An exploration of the effect of tangible rewards on Year 7s' attitude towards reading

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A Research & Development Project
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MSc Learning and Teaching: Part 3
Research and Development Project

An exploration of the effect of tangible rewards on Year 7s' attitude towards reading.

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1. Introduction

This study will focus on a large comprehensive secondary school in Northamptonshire, UK, which has seen a rise in the number of students expressing overtly negative attitudes towards reading in recent years. Such negative attitudes are coupled with concerns regarding students' reading levels, as the school is troubled by the number of students failing to make the expected level of progress in reading during Key Stage 3 before embarking upon GCSE courses. When considering literature that links reading participation with reading competence, such as Guthrie, Wigfield, Metsala & Cox (2009) and Campbell, Voelkl & Donahue (1997), students' negative attitudes towards reading, and the consequent reduction in reading participation, can be considered partially responsible for a decline in reading standards across the school. The UK government has recently placed greater emphasis on reading for pleasure, with current legislative documents stating that 'encouraging reading for pleasure is raising standards… All reading makes a difference, but evidence suggests that reading for pleasure makes the most' (Gibb, 2015, p.5 and p.17). These numerous positive links between reading for pleasure and standards of literacy can be seen as evidence for the importance of taking action when it comes to raising the profile of reading. Such evidence is crucial to the rationale of this study and its attempts to improve attitudes towards reading, and will be examined further in the Literature Review (2.1 Links Between Reading Participation and Reading Competence). There is, therefore, ample evidence to suggest that any successful attempt to encourage increased reading participation can improve children's understanding of literature and text production. This study will use previous literature to assess the extent to which participation in, and enthusiasm for, academic pursuits have been increased by new systems of tangible rewards, as well as aiming to ascertain the extent to which tangible rewards can improve attitudes towards reading, and consequent reading participation levels, at a specific UK secondary school.

In light of positive correlations between reading participation and reading competence, recent innovations at the participant school, such as the requirement for students to participate in compulsory silent reading during tutor time, have been introduced for students aged 11 to 16 in an attempt to raise reading standards. In discussions with form tutors, however, it has been made clear that this new measure is widely regarded as an unpleasant weekly conflict, with many reporting that some students become angry at the task and persistently refuse to participate. Form tutors also report that reinforcing this expectation for students to participate in reading is made difficult by other tutors who give in to student protest and cease to require such participation in reading. It seems as though these teachers' concerns are not specific to the participating school, nor are they new to 2015. As early as 2000, Hidi and Harackiewicz termed reading motivation 'a critical issue for the 21st century' and implored educators to find a way to reverse the apparent decline in 'interest and attitude towards school in general' (p.151).

Further concern for the students' reading motivation comes from evidence that the school library is critically underused. Collaboration and discussion with the school librarian has highlighted a concerning lack of interest in reading from the student body as a whole, despite the high frequency of activities designed to encourage students to read and to raise the profile of the library. From her unique viewpoint, the librarian has observed that 'the Library is a very special place for a very small percentage of the school. I get pretty much the same faces day in day out…' and describes the library as a 'safe place' for those who struggle socially, rather than a hub for reading activity and discussion.

The need to increase enthusiasm for reading at the target school can be shown objectively when considering the school library usage statistics. The library has experienced a sharp

decline in the number of books being borrowed in recent years (see Appendix 1). From September 2012 to July 2013 a total of 2542 book loans were made. The following academic year, from September 2013 to July 2014, there were only 1261 loans. This drop of 50.4% - along with statistics from May 2015 showing that only 11.5% of students in the school borrowed from the library in the academic year 2014-15 – is indicative of a significant and troubling decline in reading participation. It is certainly possible that such a decline in library loans is indicative of a move from print editions of books procured from the library to individual students' preference for owning a copy in print or electronically. According to a recent report published by the UK communications regulator, OFCOM, it is increasingly likely that secondary school age children will have access to electronic books: 'Use of a tablet computer at home has increased for each age group since 2013, to account for six in ten children aged 5-15 (62% vs. 42%)' (OFCOM, 2014). Whilst it is possible that such a sharp decrease in library usage is due to the increased access that students have to e-readers, there is still much evidence to suggest that the alternative – a general decline in interest for reading – is true. Students consistently show apathy with regards to reading-related activities, which would not be expected if reading was still taking place.

Once again, in an effort to raise literacy standards, the school's library and English Faculty organised sixteen activities between September 2013 and May 2015 with the intention of allowing students to express and share their enthusiasm for reading with others. In support of the current belief that general interest for reading amongst students is in decline, participation in all sixteen activities was extremely poor. For example, a library Twitter page was organised in September 2014 but had only eight followers after nine months; a well-advertised book club organised by two enthusiastic A Level English Literature students was disbanded after four weeks because membership remained at a disappointing zero; a freely accessible reading quiz on the school's virtual learning environment had just one participant.

Finally, and perhaps most significantly, all 592 students in Key Stage 3 were actively encouraged by assemblies and library lessons to participate in a charity Readathon. This is a scheme that encourages students to ask family and friends to sponsor their reading in order to 'provide free books for participating schools and raises funds to help seriously ill children throughout the UK' (Readathon, 2015). Despite this, only 13 students chose to take part (2%). Such reluctance to participate in reading or reading-related activities can be seen as proof of the negative attitudes that are currently being observed amongst students at this school.

An increasingly negative attitude towards reading amongst the student body does not appear to be a problem specific to the participating Northamptonshire school. A publication by Clark & Douglas of the National Literacy Trust (2011) indicates that decreased enjoyment of reading has become an issue nationally over the last decade, stating that 'there have been significant concerns about the number of young people who say they enjoy reading' (p.8). The report states that young people experienced a sharp decline in their enjoyment of reading prior to 2005, which has not subsequently recovered (ibid.). This is supported by a report published by Bradshaw, Ager, Burge & Wheater (2010) for the the Programme for International School Assessment (PISA), which states that '40 per cent [of students in England] only read if they have to' (p.x) and the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), which found that 'Children in England tended to report reading for pleasure less frequently than their peers in many other countries,' (p.v). The National Literacy Trust also shows specific concerns regarding boys' attitudes towards reading, which appears to be lower than that of their female peers in all respects. They cite a study by Sainsbury and Schagen (2004, in: Clark & Douglas, 2011, p.8.) who found that … the number of boys who at the age of 11 enjoyed reading was dropping significantly,' as well as discussing the gap between the percentage of boys and girls who enjoy reading, which widened from 10% to

15% between 2005 and 2009 (ibid.). This may be reflective of the fact that one in eight young people surveyed believe that 'reading is for girls' (ibid.), or Clark & Osborne's findings that 41.45 of secondary school students who do not read regularly believe that their friends think 'readers are boring' (2008, p.8).

Significantly, though, none of the activities made available over the last two academic years have included any tangible reward for students themselves, which raises questions about the extent to which the introduction of rewards could raise participation levels by encouraging students to associate reading with a positive feedback and, consequently, feel more positively towards reading. A study by Hidi and Harackiewicz (2000) found that 'reading for a particular purpose can enhance text-based interest.' Much literature on the subject differentiates between various types of rewards, with the effects of contractual vs. informational rewards being most commonly discussed (Chance, 1993), and so it is important for the present study to acknowledge the potentially varying effects of these. This study, therefore, will implement two separate tangible reward schemes for Year 7 students in order to ascertain the extent to which introducing various types of rewards to reading-based activities can have a positive impact on attitudes and consequent reading participation.

Before implementing these reward schemes, however, it is useful to examine previous work relating to the effectiveness of tangible rewards and to establish the extent to which past researchers have shown various types of rewards to be appropriate. This work will start by evaluating the literature concerning the intense debate surrounding the impact of extrinsic rewards on intrinsic motivation; I aim to understand the extent to which reward schemes can benefit individuals' attitudes. Several studies, such as McLoyd (1999) and Kohn (1999), have shown a negative correlation between extrinsic rewards and intrinsic motivation, with these researchers concluding that rewards are detrimental and ill-advised (see 2.2 Extrinsic

Rewards and Intrinsic Motivation: Negative Correlations). Consequently, relevant literature will be examined with a view to minimising the potentially undesirable consequences of tangible rewards. The idea that tangible rewards could have a negative effect on students' intrinsic motivation to read is especially concerning given the school's desire to combat the dwindling interest in reading as well as the necessary ethical considerations surrounding a child-centred study such as this (see section 3.3 Ethical Considerations).

There is disagreement amongst researchers, however, with regards to the benefits of tangible rewards. Several studies such as those carried out by Chance (1993) and Greene and Lepper (1974) have found that extrinsic rewards can have an extremely positive impact on students' attitudes towards academic pursuits such as reading if implemented appropriately, with some even deeming rewards to be wholly necessary for optimal learning to take place. Much of this literature, such as that of Deci and Ryan (1985, p.245) also gives advice with regards to the environment that can best nurture an interest in reading, and so this will be called upon to shape the present study with regards to effective reward implementation. This study will consider what previous researchers have found to be the most beneficial ways to reward students, rather than dismissing rewards in light of evidence that declares it potentially detrimental.

2. Literature Review

The level of agreement amongst researchers who have endeavoured to link reading participation with reading competency is striking. Because a direct correlation has been found in numerous works such as that of Anderson and Peterson (1984) and Guthrie, Wigfield, Metsala & Cox (2009), this evidence provides a useful rationale for the present study. If it is true that reading participation improves reading skills in children, every effort must be made by schools to ensure that students are reading – and willing to read – at a sufficient rate to ensure progress.

With regards to the effectiveness of rewards, however, studies aiming to establish links between rewards and motivation have produced mixed results relating to the benefits of tangible rewards. Indeed, Clark and Rumbold of the National Literacy Trust (2006) agree that 'the empirical evidence is inconclusive,' attributing this to the 'long standing controversy as to whether rewards such as money or tokens can be used to develop or harness motivation to read or whether they undermine children's motivation for reading' (p.17). A number of studies carried out over several decades have shown rewards to be ill-advised or even detrimental to students' intrinsic motivation, whereas others applaud the use of reward schemes in the classroom or even go so far as to consider them necessary. These must be examined before continuing with a study such as this, which implements reward schemes with the intention of encouraging students to alter their attitudes and practices. The debate surrounding both the potentially beneficial and detrimental effects of rewards is especially pertinent to this study, given the potential ethical issues concerning the implantation of reward schemes that some believe could potentially have a negative impact upon students. Ethical considerations will be discussed in the Method section of this work in light of the findings of previous researchers. This review will examine the literature that warns against

rewarding children for reading, before moving on to consider that which recommends rewards.

2.1 Links Between Reading Participation and Reading Competence

The first research question arising when preparing for the present study relates to the rationale behind this study's motivation to encourage a more positive attitude towards reading. As educators of young people, we must first establish the reasons why we endeavour to improve our students' attitudes towards reading and, consequently, increase their reading participation before going ahead.

The National Curriculum in English (Department for Education, 2014) places great emphasis on reading and text comprehension for students in Key Stage 3, stating that all students should 'develop an appreciation and love of reading' and 'read critically through knowing how language… presents meaning'. Additionally, this is followed up by the most recent publications regarding the newly reformed GCSE English Language, which requires students to 'analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers' (Ofqual, 2015, p.8). It appears, therefore, that increasing students' motivation to read will not only help them to understand text with ease but also assist them in achieving those qualifications later in their school career that could act as a gateway in adulthood.

