MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING AND BOYS’ VIEWS
AND PERCEPTIONS OF READING AT KEY STAGE 3

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SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
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Abstract

Although affective factors have been regarded as important in reading development, these aspects have attracted relatively little attention from policy makers and researchers. Furthermore, adolescent boys have tended to demonstrate lower reading motivation and engagement than other pupil groups. This thesis investigates reading engagement and motivation amongst Key Stage 3 boys, through materials based on the principles of Motivational Interviewing (MI).

The thesis comprises three interlinked studies. In Study One, a whole class, five-session intervention was designed. This was introduced to Year 8 boys attending a single sex school and a quasi-experimental design was developed to measure its efficacy. However, during the piloting and delivery of the sessions, it became evident that the boys’ responses to the activities were influenced by socio-cultural factors, group dynamics and classroom practices. Following an exploration of the outcomes in relation to MI theory, an alternative model of enquiry was proposed to further investigate boys’ views and perceptions of reading.

Study Two involved working with staff in the Learning Support Department. Opportunities to use the materials with individual pupils proved to be limited, restricting further investigation into their usefulness. However, staff focus groups provided information about pupil views and perceptions of reading, offering insights into the boys’ educational and socio-cultural contexts and possible explanations for their responses in Study One. The activities, therefore, became a tool for investigating boys’ reading within the school, rather than an intervention per se.

Once a clearer understanding of school-based literacy practices had been established, in Study Three, findings were presented to boys who had participated in Study One. Discussion groups were held to explore the boys’ views about these ideas and discuss possible explanations for the outcomes of the quasi-experimental research.

Overall research findings indicated that the factors that facilitated or inhibited boys’ reading were the result of complex interactions between socio-cultural influences, peer pressures, gender perceptions and literacy preferences. MI was seen as a useful paradigm for schools to explore both the affective literacy needs of individual pupils and how school-based literacy practices might facilitate reading development opportunities.
Declaration

No portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.
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Acknowledgements

Thank you to the staff and pupils involved in the project, in particular to Brenda Fraser and Cathy Bradburn, without whom this project would not have been possible.

Thank you to the course tutors, to colleagues and fellow students on the doctorate programme for the advice and guidance I have received.

Thank you to my family for all their help, support and patience.

Finally, I would like to thank my supervisor Rea Reason for all her invaluable help, advice, reassurance and support in completing this thesis and for her expertise and availability throughout.
Abbreviations

The list of abbreviations used in this thesis is as follows:

ALS Additional Literacy Support
AMI Adaptation of Motivational Interviewing
BEST Behaviour and Education Support Team
BIP Behavioural Improvement Programme
BPS British Psychological Society
CBT Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
CCEA Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment
CPD Continuing Professional Development
CSIE Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education
DECP Division of Educational and Child Psychology
DfEE Department for Education and Employment
DfES Department for Education and Skills
EBD Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties
EP Educational Psychologist
EPS Educational Psychology Service
EPWG Educational Psychology Working Group
EVT Expectancy-Value Theory
FAQ Frequently Asked Questions
LEA Local Education Authority
MI Motivational Interviewing
MISC Motivational Interviewing Skills Code
MITI Motivational Interviewing Treatment Integrity
MRQ Motivation for Reading Questionnaire
NLS National Literacy Strategy
ODPM Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
PHSE Personal Health and Social Education
SDT Self Determination Theory
SEN Special Educational Needs
SES Socio-Economic Status
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<tr>
<td>SFBT</td>
<td>Solution Focused Brief Therapy</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOA</td>
<td>Super Output Area</td>
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<tr>
<td>SpLD</td>
<td>Specific Learning Difficulties</td>
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<tr>
<td>TES</td>
<td>Times Educational Supplement</td>
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<tr>
<td>TTM</td>
<td>Transtheoretical Model</td>
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Summary of previous work

As part of the Doctorate in Educational Psychology, this thesis was preceded by the successful completion of the following research-based assignments:

Project One

Moving away from a ‘problem-focussed model’ of psychology: Working collaboratively with teachers to promote children’s learning

Within education, there is a perception that EPs are generally involved in helping to assess and meet the needs of children who schools have identified as having Special Educational Needs (SEN). This focus may restrict opportunities for EPs to become involved in the wider application of psychology within education. This research looked at how EPs might use their expertise as applied psychologists in collaborating with teachers to promote thinking and learning skills in schools.

The research involved working with Year 5 class teachers in three mainstream primary schools over a six-week period, to develop materials aimed at promoting metacognitive strategies, to enhance pupil self-efficacy and effective learning.

Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and barriers to this type of working were identified and implications for future practice considered. Although logistical difficulties were recognised, it was valued by teachers and led to a shift in the perceptions of the EP’s role.

An article based on this study has been accepted for publication by the journal Support for Learning (Atkinson, Regan and Williams, in press).

Project Two

The Mental Health and Behaviour of Young People in Educational and Youth Settings: Using a Motivational Interviewing Approach

This research considered one application of the counselling technique, Motivational Interviewing (MI), for supporting secondary age students in schools and other settings. A pack of activities was produced, introducing professionals and young people to the principles of MI. This was offered to volunteers (facilitators) working with young people in educational and youth settings and its impact, accessibility and ease of use evaluated through questionnaires completed by the facilitators and through follow up interviews.

The pack was used in a number of different youth and educational settings with pupils of different ages, genders and ethnicities. A generally positive response was received, in terms of how it enabled facilitators to engage
young people, generate discussion and assess their needs. Future research opportunities, to address the needs of young people who did not engage with the materials and to consider young people’s perceptions of the materials, were identified.

The pack of materials has subsequently been adapted and published by Sodapop (Atkinson, 2005).

**Project Three**

**Key Stage 3 pupils’ views about reading**

Recent developments in literacy teaching have tended to target the needs of primary, rather than high school pupils and focus on cognitive rather than affective elements of reading. This research was undertaken to try and identify the reading self-perceptions, aspirations, levels of reading engagement and reading preferences of pupils at Key Stage 3.

241 Key Stage 3 pupils attending two single sex high schools (the boys school that features in this thesis and a girls school in the same locality) completed a reading questionnaire, canvassing the views of Year 7 and Year 9 readers. Reading attainment data for each of the pupils was received and matched to the questionnaire responses. Views expressed by pupils of different ages, genders and abilities were then compared using statistical analysis.

Outcomes supported previous findings described in academic literature, indicating differences between boys and girls and older and younger pupils, particularly in relation to reading preferences. Pupils’ levels of engagement appeared to be linked to reading ability. Challenges for EPs were considered in offering perspectives that could contribute to literacy development at casework and curriculum levels, including whether the use of affective reading interventions would be a helpful way of promoting reading engagement and motivation.

A journal article describing outcomes from this study has been submitted to *Educational Psychology in Practice* for consideration (Atkinson, submitted).
Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Rationale for the thesis

Research undertaken previously (see Project Three, page 19) involved a large-scale study of Key Stage 3 pupils’ views about reading. Key outcomes from this study included:

- Pupils’ reading self-concept and aspirations were consistent with their reading performance.

- Boys, older pupils and pupils with literacy difficulties were less positive about reading activities both in and out of school. Pupils with literacy difficulties reported fewer reading choices outside school.

- There was considerable variation amongst the preferred reading choices of boys and girls and older and younger pupils.

Outcomes of this study were consistent with previous research findings, suggesting differential engagement in and motivation for reading for boys and girls (Barrs, 1993, 1998; Millard, 1997a, 1997b; Maynard, 2002), for older and younger pupils (Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw and Rycik, 1999) and different reading preferences for boys and girls (Barrs, 1993, 1998; Pidgeon, 1993; Millard 1997a, 1997b; Hall and Coles, 2001; Maynard, 2002).

The research found that attention had been paid primarily to technical, rather than affective elements of reading (McKenna, 1994; Pumfrey, 1997) and to the needs of primary, rather than secondary age pupils (Alvermann 2002). Issues arising from the study included:

- Feelings of competence affect how motivated pupils are to learn. Reading programmes should therefore take account of reading perceptions and levels of motivation.
• Recognising and reflecting the skills pupils bring into school, such as reading instructions, composing text messages or surfing the net, may help to engage and motivate pupils.

• The application of psychological concepts such as metacognition, motivational theory and self-efficacy can contribute to a more holistic model of literacy intervention.

• Techniques such as Solution Focused approaches, Personal Construct Psychology and Motivational Interviewing (MI) might form the basis of an affective intervention, to engage, encourage and motivate pupils who are continuing to experience reading difficulty.

Findings from this research indicated that adolescent boys reported lower reading engagement and motivation than other groups. In light of these outcomes, it was decided to undertake a thesis to look at the impact of an affective reading intervention for boys at Key Stage 3.

Research for this thesis was undertaken in the same boys’ high school that participated in Project Three. It focused on the literacy needs of Year 8 boys in this particular educational context and aimed to explore whether reading motivation and engagement could be enhanced using an affective reading intervention. Because MI had been investigated in previous research (Project Two, see page 18) and is an approach that may be particularly relevant to working with adolescents in schools (Atkinson and Woods, 2003), this was selected as the basis for the affective intervention.

1.2 Aims of the thesis

The thesis set out to look at the application of theory and principles from MI to a learning context and to consider how this might help develop pupils’ motivation for and engagement in reading. A pack of activities was designed
that reflected the goals of MI (see Section 2.3.6) and was delivered as a five-
session intervention by the author. In view of previous research (Project
One, page 18) considering the application of psychology to the learning and
development of all children, not just those identified as having SEN, this was
trialled with whole class groups of pupils, rather than individuals. A quasi-
experimental research model was proposed, in which comparison of pre and
post intervention measures of motivation and engagement would determine
the efficacy of the materials.

However, as the research progressed, it became evident that this method of
enquiry was not suitable. A range of factors appeared to impact on the boys’
responses and access to the sessions. It was clear that using before and
after quantitative measures was an over-simplistic way of studying reading
motivation and engagement that did not take account of socio-cultural
factors, group dynamics and classroom practices. Subsequently, a deeper
understanding of the complexities of motivational theory and its relationship
to MI was sought and further exploration of boys’ views and perceptions of
reading was required, to provide a fuller picture of the mechanisms that
influenced their reading engagement and motivation.

For reasons that will be described, the model of research enquiry was
revised and a second study (Study Two) was developed. Here the position
of boys as school-based literacy learners was examined, through discussions
with staff working with boys experiencing literacy learning difficulties. Rather
than an intervention per se, the pack of activities became a useful tool for
understanding the literacy needs of boys and identifying some of the factors
that facilitated or inhibited literacy learning engagement amongst Key Stage
3 readers.

Finally, in Study Three, discussion groups were held with some of the boys
who had been involved in trialling the affective reading intervention. Findings
from Studies One and Two were discussed with the boys, leading to further
consideration of their views and perceptions about school and home literacy
practices (as well as the intervention itself).
A diagrammatical representation of the process of the research is shown in Figure 1.1, overleaf.

1.3 Key questions

As the methodology changed during the course of the thesis, so did the main lines of enquiry. This led to the key research questions being redefined over the course of the thesis. The reader is directed to Section 4.1 for the initial key questions, later redefined in Sections 7.2 and 9.1.

1.4 Overview of the thesis

Table 1.1, on page 25 provides an overview of the thesis and of the evolution of the different stages of the research.
Study One
Quasi-experimental design proposed to measure the efficacy of a five-session affective reading intervention based on the goals of MI (McNamara, 1998), with Year 8 registration groups. Additional qualitative data also collected.

Study outcomes
Quantitative design found not to be suitable after trialling sessions with pilot and experimental groups. Qualitative information from the sessions and questionnaire data provided possible explanatory themes for lack of preferred outcomes, for further exploration.

Study Two
Provided a more collaborative model of working. Training offered to support staff working with individual pupils. Feedback offered via discussion groups, about the usefulness of the materials and about boys' views and perceptions about reading.

Study outcomes
Staff had limited opportunities to use the materials with pupils, but focus groups provided useful information about boys' views and perceptions about reading and enabled greater understanding of the school context and broader educational policy issues.

Study Three
Findings from Study One and Study Two shared with pupils who had used the materials. Pupils also asked about views and perceptions of reading. Explanatory themes from Study One explored with pupils

Design of materials and questionnaires reflected the author's understanding about MI and motivational theory at the outset of the thesis.

Additional consideration given to motivational theory, its link to MI and its relevance in terms of outcomes of Study One.

Research model adapted, informed by action research and illuminative evaluative paradigm. Focus group model proposed to collect qualitative information.

