that the students were noticing in the participation of the class. *(See Appendix M for Interview 2 Questions)*

**Data Analysis**

**Steps Taken to Analyze the Data**

When considering data to collect for my inquiry, I decided upon data in which I felt would assist me to better understand students’ ideas and thoughts about participation as well as measure the amount of participation occurring in the room throughout my inquiry.

I began by taking both anecdotal as well as observational notes, which served as my baseline data. To analyze this data to gain an understanding about the participation that was
taking place before any strategies were implemented; I looked for common patterns among this data.

I also asked the students in my classroom to complete the “Participation Survey.” This survey was designed to give me a general idea about what the students thought of participation as well as how they felt about the participation going on in our classroom. This survey served as baseline data to assist me in deciding upon the future data I wanted to collect. I reviewed the surveys and looked for common patterns I was noticing throughout the survey. The information gathered in this survey assisted me in answering two of my sub-wonderings: What motivates students to participate? And what do students believe is the definition of participation?

The questions in this survey asked students to explain their thoughts on participation. After reviewing these surveys, I was able to determine the most common definition of participation, in which 86% of my students believe, is “raising my hand with an idea about what we are discussing.” The survey also aided me in understanding the motivation behind why students chose to participate. Forty-six percent of students stated that when they feel comfortable in the subject and the material, they tend to participate more often. Forty-seven percent of students explained that one reason they may not participate is because they are unsure of the answer. At the end of the survey I asked students how often they feel they participate and 46% of students believed they participated a lot. Twenty-three percent said they participated sometimes. *(See Appendix D1-D6 for survey results)*

The information I gained from this survey was helpful, but I still felt I needed to get a better understanding of students’ thoughts and feelings about participation by asking them one on one.
Next, I used these participation surveys to help me determine which students I wanted to further discuss participation. I came up with a set of questions to prompt these students to think deeper and give me more of a sense of what they were thinking. During this survey, I was looking for any patterns within the answers of the students. I was also looking for any ideas the students had to increase participation in our classroom. These four interviews helped me to answer the following sub-wondering: What are students’ thoughts and feelings on participation in the classroom and what prevents students from participating?

Two of the four students I interviewed explained that participation is important in the classroom because it not only helps you learn but also helps the teacher understand what you are learning. All four students agreed that participation in our class could increase. These students explained that many times students in the class are distracted and not giving the teacher or speaker their full attention. These students may be talking with a friend sitting close by or even playing with something of their own or something on the floor. Two of the students stated that sometimes students might not participate because they do not feel comfortable with the topic or idea. Students also gave suggestions that might help to increase participation. One suggestion was that we could assign seats when the class is receiving instruction on the carpet to prevent their classmates from talking during a lesson.

Another suggestion was that we should ask all students in the class participate at least once a week. These interviews helped me to gain a deeper understanding about participating taking place in our classroom as well as ways to increase it. Both the survey and the interviews helped me to determine the data I needed to collect next.

Throughout my inquiry I continued taking observational as well as anecdotal notes. When analyzing this data I took into consideration the amount of students in the class that day,
the number of questions that were asked in the time I was observing, as well as the number of students that raised their hand during the same time period. I used the collected notes, the surveys, and interviews to help me decide on an appropriate implementation to try in my classroom. I wanted to try something that would not only give students a chance to participate, but also give them something new and interesting to try. This is where I came up with the idea of the “Say Something Jar.” Over about a two-week span there were 17 contributions to the jar. Some of the “Say Somethings” had names on them and others were anonymous. Students were making connections to material that was discussed in class, they were asking relevant questions, and making predictions about the book we were reading in our reading groups.

Another implementation I chose to try was the “think-pair-share” strategy with my students. I attempted this strategy throughout four of my lessons. I noticed that participation in the class would always increase more than double the amount of volunteers from the first time I asked the question. These two implementations assisted me in answering my sub-wondering: How can we, as teachers, give students who do not feel comfortable raising their hand and discussing ideas with the whole class, another chance to participate?