We must ask, therefore, why the National Curriculum places such emphasis on qualifications that encourage students to demonstrate their grasp of literacy and text comprehension. Kassam (1994) offers useful insight into why educators ought to encourage reading as far as possible, as he considers the benefits of literacy skills to be profound and far-reaching. He

writes: ‘To be literate is to become liberated from the constraints of dependency. To be literate is to gain a voice and to participate meaningfully and assertively in decisions that affect one’s life […] Literacy provides access to written knowledge – and knowledge is power’ (p.33). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2009) corroborates this with a statement regarding the value of reading. They define reading as, ‘understanding, using, reflecting on and engaging with written texts, in order to achieve one’s goals, to develop one’s knowledge and potential, and to participate in society.’ (in: Bradshaw et al., 2010, p.2). Finally, Guthrie & Wigfield (2000, p. 404) noted that ‘as students become engaged readers, they provide themselves with self-generated learning opportunities that are equivalent to several years of education.’ Given that literacy skills are considered essential to personal empowerment and effective participation in daily life as well as a person’s continued education, it is, therefore, justifiable for educators to promote reading participation and encourage reading competency as far as possible amongst young people.

Further support for placing increased emphasis on reading participation lies in researchers’ widespread agreement regarding an apparent positive correlation between reading volume and reading competence. In a study carried out by Guthrie, Wigfield, Metsala & Cox (2009) it was found that ‘reading amount significantly predicted text comprehension’ (p.231). Text comprehension in this study was defined as ‘the capacity of the learner to construct new knowledge or information from written text’ (Anderson and Pearson, 1984, in: ibid., p.232), and links positively with Kassam’s views above regarding the empowerment that can come from accessing textual information (1994, p.33). These results from Guthrie et al. are very encouraging, especially when it is considered that the study controlled for a multitude of factors including ‘past reading achievement, prior topic knowledge, self-efficacy for reading, and reading motivation’ (ibid.), therefore isolating as far as possible the effect of increasing students’ reading volume. Further to this, Guthrie et al. (2009) have gathered very specific

data regarding the difference between the amount of text more proficient readers encounter in comparison with those who are less proficient. Findings state: 'Good fourth grade readers encountered 220% more words in text during their instruction to date than poor readers' (ibid., p.233). It appears to be beneficial, therefore, to encourage students to read as much as possible in order to maximise their potential for reading competence.

A further study carried out by Wigfield and Guthrie (1997, in: Guthrie et al. 2009, p.235) found that 'children who reported being highly motivated to read tended to increase their reading amount and breadth over time.' These findings are strongly supported by results from Campbell, Voelkl and Donahue (1997), who have suggested that successful attempts to increase reading volume amongst students are likely to have a positive effect on literacy levels as a consequence. These researchers found that 'students who read daily for their own enjoyment were 6.7 standard errors higher in reading achievement than students who reported reading yearly or never' (in: Guthrie et al., 2009, p.232). Researchers in this instance have focussed on another potentially pertinent correlation: that of enjoyment of reading and reading amount. Such a correlation offers further support for the present study, as reward schemes are designed to add an element of fun to reading and therefore increase students' reading volume as a consequence.

Whilst the aforementioned studies linking reading competence with reading volume took place in the USA, there is also a great deal of evidence from the UK to support the findings of a positive correlation between those who spend more time reading and those who achieve more highly academically. A study into international reading standards carried out by Bradshaw et al. for PISA in 2010 found that 'Attitudes to reading had a positive connection with reading scores. Both internationally and in England, there was a large difference in scores between those who never read for enjoyment and those who do, even if only for a

short time each day' (p.xi). This is useful evidence for the present study, which aims to use reward systems as a tool for encouraging students to increase their reading enjoyment and volume regardless of their previous reading experience or current reading participation levels. Additionally, Twist (2007) writes in the PIRLS that 'There is a strong association between the amount of reading for pleasure children [in England] reported and their reading achievement,' (p.v). The findings from PISA and PIRLS imply that any increase that can come from rewards, whether incremental or exponential, will be beneficial to students' overall attainment.

Further to the numerous studies who have found a direct correlation between reading volume and attainment, the OECD has found that 'Reading enjoyment has been reported as more important for children's educational success than their family's socio-economic status' (2002, in: Department for Education, 2012, p.3). This is especially significant for the participating Northamptonshire school in the present study. We have learnt from the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) that 'there were strong negative associations between social deprivation and performance on PIRLS' (p.vi), suggesting that those of lower socio-economic status typically achieve lower standards of literacy and reading comprehension than their wealthier peers. The school participating in the present study has an unusually high number of students from disadvantaged backgrounds, with over 20% carrying the 'Pupil Premium' label. This label is defined by the Department for Education (2015) as: 'additional funding for publicly funded schools in England to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and close the gap between them and their peers.' It seems, therefore, that reading volume is most certainly an indicator of success, and increasing reading for pleasure can aid students in overcoming the disadvantages associated with being a member of a low income family. Such evidence allows us to view any efforts to increase reading enjoyment and, consequently, volume in a positive light.

These studies also hold significance for the National Curriculum in England and the importance that it places upon reading for enjoyment and text comprehension. The National Curriculum's specifications for English study state that 'All pupils must be encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world they live in' (Department for Education, 2014). Given the evidence stating that an increase in reading volume has a direct, positive effect upon reading comprehension amongst young people, the aforementioned studies can be considered to support the present study which aims, primarily, to increase reading volume amongst students.

2.2 Extrinsic Rewards and Intrinsic Motivation: Negative Correlations

There is a wealth of literature spanning several decades that condemns the practice of rewarding children for participating in activities that are seen as educationally beneficial. This is primarily due to the negative effect that many studies have found rewards to have on levels of intrinsic motivation, with intrinsic motivation being considered of paramount importance when encouraging children to be autonomous, active learners. Ryan and Deci go so far as to name autonomy as one of 'three innate psychological needs' (2000, p.68). The idea that intrinsic motivation is key to effective learning is supported by Alexander & Jetton (in: Kamil, Mosenthal, Pearson & Barr, 2000), who assert that 'learning from text cannot take place in any deep or meaningful fashion without the learner's commitment… Nor will the pursuit of knowledge continue unless the reader realizes some personal gratification or internal reward from this engagement,' (p.296). There is, therefore, strong justification for the avoidance of any practice that would jeopardise the ability of a child to motivate his or herself autonomously through intrinsic interest. Literature of this kind must be examined

critically before embarking upon any such study that involves rewards so that negative effects can be minimised.

Alfie Kohn advises against the use of rewards in all situations where learning and teaching take place. He states that 'to suggest that we learn or work only to obtain rewards... is not only inaccurate but demeaning as well' (1999, p.25). Brophy (1981) also hints towards the potentially derisive aspects of rewarding students when stating that 'it implies differential status: the person distributing praise takes the role of expert or authority figure who is judging the behavior of the person being praised,' (p.7).

Whilst some studies advise against rewards of any kind, there are also those that advise caution when designing a reward scheme rather than advising against rewards altogether. McLoyd's study is of interest for having found that the impact of rewards upon the ability of children to motivate themselves is linked to the type of reward being offered. Findings showed that 'highly valued rewards may enhance subsequent interest in a relatively uninteresting activity' (1979, p.1016). Such findings have consequences for any study involving reading, as it is undesirable, therefore, to reward activities that students are already intrinsically motivated to participate in, but may prove beneficial to reward those who have no interest in the activity with a high-value reward. There is a discussion, however, regarding the long term benefits of raising interest in an activity that was previously considered uninteresting by the child. McLoyd reasons: 'because the activity is viewed subsequently as a means to a reward, little interest in the activity is aroused in the absence of the reward' (p.1010). Findings such as these have implications for the present study. If we are to ascertain the full extent of the impact that reward systems can have, it will be necessary to carry out a follow-up study that seeks to compare students' interest in reading at the time of the reward system and a significant amount of time after it has finished.

A study carried out by Chance also focuses on the potentially negative effects of certain types of rewards, rather than ruling out rewards altogether. He considers 'contractual rewards' to be ill-advised (1993, p.787). This means that educators should avoid basic tokens as rewards for participating in specified academic activities. This links to McLoyd's assertion above, which suggests that a young person's motivation for participation in such an activity might be artificially altered from that which is based on intrinsic interest to that which exists purely to receive a reward. Once the desirable behaviour is no longer positively reinforced by the token, it is suggested that this behaviour might cease altogether.

2.3 Extrinsic Rewards and Intrinsic Motivation: Positive Correlations

In spite of the large volume of literature advising against the use of rewards in the classroom, there are numerous works that have shown rewards to be beneficial. For this reason it is impossible to understand with certainty the nature and extent of the effects that reward schemes in this study might have. Whilst McLoyd asserts that 'giving children extrinsic rewards for engaging in an interesting activity... may prove to be detrimental' (1979, p.1016), he does also acknowledge that the attractiveness of rewarded tasks may only become apparent 'after the child has engaged in them for a while or has achieved some minimal level of task mastery' (ibid., p.1011). Whilst it has already been ascertained that the target school, as well as English schools as a whole, have perceived very low levels of interest in reading amongst the student body, it will be necessary to understand the level of interest that specific children in the sample ascribe to reading activities. If it is true that the students in the sample of this study consider reading to be uninteresting, McLoyd's suggestion is that a reward scheme could be useful to help them discover an interest where there previously was none.

Chance (1993) corroborates this when he writes that 'if little to no interest in an activity is show, it is silly to refuse to provide rewards for fear of undermining the interest in the activity,' (p.789). This research can also serve as a counter argument to Kohn's aforementioned work, in which Kohn reasons that rewards should not be issued because they suggest that 'we learn or work only to obtain rewards' (1999, p.25). If students were to begin increasing reading volume in order to obtain a reward and discover a new interest in fiction as a consequence, McLoyd's research could support the idea that this is a positive consequence of working to receive a reward in the first instance.

Chance's findings corroborate this idea by further supporting the use of rewards at the early stages of a child's involvement with an activity. He states that 'some sort of extrinsic reinforcement (informational reward) is usually necessary, in the early stages at least, for learning to occur efficiently' (1993, p.787). Chance's assertion that rewards are a necessity is especially encouraging, particularly as the rewards for reading in the present study aim to foster an interest in reading which, for many disengaged students, will be entirely new. Chance's work is supported by Gambrell (1996), who writes that 'in order for students to develop into mature, effective readers they must possess both the *skill* and the *will* to read,' (p.15). Such emphasis on encouraging students to want to read in the first instance has also prompted Gambrell to insist that 'the most important goal of reading instruction is to foster the love of reading,' (p.14). This study will endeavour to reward students for reading with the intention of providing both informational rewards in order to provide positive reinforcement and boost confidence with reading, as well as foster within students an enjoyment of reading amongst the students which may or may not have been present previously.

Whilst Chance's aforementioned research is encouraging, there is a condition, however, that such rewards must be 'informational'; this is especially useful when designing reward

schemes aimed at sparking students' enthusiasm in the first instance. Indeed, many of Chance's findings indicate that the effects of extrinsic, informational rewards are so positive that it would be damaging not to administer them. He reasons: 'If rewards provide... new information about ability then they may bolster feelings of competence' (p.788). Increased confidence with reading will be beneficial for all students, regardless of prior interest in the activity.