Thesis also informed by discussion with literacy co-ordinator.

Critical educational research also used as a research paradigm to explore the impact of socio-cultural and political factors that might facilitate and inhibit reading engagement.

Thesis also informed by discussion with pupils accessing ALS support.
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Describes how previous project work provided a rationale for considering affective interventions for supporting boys’ reading at Key Stage 3 and why MI was selected as the basis for such an intervention. Provides an overview of how the project changed. |
| Two     | **Initial Literature Review**  
Reviews literature supporting the rationale for Study One. This focuses on affective reading research, boys’ literacy and the model of MI used in educational settings. |
| Three   | **Rationale and outline of the MI intervention**  
Describes the activities used in the project, based on the goals of MI (McNamara, 1998). |
| Four    | **Study One – Measuring the efficacy of the intervention using a quasi-experimental design**  
Describes the quasi-experimental design proposed to look at the impact of an affective intervention based on goals of MI, for registration groups of Year 8 boys, using quantitative design and qualitative feedback. |
| Five    | **Outcomes from Study One**  
Discusses results and outcomes from Study One. This chapter also questions the appropriateness of the intervention and the way in which it was used and considers the methodological implications of these. |
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Chapter Two: Initial Literature Review

2.1 Overview of the literature review

This chapter begins by briefly outlining why understanding and promoting affective aspects of reading may be helpful in addressing the literacy needs of pupils at Key Stage 3. In doing so it will touch on the following areas: affective and motivational factors in reading; the specific literary needs of adolescents; self-concept and self-efficacy; access to reading opportunities; motivational dimensions and affective reading interventions. It is recognised that there is an abundance of research in each of these areas, full consideration of which is beyond the scope of this thesis.

The chapter next considers boys’ literacy achievement and engagement. This theme continues throughout the thesis and findings are examined in light of recent literature. Therefore, just a short overview will be provided, in order to set the context for this research.

Finally the literature review will consider MI and its use as an intervention in educational settings. MI will be defined and a history and background to its development provided. Consideration will be given to the advantages and limitations of MI within current EP practice and of how it might be used as a way to engage and motivate readers. Finally, the chapter explores how MI might be used as a basis for an affective reading intervention.

2.2 Addressing the needs of readers at Key Stage 3

This section considers some aspects of reading that may be important to readers in secondary school. These features influenced the development of the affective reading intervention, which will be described in Chapter Three.
2.2.1 Affective and motivational factors in reading

While there has been widespread research into cognitive aspects of reading development, affective factors have been overlooked in several psychological models of reading (McKenna, 1994). Pumfrey (1997) describes helping pupils to value and enjoy reading as an important educational objective but notes that:

*Far more effort has been put into the cognitive aspects of reading than has been spent on the measurement of affective and motivational aspects of reading* (page 162).

Robeck and Wallace (1992) define the relationship between affect and motivation for reading. They propose that reading or reading avoidance is related to whether or not an individual experiences pleasure or ‘punishment’ within a reading situation. Examples of ‘punishment’ may include failures in decoding, inability to gain the information desired or teacher disapproval. They suggest that in a successful reading situation a pupil gets pleasure from decoding and accessing the meaning of the text.

Social and emotional responses to reading are also described as part of a ‘network of reciprocal effects’ that can contribute to literacy learning difficulties (DECP, 1999, page 53).

2.2.2 The literacy needs of adolescents

Since the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy (NLS) in 1996, numerous government publications have addressed the development of reading skills amongst primary age children. However, it is only recently that the government has extended the National Strategies to include the needs of pupils at Key Stage 3. Notably less attention has been given to addressing the literacy needs of high school pupils. For example, the NLS guidance *Targeting support: choosing and implementing interventions for children with significant literacy difficulties* (DfES 2003a) provides fifteen recommended literacy interventions, only three of which are appropriate for secondary school pupils and none specifically for them.
In the United States, the focus for policy development and public interest has also been early literacy instruction. Alvermann (2002) argues that the specialised literacy needs of adolescents (such as access to a variety of multimedia texts, co-operative learning and metacognitive study skills) are often overlooked. Furthermore, high school teachers may tend to see their responsibility is imparting subject knowledge, rather than teaching pupils to read and write (Moore et al, 1999). Alvermann (2002) stresses the importance of keeping adolescents’ interests and needs foremost in mind when planning a literacy curriculum for older children and of giving consideration to reading perceptions and levels of motivation. Explicit instruction on reading comprehension and study strategies and a wider range of reading resources are also encouraged (Moore et al, 1999).

2.2.3 Self-concept and self-efficacy
MI makes specific reference to developing an individual’s self-esteem and self-efficacy (McNamara, 1992, 1998). These concepts will be discussed at greater length in Sections 3.3.1 and 3.3.3.

The link between reading self-concept and reading achievement has attracted attention from researchers (e.g. Muijis, 1997). While reading self-concept is multi-faceted, the views a reader holds about their performance are likely to affect his or her approach to a specific literacy task. Bandura (1997) suggests that perceived efficacy is the most important factor when predicting performance and that self-concept largely reflects people’s beliefs in their own efficacy. There is research indicating a significant relationship between a pupil’s self-efficacy for literacy tasks and their literacy performance (Pajares & Johnson, 1994, 1996).

Self-efficacy belief is antecedent to academic achievement because it motivates behaviour that leads to success (Jinks and Lorsbach, 2003). Perceptions held by young people about their own academic prowess then lead to engagement or non-engagement. Self-efficacy is a key construct of
motivational theory, in terms of promoting students’ engagement and learning (Linnenbrink and Pintrich, 2003). Schunk and Zimmerman (1997) note that:

...effective learning requires that learners have a sense of self-efficacy for being able to use their skills to acquire new knowledge (page 37).

2.2.4 Access to reading opportunities
Children with reading difficulties tend to access fewer reading opportunities than their peers, resulting in what Stanovich (1986) described as a ‘Matthew effect,’ by which good readers progress while poor readers fall further behind. Torgesen (2002) cites Cunningham and Stanovich (1998) in describing the ‘enormous gap’ that accumulates from years of non-reading, while the peers of children with such difficulties are reading up to one million words a year or more. Moore et al (1999) and Guthrie and Knowles (2001) also note that time spent reading is related to reading success.

The amount, type and breadth of reading undertaken by learners is crucial to their reading development (via a process of self-teaching) and the availability of reading opportunities both inside and outside school is an important factor in reading progression (DECP, 1999). Guthrie and Knowles (2001) note that reading motivation is indispensable to reading engagement.

Research suggests supporting older readers with literacy difficulties may be particularly challenging. High school pupils have already received several years of literacy teaching. In describing reading interventions for older children with serious reading difficulties, Torgesen (2002) notes that:

...most professionals in this area would agree that we know less about the conditions that need to be in place to help children acquire good reading skills after they have failed for several years than we do about preventing reading failure in the first place (page 97).

Those still having difficulty with the technical aspects of reading may experience disaffection, poor reading self-concept or low motivation,
particularly if provided with a single reading strategy or methods through which they have found it difficult to acquire reading skills in the past. Furthermore, Stanovich, Siegel and Gottardo (1997, cited by DECP, 1999) speculated that when combined with relatively mild phonological difficulties, comparatively low levels of exposure to print might produce a pattern of performance characteristic of ‘surface dyslexia’. Because boys engage less frequently in reading, they have fewer opportunities to develop their skills (Barrs, 1993, Millard 1997a) and may be more vulnerable to developing literacy learning difficulties.

2.2.5 Motivational dimensions

Wigfield and Guthrie (1997) found children’s reading motivation to be multidimensional. They noted that motivation predicted the amount and breadth of their reading, with intrinsic motivation a stronger predictor than extrinsic motivation. Furthermore they posited that a variety of possible reading motivations could influence children’s engagement in reading and their reading performance. These include intrinsic factors (such as curiosity and challenge), extrinsic influences (such as grades and recognition) and social motivators for reading (such as sharing meanings and compliance). These concepts are explored further in Section 4.4.1.

The beliefs, values and goals individuals hold in relation to achievement are likely to play a crucial role in their achievement related behaviour (Wigfield, 1997). Reeve (2001) hypothesised that an individual’s motivation to approach or avoid a task will be determined by the values they attribute to it and their expectancy of success. In relation to task value, Eccles, Adler, Futterman, Goff, Kaczala, Meece and Midgeley (1983) proposed that different features, including interest value (how much the individual likes the activity), attainment value (the importance of the activity) and utility value (the usefulness of the activity) are significant factors in achievement motivation. These ideas will be explored in more detail in Section 6.4.5.

Robeck and Wallace (1992) propose that reading improvement is directly related to the student’s level of motivation and that in most cases, enhancing
the motivation of a struggling reader requires both a positive change in reading activities and an improvement in reading skills.

2.2.6 Affective reading interventions
The use of reading interventions that address the motivational and emotional aspects of reading is not a new phenomenon. Rhodes and Ajmal (1995) describe the application of Solution Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) approaches to supporting and motivating pupils with reading difficulties. They also cite reading programmes formulated by Lawrence (1985), focused on improving self-esteem and by Gentile and McMillan (1987) drawing on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) approaches. Recent proposals for supporting pupils with literacy learning needs have highlighted the importance of motivational components (Barrett, Reason, Regan, Rooney, Williams, Woods and Stothard, 2002; Manchester EPS, 2004).

While these initiatives focus on the needs of children with literacy learning difficulties, there have been calls to extend the application of psychological thinking more broadly, to promote effective teaching and learning (Wood, 1998; MacKay, 2002; DfES, 2004; Atkinson, in press). With this in mind, it was intended that the intervention would be offered to whole class groups of pupils, not just those identified as having additional needs (see Section 1.2).

2.3 Boys and reading

2.3.1 Context for ‘boys’ literacy underachievement’
Over the last 30 or so years, there have been two distinct movements within research on gender differences in educational achievement. From the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s concerns focused on the lower levels of achievement amongst girls in comparison with boys. However, from the late 1980s, the emphasis has shifted to concerns about boys’ as opposed to girls’ achievement (Sukhnandan, 1999).

Of late, the differential educational attainment of boys and girls has been widely noted, attracting attention both in the UK and internationally. Chris
Woodhead, former chief inspector of schools described the failure of boys, particularly ‘white working class boys’, as ‘one of the most disturbing problems we face within the whole education system’ (Pyke, 1996, page 1), while Bright (1998) commented that ‘…boys’ under-achievement at school has reached crisis point across the country’ (page 1).

Closer inspection of ‘boy’s underachievement’ reveals a more complex picture. Gorard, Rees and Salisbury (2001) undertook a comparison of attainment data for all pupils in Wales over 6 years, at every level of assessment and found that girls outperformed boys in English, but not in some other subjects including Maths and Science. More recent data (see Statistical Profile of Education in Schools produced by Ofsted in July 2001, DfES, 2003c, page 5) also supports these findings.

Barrs (1998) cites a host of factors affecting boys’ literacy achievement including societal expectations; family influences; early experiences; peer group pressures and stereotyping; classroom contexts; parental expectations; behavioural issues and the range of literacy materials offered by schools. Millard (1997a) notes that while the predominant focus for reading in school is books, boys express less interest in the narrative genre. Furthermore boys and girls read for different purposes and these gender differences widen as they progress through school.

2.3.2 Perspectives on boys’ literacy achievement
This area of research has attracted great debate. The dichotomy regarding boys’ literacy achievement is exemplified by Peyton Young and Brozo (2001) in a paper summarising an academic correspondence. Brozo argues that there are two fundamental positions taken by those concerned with the literacy needs of boys. The first is that there is no cause for concern and the second that the evidence is significant and serious and a need exists ‘to find effective ways of [dealing with] what many now term as a crisis’ (page 318). In declaring a feminist standpoint, Peyton Young notes, however, that while girls receive higher grades in school literacy courses, they do not access the majority of well paid, high status literary jobs and a ‘glass ceiling’ still
operates, a view supported by Raphel Reed (1999). Weaver-Hightower (2003) refers to the different standpoints, noting that while some claim that boys are disadvantaged, others claim that the concern for boys is misguided and endangers girls’ reforms (e.g. Raphel Reed, 1999; Mills, 2003).

