

Children's personality and their motivation to read

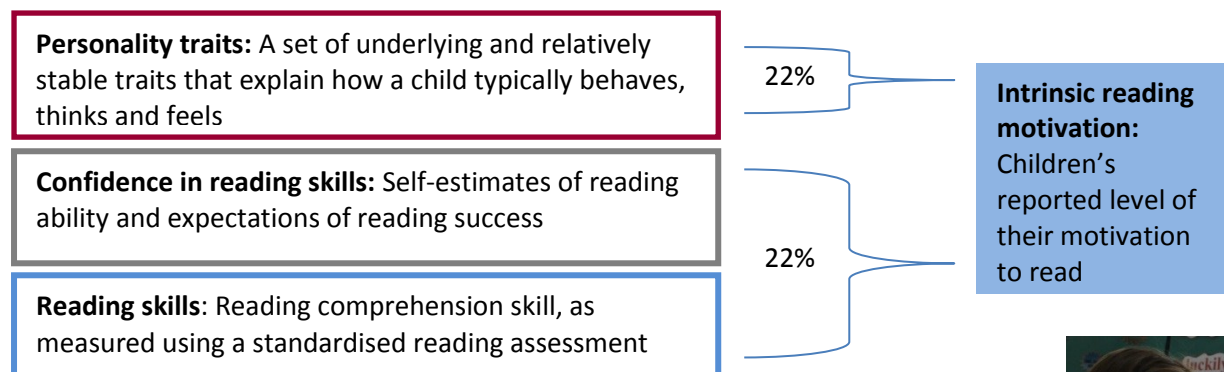
A summary for teachers

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Background: There is good evidence to suggest that children's motivation to read is associated with their reading skill and development. Therefore it is important to understand more about children's motivation to read. For example, what factors influence children's reading motivation?

Aims: The present study examined the extent to which children's personality traits, their confidence in their reading skills (self-concept) and their levels of reading skill predicted their motivation to read.

Participants: 295 children (aged 9 – 11) completed questionnaires assessing their motivation to read, personality traits, confidence in reading skills (self-concept) and an assessment of reading skill.



Results: Children's personality traits (which are unrelated to reading and regarded as relatively stable) explained the same amount of variance (22%) in levels of reading motivation as children's confidence in their reading skills and actual reading skills.



Discussion and implications for education:

Since personality traits are regarded as relatively stable, children's motivation to read may be quite resistant to change. However, developing certain personality traits, such as intellectual curiosity, may be advantageous for enhancing children's motivation to read.

Children's confidence in their reading skills was a stronger predictor of their motivation to read than their actual reading skill; therefore increasing children's confidence in their reading abilities may confer advantages on their motivation to read.

The influence of children's personalities should be considered within the primary school classroom.

Further research is necessary to examine the relative importance of child characteristics (e.g., personality), in addition to home characteristics (e.g., parent's attitudes towards reading) and teacher and school characteristics (e.g., availability of appropriate and interesting texts at school) on children's motivation to read.

Academic paper: Medford, E., & McGeown, S. P. (2012). The influence of personality characteristics on children's intrinsic reading motivation. *Learning and Individual Differences*, 22, 786-791.