Chance also cites a study that took a more practical and long-term approach to rewarding young people for learning. Greene and Lepper (1974) found that 'students gained an average of 1.2 grade levels in reading and 1.5 grade levels in math in just eight weeks' when paid '$3.40 an hour to participate in a summer program of academic instruction' (p.54). These findings go against Marinak and Gambrell's advice regarding effective types of rewards in the classroom. They assert that 'if the reward is sufficiently proximal to the task, intrinsic interest is not undermined... less proximal rewards (tokens) do serve to undermine intrinsic motivation to read,' (2008, p.22). Marinak and Gambrell's findings are corroborated by McLoyd (1979) who found that 'expected' rewards, whether tangible or monetary, 'diminish subsequent intrinsic interest,' (p.1011). Clark and Rumbold of the National Literacy Trust (2006) suggest that proximal rewards can be effective in avoiding this, as they find that 'Literacy-targeted rewards, such as books or book vouchers have been found to be more effective in developing reading motivation than rewards that are unrelated to the activity' (p.17). In Marinak & Gambrell's study the reward of monetary payment cannot be considered proximal to tasks involving reading and mathematics. However, these rewards did serve to improve the performance of these young people significantly. It cannot be said conclusively, therefore, that there is no benefit to rewards that are not proximal to the rewarded task.

As well as rewards in the form of a token, praise can also be seen as rewarding enough to act as positive reinforcement for the students' reading participation. Guthrie & Wigfield (in: Kamil et al., 2000) write that 'effective teachers can be seen to provide informative compliments that make learners feel a sense of accomplishment and pride in work,' (p.414). Once again, the *informational* aspect of the reward is highlighted here, as in the aforementioned study by Chance (1993). This provides further evidence for the idea that the present study ought to focus on informational rewards, rather than tokens alone, in order to maximise the potential that rewards have for reinforcing learning. Such a focus can also help to avoid the reportedly negative effects that previous researchers have considered rewards to have on intrinsic motivation. Finally, praise has also been advocated by Gambrell (1996) who writes that 'supporting and nurturing reading motivations and achievement is crucial to improving educational prospects for children who find learning to read difficult,' (p.15). Providing consistent rewards for those students who participate in reading activities – particularly those who were previously reluctant to do so – can certainly be seen as supportive of reading achievements, thus helping to promote a classroom culture that is positive towards reading and improve reading standards as a consequence.

In addition to the confidence that rewards can build, Brophy (1981) suggests a great number of advantages that providing positive reinforcement, or praise, can have on the learning environment. This researcher highlights the advantage of using praise 'to provide encouragement to students, to help build self-esteem, to help build a close teacher-student relationship,' (p.7). It is suggested, therefore, that a closer and more supportive teacher-student relationship will promote a more accepting and nurturing classroom setting for a reluctant reader to grow in confidence. The importance of the learning environment is further reinforced by Gambrell (1996), who concluded from a study carried out amongst younger children, that 'the responses of these children highlight the critical role of the teacher in

creating a classroom culture that fosters reading motivation,' (p.14). As in Brophy's research (above), Gambrell places the responsibility for encouraging children to increase reading participation firmly with the teacher. Given previous research and individual teachers' experience, it appears that these professionals are indeed in an ideal position to provide the necessary level of positivity in the classroom environment. Finally, Deci and Ryan (1985) give further information regarding the best methods by which to achieve this. They have found that 'When the educational environment provides optimal challenges, rich sources of stimulation, and a context of autonomy, this motivational wellspring of learning is likely to flourish,' (p.245).

3. Methodology

The overall aim of this study is to ascertain the extent to which tangible rewards can improve Year 7 students' attitudes towards reading and their consequent reading volume. For this reason, it was necessary to begin by ascertaining the extent to which the target school found reading volume and competency to be a cause for concern amongst the student population.

Before quantitative data was gathered from the students themselves, I collaborated with the school librarian and members of the English Faculty in order to ascertain the perceived level of interest in reading in these two sectors of the school. It was inferred that there would be a direct correlation between intrinsic interest in reading and participation in activities that allowed students to develop and share their interest. Given the extent to which the library is utilised by the students, as well as the level of participation in reading related activities organised by the English Faculty, it was clear that staff tasked with encouraging students to read believe interest in reading to be both low and in decline. This inference was made based on a perceived link that intrinsic interest in reading has with both participation in reading-related activities and library usage, both of which have dropped significantly in recent years.

Statistics provided by the library's Eclipse software showed a sharp decline in the numbers of books borrowed between 2012 and 2014 (see 8.1 Appendix 1 for full table of statistics). Sainsbury & Schagen (2004, in: Clark & Osborne, 2008, p.1) found that interest in reading typically declines as students grow older, which certainly appears to be the case at the participating school. According to loan statistics, students in every year group borrowed far fewer books between 2012 and 2014 as they moved through the school. For example, those who were in Year 9 in 2012-13 made 493 individual loans in that year, but only 61 loans when in Year 10 during 2013-14. These individuals' library loans decreased by 87.6% within

12 months, indicating a clear loss of interest across the group as a whole. Statistics also included some remarkable figures from the most frequent borrowers in the school: Year 7. As can be seen, the Year 7 group in 2012-13 made 943 individual book loans, whereas students of the same age in 2013-14 only made 697. This decrease of 26%, along with statistics from other year groups which show a similar pattern, indicates that interest in reading does not only decline as students grow older, but declines over time as well. Finally, students in every year group borrowed significantly fewer books than those before them. These statistics were also used when choosing a year group to participate in the study (discussed further in 3.1: Choosing a Sample).

Participation in reading related activities run by the school library and English Faculty has followed the same pattern. During the academic year 2012-13 a book club was thriving and contained members that are described by English Faculty staff as committed and enthusiastic. The club was organised by an adult and did not dictate which books ought to be read. A book club based on the same model was formed for the beginning of the academic year 2014-15 by two A Level English Literature students wishing to share their love of reading and help younger students to express ideas about literature, yet this club ceased to exist shortly afterwards having failed to attract a single member. Furthermore, in the academic year 2012-13 the Readathon was a far greater success than in the year 2014-15. As has been outlined previously, the Readathon requires students in Key Stage 3 to ask friends and family to sponsor their reading in order to raise money for a variety of children's charities (Readathon, 2015). The declining will to participate can be shown through the money raised. In 2012-13 the students raised just over £1,000 with 54 students choosing to take part. This figure is significantly more than the total for 2014-15, which stood at £210 and came from only 13 students. These figures can be considered representative of the students' declining will to read. The Readathon has been publicised in the same manner since it began with all Key

Stage 3 students attending an information assembly in February, and participating staff have not changed.

In this situation, qualitative data was seen as the most suitable method of gathering information as it allowed the participating librarian and teachers of English to express their thoughts and experiences freely. It also allowed more detailed information to be communicated with relation to the types of activities currently on offer to students, as well as a discussion of the number of activities that could be seen as involving any sort of tangible reward. Teaching and library staff also provided quantitative data that was useful in ascertaining the number of participants in various activities, which could then be used to compare interest levels between academic years and groups of students.

When gathering information from the students themselves, it was considered that collection of quantitative data would be most useful as it allowed direct comparisons to be made before and after the proposed interventions, as well as comparisons between both test groups and the control group. It was considered appropriate that methods of data collection should vary between staff and students given the large number of Year 7 students participating in the study. As a consequence, a mixed methods approach was taken in order to gather a combination of qualitative and quantitative data.

Mertens and Hesse-Biber (2013) support this choice of methodology as they consider the mixed methods approach to provide information that is more conducive to getting to the root of an issue than qualitative or quantitative data alone, as well as providing a multi-dimensional impression of the issue at hand. They believe that mixed methods "provid[es] evaluators with strategies for garnering more complex and diverse perspectives on the creation of credible evidence." (p.5) Ultimately, this study aims to provide educators with a

better understanding of the effects of tangible rewards on students' attitudes and practices with regards to reading. This is a complex issue, and so the method that Mertens and Hesse-Biber advocate was seen as the most effective in gathering information that would be of use.

3.1 Choosing a Sample

The quantitative and qualitative data provided as a result of the aforementioned collaboration with the school librarian and English Faculty staff provided essential information concerning the interest in reading that various groups of students are showing at the time of the study and in recent years. This information was instrumental in ascertaining which particular groups of students would be the most likely to respond positively to any reward scheme designed to increase reading volume and improve attitudes. To begin with, library usage statistics were consulted (see Appendix 8.1) and provided an overview of student interest in seeking out and reading books for pleasure. Whilst many teachers from partnership schools in the Northamptonshire area have spoken of what they term 'library lessons', during which students are required to read a book borrowed from the library, the participating school does not make library usage compulsory for any student. All book loans at the participating school are, therefore, voluntary. This means that we can view library loan figures as a reflection of students' voluntary reading behaviour.

Figures showed that behaviour with regards to library loans followed a very specific – and, in many ways, startling – pattern, and indicated in many respects that the most positive results from the study would come from early intervention. Overall interest in reading over time was shown to be in decline generally. The statistics for Key Stage 3 are exceedingly negative, with Year 8 and 9 students borrowing 66% and 67% less in 2013-14 than those in the same

year group in 2012-13. Also notable is the fact that each year group is shown to borrow significantly fewer books as they grow older. For example, students who were in Year 7 from 2012-13 borrowed 648 fewer books when they reached Year 8 in 2013-14 – a decrease of 69%. Further to this, those in Year 9 in 2012-13 borrowed 88% less when they reached Year 10 in 2013-14. This pattern is corroborated by research conducted by Sainsbury & Schagen (2004), who concluded that 'older children enjoy reading less and that they hold more negative attitudes towards reading than younger ones' (in: Clark & Osborne, 2008, p.1). The above statistics can be used to infer that students currently in Year 7 will experience an almost total loss of motivation to read for pleasure by the time they begin GCSE courses if they follow the same patterns as those outlined in research and those set by the school's older students. For this reason, staff concluded that the school ought to attempt to maintain interest in reading amongst Year 7 students, who have shown the highest level of interest in reading and the most positive attitudes, rather than attempting to rekindle an interest in reading amongst older students whose interest may already be in decline.

The qualitative data provided by the librarian also showed students currently in Year 7 to have the greatest potential for active participation in reward schemes given their voluntary presence in the library and participation in previously organised reading related activities. Whilst only 13 of the 592 eligible Key Stage 3 students chose to take part in the annual Readathon in the academic year 2014-15, all participants were in Year 7. They have also shown the most willingness to be seen in the library. For the last two years the library has shown a film adaptation of a book once every two weeks. The audience has been comprised almost entirely of Year 7 students in both years of the film club's existence. This year group also stood out when asked to become involved with the pupil librarian scheme. This is a nationwide initiative, which follows guidelines provided by the Schools Library Association (SLA 2015). The opportunity to become a pupil librarian is offered to every student at the

school, with the intention that students are often more likely to feel confident asking for recommendations from other children rather than adults. Of the school's 18 student librarians 11 are in Year 7, indicating that this year group is the one most likely to publicly associate themselves with reading.

In corroboration with this, the school librarian at the participating school suggests that the image of the library as a 'safe place' for the socially isolated could also contribute to the reluctance of older students to have a presence there. The librarian has also stated her reluctance to maintain what some could see as a negative image. In a recent email regarding library usage, she wrote: 'I have desperately wanted to raise the profile of the Library as you know but shifting the "safe place" image is a massive task.' Year 7 students are new to the school and therefore may not be aware of this 'safe place' image, thus feeling less concerned about how their presence in the library might be interpreted by others. We know from research such as that of Sainsbury and Schagen (2004, in: Clark & Douglas, 2011, p.8.) that interest in reading declines as children get older, and so it is possible that older children view reading as childish and would not want to be perceived as such if their peers are aware that they use the library. The notion that older students may avoid the library if they view it simply as a place for the socially unskilled is supported by John C. Coleman (2011), who writes that popularity is 'of particular significance during adolescence… The chief determinant of popularity is whether the individual is socially skilled or not,' (p.179). Furthermore, a study by Clark and Osborne (2008, p.5) into young people's attitudes towards those who read found that secondary school students are more likely to see readers as 'boring' than 'happy', and more likely to believe that they are 'someone who doesn't go out much' than 'someone who has a lot of friends'. Indeed, only 4.6% of respondents believed that readers had 'a lot of friends'. Research such as this gives us an important insight into the reasons why younger students are far more likely to become involved in reading related

activities. If students are conscious of this 'safe place' and 'boring' image that the library appears to have at present, they may be concerned that to go there would have a negative impact on their popularity and social acceptance.

