

## Lesson Focus: Intrinsic Motivation

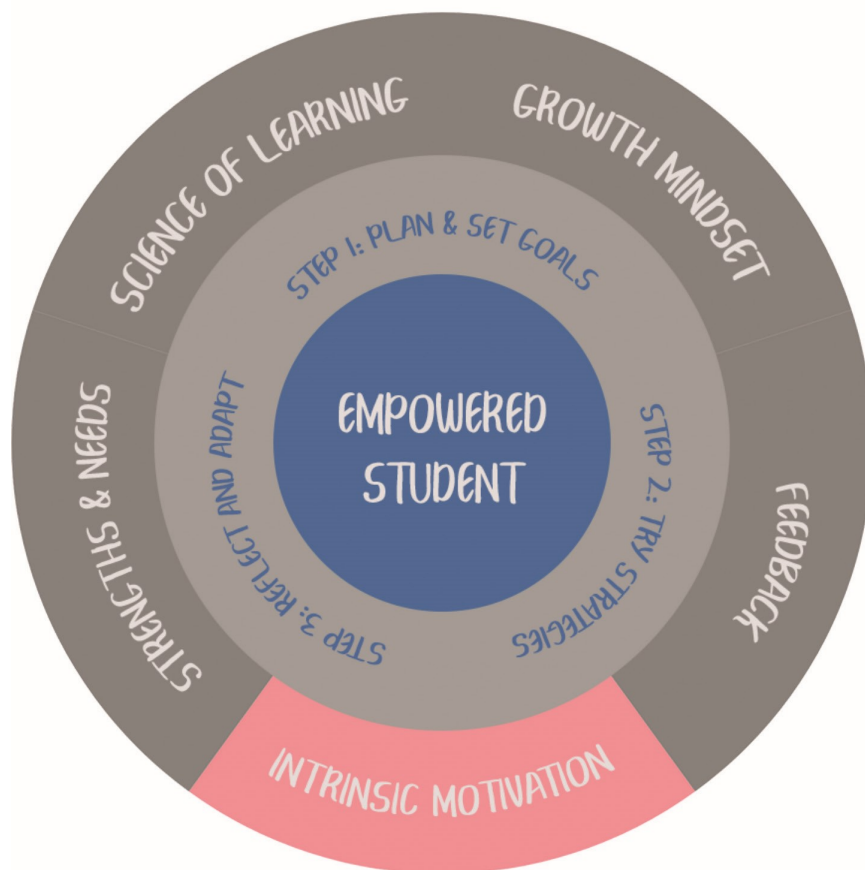


Figure 6: Intrinsic motivation

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# Lesson 4

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## Intrinsic Motivation

**M**otivation plays a key role in the process of successful learning. External factors like achieving good grades and pleasing others can work as short-term motivators and can even help to push students toward long-term success. However, extrinsic motivators like grades or special treats can start to lose value after elementary school for many students (Kohn, 1993). They can also lead to excessive stress or anxiety.

In contrast, intrinsic motivators develop from our own unique passions, interests, and reasons for wanting to learn and work hard. Successful outcomes driven by intrinsic motivation lead to self-confidence and the enthusiasm to persevere, even in the face of setbacks.



### VITAL VOCAB

***extrinsic motivation:*** Behavior that is driven by external rewards such as grades and praise. This type of motivation arises from outside the individual, often from a parent, a teacher, or a material reward.

***intrinsic motivation:*** Behavior that is driven by internal rewards, such as feelings of fulfillment, pleasure, and interest.



## TEACHER TAKEAWAYS

- ❑ Extrinsic motivators like grades, a gold star, or special treats can help younger students be compliant and learn. However, those rewards are far less effective in higher grades.
- ❑ The best way to develop intrinsic motivation is to help students identify their personal interests, strengths, and goals. Help them see how working on a given assignment or subject can be tied to achieving their long-term goals.
- ❑ When possible, give students a choice in projects and assignments. Choice instills ownership and increases the likelihood they will be interested, motivated, and successful.



## STUDENT TAKEAWAYS

- ❑ Ultimately your life satisfaction depends on discovering what motivates you, not on satisfying your teachers, parents, or friends.
- ❑ When you enjoy what you do, you are far more likely to be successful. Take time to discover what you enjoy. Try not to worry about what others are doing or thinking.