Raphel Reed (1999) and Cohen (1998) further challenge how boys’ failures are attributed to something ‘external’ to them. Raphel Reed (1999), declaring a feminist standpoint, notes that the effect of this is:

...to force our gaze on the ‘underachieving boy’ as a subject constructed in need of our help. His ‘existence’ overly determines the interpretation of gender concern amongst teachers and schools, including the allocation of resources. His production is a consequence of teachers’ failures (especially female teachers, predominant in a primary school, the English faculty or special educational needs provision) to meet his individual learning needs. His masculinity is problematised by the changing world order post feminism; it is not itself the problem (page 102).

Feminist critique of the boys’ underachievement debate suggests that the main discourses promote hegemonic views of masculinity and ignore diversity issues relating to ethnic and social backgrounds (Archer and Yamashita, 2003). Concerns are voiced about the ‘further masculinisation of teaching styles and classrooms environments, particularly in secondary schools’ (Raphel Reed, page 100).

2.3.3 Other factors in literacy underachievement

While gender remains a strong predictor of performance, other factors such as social class and cultural differences significantly influence achievement (Alloway and Gilbert, 1997). Writers have suggested that socio-economic disadvantage (Plummer, 1998; MacKay, 1999) and ethnic inequality (Raphel Reed, 1999; Gillborn and Mirza, 2000, cited by Maynard, 2002) are more significant than gender. An article in the Times Educational Supplement (Slater, 2004) suggested that while boys in affluent areas are beginning to
catch up with girls, the gender gap is widening in the most socially disadvantaged areas.

The boys in this study attended a high school in an area of high social disadvantage and although there is some degree of ethnic diversity, the majority of pupils would fit the description of ‘white working class boys’ over whom concerns about achievement seem to have focused (Pyke, 1996, Raphel Reed, 1999; Woodward, 2000). Further information about the school context is provided in Section 4.1.1.

The complex interface between gender and socio-economic status and its impact on achievement (Duffield 1998; Hutchinson, 2004) is acknowledged, although a more thorough consideration of its intricacies is beyond the scope of this research. This thesis will look at boys’ reading engagement and motivation in the context of one school. It is recognised however, that many of the issues discussed are not specific to boys or to this educational environment.

### 2.4 Motivational Interviewing

Study One of this thesis proposed the use of an affective reading intervention based on MI principles, to try to promote motivation and engagement in reading amongst boys at Key Stage 3. The use of MI techniques has previously been described within EP and educational practice literature only in relation to behavioural change (McNamara, 2001, Atkinson and Woods 2003). The wider application of MI to a learning context has not been considered.

This section provides a review of MI literature in relation to the current research. It will first define MI, considering its history within clinical settings and the principles upon which it was developed. The more recent application of MI within educational settings will also be described. Finally this section will consider MI as a possible perspective from which to develop reading engagement and motivation. It will describe the rationale for developing
materials for an affective reading intervention, based on its principles. These will then be described in more detail in Chapter Three.

The basis for the affective intervention reflected the author’s understanding of MI at the outset of this research. Further consideration of the principles and practice of MI, in relation to more general theories of motivation, will be considered in Chapter Six.

2.4.1 Definition and background
MI originated in clinical practice. It is a counselling approach developed in the field of addictive behaviour by practitioners interested in the phenomena of change (Miller and Rollnick, 2002). MI has been described as:

…a directive, client-centred counselling style for eliciting behaviour change by helping clients to explore and resolve ambivalence (Rollnick and Miller, 1995, page 325).

It is based on the premise that people may not necessarily be at a stage of readiness to change their behaviour and that motivation is fundamental to change. Miller and Rollnick (2002) note that:

…constructive behaviour change seems to arise when the person connects it to something of intrinsic value, something important, something cherished (page 12).

The potential benefits of MI are thought to extend to situations where the person involved is resistant or ambivalent about changing their behaviour (Corden and Somerton, 2004). It may be particularly useful for individuals at an early stage of change who may not yet have thought about changing their behaviour (Atkinson, 2005).

2.4.2 MI in educational settings
MI was introduced into educational settings by McNamara (1992, 1998) who noted that the approach was a useful way to address the problem of lack of
motivation to change, in a structured and positive manner. MI differs from other counselling techniques in that it does not assume that the client has a desire to change their behaviour. A model of practice adapted for educational practitioners was described in *The Theory and Practice of Eliciting Pupil Motivation: Motivational Interviewing – A Form Teacher’s Manual and Guide for Students, Parents, Psychologists, Health Visitors and Counsellors* (McNamara, 1998).

MI techniques and strategies have been incorporated into individual casework with young people whose behaviour is perceived by others to be problematic. Within educational settings, MI has been identified as a useful process in working with young people who may be ambivalent about change (McNamara, 1998, 2001; Atkinson and Woods, 2003) particularly when the impetus for change has come from a third party. In such instances, it is questionable whether the pupil will have the motivation to modify their behaviour and therefore may not be at a stage of readiness for change (Atkinson and Woods, 2003).

**2.4.3 MI, the Transtheoretical Model and the Model of Stages of Change**

The first part of this research was designed around the model of MI that is prevalent within educational practice and research. This involves the integration of MI techniques with the Transtheoretical Model of Stages of Change (Prochaska and DiClemente, 1982).

Prochaska and DiClemente (1982) proposed an ‘integrative model of change’ in response to a growing number of reported psychotherapy interventions and criticisms about the eclecticism of practice. From a comparative analysis of 18 leading therapy systems and over 300 therapy outcomes (Prochaska, 1979, cited by Prochaska and DiClemente, 1982) they developed a Transtheoretical Model of Therapy (TTM). They identified commonalities between processes by which different therapeutic interventions helped people to achieve behavioural change and proposed a Model of Stages of
The Model of Stages of Change defines a series of stages through which people pass when addressing behaviour that is perceived by others to be problematic. In the seminal text *Motivational Interviewing: Preparing People to Change Addictive Behaviour* (Miller and Rollnick, 1991) the TTM appeared to be integral when describing the context for and practice of MI. However, in the later edition (Miller and Rollnick, 2002), the model appears as less of a core feature and is included instead as a contributed chapter within a section entitled *Applications of Motivational Interviewing* (DiClemente and Velasquez, 2002).

Corden and Somerton (2004) describe the TTM as:

> …a sophisticated attempt to describe the stages, processes and levels of change involved when individuals think about changing their addiction to a particular substance or behaviour. It is described as “transtheoretical” because its authors claim that it can integrate competing theoretical concepts of how individuals can change their behaviour (page 1026).

McNamara (1992, 1998) has defined the model in relation to an educational context. This is shown in Figure 2.1 overleaf.
The TTM is widely used in social work fields as well as within clinical practice. From this perspective, Corden and Somerton (2004) question the way in which the original model has been translated, without taking account of some of the possible limitations of the model and incorporating new thinking about the stages of change. For example, the presentation of the model within the field of social work (Horwarth and Morrison, 2000) does not take account of revisions made by Prochaska and DiClemente (1998) to replace the 'Determinism' stage with 'Preparation' in the light of empirical evidence. Although some of the concerns illustrated by Corden and Somerton (2004) are specific to the field (for example, is Relapse an
appropriate stage to consider when dealing with child protection concerns?) similar criticisms could be levelled at the way in which the Model of Stages of Change has been incorporated into educational settings.

The model of MI prevalent in EP practice involves the integration of MI techniques with the stages of change described in the original TTM (Prochaska and DiClemente, 1982). MI and the Model of Stages of Change tend to have been seen as synonymous within educational practice (McNamara, 1992, 1998; Atkinson and Woods, 2003; Atkinson, 2004).

For purposes of clarity and because there are differences between the two constructs, within this thesis the ‘Model of Stages of Change' will refer to that described by McNamara (1998) within an educational context, while the TTM will denote that proposed by Prochaska and DiClemente (1982) and its subsequent adaptations (e.g. Prochaska, Norcross and DiClemente, 1994; Prochaska and DiClemente, 1998).

2.4.4 Reflections on MI within EP practice
To date, the reported use of MI techniques and the Model of Stages of Change has been predominantly in working with children and young people identified by others as having Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (EBD), although the Model of Stages of Change has also been used to evaluate systemic change (Sleight, 2004).

Within educational settings, there is not a clearly defined way of undertaking MI with children and young people (Atkinson and Woods, 2003). Cheshire EPS (2000) proposed an eclectic practice framework developed around the Model of Stages of Change. Practitioners have described the use of active listening techniques (McNamara, 1992, 1998; Parker, 1999) while Atkinson and Woods (2003) and Atkinson (2004) propose adaptations of the Menu of Strategies (Rollnick, Heather and Bell, 1992) as a way of undertaking MI with young people. Summaries of active listening techniques and the Menu of Strategies are presented as Appendices 2 (ii) and 2 (iii) respectively.
Frequently the application of MI within the author’s personal casework practice has related to affective or behavioural pupil assessment. This can include helping the young person and adults supporting them to recognise the stage of change they are at and to target interventions and support accordingly. The flexible use of MI in educational settings has been recognised by McNamara (1998) who notes that:

Apart from designated staff with significant pastoral responsibilities, it is unlikely that many teachers will engage in motivational interviewing in counselling situations - but most teachers with a knowledge of the theory and techniques of motivational interviewing can incorporate some of the techniques into their day to day conversations with pupils (page 34).

2.4.5 The efficacy of MI within educational settings
There is little empirical evidence of the impact of MI within educational settings. Research reports are limited to individual case studies (McNamara, 2001; Atkinson and Woods, 2003). This could indicate that MI is not widely used within EP practice. It might also suggest that there are difficulties defining exactly what constitutes MI (see Section 2.4.4). The efficacy of MI in clinical settings will be discussed further in Chapter Six.

2.4.6 The Goals of MI
McNamara (1992, 1998) describes how in facilitating pupil movement within the Model of Stages of Change, a number of goals should be addressed.

- To increase Knowledge
- To increase Concern
- To promote Self-Efficacy
- To promote Internal Attribution
- To promote Self-Esteem
More information about the aims and reasons for these goals is provided in Table 2.1 below:

**Table 2.1. Goals of MI (adapted from McNamara 1998)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Aim</th>
<th>Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To increase Knowledge</td>
<td>To promote knowledge about the problem situation (e.g. awareness of factors that lead to someone becoming angry).</td>
<td>Increase the probability of movement from the precontemplative to contemplative stage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To increase Concern</td>
<td>To promote concern about the problem situation (e.g. impact on future life chances, health, etc).</td>
<td>Increase the probability of movement from the precontemplative stage and thence to determination (i.e. a decision to change).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To promote Self-efficacy</td>
<td>To promote feelings of capability about dealing with difficult situations.</td>
<td>Facilitates the belief that change is achievable and increases; i) persistence when the task proves difficult and ii) continued commitment when initial efforts result in failure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To promote Internal Attribution</td>
<td>To help the individual understand that they can have some control over behaviour outcomes.</td>
<td>i) increases belief that causes of ‘the problem’ can be influenced and; ii) increases the probability that ‘failure’ will be attributed to lack of effort, not to external factors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To promote Self-Esteem</td>
<td>To improve feelings of general self-worth.</td>
<td>Negative feedback will be more readily accepted and likelihood of denial, rejection and projection reduced.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each of the goals will be explored more thoroughly in Chapter Three.

McNamara (1998) notes that the MI goals should be introduced flexibly and eclectically in helping to facilitate client movement through the stages of change. It should be noted that these goals appear to be specific to MI within educational contexts and are not described in key texts describing MI within clinical practice (Miller and Rollnick, 1991, 2002). Although these constructs have attracted substantial attention individually in other areas of educational research, there is no empirical evidence describing their collective use within MI practice.

### 2.4.7 MI in a learning context

The application of MI principles and the Model of Stages of Change to a learning context has not previously been considered within an educational setting. This section will explore how MI principles and practice might form the basis of an affective reading intervention.

One of the key principles of MI involves helping the client explore ambivalence about a specific behaviour. Miller and Rollnick (2002) note that people commonly feel two ways about an issue and that it would be exceptional to feel 100% clear about something. However, in applying an MI approach to a learning situation, it should not be assumed that individuals are experiencing ambivalence about reading. The supposition would be that most would recognise the positive aspects of reading and a lack of engagement may represent, for example, competing interests or limited time.
In considering the application of MI to a group-learning situation, it was difficult to see how active listening techniques and the Menu of Strategies might be appropriate, as these techniques were devised for working with individuals who are presenting with behaviours perceived to be problematic. However, in reflecting the ethos of MI, it was decided that a more appropriate way to proceed would be to incorporate the goals of MI (all of which could be translated into a learning context) into an affective reading programme.