Given that the majority of students willing to participate in reading and reading related activities are amongst the youngest in the school, it was therefore considered appropriate for the reward schemes in the present study to be targeted at Year 7 students. It was reasoned that this could have the greatest potential for maintaining positive attitudes towards reading beyond Year 7, and offering involvement in reward schemes to those most likely to participate would give the study the greatest chance of success. As previously stated, students going from Year 7 to Year 8 have experienced a great loss of interest in reading in recent years according to both library statistics. Literature relating to the subject of rewards and their benefits has suggested that rewards can increase interest in reading or spark an initial interest, and so it is anticipated that the reward schemes have the potential to minimise this loss of interest when those currently in Year 7 move through the school.

Having established that Year 7 were the age group most likely to benefit from reward schemes, it was necessary to choose which specific groups would receive rewards within that year group. Students in Year 7 are currently taught in their six tutor groups; two such groups are known as 'supported sets'. These sets include those students most in need of additional help with their learning, particularly with difficulties relating to literacy, and both have a dedicated Learning Support Assistant in the classroom with them at all times. There is a high volume of research which has found low literacy levels to cause students to be far less motivated to participate in reading. Bruner (1996, in: Bruner 2006) has written that 'We get interested in what we get good at. In general, it is difficult to sustain interest in an activity unless one achieves some degree of competence,' (p.118). The students in supported sets are

not seen as incapable of sustaining an interest in reading because they are not as competent as their peers. Rather, it is suggested that it may be wiser to focus on helping them to sustain an interest in reading once their reading competence has increased. In agreement with Bruner, Hidi and Berninger have found that students with low literacy levels have a 'negative attitude [towards literacy] learned through repeated failure experiences, '(in: Hidi and Boscolo, 2007, p.164). Such findings are also in support of the notion that students who currently have low literacy levels are unlikely to sustain an interest in reading at the present time, but may do so in the future once such 'failure experiences' have become fewer and their confidence with reading has grown. Finally, it was considered helpful to discount the supported sets from the present study in order for the subsequent results to be more meaningful. To choose three groups that were a combination of supported and unsupported sets would have the potential to skew the results if students in various groups had greatly differing motivation levels at the beginning of the study. It was for this reason that three of the remaining four Year 7 classes were chosen for the control group and both of the test groups.

3.2 Gathering Baseline Data

As previously stated, this study took a mixed-methods approach to gathering data from staff and students. The study aimed to gather both quantitative and qualitative data to form a whole and multi-faceted picture of the current attitudes shown towards reading by the target year group. Information gathered from staff was primarily qualitative, whilst information from students was chiefly quantitative. The preference for gathering quantitative data from students was due to the large number of students in the study; a sample size of 85 participants is large enough to produce meaningful statistics. This type of data also meant that direct statistical comparison between the test groups and the control group was possible. A

questionnaire was considered the most appropriate method by which to collect the baseline data (see Appendix 2). As there were no students with learning difficulties in the sample, it was decided that all of the students would therefore be able to understand fully what they were being asked to do and no student would compromise his or her right to anonymity by having to share answers with a scribe. Issuing questionnaires to the three groups was made possible through collaboration with another teacher. This teacher was also willing to carry out a reward scheme with the class over the seven week test period. Questionnaires were also issued to my own tutor group and drama class, both of which were Year 7 groups. No students from any of the three groups were discounted for any reason and all were present on the day of the questionnaire. In a study such as this, which aims to understand the potentially changing attitudes of a year group as a whole, it was important to issue questionnaires to a large number of students in this year group in order to gather the most accurate data possible.

Questionnaires to gather baseline data were issued in February 2015, six weeks prior to the beginning of the reward schemes. Reward schemes ran for seven weeks (March to May) and then follow-up questionnaires were issued in June after both schemes had come to an end. As has been outlined above, enthusiasm for reading at the participating school has been shown to decrease as students move from Year 7 to Year 8. If the students currently in Year 7 follow the same pattern, we would expect attitudes towards reading to be very positive in February and to decline towards the end of the academic year. Because of these patterns in reading behaviour, it was useful to leave several school terms between questionnaires so as to ascertain the impact that intervention can have on maintaining interest in reading as students grow older.

Questions were designed to gather information regarding the students' volume of reading and intrinsic interest in reading. The answers given to Questions 1 and 2 on the questionnaire –

'How much do you enjoy reading? (Scale of 1-10 with 1 being the lowest)' and 'How much time do you spend reading each week?' – will be a main focus of comparison between the responses of students given before and after the implementation of reward schemes. As discussed in the Literature Review, a direct correlation has been found between volume of reading and reading competency amongst children, with the increased volume of reading being thought to increase competency through increased exposure to technically accurate writing. An aim of this study is to encourage Year 7 students to feel more positively about reading and to increase their reading participation as a consequence, and so their answers to Questions 1 and 2 will be crucial to understanding the extent to which the intervention has been successful in achieving this.

Question 3 asks students to name a favourite book that they have read in the last three years. This is the only question on the questionnaire designed to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. Going forward, answers to this question will be useful in helping to raise enthusiasm for reading through the ability to recommend books that have proven popular amongst the target group, the primary purpose is to establish the percentage of students that are able to name a favourite book amongst those they have experienced. As discussed, a significant number of studies have found reward systems to be detrimental to students' intrinsic interest in reading. It can be assumed that the ability to name a favourite book is indicative of an intrinsic interest in past reading participation. Therefore, if more children are able to name a favourite book after the study has ended then this could be indicative of increased intrinsic motivation within the groups. Finally, Question 5 aims to understand the extent to which students enjoy reading by asking them to choose from a series of descriptive statements. Researchers such as Chance (1993, pp.787-88) have shown that rewards for a particular task can serve to help students uncover an interest in activities that they had previously considered uninteresting. Question 5 is designed to ascertain whether or not being

rewarded for reading has resulted in an increased level of enjoyment for the rewarded task itself, as data will be collected both before and after the reward schemes have been put in place.

3.3 Implementing Reward Schemes

According to the results of the research outlined above, rewards for academic pursuits such as reading must meet one of two criteria in order to be effective and to avoid the potentially negative impact that researchers have found some types of rewards to have. If a reward is to have a positive effect, it needs to be either informational or centered on praise, rather than asking students to participate in an activity in order to receive a simple token. Cameron (2001) acknowledges that a significant number of researchers have been troubled by the apparent potential that rewards have to undermine a young person's existing intrinsic motivation for a task or academic pursuit. However, she also outlines the fact that 'When studies are organized according to the actual procedures used, however, negative effects are limited to a specific set of circumstances,' (p.29). The present study will consider the circumstances of the reward to be fundamental to the success of the study and avoid the simple token rewards that so many researchers have found to be detrimental. To implement a type of reward scheme that has previously been shown to undermine intrinsic motivation to read would be counter-productive, damaging to long-term reading motivation and, therefore, irresponsible (see 3.4 Ethical Considerations). Whilst it is desirable to increase the students' reading breadth and volume, research has shown that this can only be sustained if educators are 'creating interest in reading' in the first instance, (Gambrell, 1996, p.15).

In order to create or sustain the participating Year 7 students' interest in reading, two Year 7 classes were encouraged to participate in a challenge specific to their group. These were

devised at an English Faculty meeting and incorporated input from all nine members of the faculty. It was decided that one challenge would focus primarily on increasing the variety of reading material that students chose by issuing students with specific criteria that must be met in order to be awarded bronze, silver and gold certificates. Especially close collaboration with another English teacher was necessary in order to implement the certificates challenge, as the participants were a Year 7 class that I do not have contact time with. The second challenge took the form of a game that I encouraged my own tutor group to participate in. A world map was placed on the classroom wall and students were tasked with increasing their reading volume in order to move across the map more quickly. Both challenges ran for seven weeks during the summer term in 2015.

Certificates Challenge:

Much credence has been given to informational rewards above simple token rewards, with token rewards often being blamed for a young person's decrease in intrinsic interest for completing a task that has previously been rewarded. Morgan (1984) found that if 'a reward conveys information on subjects' competence on the task or skill in the target activity, intrinsic liking for the task will be enhanced and will result in greater probability of engagement in the task even in the absence of constraints,' (p.7). Chance (1993) supports the idea of rewards that aim to provide information about how successful the child has been with the task, rather than simply rewarding involvement with a token. He writes that persistence with an activity can be achieved 'by systematically providing rewards (especially praise) for meeting successively higher standards,' (p.789). These two studies have outlined the ideal outcome for – and have, therefore, been used to shape – the certificates challenge. If we are able to maintain, or even increase, students' engagement with reading by providing them with

positive information about their reading competence, then the challenge will be considered a success and extended beyond just a single tutor group.

The certificates challenge was presented to a Year 7 group by a colleague in the English Faculty after staff members had collaborated to create the challenge and the baseline data from that group had been gathered. Students were given a list of criteria that must be met in order to achieve a bronze, silver or gold certificate. The criteria for each level included two specified types of texts for students to read and two related tasks. These were outlined in a document that was given to each student and could also be used for the teacher to record the date that each part of the challenge was completed. The tasks are outlined below; students were asked to complete each one in the order specified:

BRONZE	1) Read an autobiography or a biography. TASK Summarize the book in less than 100 words DATE COMPLETED: 2) Read a book of poems. TASK Read your favourite poem to the teacher DATE COMPLETED:
SILVER	3) Read an adventure, science fiction or horror novel. TASK Storyboard a chapter DATE COMPLETED: 4) Read a graphic novel. TASK Draw a new cover DATE COMPLETED:
GOLD	5) Read a pre-twentieth century novel. TASK Review the book DATE COMPLETED: 6) Read a comedy novel. TASK Written description of any minor character

DATE COMPLETED:

The certificates challenge was devised in this way as a response to the lack of variety in young students' reading choices that had been perceived by school staff. Evidence from library loans and observations made by members of English Faculty staff who encourage students to read during tutor time showed that students' chosen texts rarely extended beyond teen fiction. The National Curriculum in English (Department for Education, 2014) requires Key Stage 3 students to 'read increasingly challenging material independently.' The certificates challenge aimed to reward students for doing just this. The language in pre-twentieth century texts is likely to be less familiar and, therefore, more challenging; comedy or graphic novels are less commonplace and would require students to spend more time searching the library shelves, understanding the variety of texts on offer. It has also been shown that there is a direct correlation between reading variety and reading volume (McElroy, 1968, p.158), indicating that reading a greater variety of texts whilst in Year 7 might help to maintain reading volume as students grow older. Additionally, by encouraging diversity in reading material, it was hoped that those who were not especially interested in reading teen fiction might develop an enthusiasm for another genre or time period and, thus, continue to read as they transition into Year 8. It was also suggested that the lack of variety in students' reading material could be a contributing factor to the declining interest in reading as students move through the school. Without variety, a student could potentially grow tired of reading altogether.