### MINDPRINT STRATEGIES FOR STUDENTS

- Develop Intrinsic Motivation (<https://my.mindprintlearning.com/toolbox/toolbox-demo/product/11337>) (T)
- Project-Based Learning (PBL) (<https://my.mindprintlearning.com/toolbox/toolbox-demo/product/12101>) (T)
- Tools for Project-Based Learning ([https://my.mindprintlearning.com/toolbox/uid/search?name=&academic\\_topics=504&cognitive\\_skills=&interests=&product\\_types=2.4.5.6.7.8.9&age\\_range\\_min=3&age\\_range\\_max=21&order\\_by=bestfit\\_score+desc&uses\\_recommendations=&pills=academic\\_topics%7C504](https://my.mindprintlearning.com/toolbox/uid/search?name=&academic_topics=504&cognitive_skills=&interests=&product_types=2.4.5.6.7.8.9&age_range_min=3&age_range_max=21&order_by=bestfit_score+desc&uses_recommendations=&pills=academic_topics%7C504)) (T)



### A CLOSER LOOK

- Articles on Intrinsic Motivation; Mind/Shift ([ww2.kqed.org/mindshift/tag/intrinsic-motivation/](http://ww2.kqed.org/mindshift/tag/intrinsic-motivation/))
- 6 Tips for Getting Started with Genius Hour; Edutopia ([www.edutopia.org/groups/personalized-learning/802456](http://www.edutopia.org/groups/personalized-learning/802456))
- Ideas for Genius Hour; Genius Hour ([www.geniushour.com](http://www.geniushour.com))
- Articles on Grit, Growth Mindset, and Intrinsic Motivation; Mindprint Learning ([mindprintlearning.com/article/topics/academic-potential/grit-growth-mindset/](http://mindprintlearning.com/article/topics/academic-potential/grit-growth-mindset/))



## LESSON ACTIVITIES

### Direct Instruction

Motivation: Discuss the difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. (E, M, H)

### Student Activity

Watch and discuss Logan LaPlant's TEDx Talk: Hackschooling Makes Me Happy ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=h11u3vtcpaY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h11u3vtcpaY)). Discuss the role students can play in taking control of their own learning. (E, M)

### Student Activity

My Interests and Passions: Students complete exercise and teachers can use responses to support lesson planning. (E, M, H)

### Student Activity

Classroom Rules/Commandments: Consider as a start-of-the-term activity. Have the class brainstorm ideas for class rules either independently or as a group. As a class, narrow down or prioritize the rules that will be most important for successful, self-regulated learning. Post the final rules in the classroom. Giving students

some control over the classroom environment is a first step in allowing them to take control of their overall learning. (E, M)

### Student Activity

Choose an App: Allow students to search their Mindprint Toolbox by interest and choose an app or website to play during class or for homework. Afterward, you can ask students why they chose the app they did and what they learned. (E, M)

### Coaching

Choice Assignments: Offer assignments that allow students to choose their topic and/or their presentation format. Project-based learning is a great approach to support student interest and choice. Incorporate Genius Hour ([www.geniushour.com](http://www.geniushour.com)) into your class curriculum, setting aside an hour a week for students to work on an independent passion project. (E, M, H)

### Teacher-led Discussion

Explain how incorporating things you enjoy into your learning, or learning to find them within activities, helps make school more interesting and motivating. When thinking about what you enjoy, students should think about not only hobbies or activities they are already involved in, but also topics, causes, and ideas they like thinking about.

Give examples of how their interests can lead to something else. For example: an interest in hands-on construction can lead to using blocks/cubes to help with solving math problems; an interest in drawing can lead to illustrating when taking notes; or an interest in animals can be taken into consideration when choosing books to read or a research topic.

Discuss the importance of “feeling” your interests rather than focusing on grades or what friends are doing.

Brainstorm a list of extrinsic vs. intrinsic motivators and discuss them in class.

Be prepared that this conversation could easily evolve into a discussion of the importance of grades versus learning and the stress that students might be feeling.

**Teacher Example**

Give an example of a passion of your own and relate it to choices you have made in your own learning.

Consider explaining how your passions or interests led you to teaching a specific subject, working with children, or pursuing a hobby.

Talk about how you discovered your passion—was it something you always just knew, or how did you go about discovering it?

## **STUDENT ACTIVITY:**

### **My Interests and Passions**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Use the space below to write a list of the activities, topics, and thoughts that interest you or that you would like to learn more about. If you have time, write about how you would like to apply those interests in this class.

## **STUDENT ACTIVITY:**

### **Classroom Rules/Commandments**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Take a few minutes to brainstorm class rules for the semester. With your classmates, discuss and prioritize those rules. How will you self-monitor and help each other stick to them throughout the semester?





Figure 7: Metacognition, the key to a growth mindset