Chapter Three outlines how this intervention attempted to address each of the goals in turn, in relation to reading engagement and motivation. It considers each of these concepts in greater detail and describes the activities devised that were associated with each of the goals. It should be made clear, at this point, that for the purposes of this research the intervention did not claim to be providing MI. Instead the goals of MI were used as a basis for activities designed to promote reading engagement and motivation. The intervention was essentially an exercise in promoting a sense of self, seeing what the benefits of reading might be and exploring ways in which the boys could access additional reading opportunities.
Chapter Three: Rationale and outline of the MI intervention

3.1 Context for the materials

Chapter Two describes why the application of MI techniques and principles to a learning context should not be considered as MI per se. It also describes how, within educational practice, there is a lack of a consensus surrounding what constitutes a motivational interview, but that previous work has centred on trying to facilitate pupil movement through the stages of change.

Some of the techniques used in MI practice are difficult to apply to a group-learning situation (see Section 2.4.7). It was therefore decided to build the programme of activities around the goals of MI (McNamara, 1998) (see Section 2.4.6). Additionally, specific techniques from MI were included where these could be related to these goals. Explicit reference will be made to these activities, and their theoretical rationale, in the description of the sessions.

Each of the goals represents a complex and abstract psychological construct. Furthermore they should not be considered individual entities without overlap. For example, locus of control and self-esteem are important constructs within self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1997). Elliot (1996) demonstrates difficulties with researching the locus of control in clinical settings and suggests that such problems may be applicable to other psychological constructs, including motivation and self-esteem. Methodological issues in researching such concepts are considered further in Section 4.5.4.

It should be made clear that while the materials designed for the project were intended to reflect the goals of MI, they represented a very simplistic notion of these psychologically complex constructs. While they attempted to build on the ideas reflected in the goals of MI, no assumption was made that the
materials would have an impact on, for example, an individual pupil’s self-esteem or self-efficacy, particularly in view of time limitations (each session would be a maximum of twenty minutes). In order to measure impact, clear definitions of these concepts within the context of the thesis would be required and relevant before and after measures would be needed, to determine whether any intervention had been influential. This level of research was beyond the scope of this thesis. Instead the general ethos of the project was to try and allow pupils the opportunity to examine, challenge, discuss and possibly extend their own reading motivation and engagement.

3.2 The sessions

The sessions were designed to be accessible to mixed ability registration groups (see Section 4.1.1). They were presented in a different order to the goals described by McNamara (1992, 1998). The reason for this was that, in the context of the thesis, self-esteem and locus of control appeared to be more general concepts while knowledge, concern and self-efficacy could be related specifically to reading. The sessions were therefore planned in the following order:

Table 3.1   Overview of sessions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session Number</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>To promote Self-Esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>To promote Internal Attribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>To increase Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>To increase Concern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>To promote Self-Efficacy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.3 The activities

The ideas for the activities for each session came from theoretical and empirical information about how these goals might be pursued. Each will now be considered in turn.

3.3.1 Promoting Self-Esteem

The concept of self-esteem is defined by Lawrence (1988) as the individual’s evaluation of the discrepancy between self-image (what a person is) and ideal self (what a person would like to be). Ayers and Prytys (2002) write that:

*The term self-esteem refers to the evaluations children make about themselves and their competence in a range of settings. These self-evaluations and competencies influence attitudes, motivation and behaviour* (page 186).

McNamara (1998) observes that some notions of self-esteem can be oversimplified and that evaluations by people of themselves can vary according to their frame of reference. Self-esteem, unlike self-efficacy, is not domain specific but concerned with judgements about self-worth (Bandura, 1997). It is not a constant and can vary in different situations or environments. Pintrich and Schunk (2002) cite work by Harter (1998) that suggests global self-esteem is related to both self-perceptions of confidence in different domains and the importance the individual assigns to these domains. Links between self-esteem, locus of control and self-efficacy are identified by Lawrence (1988) and Bandura (1997).

Good self-esteem is central to developing competence and for individuals to achieve high self-esteem they must identify their own strengths (Bandura, 1997; Franken, 1998). The activities for this session therefore related to helping the pupils recognise their skills.
Activities for this session were as follows:

1. An introduction to the general aims of the intervention.

2. Completion of a Skills Profile (see Appendix 3 (i)). This was adapted from materials produced by Manchester City Council (2002) and Cheshire County Council (2005) to allow pupils to identify skills they had. They were asked to choose from a list of words those that were most like them. They then matched these to categories that defined areas of strength (e.g. *Word Smart, Body Smart*).

3. A discussion, to illustrate the range of skills held by the class, reflecting that different people have different skills and strengths.

This session was not related specifically to reading, but was designed to promote rapport with the pupils, another important prerequisite for MI (Rollnick and Bell, 1991) and to engender general feelings of well-being.

### 3.3.2 Promoting Internal Locus of Control

The concept of perceived control over task engagement and outcomes is central to many views of intrinsic motivation (Pintrich and Schunk, 2002). Rotter (1966, cited by Pintrich and Schunk, 2002) developed his social learning theory to include locus of control, which is a generalised belief about the extent to which behaviours influence outcomes.

In literacy learning, having an external locus of control can mean that responsibility for failure tends to be attributed to others and the pupil may not feel accountable for their own literacy learning (Dweck and Repucci, 1973, cited by Pumfrey, 1997). It is important, therefore, to help pupils to develop an increasing internal locus of control belief, in relation to their progress in reading. Internal attribution relates to ‘attributing success to one’s own efforts rather than to another’s actions, luck or circumstances’ (Ayers and Prytys, 2002, page 137).
There is some research to suggest that individuals with an external locus of control have lower attainments than those with internal locus of control beliefs. Nunn and Parrish (1992) suggested that at risk students, who tended to have more of an external locus of control, were less motivated towards achievement and had poorer learning self-concepts than a matched control group.

Franken (1998) reports that success and failure at a task can be attributed to any one of four factors: ability, effort, task difficulty and luck. Activities in this session asked pupils to identify which of these contributed to successes at different activities. They were introduced to the notion of internal and external reasons given for success and encouraged to find internal reasons for recent achievements, particularly relating to their skills and abilities.

Activities for this session were as follows:

1. Pupils were given a questionnaire called *Why I do well at things* (see Appendix 3 (ii)). They were asked to consider a number of written statements describing successful events (e.g. ‘I played well at football’; ‘I remembered what I had learnt in my Science lesson’). For each statement, they were asked to attribute a reason for the success (ability, effort, task difficulty or luck).

2. The idea of internal and external reasons for success was introduced to the pupils. They were asked if they could think of examples of internal and external reasons why somebody might do well on a reading test.

3. Pupils were asked to think of recent successful events and think of internal reasons for these.

Once more, this session wasn’t specifically related to reading, although the second activity referred to a literacy task.
3.3.3 Increasing Knowledge

McNamara (1998) notes that increasing knowledge about a problem situation may increase the probability of movement from the precontemplative to the contemplative stage. Because this intervention was not specifically concerned with a problem situation, in this instance increasing ‘knowledge’ focused on raising awareness about what reading means and the different ways in which pupils might engage in reading.

During this session, pupils were asked for their thoughts about what reading means and were asked to identify and share as many items as possible that could be read. The aim was to encourage pupils to think more broadly about the range of reading behaviours they might choose to engage in.

Activities for this session were as follows:

1. The word ‘reading’ was written in the middle of the whiteboard. Pupils were asked to describe what they thought reading was to a partner. Feedback was collected and written on flip chart paper. The purpose of this activity was to help pupils to gain a broader understanding of what reading means, beyond commonly held perceptions such as decoding and reading books.

This activity was also devised with the Opening Strategy from the Menu of Strategies (Rollnick et al, 1992, see Appendix 2 (ii)) in mind. Here the problem behaviour is presented in a neutral and non-judgemental way. It can help the interviewer to understand the context for the client’s behaviour. In this case, it was envisaged that this activity would prompt an open-ended discussion of reading behaviours amongst the groups.

2. In order to identify the range of reading matter available, pupils were asked to work in pairs or threes and in two minutes think of, or write down, as many things as they could think of that people read. Feedback was then received from pupils.
3. Pupils were asked to consider a worksheet *Why do we read?* (see Appendix 3 (iii)). Elkin (2003) lists a range of reasons why people engage in reading. Items that seemed particularly pertinent to Key Stage 3 pupils were incorporated into this worksheet. Pupils were asked to indicate what they thought of each of the reasons by choosing smiley, straight-mouthed or frowning faces. They were also offered the opportunity to provide additional reasons of their own.

### 3.3.4 Increasing Concern

Raising concern is intended to increase the probability of movement from the Precontemplative to the Contemplative stage. McNamara (1998) describes how this relates to concern about the ‘problem situation’. Because a ‘problem situation’ was not defined in this intervention, it was difficult to translate this goal directly to a learning context, particularly at a group level.

Instead, the session related more generally to exploring positive reasons for reading and highlighting how reading might be beneficial to life after school, the implication being that engaging in reading now might enhance opportunities in terms of career, lifestyle and wealth.

Activities for this session were as follows:

1. The phrases ‘*Good Things*’ and ‘*Less Good Things*’ were written on the board. Pupils were asked to share some of the good things and less good things about reading, in whole class discussion. Feedback was recorded on flip chart paper. This activity was derived from *The good things and the less good things* from the Menu of Strategies (Rollnick et al, 1992, see Appendix 2 (ii)). In clinical practice, the technique is used to provide important information about the client’s context and enable an assessment of readiness for change. Here it was used with the intention of developing a fuller picture of the factors that facilitate or inhibit reading amongst young people and to address these accordingly.
2. Pupils were asked to consider a worksheet entitled *Can reading more make a difference?* (Appendix 3 (iv)). This activity relates to *The future and the present* activity in the Menu of Strategies (Rollnick et al, 1992). Clients are asked to explore how things might be different in the future without the behaviour in question. For the activity, pupils were asked, with their peers, to reflect on how reading more might affect different aspects of their future lives and if they wished, provide responses on the sheet. Answers were discussed and shared.

### 3.3.5 Promoting Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is a key construct of motivational theory in terms of promoting students’ engagement and learning (Linnenbrink and Pintrich, 2003). Self-efficacy is the perception of competence that an individual holds about his or her performance in relation to a specific task. It is not a measure of ability, but rather a belief in one’s ability to accomplish a particular target. Bandura (1997) states that ‘Perceived self-efficacy is concerned not with the number of skills you have, but with what you believe you can do with what you have under a variety of circumstances’ (page 37). It is concerned with judgements about personal capacity and differs from self-esteem, which is concerned with judgements about self-worth. Pajares (1996) suggests that self-efficacy may be the clearest predictor of performance on a given task and a more significant factor than actual aptitude.

Weak self-efficacy beliefs set the context for people to shun participating in activities and can contribute to arrested developmental potentials (Reeve, 2001). In other words, if a pupil expects a task to be overwhelming, confusing or frustrating they may avoid it. Bandura (1997) warns that avoidance choices exert a profound, detrimental, long-term effect on development.

Children who have self-set goals experience higher self-efficacy and motivation for attaining them than those who have had goals set for them. Schunk (1990) notes that:
• Goal setting can be beneficial to children’s learning. When children pursue a goal, they experience heightened self-efficacy for attaining it as they observe their progress towards the goal.

• Proximal goals, which are close at hand, result in greater motivation than more distant goals (therefore having ‘sub goals’ may be one way of enhancing children’s motivation).

• Self-set goals promote achievement striving better than externally imposed goals.

• Children who have self-set goals experience higher self-efficacy and motivation for attaining them than those who have had goals set for them.

The focus of this session was therefore to offer the boys the opportunity to set themselves some goals to increase their engagement in reading.

The activities for this session were as follows:

1. Pupils were asked to identify a range of possible activities that people might undertake when wishing to read more (through whole class discussion).

2. They were then asked to consider a worksheet entitled ‘Goals for Reading’ (Appendix 3 (v)). Here they were invited to comment on whether they would like to read more and if so could set themselves reading targets. Those who did not want to read more had the opportunity to think of more general goals.
3.4 General points about the activities

The activities were designed to promote discussion and interaction and pupils were encouraged to collaborate wherever possible. Any written components of the sessions were read aloud to pupils. Where activities included worksheets, pupils were told that it was not essential to write anything, but that if they did, the focus was ideas, rather than spelling or handwriting.