At the end of my inquiry, I again conducted the same survey as I had previously given students and interview the same four students. I compared my results from the first survey to the last survey. I realized that the definition students had chosen for the definition of participation had broadened. All students surveyed believe that participation is sharing ideas that are related to the topic we are talking about in class. Eighty-seven percent of students believed that participation was raising their hand with an idea about what we are discussing. Students also stated that they are motivated to participate when they enjoy or feel comfortable with the material. Only 19% of students stated they might not participate because they are unsure of the
answer. Forty-seven percent of students thought they participated a lot and another 47% believed they participated sometimes.

When conducting the interviews students believe that participation in the classroom increased slightly. They felt that the “Say Something Jar” as well as implementing the “think-pair-share” strategy aided this increase. The second set of both surveys and interviews conducted assisted me in understanding any changes that were made with the participation going on within our classroom.

**Explanation of Findings**

After the analysis of my data I was able to understand the general participation that was taking place in my classroom and the reasons behind it. This data aided me in concluding upon two strong claims regarding participation and the increase of participation in my classroom.

Claim #1: **When students are given a variety of ways to participate, participation will increase.**

My main wondering during this inquiry was about increasing motivation for students to participate in the classroom. I wanted to see if implementing different strategies in my third grade classroom would increase the levels of participation taking place.

Through much of my data collection I learned that in order for participation to increase, students must feel comfortable in the material and content being asked. All students are extremely different in many ways and some do not like to be put at the center of attention to share their answer or ideas. Students must be given alternative ways to participate. Giving students an alternative way to participate after the lesson will increase participation because students will not be forced to share their answer and will understand they can do this at their own leisure in a way that best suits them.
After I implemented the “think-pair-share” strategy the amount of participation would always increase more than double. When I interviewed students about their thoughts behind this strategy, one student shared that she felt more comfortable sharing when she was able to double check her answer with another student. She stated that sometimes she is hesitant to participate because she does not want to say the wrong answer and become embarrassed. (See Appendix K for “think-pair-share” results)

Giving students an opportunity to share at their own time also increased participation taking place in the room. The “Say Something Jar” gave students the opportunity to share when they felt comfortable as well as what they felt comfortable sharing. One student in the second interview shared, “I think the “Say Something Jar” is a good idea because it is a good chance for students who do not usually speak up a chance to say something.” At one point during my inquiry I was teaching a Social Studies lesson and one student shared that she wanted to make a connection and was going to add it to the say something jar. After she added her connection she came up to me and said, “I really like this jar, it’s a lot of fun!”

The data I collected from both strategies I implemented, helped me to determine that the participation in a classroom had increased by implementing strategies that give students a variety of ways to participate. On the second Participation Survey I noticed an increase in how often students felt they were participating daily compared to the first survey that was administered. (See Appendix D6 for survey results)

Claim #2: When students feel more comfortable in a certain subject, they tend to participate more often.
As I was reviewing my data I noticed a pattern between the subject that students’ feel the most comfortable participating in and the percent of student participating in this certain subject. In the first survey I completed with my students 47% of students stated that Math was the subject they felt most comfortable participating in and 38% of students recorded that Math was their favorite class to participate in. As I was taking observational notes I noticed that the percent of students participating in Math was always higher than any other subject. The last survey I completed also displayed similar results. Forty-six percent of students said Math was the subject they felt most comfortable participating in, and 40% wrote that Math was their favorite subject in which to participate. (See Appendix D2-D3 for survey results and F for observation results)

Overall, an average of 31% of students participate in Math daily compared to Social Studies that has an average participation of 20%, and Writing which has an average of 14% of students participating daily. These were the top three classes that I found students to participate in during the day. (See Appendix F for observation results)

**Reflections and Implications for Future Practice**

Through conducting this inquiry, I have gained a better understanding about participation that takes place in my classroom. This new gained knowledge helped me to discover ways to increase participation opportunities for all my students in the classroom. Students were able to broaden their ideas about participation and the many ways they can participate everyday in the classroom.

My inquiry has shown me that participation in the classroom always has room for improvement. Students must feel comfortable not only in the subject but also the information being provided for students. It is important as a teacher to understand the subjects that your
students feel most comfortable with and to work with them to gain confidence in the areas they feel weaker.

