

FOSTERING STUDENT MOTIVATION: REFLECTION WORKSHEET

A. Brainstorming: Your motivation as a language learner

Get a pen/pencil and a blank piece of paper. Set a timer for 3-5 minutes. When you start the timer, use the paper to make notes while you brainstorm about the things that motivated you (or continue to motivate you) while learning English.

It may be helpful to think about these questions:

- What types of activities motivated you?
- How did your learning environment and/or classmates affect your motivation?
- How did you learn to deal with challenges while learning?
- What kept you on track to meet your long-term goal of language proficiency?
- What made learning enjoyable or exciting?
- What type of teachers helped you learn most effectively? Which teachers did you like best? Why?

B. Reflection Inventory: Factors Affecting Student Motivation

Next, we will think about student motivation in our classrooms. As we know, many factors affect extrinsic and intrinsic student motivation. We will use four categories to group them: (1) instructional design, (2) promoting learner autonomy, (3) creating a positive classroom environment and culture, and (4) teacher behavior and knowledge.

Teachers can make choices to influence student motivation by considering questions in the following list. Think about each item in relation to your teaching and classroom environment in general, then circle **Yes**, **No**, or **I'm not sure** next to each item.

Notes: (a) This list is not meant to be exhaustive (e.g., there are more factors that can affect student motivation); (b) some questions could be assigned to more than one category; (c) not all items will be relevant for teachers of all learner levels and ages.

(1) Instructional design

- Yes No I'm not sure** 1. Do students understand objectives and *why* they are learning what they are learning?
- Yes No I'm not sure** 2. Are activities sequenced and scaffolded (supported in a level-appropriate way) to promote learner success?
- Yes No I'm not sure** 3. Do lessons feature appropriate pacing and incorporate a variety of activities to appeal to different learning styles?
- Yes No I'm not sure** 4. Do activities incorporate student interests, current topics, and a variety of media (where available) that are relevant to students' lives?
- Yes No I'm not sure** 5. Do students have a chance to engage with language content in a personalized way?

- Yes No I'm not sure** 6. Do some language-learning materials give students chances to learn about and use English in a way that is relevant to their home culture? Do some materials provide opportunities to build cross-cultural and intercultural awareness?
- Yes No I'm not sure** 7. Are activities designed to generate student curiosity, and do they present appropriate challenges? (examples: inductive/discovery learning tasks, cooperative information gap activities, learning games and puzzles)
- Yes No I'm not sure** 8. Do learners receive frequent informal and formal feedback on their work? Are grades and other assessment tools used in a fair, transparent way? Does feedback highlight both strengths and areas for improvement?

(2) Promoting learner autonomy

- Yes No I'm not sure** 1. Are learners encouraged to think about how they like to learn/how they learn most effectively?
- Yes No I'm not sure** 2. Do students get to make some choices about what and how they learn?
- Yes No I'm not sure** 3. Are students encouraged to set goals and make plans to meet them?
- Yes No I'm not sure** 4. Are students encouraged to develop and apply project management and time management skills?
- Yes No I'm not sure** 5. Are students encouraged to reflect on their learning and progress toward their goals?
- Yes No I'm not sure** 6. Are students encouraged to solve problems and complete activities using critical and creative thinking?
- Yes No I'm not sure** 7. Are students supported while developing 21st century skills like digital literacy and learning with technology, content creation, flexibility, and leadership?
- Yes No I'm not sure** 8. Are learners encouraged to develop strategies for self-motivating when they encounter challenges?
- Yes No I'm not sure** 9. Do teachers connect students with self-directed language learning resources (examples: library-based media, websites, social media tools and content, programs to connect learners with English speakers) and strategies for using them?

(3) Creating a positive classroom environment and culture

- Yes No I'm not sure** 1. Are there clear expectations about appropriate classroom behavior? Do students help develop classroom rules and disciplinary consequences in an age-appropriate way?
- Yes No I'm not sure** 2. Do classroom standards encourage mutually respectful speech and actions? Are class members' time and ideas respected?

- Yes No I'm not sure** 3. Do activities include a variety of grouping styles (individual work, pair work, and group work) to appeal to different learning styles?
- Yes No I'm not sure** 4. Do some activities encourage cooperative learning and teamwork? Do they allow students with different strengths to contribute in different ways?
- Yes No I'm not sure** 5. Do some activities incorporate healthy competition and/or a system of rewards to spark students' desire to complete them?
- Yes No I'm not sure** 6. Is student success acknowledged and celebrated?
- Yes No I'm not sure** 7. Does the teacher employ classroom management techniques to keep learning on track and the classroom operating smoothly?

(4) Teacher knowledge and behavior

- Yes No I'm not sure** 1. Do the teacher's behavior and speech reflect enthusiasm for English language learning, fairness in applying rules and standards, and respect for learners?
- Yes No I'm not sure** 2. Is the teacher approachable and willing to support learners who require assistance?
- Yes No I'm not sure** 3. Does the teacher share lessons from her/his own language learning experiences, incorporate humor in lessons when appropriate, and make an effort to include current, relevant content in lessons?
- Yes No I'm not sure** 4. Does the teacher display an appropriate level of knowledge about the English language and language teaching methodology?

C. Further Reflection

Consider and respond to the following items. Make notes about your responses for discussion purposes or additional reflection.

1. Review your brainstorming notes from Part A and compare them to the list of factors in the Reflection Inventory (Part B):
 - a. Did your brainstorming notes mention any motivational factors that weren't in the Reflection Inventory? What were they? Do you address those motivational factors in your teaching? If so, how?
 - b. Do you see any trends in your Part B responses that suggest your teaching approach focuses on motivational techniques that appeal most to you as a learner? How might you broaden the range of motivational strategies you use?
2. Is there one motivation category in your Part B responses that contained several "No" or "I'm not sure" answers? Why might that be? How might those items affect student motivation in your classes?
3. Did completing the Reflection Inventory make you aware of any new factors that can affect student motivation? How could you incorporate motivational strategies to address them?
4. What student motivation strategies do you currently use that work well? Why? Which strategies have been less effective? Why? What could you change to make weaker strategies more effective?