The next chapter will describe the research design for trialling the materials with whole class groups.
Chapter Four: Study One – Measuring the efficacy of the intervention using a quasi-experimental design

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter describes how an affective reading intervention was devised, using a series of activities based on ideas from MI literature. In order to evaluate the impact of the materials and to investigate whether or not they had the desired impact of promoting reading engagement and motivation amongst Key Stage 3 boys, a quasi-experimental approach was proposed. This was designed to examine the efficacy of the affective reading intervention. The following key questions were considered:

- Can MI principles and techniques be applied to a learning context?
- Can MI techniques increase boys’ reported engagement in reading?
- Does undertaking MI activities increase boys’ reported motivation for reading?
- What strategies are useful in helping boys to engage more readily in reading?

4.1.1 Participants

Study One involved mixed ability registration groups of Year 8 boys attending a single sex school, within an inner city conurbation. The school catchment area represented an area that could be described as predominantly white working class. It is situated within an area of high socio-economic disadvantage and government statistics show that Super Output Area (SOA) measures of multiple deprivation place it within the 1% most deprived wards in England (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM), 2004). This is also true of neighbouring wards in which feeder schools are situated. The last Ofsted report noted that over half of the boys received free school meals (well above the national average).
The rationale for selecting this school was as follows:

1. **Existing relationships with the school**

   The role of the EP in this particular school was not a generic or traditional one. The author worked as part of a multidisciplinary Behaviour and Education Support Team (BEST) that offered support to the school as part of the Behavioural Improvement Programme (BIP). BEST goals clearly identify systemic working as an important objective; part of the role of BESTs being to support school practice and development and work in partnership with school staff and other professionals, to develop their confidence in managing behaviour and attendance (BIP, 2003). Additionally, the school had a concept of an EP role that involved school development work and action research that may be atypical of schools generally (DfEE, 2000a). Another factor that enabled the BEST EP to adopt these practices was that the school also had its own EP who occupied a more traditional role, involving individual casework, consultation and staff training.

   A substantial piece of work had already been undertaken regarding boys’ literacy, through the BEST project, following identification via individual casework referrals of a link between low levels of literacy and behavioural difficulties. All members of school support staff had attended a training session delivered via the BEST programme (Manchester EPS, 2003) aimed at developing sophisticated responses to the literacy needs of the boys using the Manchester Literacy Resource File (Manchester EPS, 2004). As well as diagnostic assessment and target setting, this programme includes motivational aspects of reading development and encourages pupil participation and self-monitoring.

   Staff at the school were enthusiastic about and committed to supporting research and developing school-based literacy practice.

2. **Involvement in previous research**

   Pupils from the school had participated in previous research into Key Stage 3 pupils’ views about reading (see Section 1.1). This study found that the boys
involved reported significantly less engagement in reading than girls attending a single sex school within the same catchment area. Therefore intervention work seemed particularly relevant within this setting, the hope being that using an affective reading intervention would help to promote reading engagement and motivation.

4.1.2 Rationale for a whole class design

There is some reference within academic literature to reading interventions using therapeutic principles (see Section 2.2.6). However, these have tended to focus on the needs of individual pupils experiencing difficulties. This thesis set out to use an affective intervention to promote reading engagement and motivation amongst whole class groups. Reasons for this have previously been described in Sections 1.2 and 2.2.6.

Additionally, ethical concerns formed part of the rationale for choosing to trial the MI intervention materials with whole class registration groups, rather than individual pupils. Because it was possible to deliver the intervention during registration period, the need to interrupt individual pupils’ learning opportunities could be avoided. This meant that it was not necessary to choose individuals for specific reading interventions, who might feel stigmatised or uncomfortable about being selected.

Previous research (Project Three, page 19) identified that boys in general, not just those with reading difficulties, showed lower levels of reading engagement that their female counterparts, suggesting that a programme aimed at increasing reading engagement might be of benefit to the wider school population. This design gave all pupils within the registration groups the opportunity to participate in the activities.

One further reason for undertaking the research with whole class groups, rather than individuals, is that it meant that the materials would be delivered in a setting more akin to how literacy is taught within school. Even pupils with literacy learning difficulties receive the majority of their teaching in whole class groups.
4.1.3 Research methodology

A quasi-experimental, non-equivalent groups design was devised to measure the impact of the proposed affective reading intervention. Campbell and Stanley (1963, cited by Robson, 2002) describe this method as:

...a research design involving an experimental approach but where random assignment to treatment and comparison groups has not been used (page 133).

The aim was to generate quantitative pre and post test information about pupils’ reading engagement and motivation. It was hoped that selecting a quasi-experimental design would enable objective information about the efficacy of the affective reading intervention to be gathered.

Pre intervention measures for reading motivation and engagement were taken from three mixed ability groups of Year 8 pupils (see Section 4.1.1). One of these groups was to act as a control group. The other groups were to receive five whole class sessions aimed at developing reading engagement and motivation using the goals of MI (see Section 2.4.6). Additionally, the measures were piloted with a further registration group.

For the purposes of clarity the groups will be described as follows:

- Group A  Pilot group
- Group B  Control group
- Group C  First intervention group
- Group D  Second intervention group

The interventions were delivered at different times so that any impact could be measured using a crossover design (see Table 4.1, overleaf). It was planned that the control group (B) and intervention groups (C and D) would complete the questionnaires on three separate occasions:
• At the pre intervention stage;
• At the midway point (when Group C had received the intervention but Group D had not);
• Post intervention (when both groups C and D had received the intervention). Post intervention data for group C would therefore represent a ‘follow up’.

Details of the participation of each of the groups in the study are illustrated in Table 4.1 below.

### Table 4.1 The quasi-experimental design model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Group A</th>
<th>Group B</th>
<th>Group C</th>
<th>Group D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre test measures</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot activities</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First five week intervention</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeated measures</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second five week intervention</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post test measures</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Questionnaires piloted with Group A.

Additionally, dates and an outline of the programme, detailing who would receive the intervention at which times, can be found in Appendix 4 (i).

### 4.2 Ethical considerations

#### 4.2.1 Parental consent
Parents/carers were notified via the school newsletter that research would be taking place to look at the motivation of readers in Year 8. They were asked to contact a named person at the school if there were any questions or issues. This meant that the research design employed an ‘opt out’ rather
than an ‘opt in’ model of consent. In the context of this research, there were advantages and disadvantages with this particular design, which included:

- Because the activities were whole class, problems may have occurred in using an ‘opt in’ model, where, for example, return slips were not received.

- Logistical issues may have occurred in separating pupils whose parents/carers had actively opted in and those from whom informed consent had not been received. This research design avoided issues about pupils being stigmatised for participation or non-participation.

- It is possible that parents/carers may not have read the newsletter or the note about reading research.

- This method of informing parents/carers was less likely to lead to dialogue with their sons about whether they wanted to participate.

4.2.2 Pupil consent

Pupils in all groups were told that the research was about looking at ways to help pupils to enjoy reading more. Because the sessions were during registration period, the boys did not have a choice of leaving the sessions. This was problematic in terms of the notion of informed consent. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) note that the principle of informed consent arises from the subject’s right to freedom and self-determination and that the participant should have the right to refuse to take part.

Section 4.1.2 describes how one of the reasons for researching the intervention with whole class groups was to avoid segregating or stigmatising pupils. In acknowledgement of the need to allow the pupils the right to non-participation, it was emphasised throughout Study One that boys did not need to complete the written activities and pupils were not questioned or pursued about missing data (see Section 5.7.1).
4.2.3 Pupil well-being
The author administered the questionnaire and interventions personally, so there were opportunities to check that procedures did not entail any risk to the psychological well-being of the participants (British Psychological Society, 2000).

4.2.4 Confidentiality
It was agreed with the school that pupil responses would remain confidential and that outcome information communicated to the school would not permit the identification of individuals.

4.2.5 Debriefing
The importance of debriefing participants after they have taken part in an investigation is stressed in the Code of Conduct for Psychologists (BPS, 2000). Information about outcomes from Study One was discussed with the participants after the sessions had been completed (see Section 5.8).

4.3 Questionnaire design
Attitudes about reading were measured using data from questionnaires personally administered to the registration groups. There were three different questionnaires:

1. Reading Motivation Questionnaire
2. Frequency of Reading Questionnaire
3. Stages of Change Questionnaire

These will each now be described in turn.

4.3.1 Reading Motivation Questionnaire
The basis for the reading motivation measure used in this research was the Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ) (Wigfield and Guthrie, 1997).
This proposes 11 different dimensions of reading motivation, which are shown in Table 4.2 below.

### Table 4.2 Dimensions of reading measured by the MRQ

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intrinsic motivation</th>
<th>Extrinsic motivation</th>
<th>Social motivation for reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading efficacy</td>
<td>Competition in reading</td>
<td>Social reasons for reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading challenge</td>
<td>Recognition for reading</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading curiosity</td>
<td>Reading for grades</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading involvement</td>
<td></td>
<td>Compliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading work avoidance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The MRQ presents 54 separate questionnaire items (reflecting the 11 different scales) to which pupils respond on a 4-point scale from 1 (Very different from me) to 4 (A lot like me). The questionnaire was piloted with small groups of Year 8 boys, who were not involved in the project and was found to be quite lengthy. Because MI is concerned with promoting intrinsic motivation (McNamara, 1998; Miller and Rollnick, 2002), items that reflected extrinsic or social motivators were therefore disregarded for the purposes of this research. A short form version of the questionnaire, comprising 21 questions representing four of the eleven scales, was devised (see Appendix 4 (ii)). Scales included were Reading efficacy and Reading challenge (which represent aspects of motivation based on self-efficacy), and Reading curiosity and Reading involvement (which measure intrinsic motivation and learning goals) (Wigfield and Guthrie, 1997).

The rationale for choosing these items was two-fold. Firstly they were felt to be the areas most relevant to promoting intrinsic factors when considering reading engagement and motivation. Secondly, these scales were measured as having higher levels of internal reliability than some of the other items,
with reliability coefficients ranging from 0.68 to 0.8 (Wigfield and Guthrie, 1997). Indoe (1999) notes that values greater than 0.7 are seen as preferable for this questionnaire.

4.3.2 Frequency of Reading Questionnaire
This questionnaire (Appendix 4 (iii)) asked about the frequency with which boys read when not at school. Pupils were asked to respond about a range of items, including books, newspapers, magazines, text messages and the computer/internet. The purpose of including questions related to home reading preferences was to establish the amount of leisure reading pupils engaged in.

4.3.3 Stages of Change Questionnaire
In behavioural interventions, it is often possible to ascertain an individual’s readiness for change by considering the statements that they make in relation to a particular behaviour (McNamara, 1998; Parker, 1999). Similarly it is possible to ask young people to define what stage of change they are at and to describe associated behaviours (Atkinson, 2005). The Stages of Change Questionnaire proposes that same rationale might be used to ascertain pupils’ motivation for reading, using an adapted cycle to describe reading behaviour (see Figure 4.1, overleaf).

The boys were presented with these statements in the Stages of Change Questionnaire (see Appendix 4 (iv)) and asked to tick the one that was most like them. This was intended to give some idea about their level of motivation to develop their reading engagement during the project and to measure whether or not the intervention facilitated movement around a reading Model of Stages of Change, defined in these terms.
4.3.4 Piloting the questionnaires

Prior to piloting the questionnaires with a whole class group, the questionnaires were trialled with small groups of boys who were not involved in the research, to check the clarity of the questionnaire items, layout and instructions.

The questionnaires were piloted with Group A on two separate occasions, to check for reliability. Test–retest correlations were made for all of the dimensions on the Reading Motivation Questionnaire (Reading Efficacy, Challenge, Curiosity and Involvement, as well as for the total score) using Spearman’s correlation coefficient for ranked data. These were found to be significant at the 0.1% level for all items. A positive shift in responses to the
Frequency of Reading Questionnaire was noted using the Mann Whitney U test ($z = 2.169; p = 0.030$), despite the fact that the questionnaires were only administered one week apart, suggesting a change in the reported reading engagement of the pupils over this period. This could indicate heightened awareness of reading behaviour, leading to a Hawthorne effect (refer to Cohen et al, 2000, for further information).

4.3.5 Questionnaire administration

All three questionnaires were completed within a twenty-minute registration period. Questions were read aloud by the author, but pupils were given the option of completing the questionnaires at their own pace. The boys were told that the questionnaires were part of a research project to find out about young people’s reading. Pupils participating in the intervention and control groups were given the same information during the questionnaire administration, to ensure consistency and enable more accurate comparison of results.

