

Student motivation

Students were surveyed to measure changes in motivation to read using an anonymous online survey instrument designed in consultation with Dr Merga. We surveyed students pre and post intervention on a variety of factors.

When students were asked whether they liked reading in their free time at home, the vast majority of the students answered definitely or probably yes. Pre intervention 10% of our students answered definitely not and this decreased to 7% after the intervention.

The majority of our students read regularly prior to the intervention and the Just Read program did not change this significantly as 65% of our students choose to read every day or at least once a week in their free time.

For students in the study, there was no significant difference between reasons for reading pre and post intervention. Figure 1 below shows the post data. It is interesting to note the wide variety of reasons chosen for reading, including reading for wellbeing.

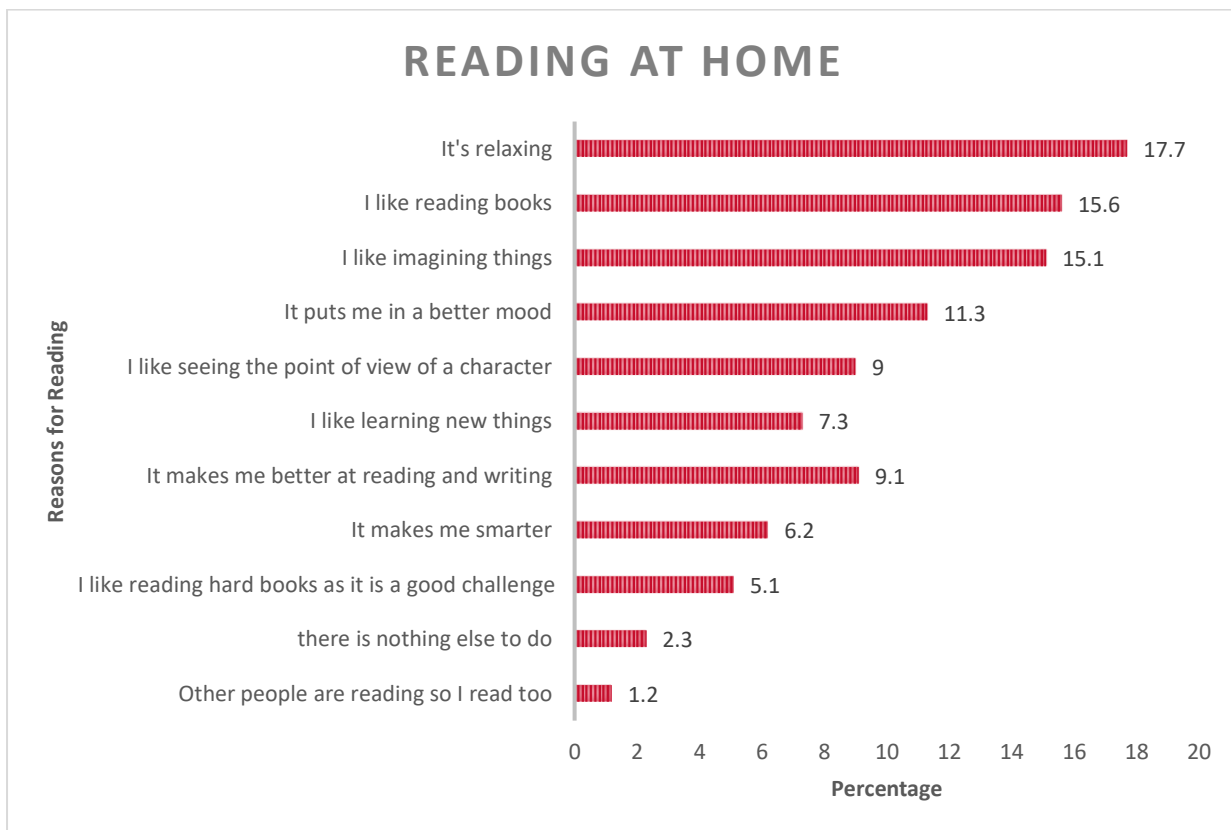


Figure 1

Of the small percentage of students who indicated that they do not like reading at home, the most common reason given was "I would rather do other things with my free time". Those students who chose "reading books is boring" reduced by 2.6% to 10.7% after the intervention. We predict that this would be further reduced had we surveyed the students after the second year of the project. Students also identified being unable to find an interesting book and also not having any good books available at home as reasons why they did not like reading at home. As the survey was anonymous we are unable to identify individuals, which makes it more difficult for our librarians to offer reader advisory to these students.

In terms of student enjoyment of reading, there was no statistical difference between the locations of home and school. When asked whether students like reading books silently at school, 13.5% of

respondents chose probably not or definitely not prior to the intervention. After the intervention this dropped to 9.8% of respondents, indicating a change in reading for enjoyment, possibly due to habits formed during the program. The most common reason why students liked reading in SSR was that it is relaxing, and the percentage of students choosing this as a reason increased after the intervention. It is interesting to note the impact of SSR on the wellbeing of students, as indicated by the increased percentage of respondents indicating “it puts me in a better mood” after the intervention.

Rank prior to intervention	Rank after intervention
1. It’s relaxing (16.0%)	1. It’s relaxing (17.6%)
2. I like imagining things (12.3%)	2. It puts me in a better mood (12.4%)
3. I like reading books (11.8%)	3. I like reading books (11.6%)
4. It puts me in a better mood (10.5%)	4. I like imagining things (11.1%)
5. It’s better than working (9.7%)	5. It’s better than working (9.3%)

When comparing reasons for reading at home and at school, significantly more students chose the following reasons for liking to read at school:

- It’s relaxing
- It puts me in a better mood
- It makes me smarter
- It makes me better at reading and writing
- Other people are reading so I read too

This is an element of collective peer behaviour evident in these responses and it would be interesting to explore this further.

Students were asked who encourages them to read, and this ranking was similar for both pre and post intervention.

Rank pre intervention
1. Mother
2. Teacher
3. Librarian
4. Father
5. Grandparent
6. Friend

With more conversations about books happening in our school, it would be fascinating to investigate the most frequent sources of student book recommendations to determine whether the peer influence is greater in this sphere than for the encouragement of reading.

Our data shows that there has been an increase in the motivation of reading amongst our students. We look forward to tracking this data over time.