This inquiry will not end with the data and claims I have collected. Participation is always something to look into in each and every classroom. All students are unique and have many ideas and different approaches in which they like to share them, and as a teacher it is important to find the methods that work best for each individual class. In my future classroom I plan on giving my students many opportunities to participate. Students should be able to take part in a lesson as many ways as possible. As a teacher time sometimes works against us and we are not always able to give students a chance to share an idea that may be an important point in the discussion. This is why it is important to give students many ways to participate. Giving students other opportunities to participate will not only increase the participation going on in the classroom, but also help us, as teachers, to understand some of those great ideas that our students did not get a chance to say.

Appendix

A. Inquiry Brief

I. Context
As a Penn State student in the PDS program, I have been working with a third grade class in the 2008-2009 school year at Park Forest Elementary School. My class is a self-contained class, which consists of twenty-one students, twelve of which are females and nine are males. There are a large variety of students within my classroom. Out of these twenty-one third grade students there are two students with disabilities, one of which was diagnosed with autism and the other displays characteristics of Asperger’s Disorder. Both of these students are paired with a paraprofessional who assists them with their everyday school activities. While the majority of the students in the classroom are Caucasian, there are two students that are Asian-Pacific/American, and another is multiracial. Other variations among the third grade students include their academic abilities as well as the social characteristics of each individual.

Among the students there is a wide range of academic learning abilities that contributes to the diversity of the classroom. Five of the students display high levels of academic achievement. Out of these five students, four attend the Math Enrichment program once a week. This program challenges their mathematic abilities. Out of the sixteen remaining students, eleven show an average level of academic success. Four other students in the class display low levels of academic achievement. Of these four students, three attend Title I subjects, including math and reading. Another student in the class is given autistic support throughout the day to assist him with the topics we are discussing in class.

When comparing participation in both large and small groups there tends to be substantial differences. During large group instruction, about ¼ of the students are continuous participants in the classroom. These active participants tend to contribute their thoughts and ideas to the majority of subjects throughout the school day. Approximately ½ of the students in the class will participate occasionally, but not on a consistent basis. The other ¼ of these students need to be
asked or strongly encouraged to participate. In a small group setting, such as reading groups, about \(\frac{3}{4}\) of the students will volunteer and participate in discussion more frequently. Approximately \(\frac{1}{4}\) of the students are still hesitant to contribute to the small group discussion. These small groups are typically made up of five or six students.

Among these third grade students there are several who display strong personalities and show dynamic characteristics. These students always have something to say to the group even if the topic is not relevant to the current discussion.

Overall, the class has a wide variety of students that vary in performance both educationally and socially. There are many aspects of participation within the classroom setting. Each student reacts differently to certain situations and it is important to understand these unique differences.

II. Rationale

Classroom teachers constantly struggle when it comes to increasing participation among students. In my classroom I often observed the same students continuously participating throughout the day. Also, I have observed that on a less consistent basis other students will express their ideas, but do not seem as confident in their responses. It is important to create a classroom environment where all students can feel comfortable when participating. As a teacher, I believe that it is important for students to participate in a classroom setting. It shows that students are paying attention to the material being presented and when participation occurs, it prompts other questions and discussion for the entire class. The reason I chose to focus on class participation is because during my experience in the classroom, I was curious as to why the same students constantly participated and many other students were hesitant to participate at all.
Another aspect of student participation that I have noted while observing the class is that it is important to increase motivation among students to increase overall participation. With increased motivation the students may become more engaged in the content being discussed in the classroom environment. If students are more interested in the topics being taught, they will feel more comfortable with the information and will be more encouraged to participate. Although there may be certain district curriculum that must be followed, there are many other ways to engage students in that material.