4.4 Delivery of the sessions

The intervention sessions were also delivered during the twenty-minute registration period, at weekly intervals. These followed the format described in Chapter Three. Pupils were told that, following on from the questionnaires, they would be presented with some activities that might help them to think more about reading. They were informed that the rationale for this was that research evidence indicated that when young people become teenagers, they engaged less in reading. The boys were told that they were co-researchers and asked to contribute ideas at any available opportunity. They were informed that the intervention would be about their feelings about reading, not about teaching them to read or finding out how good at reading they were.
4.5 Critique of methodology

4.5.1 Limitations of quantitative analysis
At the outset of the thesis, limitations of positivist approaches to educational research were acknowledged (see Sherrard, 1998; Cohen et al., 2000; Robson, 2002, for further exploration of its possibilities and limitations). The reasons for initially selecting a quasi-experimental design are described in Section 4.1.3. It was noted however, that seeking to control variables to ensure an objective and systematic research design can stifle exploration of the more open-ended aspects of human behaviour and therefore may not be appropriate for social research (Cohen et al., 2000). For this reason, additional qualitative information was gathered during this stage of the research to provide greater insight into the boys’ responses to the sessions (see Section 4.5.2).

4.5.2 Initial revisions to methodology: including more qualitative data
The questionnaires were administered to four different registration groups, who it was intended would act as the pilot group, control group and two experimental groups (see Section 4.1.3). During this initial data gathering, observations about variation in pupil responses, teacher involvement, group dynamics and logistical factors (e.g. the time available for the session; the number of boys present at the start of the day) between the groups, brought into question whether a predominantly quantitative experimental design would be appropriate.

Dörnyei (2002) notes that while quantitative research can provide precise, reliable and replicable data, it does not do justice to the subjective variety of individual life. Similar scores can result from quite different motivational processes and quantitative methods are less sensitive to revealing motivational dynamics than qualitative techniques (see also Section 4.5.4).

In view of this, a decision was made to place greater emphasis on the response made by the boys to the activities. Sessions were audio taped and transcribed. This provided qualitative feedback about the content of the
sessions and the level of engagement, interest and enthusiasm shown. Individual pupils were not discernible on the tape recordings, so it was not possible to attribute comments to individual pupils (and not desirable in view of confidentiality issues). Pupils were told that sessions would be taped and that this was to enable their delivery to be reviewed. Additionally, a research diary was completed after every session, detailing thoughts and observations pertaining to the boys’ responses to the activities. Examples of a session transcription and audio diary reflections can be found at Appendix 4 (v). Information from the sessions was recorded on a pro forma and this is exemplified at Appendix 4 (vi).

With the boys’ permission, worksheets were collected after every session to evaluate any written responses to the activities. These were returned the following week. Additionally, at the end of each of the sessions, pupils were invited to write a comment on the activity sheets under the heading ‘Comments about the session’. They were told that these would be used to inform and develop future sessions. These comments were also noted on the pro forma (Appendix 4 (vi)).

4.5.3 Ethical issues in relation to the control group
It was not originally intended that pupils in the control or pilot groups would have access to the intervention during the course of the thesis. It was therefore agreed that materials would be made available to the school to use with other pupils, if, at the end of the research, the impact of the intervention had been positive.

4.5.4 Motivational research
Problems are inherent in motivational research because motivation is an abstract concept and not directly observable (Dörnyei, 2002). This means that it is not possible to find objective measures of motivation. Furthermore, it is a multidimensional construct and cannot be represented by simple measures, such as the results of simple questionnaire items.
An additional problem affecting motivational research is noted by Dörnyei (2002), in that motivation is not stable and changes dynamically over time. It is therefore questionable to what extent a one-off questionnaire can represent an individual’s approach to a prolonged behaviour such as the acquisition and development of reading. The same stipulations need to be made when referring to the constructs described as the goals of MI (McNamara 1992, 1998), although changes in relation to these measures were not sought (see Section 3.1).

4.5.5 Power balance
Reeve (2001) notes that most attempts to motivate others take place in relationships that involve interpersonal power differentials between the motivator and the person being motivated. In this instance, the justification for undertaking an intervention aimed at promoting reading enjoyment and participation was based on research evidence about the likely benefits of reading participation (e.g. DECP, 1999, Torgesen, 2002). However, the impetus for this work had come from the author, not from the pupils themselves. This is explored further in Section 6.2.3, in relation to an MI paradigm.

4.5.6 Research in a single sex school
The rationale for selecting the school for this research is described in Section 4.1.1. There is a substantial body of literature that refers to possible implications for pupils educated in single sex establishments (e.g. Speilhofer, O'Donnell, Benton, Schagen and Schagen, 2002; Daly and Defty, 2004). This is noted, but will not be explored further in this thesis. Instead, it should be made clear that outcomes and observations relate to the educational context described in this research. Limitations of findings, in terms of their general applicability to other contexts (particularly co-educational schools) are acknowledged and outcomes relating to the boys’ responses to the intervention and to reading in general are reported with this proviso.
4.5.7 Role as EP within the school

One unforeseen problem was that during the course of this research, the author accepted another post in another LEA. Therefore the latter part of the research and data collection was not undertaken as EP for the school. Although this did not restrict opportunities for conducting research, it did mean that there was less scope for informal discussions about the thesis that might have taken place in the course of day-to-day EP practice. It also meant a position as a ‘researcher’ rather than EP was assumed for the concluding parts of the research.
Chapter Five: Outcomes from Study One

5.1 Introduction

This section describes outcomes from Study One of this thesis. Originally it had been intended that these would be thoroughly explored in relation to the key questions (see Section 4.1). However, during the course of the research, important issues arose that led to the methodology being examined, re-evaluated and eventually redesigned. These factors will be explained fully during the course of this chapter, which therefore provides formative (rather than summative) information about MI and boys’ reading engagement and motivation. In view of this, quantitative and qualitative data from this part of the thesis will be described, but not discussed in their entirety. Instead an overview of the key findings will be provided, along with the justification for changing the focus of the thesis.

This chapter comprises the following sections:

- The pilot study and pre intervention measures
- Data analysis
- Pupil responses
- General observations
- Questionnaire outcomes
- Process and practice issues
- Debriefing

The chapter will conclude (Section 5.9) by explaining how, in the view of outcomes from Study One, the focus of the thesis was reviewed, the key questions redefined and a new method of enquiry considered (Study Two).
5.2 The pilot study and pre intervention measures

5.2.1 Extending the pilot study
Originally it was intended to pilot the questionnaires and one session with a registration group (Group A) and other materials with small groups of boys. However, the opportunity arose during the course of the thesis to trial the entire intervention with Group A. This meant that all of the sessions were piloted before they were delivered to the first intervention group (Group C). Group A received the intervention programme a week ahead of Group C, which allowed time to amend materials or activities, as appropriate.

5.2.2 Questionnaire reliability and comparison of groups
To check for reliability, the questionnaires were piloted with Group A (see Section 4.3.4). Outcome data seemed to represent adequate levels of reliability, although it was not possible to assess this over longer timescales, owing to research deadlines.

Scores recorded on the pre-test questionnaires were compared using the Kruskal-Wallis One-Way Analysis of Variance. This indicated that there was no significant variability between the registration groups (B, C and D) in terms of their responses to the questionnaire items (Reading Motivation Questionnaire (total score), $\chi^2 = 0.123; p = 0.940$; Frequency of Reading Questionnaire, $\chi^2 = 2.264; p = 0.322$). This suggested that there were no significant differences between the groups and that they were particularly well matched on the Reading Motivation Questionnaire.

5.2.3 Difficulties with the quasi-experimental design
Following the questionnaire pilot and administration of the pre-test questionnaires, it was evident that the assumption that the efficacy of the intervention could be measured using a solely quasi-experimental design was premature. Although baseline reading motivation scores were similar, there were unforeseen factors that could not be controlled that made it difficult to make direct comparisons between the groups. These included:
• Differences in teacher response and role
• Logistical factors
• Group dynamics
• Pupil response to the researcher

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) advocate that:

For research to be reliable, it must demonstrate that if it were to be carried out on a similar group of respondents in a similar context… then similar results would be found (page 117).

Observable differences in group dynamics and pupil responses between the registration classes brought into question whether the groups were comparable, suggesting that it would be inappropriate to generalise the results to other pupils, even those within the same academic context. These factors are discussed further in Sections 5.3 and 5.4.

5.2.4 Session delivery
Because of the methodological difficulties described in Section 5.2.3, and other factors described more fully later in this chapter, the intervention was eventually delivered only to Group A and Group C, although these were not the proposed intervention groups at the start of the research.

The decision to include Group A outcomes in Study One came about for two reasons. First of all, qualitative information from the sessions and suggestions from the boys became more important than the quantitative measures (pre and post test questionnaires), because of the nature of the boys’ responses. Secondly, when the materials were trialled with Group A, there were no particular problems with the content of the sessions, so the same activities were used with both groups.
5.3 Data analysis

All of the sessions with Group C and three of the sessions with Group A were transcribed (the reason being that it was initially intended that Group A would act as the pilot group).

Key themes were identified and these are listed below:

- Pupil engagement
- Pupil response
- Pupils' verbal comments
- Socio-cultural factors
- Role of the teacher
- Logistical factors
- Process and practice issues

Information about each of these areas was recorded on the session feedback pro forma (see Appendix 4 (v) for an example).

5.4 Pupil responses

An overview of the responses of the two groups to the project will first be provided. This section will then describe some of the individual responses made by pupils within the groups.

5.4.1 Group responses

Table 5.1, overleaf, offers a summary of the key features of the sessions for Groups A and C, as a way of offering the reader an overview of the outcomes.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Group A</th>
<th>Group C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. To promote Self-Esteem</td>
<td>Generally positive/well received, although pupil engagement and feedback limited.</td>
<td>Generally fine, although pupils arriving throughout registration affected the fluency of the delivery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. To promote Internal Attribution</td>
<td>Good response to activities. Reasonable pupil engagement.</td>
<td>More positive than Session 1, although latecomers still impacted on session delivery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. To increase Knowledge</td>
<td>Increased level of pupil engagement.</td>
<td>Individual pupil expressed discontent before the session. Pupil engagement highest on this occasion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. To increase Concern</td>
<td>Most positive session in terms of pupil response.</td>
<td>Negative response from a number of the pupils. Disapproving comments made to boys who showed interest in the session, by peers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. To promote Self-efficacy</td>
<td>Unsuccessful session, possibly due to logistical factors (change of room, supply teacher, pupil unwell).</td>
<td>Not conducted following negative response from pupils in Session 4.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.4.2 Response of Group A

Group A was initially the pilot group. However, for reasons described in Section 5.2.4, feedback from using the intervention with this group was later included in Study One outcomes.

Responses to Sessions 1 and 2 were generally positive, although pupil feedback was limited. The third and fourth sessions were more successful and there seemed a positive response from most boys. Pupils seemed willing to engage with these sessions, with the exception of a small group of about four or five. However, these boys were still willing to contribute credible suggestions to whole class discussion.

The final session, however, was problematic due to a number of unforeseen circumstances. There was a supply teacher taking the form group, the classroom was locked which meant that the session was late starting (after an eventual change of classroom) and one pupil was unwell towards the end of the session, which entirely diverted the attention of the class. This meant that the sessions were not concluded in the way that had been intended.

5.4.3 Response of Group C

From the outset, sessions with Group C were less well received than those with Group A. One initial hypothesis for this was that Group A had undertaken an additional session, piloting the questionnaire, and that this had enabled greater rapport with these pupils. Additionally, it was observed that more Group C pupils arrived late to registration, making delivery of the sessions disjointed. Instructions needed to be revisited for latecomers and this interrupted the flow of the sessions. Pupils found it difficult to complete the activities if they were not in attendance for the whole session.

During the third session, it became clear that the social dynamics of Group C were a significant factor in determining the boys’ response to the sessions. Before the teacher arrived for this session, one pupil, speaking in front of his peers, stated that the sessions conflicted with another, more enjoyable registration activity (a class quiz). Although the pupil appeared to hold status
within the group, it was evident that this matter was not just of concern to him, but to other members of the class. Despite reassurance from the form tutor that the boys that they would be able to do the quiz on an alternative morning, their reaction was far less positive or productive after this. Ethical concerns about the suitability of the intervention for Group C led to a decision to terminate the programme after Session 4. Reasons for this will be explored in greater detail later in this chapter.