As has been shown, several researchers have outlined the value that praise and positivity can have on motivating students to complete specific tasks (see 2.3 Extrinsic Rewards and Intrinsic Motivation: Positive Correlations). For example, Brophy (1981) finds that consistent

and sincere praise will build self-esteem and self-efficacy in relation to reading (p.7) and Morgan (1984) found that 'receiving a large reward coupled with positive feedback on competence increased subsequent intrinsic motivation. On the other hand, large rewards coupled with negative feedback produced a corresponding decline,' (p.9). Whilst the receipt of a certificate cannot be considered a 'large reward', Brophy and Morgan's sentiments regarding positive and negative feedback were influential in creating the positive environment desirable for a reading study. In an attempt to surround the certificates challenge with positivity only, it was decided that it would be non-compulsory and at no point would the challenge form a part of a classroom task. This meant that no child could be chastised for choosing not to participate straight away, all involvement would be a result of the students' own motivation, and the teacher would express no disappointment in students at any time if, for example, they only managed to reach the bronze or silver level. Participation of any kind was met with positivity.

In addition to the receipt of certificates and praise from the teacher, participants in the reading challenge also had the opportunity for their text based tasks to be mounted on a display board in the school library. Claxton and Carr (2004) assert that 'student-made posters on the classroom wall, recording all kinds of student-generated ideas […] can likewise act as a running record of their achievement,' (p.94); these sentiments echo those of the present study. As has been outlined above, this challenge aimed to improve students'



attitudes towards reading through increasing the positive feedback associated with it, as well as allowing ample opportunity to provide information about students' achievements as readers. The primary purpose of the display was to provide participating students with a reminder of their achievements and inform them that what they had produced had been of a high quality.

Once students had participated in the certificates challenge, it was necessary to gather further quantitative data in order to ascertain the potential effects of the intervention and to compare these with both the second test group and the control group. Students were issued with the very same questionnaire that they had been given two months before, in order that direct comparisons could be made with their earlier responses. I ensured that I was able to issue the questionnaires personally, as it was necessary to explain why students were likely to recognise the document.

World Map Challenge:

This reward scheme was designed in response to numerous studies that have emphasised the importance of a positive environment for young people's academic motivation. Chance (1993) writes that 'People learn best in a responsive environment. Teachers who praise and reward students provide such an environment,' (p.788). Deci and Ryan (1985) provide yet more details of the type of classroom environment that they have shown to be conducive to learning. They write that a 'motivational wellspring of learning is likely to flourish' if the environment 'provides optimal challenges, rich sources of stimulation, and a context of autonomy,' (p.245). The aim of this reading challenge, therefore, was to have a physical representation of students' reading achievement on the wall of their tutor room for the

duration of the challenge. This was in order that students could view and potentially build on their achievement each day.

Physical representation of these students' reading achievement took the form of a large world map displayed on the classroom wall. Each child was given a small piece of card on which to write their name and decorate in any way they wished; a piece of string was then threaded through the card and affixed to a drawing pin; all pins were attached to Northamptonshire, England at the start of the challenge. Students were encouraged to decorate their pins in order to increase a feeling of ownership over the task and to make the challenge feel more personal. Each student in turn was asked to choose a city in another part of the world that they hoped to 'read their way' to. It was explained that they could move their pin one centimeter across the map for every 50 pages read over the following seven weeks in an effort to reach their target city. Again, I hoped to make the challenge more personal for each child and to differentiate between confident readers who would choose a city far from the starting point, and those who find reading more difficult and would aim for somewhere a little closer. Each child's decision was met with positivity regardless of how ambitious or cautious they had been, and recorded with the promise that students could choose another city if they reached their personal target before the seventh week. They were told that there would be a prize for the person who travelled the furthest, which was a £5 voucher for the town's bookshop. This was a response to those researchers who have expressed concerns about the potentially negative effect of rewards that are not proximal to the task. Marinak and Gambrell (2008) found that 'intrinsic interest is not undermined' if rewards have a clear link with the task (p.22), and Clark and Rumbold (2006) specify that 'Literacy-targeted rewards, such as books or book vouchers have been found to be more effective in developing reading motivation than rewards that are unrelated' (p.17). Whilst some students may have been fully aware that they were not sufficiently motivated or in possession of enough free time to win the overall prize, it was felt

that in choosing a target location all students could feel a sense of achievement and satisfaction should they manage to reach it.

When presented with the initiative, students were asked to make a log book with name written on the front in a decorative fashion if they preferred, and multiples of 50 written on the inside. They were asked to have a parent sign in order to verify each time they had read another 50 pages of a text. This system is a popular method by which students involved in studies such as these have recorded their participation in reading related activities. Studies carried out by Clark and Wahlberg (1968) and Gambrell (1996) have both used achievement log cards in order for students to record how much reading is completed over a set period of time.

This reward scheme also took place over a period of seven weeks. Some researchers, such as Clark and Wahlberg (1968, p.307), have been concerned by what they term the 'novelty effect' of any reward scheme. Indeed, it is very possible that the presence of the map in the classroom and the reading that students participate in in order to move across it could be considered a novelty and consequent interest could potentially be short lived. For this reason, the challenge was carried out for an extended period in order for the novelty effect to wear off and for students' continued participation to be a result of the will to read rather than temporary interest in a novel innovation.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

During the planning stages of this study, there were a number of questions raised regarding the ethics of gathering information from 11 and 12 year old children and their ability to

understand what was being asked of them. In order to ensure that this information was gathered ethically, the adults responsible for the welfare of participating students were fully informed of what the study would entail and the aims and objectives were outlined before any students were approached. Initially, close collaboration with the teacher implementing the certificates challenge was necessary in order to ensure that he was satisfied with what he was being asked to do and the extent of his involvement with the study. Following confirmation of this, I wrote to the headteacher of the participating school whose consent was necessary prior to any student involvement. This letter included the title of the study, an outline of what the students' involvement would entail, and the assurance that participants would remain anonymous at all times. I explained that participating students would be involved with a reward system and would be asked to complete a questionnaire during lesson time on two occasions during the year. I informed the headteacher that the objective of the study was to understand the extent to which reward systems could motivate Year 7 students to read, and explained that all data would be confidential and not used in any way other than that specified. The headteacher responded with support for the project. Finally, I wrote a letter to all of the parents in participating tutor groups explaining each of the above points. There were no parental objections.

A questionnaire was considered the most ethically sound method of gathering information from young students given the personal nature of some questions being asked. For example, students were asked to state the amount of time they spend reading and to choose the most accurate statement of their attitudes towards reading. Each participating student was aware of my own status as a teacher of English and might have felt uncomfortable expressing any negative yet truthful attitudes towards reading in a face-to-face interview, or being honest should they read very little. Questionnaires ensured that students could be truthful without

having to modify responses according to what they might see as an interviewer's preferred response.

When issued with a questionnaire, each group of students was asked not to write their names on the questionnaire and ensured that they would remain anonymous in the write up. Each time a questionnaire was issued, students were informed that I was carrying out research into their attitudes towards reading. There was no deception of participants at any time and students were assured that no follow-up questions would be asked regarding their questionnaire responses. Each group was informed of their right to withdraw in age-appropriate language. The questionnaire included questions of a non-sensitive nature, and did not marginalise any student on the grounds of age, culture, race, gender, sexuality, socio-economic standing or religion. There was no special incentive to complete the questionnaires and all children were treated equally regardless of the extent to which they chose to communicate their views.

Students were informed that their involvement was entirely voluntary and that they were not obliged to hand in a completed questionnaire if they did not want to. As is outlined above (3.1 Choosing a Sample), students at the participating school who have special educational needs belong to two supported tutor groups, neither of which were involved in the study. This meant that none of the participating students had any learning difficulty that might preclude them from understanding the task or the nature of their involvement. Questions asked of, and explanations given to, the children participating in the study were reflective of their age and consequent level of understanding (see 8.2 Appendix 2: Sample Questionnaire). None of the students in the sample required the use of a scribe, meaning that no participant had to compromise his or her right to anonymity by having to share answers openly.

In addition to students' involvement, supplementary qualitative data has been gathered from members of staff at the participating school. These participants are all adults and the study's aims and objectives were explained to them in full. None of these staff members have been referred to by name in the study and the school's name has been omitted from this work, thus ensuring anonymity of those staff members whose opinions appear here. One staff member, the school's librarian, has been quoted directly. This participant gave written consent via email for her words to be used in this study.

Finally, all research was carried out during participants' directed time. With the consent of the headteacher and, where necessary, the class teacher, all questionnaires were issued during lesson time in order to avoid encroaching on students' morning and lunch breaks. English Faculty staff members' opinions were sought during faculty meetings. I also collaborated closely with the school libriarian for the purposes of this study, however all of these meetings were held during the librarian's working hours and with her informed consent.

4. Findings

The first questionnaire was issued in February 2015; at this time students were half way through their first year of attendance at the participating school. A second, identical questionnaire was issued four months later in June 2015.

The quantitative data from students is presented below. This will be discussed in full in section 5: Analysis of Data, along with qualitative data gathered from school staff.

4.1 Presentation of Data

Q1: Mean average response to the following question:
How much do you enjoy reading? (Scale of 1-10 with 1 being the lowest).

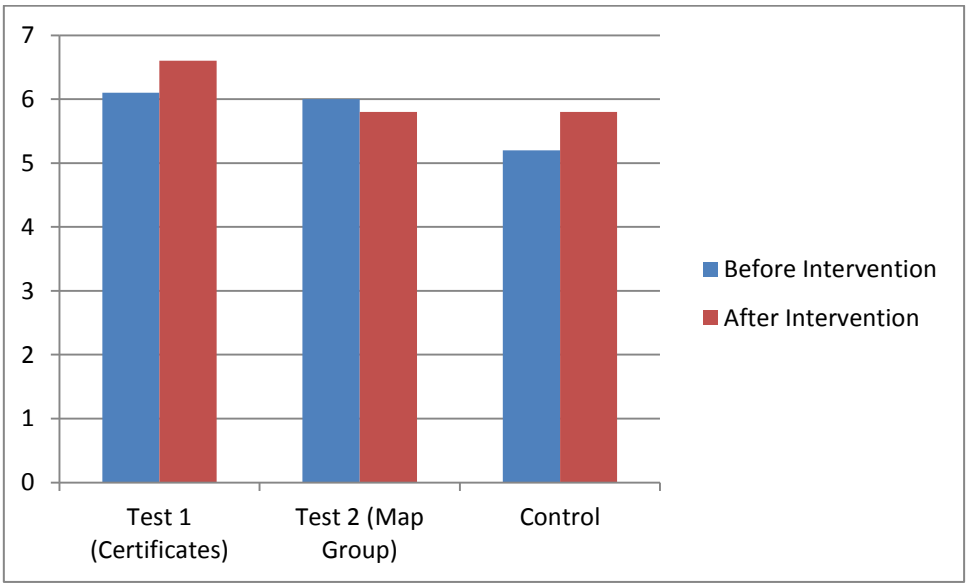


Figure 1

Q2: Frequency of responses to the following question:

How much time do you spend reading each week?

