

AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR THE
ADVANCEMENT OF LITERACY

Leading with **evidence**

Newsletter

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Visit our website here:

<https://www.acu.edu.au/advancing-literacy>

Calling Year 10 students!

ACU's Centre for Advancement of Literacy is running a word-learning study for Year 10 students. They will receive a \$50 gift voucher for participating.

Please share this QR where they can book an online session (45 minutes). Year 10s in all states and territories can participate.



ENJOYMENT OF READING: A CRITICAL EMOTIONAL FACTOR IN LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

BY DR. CLAIRE XIE

Reading is an essential ability and a foundation for academic success. Researchers have been trying to find out various predictors of reading achievement. An often-overlooked predictor of reading success is quite simple: enjoyment. Research consistently shows that students who enjoy reading tend to be better readers. When children read because they want to, rather than because they have to, they are more likely to spend time reading, encounter a wider range of texts, and develop stronger literacy skills over time.

Read the full article here.

STUDY WITH US

Graduate certificate specialising in literacy:

Teaching Foundational Reading Skills

Expand your knowledge of the foundational skills necessary for the development of reading ability at any age. Learn the theory and research surrounding early reading instruction, and how to build, plan, deliver and evaluate evidence-based reading instruction that meets the needs of all learners. **Register here.**

Online short courses

Our interdisciplinary team of researchers and clinicians provide you with high-quality, evidence-based and practical knowledge. Check out these:

- Explicit Instruction and Differentiation
- Living with Dyslexia

You can register here: catalogue.acu.edu.au

MYTH: "Australia's education system should just copy what other countries do to raise literacy rates and academic achievement."

FACTS:

- What works in other countries depends on their culture, society, and education system, so it cannot simply be copied in Australia.
- High-performing countries use different approaches, not a secret formula for literacy success or general achievement.
- Australia could improve literacy rates by addressing its own challenges while adapting proven strategies from around the world.

Learn more here



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Reading is an essential ability and a foundation for academic success. Researchers have been trying to find out various predictors of reading achievement. An often-overlooked predictor of reading success is quite simple: enjoyment. Research consistently shows that students who enjoy reading tend to be better readers. When children read because they want to, rather than because they have to, they are more likely to spend time reading, encounter a wider range of texts, and develop stronger literacy skills over time.

Reading enjoyment may also help explain the well-known Matthew effect in reading, often summarised as “the rich get richer and the poor get poorer”. Students who are better readers are more likely to enjoy reading. On the other hand, enjoyment of reading can motivate students to read more frequently, which in turn strengthens their reading abilities. In contrast, students who are poorer readers may find reading less enjoyable and therefore read less often, limiting opportunities to develop the literacy skills. Over time, this cycle can widen the achievement gap between stronger and weaker readers.

Emotions can be transferred from one person to another through social interactions. Teachers’ enjoyment of teaching can promote students’ enjoyment of reading via emotional contagion. A study that investigated over 84,000 adolescents across several countries in Eastern and Western contexts demonstrated the cross-cultural universality of this emotional contagion.

Research on enjoyment of reading has important implications for classrooms. Reading instruction should not focus solely on developing literacy skills. Equally important is considering students’ enjoyment of reading in literacy instruction. Below are several ways that teachers can foster reading enjoyment in their classrooms:

- **Organise the discussion of reading content.**

Encourage students to share what they have read in books and discuss reading content. Allow students to share their personal reading experiences and demonstrate enthusiasm for reading. Make reading a social and enjoyable experience.

- **Provide choice.**

Allow students to select texts to read that are aligned with their interests and reading abilities.

- **Create a rich reading environment.**

Ensure classrooms include diverse and engaging reading materials that reflect students’ backgrounds and interests.

- **Make time for reading.**

Regular times for independent and shared reading can help students develop positive reading habits.

- **Support struggling readers.**

Provide appropriate scaffolding for struggling readers and create achievable reading success for them to build confidence and enjoyment.

In addition, fostering teacher enjoyment of teaching is beneficial not only for teachers themselves but also for students’ learning and engagement. Schools can support teachers’ enjoyment by creating a positive and collaborative work environment, recognising teachers’ contributions, providing opportunities for professional growth, and ensuring access to adequate teaching resources. Supporting teacher wellbeing can also help teachers focus more on meaningful interactions with students and the rewarding aspects of teaching. When teachers feel valued, supported, and enthusiastic about their work, they are more likely to bring energy and passion into the classroom, which can nurture students’ reading enjoyment.

Learn more here:

Becker, M., McElvany, N., & Kortenbruck, M. (2010). [Intrinsic and extrinsic reading motivation as predictors of reading literacy: A longitudinal study](#). *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 102(4), 773–785.

Coventry, W. L., Faraway, S., Larsen, S. A., Enis, T. P., Forbes, A. Q., & Brown, S. L. (2023). [Do student differences in reading enjoyment relate to achievement when using the random-intercept cross-lagged panel model across primary and secondary school?](#) *PLOS One*, 18(6), e0285739.

Schiefele, U., Schaffner, E., Möller, J., & Wigfield, A. (2012). [Dimensions of reading motivation and their relation to reading behavior and competence: A meta-analysis](#). *Reading Research Quarterly*, 47(4), 427–463.

Xie, Q., Cai, Y., & Zhang, Q. (2026). [The roles of student enjoyment of reading and teacher job satisfaction in socio-economic inequality in reading achievement](#). *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 177, 105532.

Xie, Q., King, R. B., & Cai, Y. (2023). [Emotional contagion: A cross-cultural exploration of how teachers’ enjoyment facilitates achievement via students’ enjoyment](#). *Current Psychology*, 42, 15907–15910.