5.4.4 Pupil engagement
Observations, and transcripts of pupils’ verbal responses suggested positive engagement with some of the activities. No difficulties were noted during the sessions on self-esteem or locus of control (Sessions 1 and 2) where there was no specific focus on reading. Tasks involving whole class or paired discussion led to the greatest pupil engagement. It should be noted, however, that even in sessions perceived to be the most successful in terms of pupil participation, a limited number of pupils (about six or seven) typically provided most of the answers during whole class discussion.

The lowest levels of engagement were observed in the final sessions for each of the groups (Session 4 for Group C; Session 5 for Group A). With Group A, logistical factors might have been contributory as there was a change of teacher and classroom. Amongst pupils in Group C, disengagement was evident amongst a number of pupils, during Session 4 (e.g. not completing any of the written activities; not providing names). This was not challenged, for reasons described in Section 5.7.1 (Ethical concerns).

5.4.5 Response to the activities
During the early sessions (Self-Esteem and Locus of Control) there was quite a positive response from the pupils. This was more marked amongst pupils in Group A than Group C (reasons for this are considered in Section 5.4.3). Group A responded well to the activities in Sessions 3 and 4. This was exemplified by a rich range of ideas about the 'good things' and 'less good
things’ about reading provided for Session 4 (Concern), although once more, a limited number of boys offered responses.

The kinds of responses given by boys from Group A to this activity are shown in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2 The kinds of responses given during whole class discussion to identifying the ‘good things’ and ‘less good things’ about reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good things</th>
<th>Less good things</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“You can read your bills when they come through the door”</td>
<td>“Too long” [a novel]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Learn things from books”</td>
<td>“There’s no music”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Interest”</td>
<td>“Boring”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“You can imagine more”</td>
<td>“I’d rather go out to learn about stuff, than read. Like go to a museum, or a film”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Pictures”</td>
<td>“Pictures”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“For going out like… if you read a book it tells you where you can go out, like on a treasure hunt”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“It gives you ideas”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“You can read about things that you’ve never done before. Like origami or something like that”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another activity that provided a rich and diverse response from the pupils was identifying a range of things you could read (in Session 3, Knowledge). Boys worked in pairs for this activity and offered extensive written and verbal feedback about possible reading materials. Written responses offered by Group C can be found in Appendix 5 (i). Observations suggested that this
was a task that all of the boys could engage with, which offered opportunities for peer collaboration.

The response of pupils in Group C to the later sessions seemed to be affected by the comments about the activities conflicting with the class quiz (see Section 5.4.3). Interestingly, Session 3 that followed (Knowledge) was the most interactive. The boys had lots of ideas and were on task during activities (Appendix 5 (i) provides an illustration). However, at the next session, two boys showed a demonstrably negative attitude at the start of the session and generally pupils did not respond positively. Specific behaviours included audibly negative comments about the activities, lower levels of engagement than had been observed at previous sessions and disruptive or off task behaviour. Additionally, negative comments were directed at one boy who engaged with the activities (see Section 5.4.8). It was felt that these observed behaviours indicated that some pupils were not motivated to participate in the sessions and that therefore the intervention was not reflecting the ‘spirit’ of MI as described by Miller and Rollnick (2002). This is explored further in Section 6.2.3.

5.4.6 Verbal comments during the sessions
It was not easy for pupils to offer feedback during the sessions, because the activities were structured and time scales limited. Furthermore, the audio recording equipment was not sophisticated enough to capture comments that were not audible to the whole class. Most of the comments made by the boys were questions about the tasks. Some of the pupils offered feedback about their responses to the activities (“I got loads of Cs”; “Miss, I’ve done all 15”).

5.4.7 Written responses
In order to provide a brief analysis of the written comments, these were coded into four groups. Examples are shown in Table 5.3, overleaf.
Table 5.3 Summary of pupils’ written responses to the sessions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive responses</th>
<th>Examples:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I have found out more about myself and what I am capable of.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I think it makes people think and gives people enjoyment in reading.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It was very helpful to me.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enjoyed the session.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group A 57%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Group C 32%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negative responses</th>
<th>Examples:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I think the session was pointless.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I would rather do the quiz. I never read anything. IT’S BORING.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It was boring.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I didn’t work.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group A 20%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Group C 32%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mixed or indifferent responses</th>
<th>Examples:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I think it was all right. I got to know what things I like.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It was different from the other session, less entertaining yet it was OK.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This session was interesting but the questions were difficult.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group A 18%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Group C 28%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other responses</th>
<th>Examples:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Artistic.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I am good with bike skills.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work hard make money sleep eat and watch TV. Go on holiday. Sunbathe.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group A 5%</td>
<td></td>
<td>Group C 8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The proportion of positive and negative comments appeared to reflect the different responses of the two groups and individuals within them. Although comments were not matched to individual pupil data, it is feasible that the responses also reflected different levels of pupil motivation expressed in the Stages of Change Questionnaire (see Section 5.6.2).

5.4.8 Socio-cultural factors

It was evident from pupil interactions, recorded in the session transcripts and from direct observation of the groups, that the socio-cultural context of the classrooms was an important factor in influencing pupil engagement. During the sessions, a number of specific incidents were recorded, including:

1. A pupil raising his hand to demonstrate strengths in all categories during the Self-Esteem session, when pupils were asked to select one. This appeared to be related to gaining peer approval and status.

2. Some pupils were mocked for answers given during the whole class discussion. This did not appear to relate to the content of their suggestions, but to the fact that they were responding to the task. One pupil was referred to as “Gay boy” for engaging readily in the discussion. The use of the term ‘gay’ has been identified by researchers as a term used to police behaviours that are seen as being inconsistent with hegemonic or dominant views of behaviour within a particular socio-cultural context (Duncan, 1999; Martino, 1999). This is examined in greater depth in Section 8.4.4.

3. Where there was disaffection and disengagement, this was most notable amongst groups of boys. Amongst these pupils there was clear demonstration of their non-participation.

4. In Group C, two boys appeared to exert a powerful social influence over other members of the group. Pupils within the class appeared to be conscious of the views of these boys, when responding to the activities.
Dörnyei (2002) cites Swezey, Meltzer and Salas (1994) who argue that most theories of motivation attempt to explain motivational processes at the individual rather than the group level. Groups, however, might show motivational characteristics that stem from the group as a social unit, rather than from individual members. Dörnyei (2002) also describes research by Ehrman and Dörnyei (1998) that demonstrates that the motivational impact of peer relationships can be influenced by:

- The group structure – intermember relationships, group norms, group roles and the status hierarchy within the group;
- The group’s development – level of maturity, independence and self-reliance;
- The teacher’s leadership style and behaviour.

Dörnyei (2002) speculates, ‘in many classrooms, a student’s lack of motivation can be traced to a real or imagined fear of being isolated or rejected by peers and being labelled a ‘brain’, a ‘nerd’, a ‘creep’ or a ‘swot” (page 37).

It is likely that the observed behaviours identified above influenced the extent to which pupils participated in the sessions and came to value the activities. It became evident, when reflecting on the general aims of the intervention (to promote reading engagement and motivation), that the social dynamics of the group were not conducive to these objectives.

5.5 General observations

In addition to pupil responses detailed in Section 5.4, general observations were made about the sessions, as follows:
5.5.1 The materials

The materials for Sessions 1 and 2 (Self-Esteem and Locus of Control) were centred on a single task. This meant that it was difficult for the boys to join in if they arrived late to the session (see Section 5.5.3). The pace of the activities was also a problem for some of the boys. One boy wrote that:

_They just fire words at you. I do not even understand it unless someone explains it to me._

Some of the written responses provided by the boys suggested a lack of clarity about the purpose of the sessions, for example:

- **Why do we do this? What will this do for our education?**
- **I found out I like music and sound a lot. What are we doing this for – reason? What will this achieve for my future? Will it give me more grades?**
- **I don’t see what this is about and how it could help but it was all right.**

Further explanations about the aims and objectives of the project were offered throughout the sessions, but it was evident that these were not sufficient to enable all of the boys to fully understand the purpose of their participation. However, some responses indicated that the boys had understood the rationale for the activities, for example:

- **Helped me to think about things.**
- **Reading can help you get a good job and good amount of money.**
- **I like it because it encourages me to read and gives me information on something.**
- **Good because it has encouraged me to read about my hobbies and the job I want to do when I am older.**
During the sessions, it was difficult to establish exactly why the boys were having difficulty understanding the purposes of the intervention and increasingly detailed descriptions were offered at every stage. However, on reflection, it may have been hard for them to understand the role of a researcher, rather than somebody with whom they have a pre-existing relationship and who is part of the school. This idea will be revisited in Sections 5.9 and 6.4.3.

5.5.2 Role of the teacher

The contribution the teachers made to the sessions had not been anticipated when planning a quasi-experimental design. Both form tutors assumed an active role during the sessions, in terms of addressing queries, managing behaviour and contributing to the content of the sessions. Examples of teacher responses are included as Appendix 5 (ii).

One of the problems was that, in view of difficulties with accessing informed pupil consent (see Section 4.2.2), the activities were designed to be non-directive and to offer the boys an opportunity to participate at whichever level they felt comfortable. However, this was not practical within the context of a registration group, where class rules needed to be reinforced and boys were actively encouraged to demonstrate on-task behaviour. Furthermore, after Session 4 (Concern) with Group C, the teacher appeared to reprimand pupils who had not actively engaged in the session.

On reflection, meeting teachers prior to the sessions would have helped them to understand the aims and spirit of the thesis. Because the sessions were organised via a third party, this did not happen. Had the research design been one that was more facilitative of collaborative working and joint problem solving, form tutors could have contributed to the delivery and content of the sessions, from the outset. This is explored further in Section 7.7.1.

5.5.3 Logistical factors

A number of logistical factors impacted on the delivery of the sessions. One of the main problems, particularly affecting Group C, was that boys tended to
drift in throughout the session and generally quite a small number of boys (around ten) were present at the start of the session (see Section 5.4.3). This meant that pupils had differential access to the activities and some boys found it difficult to catch up without further instruction.

Other duties had to be performed during registration that interrupted the delivery of the sessions. On more than one occasion, pupils were withdrawn from the group by members of the senior management team to deal with unrelated incidents. Announcements were made at the end of the session that meant that the time for the activities was reduced. On two occasions, snowy weather caused great excitement amongst the boys, prior to the session, meaning that they were slow to settle. One further event involved a drink being split in the corridor before registration, which led to the whole class being reprimanded by a senior teacher.

All of these factors affected the reliability and validity of Study One, as it had originally been planned and it was recognised at an early stage of the research that it would be extremely difficult to control for these factors (see Section 5.2.3).

5.5.4 Terminating Study One

In view of these findings (and the fact that the intervention was incomplete), after five sessions with Group A and four with Group C, a decision was made not to proceed with the quasi-experimental design (as described in Section 4.1.3).

The difficulties in using a solely quasi-experimental design to measure the efficacy of the intervention are discussed in Section 5.2.3. Research literature acknowledges that there are numerous threats to validity when using a non-equivalent groups design (Robson, 2002) while Cohen et al (2000) recognise that, “Often in educational research, it is simply not possible for investigators to undertake true experiments” (page 214).
It should be noted however, that the presiding reason for abandoning the quasi-experimental design at this stage was that the intervention did not appear to be producing preferred outcomes for the boys and in the case of Group C was therefore not completed.

Because the response of Group A to the majority of the sessions had been positive, Study One concluded by asking pupils to complete the reading questionnaires again. Post test measures were not taken with Group C for the following reasons:

- The programme of activities had not been completed;
- Because Session 4 did not appear to be a positive experience for a number of the boys, it was decided that continuing to promote the reading materials might actually have a negative impact of some boys’ reading engagement and motivation. Instead it was decided to debrief the boys and to make the materials available to pupils who wanted them.

All of the boys were debriefed about the outcomes of Study One and offered the materials from the sessions (see Section 5.8).

5.6 Questionnaire outcomes

5.6.1 Reading Motivation and Frequency of Reading Questionnaires

Post test measures for Group A revealed no significant difference between before or after measures for overall reading motivation when compared using the Mann Whitney U test (z = -0.175; p = 0.861) or for frequency of reading (z = -1.60; p = 0.873). This indicates that the intervention did not have the preferred outcome, at least in the short term, of promoting reading engagement and motivation. Instead, a very slight negative shift was observed. Reasons for this are not clear, although it is possible that pupils who did not enjoy and participate in the activities offered less positive feedback in the post test questionnaires. Given that Group C appeared to
respond less positively to the sessions, it was predicted they would have been highly unlikely to report greater post intervention engagement and motivation, via the questionnaires.