Responses of Test Group 1 – Certificates Challenge

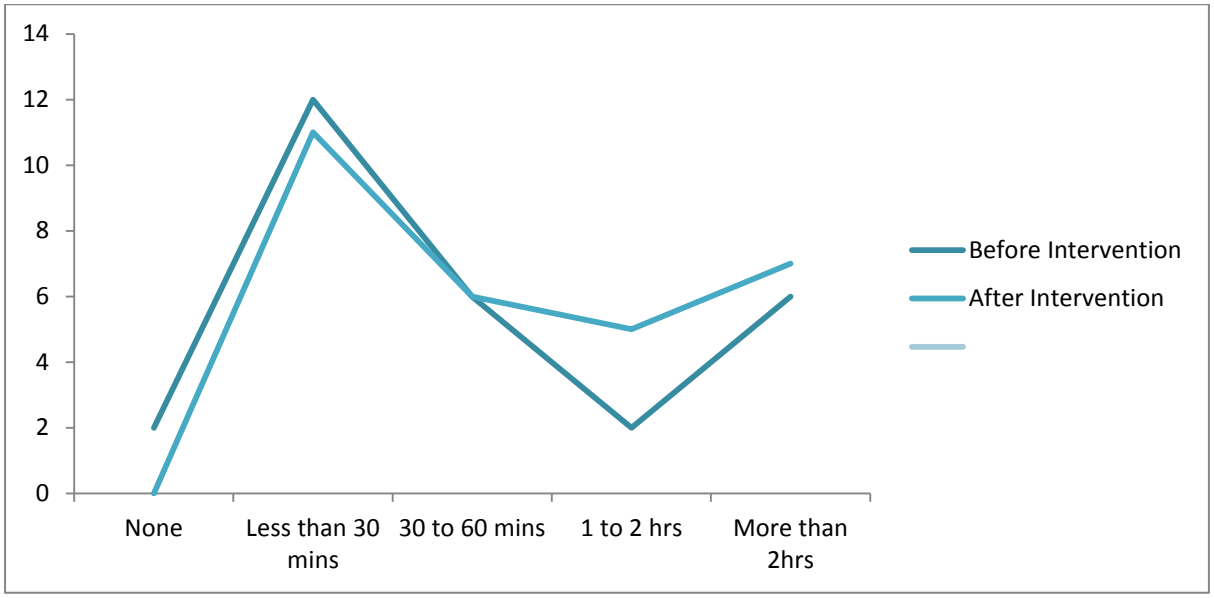


Figure 2

Responses of Test Group 2 – World Map Challenge

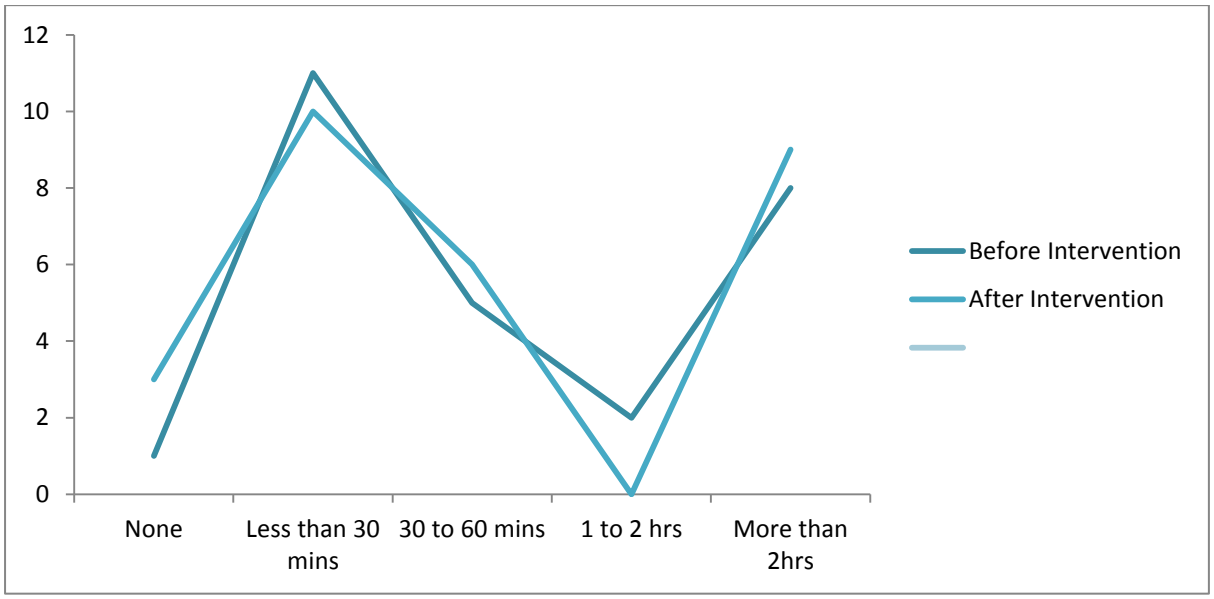


Figure 3

Responses of Control Group

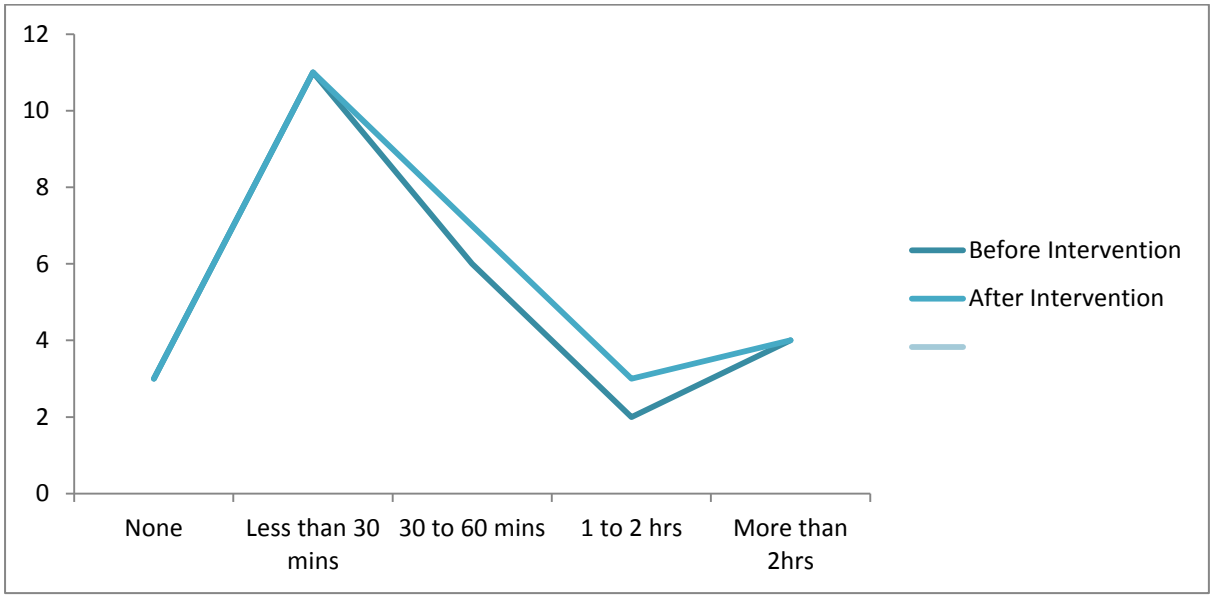


Figure 4

Q3: Percentage of students able to answer the question:

Think of all of the books that you have read over the last three years. Which one has been your favourite?

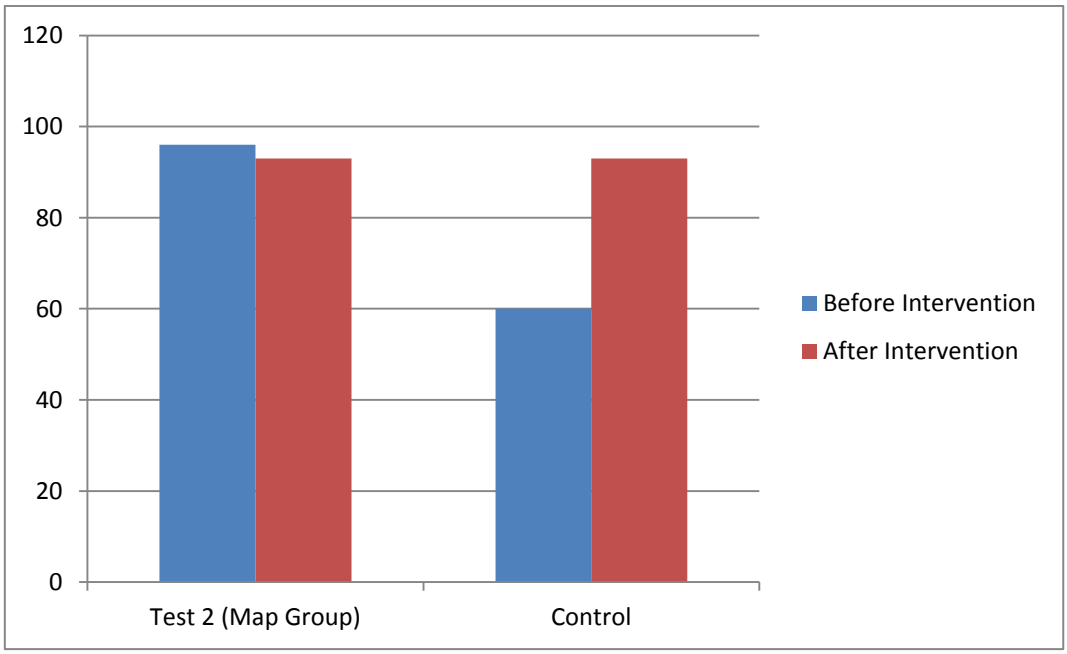


Figure 5

Q5: Frequency of responses to the following question:

Which of the following best describes how you feel about reading?