III. Wondering/Sub Wonderings

Main Wondering: **In what ways will implementing techniques to increase motivation and participation affect the overall participation in a third grade classroom?**

- What motivates students to participate? – Student Interview 1 and 2
- What do students believe is the definition of participation? – Student Survey (Participation Survey 1, Participation Survey 2), Student Interview 1 and 2
- What are student’s thoughts and feelings on participation in the classroom? – Student Survey (Participation Survey 1, Participation Survey 2), Student Interview 1 and 2
- What prevents students from participating? – Student Survey (Participation Survey 1, Participation Survey 2), Student Interview 1 and 2
- What role can extrinsic or intrinsic motivational factors play in increasing student participation? – Class Meeting
- How can we, as teachers, measure all aspects of participation? – Daily Participation Chart
- How can we make our classroom a place where students feel comfortable when participating? – Student Interview 1 and 2, Class Meeting
Motivation to Participate 19

-How do we, as teachers, convey to students that it is okay to participate and get the wrong answer as long as their question or comment is focused on the topic being taught? – Class Meeting

IV. Data Collection

1. What do students believe is the definition of participation?
   -How do students feel about participating?
   -What prevents students from participating?

To answer these three questions I will conduct a student participation survey as explained below.

In order to understand the thoughts and ideas my students have about participation, I plan on beginning my data collection by asking students to fill out a participation survey called simply “Participation Survey.” In this survey I will ask students their thoughts and feelings about participation. I will also ask how often the students feel they participate. I will provide them with five choices. The choices range from students always participating in class to students never participating in the classroom. I will also ask what participation means to them. I will give them ten choices and ask the students to circle each one the student feels applies to participation. Some of the choices will include: raising my hand with an idea about what we are discussing, being an active listener, following a teacher’s direction, completing an assigned activity, sharing ideas that are related to the topic we are talking about in class, asking a topic related question, thinking in my head about the topic we are discussing, looking at the teacher
Motivation to Participate 20

when they are speaking/teaching, working well with others. I want to understand the thoughts and ideas my students have about the concepts of participation. Also, included in the survey will be a question about whether there is a certain subject that he or she may feel more comfortable participating in. I am also looking to see if the thoughts I have about participation are the same as the students in my class. I will tell the students that if they have any other thoughts or ideas about participation they may write these on the back of their paper.

2. -How do we make our classroom a place where students feel safe when participating?
   -What do students believe is the definition of participation?
   -How do students feel about participating?
   -What prevents students from participating?
   -What motivates students to participate?

To answer these four questions I will conduct student interviews as explained below.

I also plan on interviewing certain students in my class regarding their thoughts on participation. I will choose these students depending on how they have answered the survey questions. My plan is to choose a student who I know participates often and describes this in their survey answers. I will also interview two students who do not participate on a regular basis but still share their thoughts and opinions with the class. When selecting these students to interview I will chose one who recognizes their limited participation and states this on their survey and another who is less aware of their participation habits. Another interview I plan on conducting will be with a student who rarely participates. When going over the students survey
answers, I intend on interviewing students that write down responses that are unexpected.

The interview will answer many of the previous questions from the survey, but will go much more in depth with the individual students. When I interview the students, I will ask them a variety of questions including, how they feel about participation, as well as what may prevent the student from participating. I would also like to ask what does and does not motivate these students to participate in the classroom. If students are hesitant to talk I will prepare several prompts to encourage the students to expand on their responses.

3. What do students believe is the definition of participation?
-What role can extrinsic or intrinsic motivational factors play in increasing student participation?
-How do we make our classroom a place where students feel safe when participating?
-How do we, as teachers, convey to students that it is okay to participate and get the wrong answer as long as their question or comment is focused on the topic being taught?

To answer these four questions I will hold class meetings to discuss participation in the classroom.

Following my student interviews, I will have various class meetings to discuss with the students what progress they feel they have made regarding participation. We will talk about whether the students feel the strategies we have been implementing have been effective. In our first class meeting, we will discuss our thoughts and ideas about participation, our definition for participation (is it necessary to always have the correct answer when participating), and
Motivation to Participate

participation we are seeing in the everyday classroom setting. We will also talk about ways to increase participation in our classroom, both with extrinsic and intrinsic motivational factors. I will ask the students what ideas they have about ways that we can keep track of participation by the students. Students will be asked in what ways we can make all of our classmates feel more comfortable about sharing their ideas.

After the class meeting, I plan on implementing at least one of the motivational strategies that was discussed. I will hold class meetings throughout my inquiry to understand how their ideas about participation are changing. I will also allow students to ask any questions they have about participation in the classroom.

