

PROGRAM RESEARCH

How Principles of Reading and Learning Engagement Inform

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Research and Development for



Jamestown
**READING
NAVIGATOR**



Glencoe



How Principles of Reading and Learning Engagement Inform

by William G. Brozo

Within the past ten years, volumes have been written about student motivation and engagement, and countless workshops and conference presentations have been devoted to the topic. Evidence for the benefits of engaged learning is compelling (Guthrie & Alvermann, 1999; Hidi & Harackiewicz, 2000; Pintrich, & Schunk, 2001). We know from correlational data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) that adolescents who identified themselves as interested in reading not only achieved better scores but had better high school grade point averages than their less motivated peers (Donahue, Daane, & Grigg, 2003). Even more convincing are data from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), a global study of reading-literacy for 15-year-olds, in which the United States participates. According to PISA, adolescents from the lowest socio-economic status (SES) who were highly engaged readers, performed as well on the assessment as youth from the middle SES group, and they cut in half the disparity between themselves and their high SES peers (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2001). In other words, highly motivated adolescents made up for low family income and parents' limited educational attainment, two common risk factors in the academic lives of adolescents.

Although teachers may have little influence on the social worlds students navigate outside of school, the literature makes clear that classroom educators have a great deal of control over the arrangement of reading and learning conditions in the school setting and can positively affect academic motivation for adolescents (Brozo & Simpson, 2007). *Jamestown Reading Navigator* allows students to choose from interesting, timely selections that acknowledge their sophisticated tastes and comprehensive worldviews. Designed with sound, evidence-based principles of reading and learning engagement as guides, *Jamestown Reading Navigator* provides an important tool teachers can use to motivate adolescent students to maximize their potential as readers and learners.

Elevate self-efficacy.

The research literature makes evident that students with strong, school-related self-efficacy—the belief and confidence that they have the capacity to accomplish meaningful tasks and produce a desired result in academic settings—are more engaged and motivated than students with low self-efficacy (Alvermann, 2003; Cappella & Weinstein, 2001; Sturtevant, et.al., 2006; Pajares, 1996). Because the program is designed to ensure student success, *Jamestown Reading Navigator* helps promote self-efficacy.

- *Jamestown Reading Navigator* accurately places students into levels with text at an appropriate readability, scaffolded support, and accessible tasks. As students complete the lessons, their confidence grows.
- Additionally, *Jamestown Reading Navigator*'s focus on content area selections builds students' subject knowledge and competencies for learning in actual secondary classrooms.

Engender interest in new learning.

A self-evident and empirically grounded truth about learning is that students will expend the energy necessary to learn if they are interested in the material (Eccles, Wigfield, & Schiefele, 1998; Guthrie & Humenick, 2004; Mosenthal, 1999).

- *Jamestown Reading Navigator* captures and holds students' interest by presenting a variety of interactive and engaging activities throughout the journeys, or lessons. For example, video clips with a narrator and exciting real-world footage build relevant prior knowledge for upcoming readings. Anticipation and questioning activities, selection images with audible captions, useful reading tips, and an Add-A Note feature help stimulate readers' curiosities about text topics and sustain their attention during reading, while writing and fluency opportunities engage students after they read.

Make an abundance of interesting and accessible texts available.

Experts agree that the surest road to a richer vocabulary and expanded literacy is wide and sustained reading of high-interest texts that are accessible and paced to increase in sophistication commensurate with each student's developing abilities (Allington, 2002; Anderson, Wilson, & Fielding, 1988; Cipielewski & Stanovich, 1992; Ivey & Broaddus, 2001; McQuillan, & Au, 2001; Taylor, Frye, & Maruyama, 1990).

- *Jamestown Reading Navigator* makes available to students a wide variety of engaging and accessible texts. These texts are organized around topic themes that adolescents care about, such as personal health, sports, the environment, and becoming independent.

Expand student choices and options.

Choice may be one of the most critical elements of motivation (Guthrie & Davis, 2003; Turner, 1995). As students enter preteen and teen years their choices about many things outside of school increase significantly, yet options in school remain limited (Bean, 2002; Hinchman, et.al., 2003/2004). When students are given the prerogative to select texts they want to read and to respond in creative and personally meaningful ways to those texts, motivation and sustained engagement increase (Brozo & Simpson, 2007; Worthy, Moorman, & Turner, 1999).

- *Jamestown Reading Navigator* creates opportunities for student choice at virtually every stage of the reading process. Students have the option to test out of a particular level in order to find texts and tasks that are most suitable to their expanding abilities. They have choices about which texts to read, the level of scaffolding and prompting they would prefer during reading, and how to respond after reading.

Structure collaboration for motivation.

When secondary teachers create opportunities for students to work together in the pursuit of new knowledge, they are taking advantage of the social nature of learning (Freeman, McPhail, & Berndt, 2002). An added benefit to students is the sense of belonging that grows out of cooperative and collaborative engagement in the classroom (Anderman, 1999). This sense of belonging for adolescents has been associated with an increase in motivation for reading and learning (Ivey, 1999; Nichols & Miller, 1994; Sumter, 2002).

- Through its *inClass Readers* and *inTIME* magazines, *Jamestown Reading Navigator* provides opportunities for students to gather as a community of learners to socially construct knowledge through a variety of activities that promote discussion and collaboration. Additionally, the online instruction and tutor buttons serve as companions for students as they read, complete tasks, and generate responses. Students can interact with the tutor to gain additional information, answer questions, and receive support and encouragement as they work through the program lessons.

The ultimate goals of an effective reading program for adolescents are to develop the abilities needed for academic success as well as the desire to make reading a lifetime habit. *Jamestown Reading Navigator* capitalizes on evidence-based principles of reading and learning engagement to build the will to read and the skills to be lifelong learners.

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