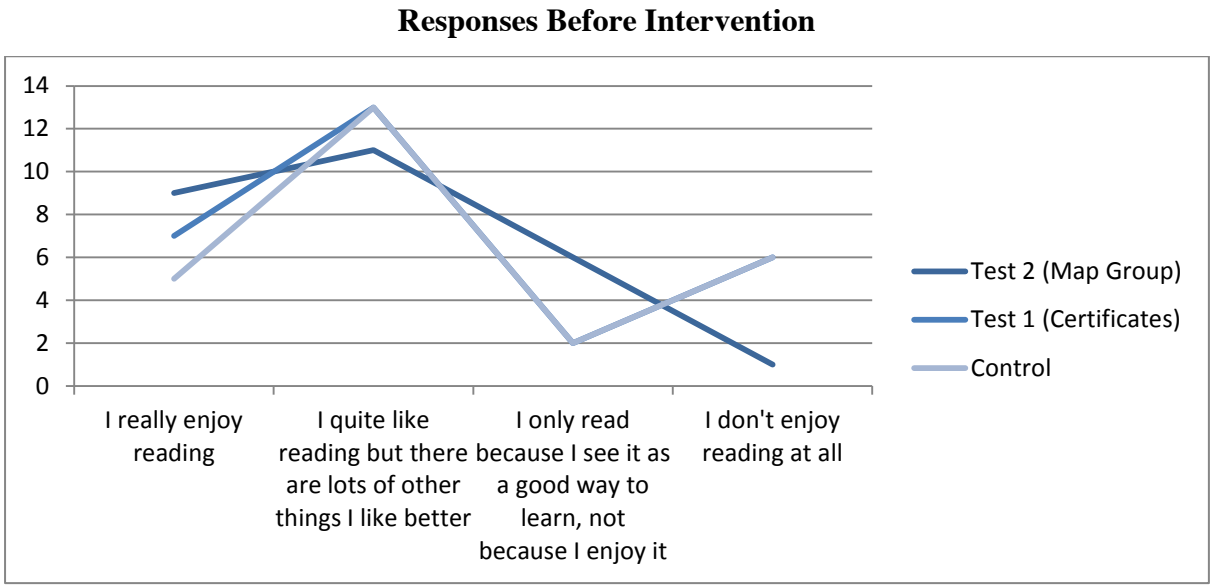


Figure 6

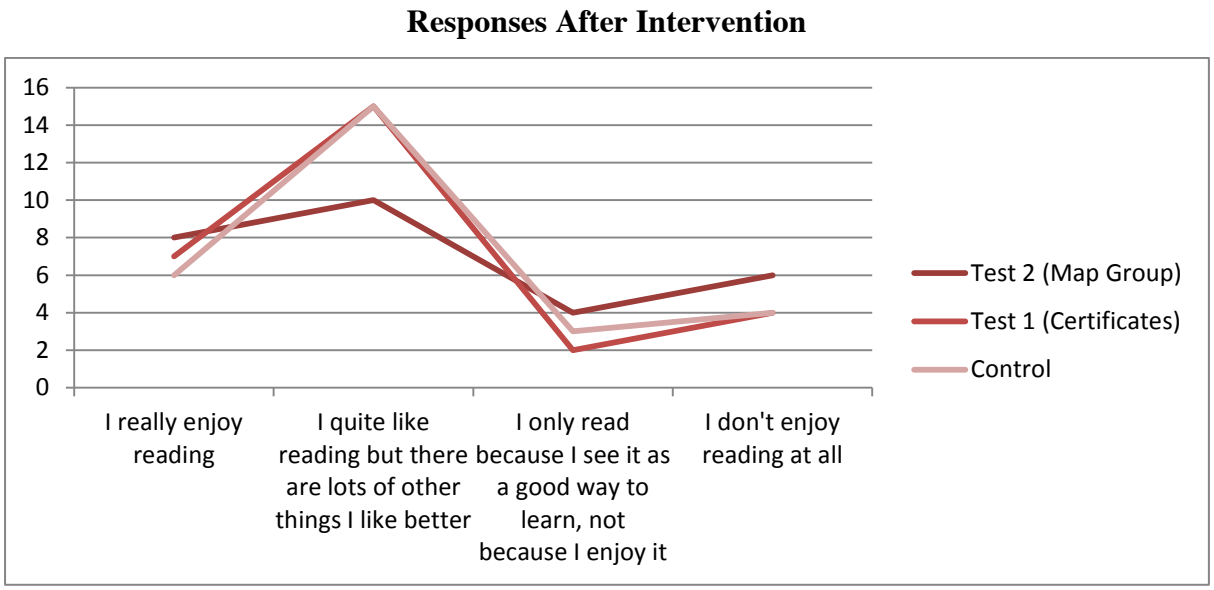


Figure 7

5. Analysis of Data

Test Group 1 – Certificates Challenge

Staff Observations

Participation in this challenge was especially positive. The group was comprised of 28 students. Of these, 26 achieved the bronze certificate, 20 reached silver, and 6 were awarded the gold certificate. This is an extremely satisfactory result given that the scheme was entirely voluntary and never incorporated into directed classroom activities. The number of students who achieved the silver certificate appears to be the most positive figure. As has been shown above, the silver certificate requires students to read four whole texts and complete four relevant tasks. The class showed that the majority of students were willing to spend an extended period of time reading and completing reading-related activities, thus indicating a very positive attitude. Such enthusiasm and positivity towards reading is significant given that the intervention took place towards the end of Year 7, at a time when literature and library statistics both show interest in reading to be in decline.

The participation levels suggest that to surround a reward system with praise alone, rather than acting negatively towards non-participation, can positively influence students to pursue academic challenges voluntarily and maintain intrinsic interest. As has been outlined above (3.3 Implementing Reward Schemes) the majority of evidence points towards the benefits of praise (Gambrell, 1996; Guthrie and Wigfield in: Kamil et al., 2000) and the present study appears to corroborate these. Measures were taken to ensure that students perceived a positive and safe environment in which to read a variety of text styles, many of which were unfamiliar and difficult, and thus develop their proficiency as readers. The member of staff

implementing the reward system has commented upon how freely the participating students spoke with him about their new reading experiences and how eagerly they showed him their completed tasks.

Reading has been shown to have a negative image amongst students both at the participating school and across the UK, with many believing that readers are 'boring' and 'don't go out much' (Clark and Osborne, 2008, p.8), as well as the library at the participating school having a well-known 'safe place' image for the socially isolated. If students continue to speak about reading freely and enthusiastically, reading could begin to be seen as a normal activity rather than one for the 'boring' and isolated.

Test Group 2 – World Map Challenge

Staff Observations

This initiative proved most popular at the beginning of the study, with the greatest participation occurring within the first two weeks. Students were presented with the challenge during tutor time in the days leading up to the Easter break. This break lasted for two weeks and therefore allowed the students to read a significant amount and feel as though they had achieved a good deal before moving their pin across the map for the first time. Of the 29 students in the group, 22 had their log book signed by a parent in the first two weeks of the challenge and were, therefore, able to participate straight away. However, there were six students who participated after the Easter break but did not manage to move their pin further in subsequent weeks. The map below is as it appeared after the first two weeks of reading:



Of particular interest is the child who read 3800 pages during the Easter break and who was able to move his pin straight from Northamptonshire to Sydney. When I remarked upon the achievement, the student responded: 'We went to Norfolk for two weeks. There was no internet and nothing else to do.' The response corresponds with the school librarian's thoughts regarding the perceived competition between books and other interests currently popular amongst young people. In a recent email exchange regarding the dwindling enthusiasm for reading amongst older students she wrote: 'reading is struggling to compete with gaming [and] social media.' The aforementioned student clearly considers reading to be a less attractive activity than many others, mentioning particularly that he only read because he was in an area with poor internet access. It seems unlikely, therefore, that he would have completed any significant amount of reading if he had been able to participate in the sorts of technology based activities that the school librarian outlined as the main competitors for students' leisure time. Whilst it would be very pleasing to see this particular student discover

an enthusiasm for reading amongst the 3800 pages, this does not appear to be the case when the remaining five weeks of the challenge are considered. According to his reading record this student read nothing at all until the very end of the challenge; he has an entry of 300 pages for the final week, though his motivation for reading during that week remains unclear.

Also enthusiastic at the beginning of the intervention was a girl who has been diagnosed with dyslexia this academic year and whose mother recently described her as 'allergic to reading'. I received an email from the school librarian after the challenge had been announced, which described how this student had excitedly told her that she intended to 'read her way to Philadelphia'. The student was especially eager in the first two weeks, reading a total of 400 pages. Whilst she did not manage to read anything after this, the initiative did give her the motivation to read whole books even if just for a short while. This is unlikely to have been something that the student in question would have done otherwise, and could potentially have built her confidence with reading.

The map below is as it appeared after the seventh week of the challenge. It is especially interesting to see the level of involvement from the class, as there is a wide dispersal of pins indicative of the enthusiasm that a great many students showed for the challenge.



Question 1: Mean average response to the following question: How much do you enjoy reading? (Scale of 1-10 with 1 being the lowest).

According to a variety of literature, the participating school should expect interest in reading to be at its highest among the youngest students. Few researchers have offered reasons for this trend, though it has certainly proven to be the case at the participating school. As has been shown, involvement in reading related activities, as well as library loans, show Year 7 to have the most positive attitude towards reading. They reliably make the most library loans every year, and are typically the only participants in reading-related activities. Trends have also shown that the school should expect a sharp decline in this enthusiasm as students move towards and reach Year 8.

Results show that enthusiasm for reading was reasonably high amongst the participants as a whole, with the mean average answer to the above question being 6 and 6.1 for the test

groups. The control group claimed to enjoy reading slightly less with an average answer of at 5.2.

Should these groups follow the trend set out above, their interest in reading would be expected to be at its peak when the first questionnaire was issued in February. It would then be expected to decline as the year came to an end and we would anticipate a reflection of this in the responses to the second questionnaire in June. The participants of this study do not appear to have followed this trend. The most positive results to come from the study can be found in the group who participated in the certificates challenge. This group can be compared directly with those who were offered the world map challenge as both entered the study with very similar average responses to Question 1. The certificates challenge appears to have maintained the participating students' interest in reading as their average response to this question of enjoyment increased by 0.4 at a time when we would expect it to decline. As has been outlined above (3.3 Implementing Reward Schemes), a number of staff members at the participating school have commented on the lack of variety in children's reading choices; it has been suggested that this lack of variety could be partly responsible for the loss of interest in reading that has been observed amongst children of this age in the UK.

The responses from the second test group, however, are less clear. The average response to Question 1 decreased from 6 to 5.8 over the period of four months, indicating that students' enjoyment of reading had declined during this time. Initially it appears as though the warnings relating to the potentially negative effects that rewards are believed to have on intrinsic interest ought to have been heeded (McLoyd, 1979; Chance, 1993; Kohn, 1999). However, a decrease of 0.2 is very small and in a sample size of only 29 the response of just one student could potentially cause this difference. In order to understand the full extent of the reward scheme's impact it would be necessary to repeat the study using a much larger

participatory group. Additionally, given the current trends that the school has noted regarding declining attitudes towards reading over time, it is possible that the decrease in average response might have been greater without the implementation of a tangible reward scheme. Whilst 6 students only participated in the first two weeks and 3 chose not to participate at all, a large majority of students voluntarily took part in the challenge throughout the seven weeks of its running. When the students' scores were calculated and it was announced that the game had come to an end, there was much protest from the group and it was immediately decided by a majority vote that the scheme would continue for another seven weeks.

The most perplexing result from this section of the questionnaire came from the control group. This group were not given any tangible reward for reading, and yet their average response for reading improved by 0.6 over the test period. This was the largest improvement in apparent enjoyment of reading across the three groups. On the one hand, this could be used for evidence against the implementation of tangible reward schemes. It is necessary to consider this group's responses to subsequent questions in order to ascertain whether or not there is in fact an observable benefit to receiving no rewards for reading at all.

Question 2: How much time do you spend reading each week?

A study by McElroy (1968) found a direct correlation between reading variety and reading volume (p.158). His work indicates that we should expect the first test group in the present study – those involved in the certificates challenge – to have increased their time spent reading between the completion of the first and second questionnaires. This expectation is due to a large percentage of students choosing to participate in the challenge and thus succeeding in reading a wide variety of material during the seven weeks. When the students' responses are considered, this certainly be said to have been the case. Figure 2 (in: 4.1:

Presentation of Data) shows that 8 students claimed to read for more than an hour each week before the study began, which then increased to 12 students after the study. Similarly, before the intervention there were 12 students who claimed to read for less than 30 minutes each week, and 2 who did not read at all; after the intervention only 11 read for less than 30 minutes per week and no student claimed to read nothing at all.

These statistics concord with McElroy's discovery. Participation in the certificates challenge was high, with 20 students reaching the silver level and almost all reaching bronze. This means that almost every student in this group read a variety of texts during the seven weeks of the intervention, whereas previously they had been observed by staff to read only teenage fiction. In corroboration with these observations, every book singled out in the first questionnaire as a child's 'favourite' was young adult fiction. No pre-intervention response from this group included the type of texts such as pre-20th century, graphic novel or non-fiction books that students subsequently read in order to receive their reward of a certificate. A large majority of students in the class succeeded in reading a variety of texts during the seven weeks and there is, therefore, an observable correlation between their reading variety and their time spent reading.