I will be taking observational notes throughout my entire inquiry project to monitor my students’ participation. I will have my mentor, my PDA as well as myself keep track of the students participating in the classroom. I will also monitor the amount of student participation in each subject. I will be looking to see if there are certain subjects that students tend to participate in more often. I will also take observational notes to see whether students are participating more often when my mentor is teaching or when I am teaching or if participation is approximately the same.

4. How can we measure all aspects of participation?

I will also ask the students to keep track of their participation as well. I am interested to see how often they feel they are participating. One way that this could be done would be having a daily participation chart in the classroom. Each student will have an individual chart on their desk to record each time they feel they participated in a positive way. At the end of each week I will collect their charts and transfer them to a classroom participation chart. I will compare the amount the students feel they are participating with the amount of participation information I
have collected.

I will finish my data collection by giving students the “Participation Survey” once again. I will observe how the students’ views of participation have changed and also how their participation varies throughout my project. I also plan to interview the same students at the end of my inquiry project to see if their thoughts about participation have changed.

V. Timeline

2/16-2/20 – Begin observational notes, begin tallying amount of student participation, write rough draft of brief

2/23-2/27- Conduct “Participation Survey” (first survey), continue tallying amount of student participation, observations, write final draft of brief

3/2-3/6- Interview students about their thoughts on participation, continue tallying amount of student participation, continue observations

3/9-3/13- Spring Break- Analyze student interviews and compare to observations I am making in class, look at students survey (Participation Survey 1) and compare them to what I am observing in the classroom, brainstorm both extrinsic motivation ideas to use in the classroom and also ways to increase intrinsic motivation, plan class meeting

3/16-3/20-conduct class meeting, implement strategy/strategies from class discussion (ways to increase participation in the classroom), start student participation charts, continue tallying amount of student participation, and continue observations
3/23-3/27-Continue motivational strategy/strategies, continue student participation chart, continue tallying amount of student participation, continue observations, have another short class meeting

3/30-4/3-Give students “Participation Survey” (second time), analyze data on survey compared to first survey, continue motivational strategy/strategies, continue observations, continue tallying amount of student participation, have another short class meeting

4/6-4/10-Complete rough draft for inquiry, interview same students as before to understand any new thoughts they may have about participation, continue tallying amount of student participation, continue observations, have another short class meeting, continue motivational strategy/strategies

4/13-4/17-Complete necessary revisions on Inquiry and be prepared to submit final copy
4/20-4/24-Prepare 20-minute presentation for inquiry conference
4/27-5/2- Make any necessary revisions and be prepared to submit paper

Annotated Bibliography

This book discusses factors critical for motivational achievement. The author uses personal experience, research, and theories to help teachers understand motivation and provide strategies to aid students in personal motivation. This book is helpful for teachers because it helps to provide understanding regarding motivational factors in a classroom setting but also helps teachers to assist students in developing motivational tools that will be intrinsically enforced. I feel that this resource will help me in my inquiry by providing me with possible strategies on increasing self-motivation in my own classroom.


Brophy uses a wide range of examples that have been compiled regarding motivating students. The author does not use personal experience; rather, Brophy uses the most relevant literature that discusses the different types of motivational techniques and how they can be used in the classroom. This is an important resource for teachers because it does not simply give the opinion of one expert. It does, however, show the experiences and techniques that have been used by a variety of teachers. This gives a wider range of experiences and different ways in which different methods of motivation have been used. This will be a helpful resource when completing my inquiry because Brophy pulls his examples from a wide range of teachers with a large amount of experience. I will be able to look at some of the examples from other teachers to see which methods would be most effective for my classroom.


Within this resource the authors discuss important differences in the ways that students read. Many students do not get the important background information when reading due to either a lack of interest or lack of self-motivation. It also gives examples of ways to motivate students to read with more attention to detail and to get students interested in the content of the reading. This is a helpful tool for teachers because it gives multiple examples of ideas that can be used in a classroom setting. I feel that this will be a helpful resource to me because it is important to understand the differences in how children read. Reading is a critical part of the learning process and if children are having difficulties reading then that will impair other aspects of classroom participation.