In addition, the results of Test Group 1 are not in keeping with the trends that have previously been set by other Key Stage 3 students in recent years (see 8.1 Appendix 1). As has been noted, students' interest in reading and reading participation appears to be at its highest when the students are in Year 7 and then decline as they move through the school. Attitudes towards reading have also been seen to become less positive with each year that passes. Each year group borrows fewer books from the participating school's library than the group before them, and participation in library-run activities has declined even amongst Year 7 students, who reliably show more enthusiasm for these than any other year group. The students in Test

Group 1, however, show a very positive interest in reading given that almost one third of respondents claim to read for more than an hour each week and seven students read for more than two hours.

Test Group 2, however, claimed to spend less time reading after the intervention than they did before it (see Figure 3). Because reading is entirely optional for these students, their reading volume can be considered a reflection of how intrinsically motivated they are to read. The reward of praise and progression across the map does not appear to have made a significant difference to the amount of time that this group spends reading. The chart above (figure 3) shows that responses were very similar in February and June 2015 despite the seven weeks' intervention in between. Indeed, amount of reading has evidently decreased as two more students claimed to read nothing at all in June than the number who responded this way in February. This may be due to the nature of the reward for this group. Whilst both test groups' participation in the schemes was optional and met with lots of praise from the class teacher, the certificates reward scheme can be considered to give students more information about their reading proficiency than the map challenge, as the latter purely rewards reading volume. These results are in accordance with the research outlined above, which values informational rewards above all others (McLoyd 1979; Chance, 1993) and considers it the most suitable for maintaining students' intrinsic interest in a task.

The control group produced some interesting figures in response to this question. Figure 4 shows that there is almost no difference at all between the amount of time that they spent reading in February and June. It could be said, therefore, that changes in reading behaviour in the test groups has potentially been caused by the tangible reward schemes. However, the test groups in the present study are small with only 28 participants in each. It is likely that a much larger study would be necessary in order to allow us to state that the implementation of the

reward scheme was responsible for the changes in students' reading behaviour between February and June 2015.

Question 3: Think of all of the books that you have read over the last three years. Which one has been your favourite? and Question 4: Please tick one of the following: a) I chose to read this book by myself. b) I read this book as part of my school work, e.g. during English lessons.

The statistics produced by the students' responses to Question 3 can be misleading. As has been mentioned (in 3.2 Gathering Baseline Data), the aim of Question 3 was to ascertain the number of students who were able to name a favourite book. It was anticipated that the ability to do so would indicate that a student could bring to mind a positive experience relating to reading, as a student would necessarily have experienced enjoyment from a book if they are to single it out as a 'favourite'. Similarly, it was expected that any student unable to answer the question would struggle to do so because he or she could not bring to a mind any book that they had enjoyed. If this is assumed to be the case, statistics suggest that the test groups had the most positive attitudes towards reading; all except one of them was able to name a favourite book before the intervention. By contrast, fewer students in both of these groups were able to name a favourite book after the interventions, giving the illusion of a more negative attitude following the implementation of reward systems. When the raw data is examined, however, this cannot be said to have occurred. What had not been anticipated in the design of the questionnaire was that the students in the test groups who could not name a favourite book after the intervention struggled to do so because – as they stated on their questionnaires – they had too many favourite books to choose from. This does, in fact, denote a more positive attitude following the intervention as these students' perceived list of books that they have found a great deal of enjoyment in appears to have grown.

In contrast, however, the control group were far more negative about reading when answering Questions 3 and 4. Only 60% of respondents were able to name a favourite book and none specified that they were unable to answer because they had too many to choose from. Students in the test groups who did specify that they had 'too many' favourite books were then able to answer Question 4. All students in the test group stated that the books they had enjoyed the most had been their own choice, rather than a book they had read for schoolwork. Students in the control group who did not answer Question 3 also refrained from answering Question 4. The control group's responses indicate, therefore, that 40% of the class could not answer because they had not read a book in the last three years that they found especially enjoyable. Respondents in the control group who were able to answer Question 4 also indicated that their favourite books had been those they chose to read themselves. This has implications for the school's curriculum, as not one child of 84 could say that their favourite book was one that they had read at school during the last three years and, therefore, gives a negative impression schools' text choices. In light of these findings, more research could be done into the types of texts that students would enjoy reading in class and could, perhaps, help to inspire students to read more of their own volition.

Question 5: Which of the following best describes how you feel about reading?

- a) I really enjoy reading
- b) I quite like reading but there are lots of other things I like better.
- c) I only read because I see it as a good way to learn, not because I enjoy it.
- d) I don't enjoy reading at all.

The results from this section of the questionnaire were contrary to that of the Education Standards Research Team (Department for Education, 2012) who also gathered information

from young people about their motivations for reading. The research group found that 'reading for pleasure is not always cited as the key reason for children reading… The majority of children surveyed seem to respond with skills-based reasons, reasons to do with learning and understanding,' (p.17). The questionnaire in the present study offered children the answer: 'I only read because I see it as a good way to learn, not because I enjoy it' to the question: 'Which of the following best describes how you feel about reading?' Whilst the findings of the Department for Education study suggest that this would be a popular choice, in fact only 10 of the 84 participating students chose this answer before the interventions and even fewer (9) chose it afterwards. This was the least popular response to the questionnaire in both February and June, indicating either that students at the participating school have alternative motivations for reading, or that the potential that reading has for increasing their learning is not sufficiently attractive to motivate them to read.

The most popular option before and after the intervention was 'I quite like reading but there are lots of other things I like better.' This was the most commonly chosen option for students in both test groups and the control group before and after the implementation of reward schemes. This figure corroborates the qualitative data collected above, such as the response from a student who claimed only to have completed a significant amount of reading during the Easter break because he 'went to Norfolk for two weeks. There was no internet and nothing else to do.' The response of the participating students also indicate that the concerns the librarian has for reading 'struggling to compete with gaming [and] social media' are in fact valid. The number of alternative pastimes on offer for secondary school age children are numerous and easily accessible.

In accordance to the findings above, those involved with the informational reward (Test Group 1) showed a slightly more attitude towards reading in June than they had earlier in the

year. Before the implementation of the reward scheme, six students claimed that they 'don't enjoy reading at all'. By the end of the scheme this figure had decreased to only four, and two more students claimed to 'quite like reading' than had done previously. Those who had claimed to 'really enjoy reading' maintained their apparent enthusiasm, as seven students chose this option before and after the intervention.

In contrast, Test Group 2 showed far less positive attitudes towards reading after participating in the map challenge. Their responses indicate that they are, in fact, following the trend set by students before them: that of a declining interest in reading as they grow older. Prior to the implementation of reward schemes, this group were very positive about reading with only one respondent claiming not to enjoy reading at all. After the reward scheme, six students chose this answer. This would suggest that interventions such as the certificates challenge, those that are based clearly on informational rewards and reward variety in reading, are much more successful at maintaining Year 7 students' positive attitudes than schemes designed to reward reading volume alone. Given that each test group was comprised of only 28 students, a larger sample would be useful in order for these findings to be stated with confidence.

6. Conclusion

The primary aim of this study was to ascertain the extent to which tangible reward schemes could help maintain what Gambrell (1996) terms 'the *skill* and the *will* to read,' (p.15).

Reading skills have been shown to have a close relationship with reading motivation, as young people who read more have been shown to be more competent readers, and studies have also shown that young people are more highly motivated to complete a task if they perceive a certain level of competence for it. The present study aimed to ascertain whether or not tangible reward schemes could help to increase both reading volume and reading motivation. A study carried out by Wigfield and Guthrie (1997, in: Guthrie et al. 2009, p.235) found that 'there is a direct correlation between a young person's reading volume and their reading skills.' In turn, an increased reading volume has been found to increase reading competence by Guthrie et al. (2009) and Campbell, Voelkl and Donahue, (1997).

The reward schemes implemented in this study were shaped by a range of relevant literature. Because previous researchers had found informational rewards to be especially effective and found that reading variety had the potential to increase reading volume, Test Group 1 were offered a challenge that would provide such variety and offer information regarding participants' reading competence. Responses from participating students showed this reward scheme to have the most positive effect on Year 7 students' attitudes towards reading. Whilst participation was voluntary, a large majority of students elected to take part and experienced a great deal of success. Following the study, students in this group were generally still positive about reading. A greater number of students stated that they enjoyed reading after the intervention and fewer students claimed to dislike reading entirely. Furthermore, students in this group claimed to have increased their reading volume after the intervention, indicating

that variety of reading can indeed have a positive effect on students' attitudes. This is in corroboration with qualitative data from members of staff who voiced concerns that a lack of variety in students' reading may cause them to lose interest in the activity, along with the research from McElroy (1968, p.158) who found a direct correlation between the amount of variety in participants' reading choices and the amount of time that these participants spent reading.

The effects of the second tangible reward scheme – the map challenge – do not appear to be as positive. Students in Year 7 have been observed both nationally and in the participating school to be enthusiastic about reading, and evidence suggests that young people's attitudes towards reading become less positive as they grow older. This is corroborated by the observable trends at the participating school: library loan statistics indicate a negative correlation between age and borrowing, and Year 7 is typically the only year group to participate in reading-related activities voluntarily. It would be expected, therefore, that Year 7 students would show a much less positive attitude towards reading as they approach Year 8 than they did halfway through Year 7. As has been stated, the aim of this study was to understand the potential that tangible rewards have for preventing this loss of interest in reading that educators have come to expect. Responses from Test Group 2 appear to show that their attitudes towards reading have become more negative in accordance with the expected trend. This is in spite of a tangible reward scheme being put in place, and a large majority of students choosing to participate in this.

It would appear, therefore, that the existence of a reward scheme is not sufficient to maintain Year 7 students' positive attitudes towards reading as they grow older. The findings of this study indicate that the type of reward scheme is far more important than the mere fact of one. A reward scheme that provides information about reading competence and rewards reading

variety appears to have a much more positive effect on Year 7 students' attitudes towards reading than schemes intended to reward reading volume alone.

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8.1 Appendix 1: Library Loan Statistics

Academic Year Loan Statistics 2012 to 2014

Year Group	Sept 2012 – July 2013	Sept 2013 – July 2014	Total Difference
7	943	697	-246
8	865	295	-570
9	493	165	-328
10	156	61	-95
11	67	63	-4
Sixth Form	18	10	-8
TOTAL	2542	1261	-1281

Monthly Loan Statistics September 2014 to March 2015

Month	Comment	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4	Key Stage 5	Staff
Sept	Library Inductions	243	19	4	10
Oct	Included 'Private Peaceful' (Y7 study)	204	12	0	3
Nov	Included 'Trash' (Y8 study)	181	13	1	4
Dec	Included 'The Merchant of Venice' (Y11 study)	304	74	2	2
Jan	Readathon	243	7	1	2
Feb	Readathon	113	15	3	5
March	World Book Day	122	4	1	0

8.2 Appendix 2: Sample Questionnaire

Reading Questionnaire
There is no need to put your name on this sheet.
All responses will be kept confidential.

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

1. How much do you enjoy reading? (Scale of 1-10 with 1 being the lowest)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. How much time do you spend reading each week?

a) None

b) Less than 30 minutes

c) Between 30 and 60 minutes

d) Between 1 and 2 hours

e) More than 2 hours

3. Think of all of the books that you have read over the last three years. Which one has been your favourite?

4. Please tick one of the following:

- I chose to read this book myself.

- I read this book as part of my school work, e.g. during English lessons.

5. Which of the following best describes how you feel about reading?

a) I really enjoy reading.

b) I quite like reading but there are lots of other things I like better.

c) I only read because I see it as a good way to learn, not because I enjoy it.

d) I don't enjoy reading at all.