Erwin, Jonathan C. (2004). *The classroom of choice: Giving students what they need*
In this text Erwin provides useful management and instructional tips for teachers in the classroom. It gives many specific strategies teachers can use to intrinsically motivate students in the classroom. It is about giving students choices in the classroom. This book will be a useful tool for me because it can be used as a resource for management strategies. Also, it can be used as a planning guide in a classroom to assist me in attempting to intrinsically motivate students.

Haywood, J., Kuespert, S., Madecky, D., & Nor A.(2008). Increasing elementary and high school student motivation through the use of intrinsic and extrinsic reward. Retrieved February 3, 2009 from ERIC.

This online text gives an outline of extrinsic and intrinsic motivational factors. These factors can be attributed to family stress, neighborhood issues and other things that are beyond the control of the teaching environment. It also discusses ways in which testing can discourage students from getting excited about content and showing a lack of enthusiasm towards learning. This text will be helpful with completing my inquiry project because it discusses ways that a teacher can motivate students through both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation.


The authors are able to effectively explain how students develop cognitive understanding. The authors use classic and current psychological understanding that is critical for practicing teachers. The book takes a learning centered psychological approach that focuses on psychological dimensions such as strategies and regulating learning and also shared learning. This reference offers guiding principles that suggest ways for teachers to instruct effectively by creating motivational factors within a classroom setting. I will be able to use the ideas and concepts from this text to assist me in understanding what motivates children in the classroom. It is important to understand how students think when it comes to learning.


This book talks about the natural tendencies, impulses, and strivings of students in a classroom setting. It explains why students have difficulty intrinsically motivating themselves and ways
that teachers can improve self-motivation within students. It draws upon a wide range of research regarding motivation in a classroom. This is a helpful tool for teachers because it helps them to understand the way in which students learn. This will be an effective tool during my inquiry because it discusses the difficulties of intrinsically motivating students. Especially for my specific wondering, it is critical to understand how to effectively self-motivate students.


Savarock discusses the difficulties of trying to inspire reluctant learners in the classroom. It gives a brief summary of the different kinds of reluctant learners and the ways in which these students can be taught to become intrinsically motivated. The article also explains that although extrinsic motivation is not necessarily bad, it may not help the student in the long run. This resource will be helpful to me because it shows the importance of intrinsic motivation and gives examples of how to get students to become self-motivated and interested in the materials presented.


This informative text provides a broad overview of motivational techniques that are used in a variety of different classrooms. It gives a number of powerful and practical applications that can be applied to any classroom. It is a useful tool for teachers because it provides many simple strategies that can be applied to motivating students in the classroom. These strategies are practical and useful techniques to help students to perform better academically and develop better attitudes about school and learning. I will be able to use this book in my inquiry because it will give me some simple ideas that will aid me in motivating my students.


Wolk offers an important aspect of learning that often times gets forgotten, the joy of learning. It provides evidence that states that when students are enjoying the learning experience, they are more intrinsically inclined do motivate themselves to be successful in the classroom. It is important to give students a choice when they are learning, which helps with their responsiveness to the materials presented. This is a useful tool for teachers because it gives a somewhat unconventional view of ways to increase joy in learning among students. This online text provides ideas for me as a teacher to keep students engaged in the material as well as offering advice as to how to intrinsically motivate my students.
Appendix

B. Student Survey on Participation

Name: _____________________________ #_________ Date: ________________

**Participation Survey**
1. I believe participation is:
   (circle all you think apply)

   - raising my hand with an idea about what we are discussing
   - being an active listener
   - following a teacher’s directions completing an assigned activity
   - sharing ideas that are related to the topic we are discussing in class
   - asking a topic related question
   - thinking in my head about the topic we are talking about
   - looking at the teacher when they are teaching/speaking
   - working well with others
   - raising my hand because I need to go to the bathroom
   - other: _______________________

2. Please fill in the blanks below

   I feel most comfortable participating in ___________________class.

   My favorite class to participate in is _____________________ because___________________________.

   I feel I participate the least in _____________________class

   because___________________________________________________.

   One reason I may not participate is because_______________________________________.

3. During a school day I believe I participate:
   (Please circle what you think applies to you)

   - a lot
   - sometimes
   - often
   - never
Appendix

C. Sample of Student Survey 1

1. I believe participation is:
   (circle all you think apply)
   - raising my hand with an idea about what we are discussing
   - following a teacher's directions
   - sharing ideas that are related to the topic we are talking about in class
   - thinking in my head about the topic we are talking about
   - working well with others
   - other: ____________________________

   Participation Survey
   
   2. Please fill in the blanks below
   
   I feel most comfortable participating in ____________________________ class.
   
   My favorite class to participate in is ____________________________ because I
   
   feel comfortable with the teacher and teaching.
   
   I feel I participate the least in ____________________________ class
   
   because ____________________________
   
   One reason I may not participate is because ____________________________
   
   3. During a school day I believe I participate:
   (Please circle what you think applies to you)
   
   a lot
   sometimes
   often
   never
Appendix

D1. Results of Student Surveys – Participation Definition

D2. Results of Student Surveys – Most Comfortable Class to Participating in
D3. Results of Student Surveys – Favorite Class to Participate in

D4. Results of Student Surveys – Reasons why Students Participate
D5. Results of Student Surveys - Reasons why Students might not Participate

D6. Results of Student Surveys – How often Students Feel They Participate
## Appendix

### E. Student Interview Questions 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Interview approx. 10-12 minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Tell me about your favorite class or subject in school?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Tell me what you think participation is?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Why do you think participation is important in a classroom?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Do you talk at home about what you learned in school each day?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Do you ever tell your parents about when you participate?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Do you feel comfortable participating in our classroom?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Do you feel more comfortable participating in a large or small group?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. What is the class that you really enjoy to participating in?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Tell me why you like to participate in this class?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. What do you think might be a reason why some students do not participate?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Is there a way we can change this in our classroom?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Do you think there is something we could do in our classroom to get more students to participate?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix

F. Observations on Participation
Appendix

G. Sample recording sheet for Observations on Participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEACHER</th>
<th>MD</th>
<th>MP</th>
<th>MD (Missed)</th>
<th>MD (Missed)</th>
<th>MD (Missed)</th>
<th>MD (Missed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SUBJECT</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>MP</td>
<td>MD (Missed)</td>
<td>MD (Missed)</td>
<td>MD (Missed)</td>
<td>MD (Missed)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For each observation, the following symbols are used:

- ✴ = volunteered, answered question appropriately
- ✥ = volunteered, answer was on the right track (need help)
- ✩ = volunteered, answer was no where near close
- ✫ = volunteered, was not called on
- ? = student question
- -= students called on, incorrect answer
- += student called on, correct answer
- A = being an active listener
- N = not being an active listener
- R = relate material to a real life situation

C = call out
A = absent
AB = absent
A = was active listener but now not
N = was not an active listener but now is
O = gave compliment
✴ = caught mistake
Appendix

H. “Say Something Jar”

I. Student examples from jar

J. Suggestions for the “Say Something Jar”
Appendix

K. “Think-Pair-Share” Results
Appendix

L. Sample of Student Survey 2

Participation Survey

1. I believe participation is:
   (circle all you think apply)
   - raising my hand with an idea about what we are discussing
   - being an active listener
   - following a teacher’s directions
   - completing an assigned activity
   - sharing ideas that are related to the topic we are talking about in class
   - asking a topic related question
   - thinking in my head about the topic we are talking about
   - looking at the teacher when they are teaching/speaking
   - working well with others
   - raising my hand because I need to go to the bathroom
   - other: Doing more things

2. Please fill in the blanks below

I feel most comfortable participating in __________ class.

My favorite class to participate in is __________, because it's __________

for being time and opinion

I feel I participate the least in __________ class

because sometimes I don’t feel comfortable because sometimes I don’t have something good to share.

One reason I may not participate is because __________

3. During a school day I believe I participate: (Please circle what you think applies to you)
   - a lot
   - sometimes
   - often
   - never
Appendix

M. Student Interview 2 Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Interview 2 approx. 7-10 minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Do you feel that participation has increased in our classroom?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Tell me how comfortable you feel comfortable participating in our class lately?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What are your thoughts about the “Say Something” jar?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Tell me how you would feel if you were asked a question and were allowed to discuss it with a partner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Do you have any suggestions to increase participation in our classroom?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>