5.6.2 Stages of Change Questionnaire

Responses given by the pupils in Group A who completed pre and post test Stages of Change Questionnaires (Appendix 4 (iii)) are indicated in Table 5.4, below. Also included are columns representing the pupils’ responses to the question ‘Do you want to read more?’ that formed part of Session 5 (see Appendix 3 (v)) and whether or not pupils requested a pack of materials offered at the end of Study One (see Section 5.8).

Table 5.4 Responses indicating reading motivation, engagement and interest amongst boys in Group A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pupil</th>
<th>Stage of ‘Change’ First response</th>
<th>Stage of ‘Change’ Second response</th>
<th>Response to question ‘Do you want to read more?’</th>
<th>Request for pack</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Precontemplative</td>
<td>Precontemplative</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Precontemplative</td>
<td>Contemplative</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Precontemplative</td>
<td>Contemplative</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Contemplative</td>
<td>Precontemplative</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Contemplative</td>
<td>Contemplative</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Contemplative</td>
<td>Contemplative</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Contemplative</td>
<td>Contemplative</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Determinism</td>
<td>Determinism</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Determinism</td>
<td>Relapse</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>Contemplative</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Relapse</td>
<td>Relapse</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>Relapse</td>
<td>Relapse</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The pupils’ responses showed very little change between pre and post test measures, with 9 out of 15 pupils giving the same response on both occasions. There was some change in both directions between the Precontemplative and Contemplative stages, but only one pupil’s response changed significantly, from Maintenance to Contemplative. Interestingly, despite this apparent negative change, the pupil requested a pack. The minimal movement between stages is perhaps relatively unsurprising given the short research timescales and also the lack of impact of the intervention (described in Section 5.6.1).

As Table 5.4 shows, pupils who reported being most motivated on pre test measures tended to be the ones who noted a desire to read more, or requested a pack. This suggests that the boys who responded most favourably to the intervention were those who were positive about reading anyway. Some of the content, particularly that specific to reading, appeared to be unsuitable for pupils who reported being ambivalent (or Precontemplative) about increasing their reading engagement. These are the pupils for whom an affective reading intervention might be particularly important. From the responses shown in Table 5.4 it would appear that the intervention did not meet the needs of these boys.

The whole class model did not account for differences in reading motivation (as recognised in the Reading Model of Stages of Change, defined in Section 4.3.3). Furthermore, the session content and resources were not tailored to meet the needs of boys at different motivational stages. This suggests that a

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**Key to Table 5.4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change in self-report, but not evident if negative or positive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apparent negative change in self report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apparent positive change in self report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No change in self report</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---
generic approach, working with groups of pupils who report to be at different stages of reading engagement and motivation, is not viable.

5.7 Process and Practice Issues

5.7.1 Ethical concerns

Ethical considerations in the research design were detailed in Section 4.1.4. In light of outcomes from the sessions, these will now be revisited.

In terms of pupil participation, disengagement amongst the boys was not challenged, as this would have contravened their right not to take part. Pupils were also informed, on a number of occasions, that they could make choices about their level of engagement, as in the example below:

Pupil: “Do you have to write anything down?
CA: “You don’t have to. If you want to that’s fine, I’ll be able to see your ideas. If you don’t want to, that’s fine too.”

From an ethical perspective, it seemed clear to the pupils that the activities were voluntary, for example:

Pupil 1: “How many do you have to write?”
Pupil 2: “You don’t have to write anything.”

However, while the boys understood that they had the option of not having to write (which a very small number - generally one or two per session - accepted), the issue of non-participation in activities was more complex. Although questions were not directed at individuals and responses only accepted from pupils who demonstrated a wish to contribute, it was difficult for the boys to actively not engage in the sessions, as the teacher would have addressed this. While the option of not writing was made explicit to pupils, the option of non-participation per se was not broached and it was not
made clear to pupils how they might demonstrate such non-participation (e.g. by engaging in another activity, such as reading a book).

The reason for this was that it would have been difficult to make non-participation explicit and to not divide the group, especially in view of other socio-cultural factors that influenced participation or non-participation, which may have made it difficult for some pupils to participate, without peer reprisal (see Section 5.4.8). Keeping the group together meant that those who were interested in the sessions could continue to access the tasks, while those who were not could choose not to actively participate. Because the amount of time dedicated to the sessions (5 x 20 minute periods at weekly intervals) was fairly short, it was not felt that this would encroach too much on pupils’ choices during registration.

Delivering the sessions personally meant that there was the opportunity to ensure pupil well-being could be monitored (see Section 4.3.3). During the early sessions pupils seemed happy to engage with the activities. However, when pupils started to express disenfranchisement with the sessions, they were reviewed and then terminated.

Further ethical reasons for discontinuing the original research design (described in Section 4.1.3), were that quantitative and qualitative feedback suggested that Study One did not appear to be having the desired outcomes in terms of improving reading engagement and motivation (see Section 5.5.4). This was later confirmed by post test measures for pupils in Group A (see Section 5.6.1). Some of the boys that were choosing not to participate also attracted negative teacher attention (see Section 5.5.2).

### 5.7.2 Using the materials with a whole class group
For reasons described in Section 5.6.2, a whole class model was not appropriate for the proposed affective reading intervention. Factors relating to socio-cultural factors and group motivation (Section 5.4.8) also appear to have been influential and brought into question the appropriateness of the
whole group design, at least in terms of achieving the preferred outcomes of promoting reading engagement and motivation.

### 5.8 Debriefing

A week after their final sessions, the groups were given a short debrief about the findings of the research to date and were thanked for their involvement in the project. They were also given the opportunity of receiving blank copies of the materials to enable personal reflection at a later date. The activities were compiled as a pack which was entitled ‘Thinking about Reading’. They were given a choice of three options:

- To receive a pack of materials;
- To not receive a pack of materials;
- To be asked again at a later date whether or not they wanted the materials.

**Table 5.5 Number of boys in each group requesting the pack**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requested the pack</th>
<th>Group A</th>
<th>Group C</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Requested to be asked again later*</td>
<td>5 (28%)</td>
<td>3 (25%)</td>
<td>8 (27%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not wish to receive the pack</td>
<td>2 (11%)</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
<td>3 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>11 (61%)</td>
<td>8 (67%)</td>
<td>19 (63%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
<td><strong>30</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Form tutors were sent a follow up letter and spare packs but information about whether additional requests for the materials were made was not received.

More than half the boys from each of the groups declined the pack. It is not clear whether this was due to a lack of interest or to other factors (e.g. peer group pressures). However, it provided additional evidence of a lack of preferred outcomes from Study One.

5.9 Discussion

In view of Study One outcomes, the key questions, defined in Section 4.1 (see Table 5.6), were revisited.

Table 5.6 Key questions (as defined in Section 4.1)

- Can MI principles and techniques be applied to a learning context?
- Can MI techniques increase boys’ reported engagement in reading?
- Does undertaking MI activities increase boys’ reported motivation for reading?
- What strategies are useful in helping boys to engage more readily in reading?

In this instance, the intervention, based around the goals of MI (McNamara, 1998) did not have the preferred outcome of promoting reading engagement and motivation. However, a range of factors detailed in this chapter might have been significant in determining this. Furthermore, significant questions remained about whether the research design was appropriate for allowing an exploration of its possibilities and limitations.
In exploring the reasons for why this intervention did not produce preferred outcomes, various explanatory themes were identified. These are outlined in Table 5.7, below.

**Table 5.7 Possible explanatory themes for the lack of preferred outcomes from Study One**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Socio-cultural factors</td>
<td>That the group dynamics and socio-cultural perspectives, beliefs and values about reading behaviour were influential.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research methodology</td>
<td>That using a quasi-experimental cross-over design to measure outcomes was not possible because the intervention was not completed in accordance with the proposed design. Additionally this model of enquiry did not take account of other complexities that exist within the secondary school context and could not provide a comprehensive answer as to whether principles from MI might be applicable to this particular learning context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differential motivation to change amongst groups of pupils</td>
<td>The whole class model did not account for individual differences in motivation (as recognised in the reading Model of Stages of Change, described in Section 4.3.3). The session content and resources were not tailored to meet the needs of pupils at different motivational stages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the study congruent with principles of MI?</td>
<td>That the intervention did not seem to reflect the ethos of MI, from the author’s experience of the intervention in a behavioural context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Suitability of materials</strong></td>
<td>That the materials produced did not engage pupils, or reflect the intended outcomes of the project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Researcher factors</strong></td>
<td>That the researcher was somebody unfamiliar to the boys and that this made it difficult for participants to understand the rationale for the project and the purpose of their participation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Logistical issues</strong></td>
<td>That the project should have been delivered at another time of day and that logistical issues (such as pupils arriving late) contributed to difficulties in providing effective delivery of the sessions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These themes were not intended to be mutually exclusive and it was envisaged that all of the factors detailed in Table 5.7 could have in some way contributed to the outcomes of Study One. In order to achieve a more informed reflection on these different themes, the theory and practice of MI were revisited, particularly in relation to the experiences of boys, through a further literature review (Chapter Six). The purpose of this was to develop a theoretical rationale for some of these explanatory themes, before considering how the outcomes of this part of the thesis would inform future research (Study Two).
Chapter Six: Further Literature Review

6.1 Introduction

This chapter will attempt to offer a theoretical explanation for some of the outcomes of Study One, by revisiting literature relevant to MI and motivational theory. In doing so, it will reflect on some of the explanatory themes identified at the end of Chapter Five. This literature review will go beyond the model of practice prevalent in educational settings, to consider the concepts underpinning MI and to look at how it has been theoretically constructed. This will lead to an exploration of the concept of motivation, its theoretical complexity and the models of motivational theory that seem to be most closely linked to both MI and to a secondary learning context.

The chapter concludes by suggesting how MI and motivational theory might offer a paradigm for gaining greater insight into boys' views and perceptions of reading.

6.2 MI practice

6.2.1 Preface

Section 2.4 offered a concise overview of MI theory and practice, as it has come to be defined in educational settings. This reflected the author’s understanding of MI at the outset of this research. Section 2.4.3 illustrates how MI and the Model of Stages of Change (derived from Transtheoretical Theory) have come to be seen as synonymous within educational practice.

This section will revisit MI, particularly in view of developments to clinical practice since the educational Model of Stages of Change was proposed (McNamara, 1998, see Section 2.4.3). Section 6.3 will move on to explore whether there is an underpinning theoretical rationale for MI.
6.2.2 Developments in MI practice

In the 11 years between the two seminal MI texts *Motivational Interviewing: Preparing People to Change Addictive Behaviour* (Miller and Rollnick, 1991) and *Motivational Interviewing: Preparing People for Change* (Miller and Rollnick, 2002) the TTM appears to have become less central to MI (see Section 2.4.3).

As within educational establishments, there has not been consensus within clinical settings about specific techniques or interventions that constitute MI. Rather it is the underlying principles behind MI that are seen as more important. Miller and Rollnick (2002) note:

…we have found ourselves placing less emphasis on techniques of motivational interviewing and ever greater emphasis on the fundamental spirit that underlies it (page 33).

The revised handbook of MI practice (Miller and Rollnick, 2002) gives higher prominence to the principles and ‘spirit’ of MI. These will now be explored in more detail.

6.2.3 The Spirit of MI

Miller and Rollnick (2002) describe the ‘spirit’ of MI. This includes the following principles:

1. Collaboration – ‘That the method of motivational interviewing involves exploration more than exhortation, and support rather than persuasion or argument’ (Miller and Rollnick, 2002, page 34).

2. Evocation – That MI is not about imparting information, but finding things within the person and drawing them out. It requires finding intrinsic motivation for change from within the person and evoking it.
3. Autonomy – Any responsibility for change is left with the client, no matter what the views of professionals. It is the client rather than the counsellor that should ultimately present arguments for change.

Revisiting the outcomes of Study One, the response of the boys to the activities (and the way in which they were delivered) does not seem to reflect the ‘spirit’ of MI as defined here and should not therefore be considered a MI intervention. Although the sessions were designed to enable pupils to make informed choices about reading engagement, the reality of the situation was that the boys did not really have the choice of active non-participation (see Section 5.7.1). Furthermore, there was not the opportunity for collaboration, where activities were predominantly didactic, or not informed by the boys’ own expressed needs and choices. Bollg (2003) proposes that when people engage in a behaviour because of pressure from others, the behaviour is likely to be less self-determined and is internalised in a more poorly integrated way.

6.2.4 The principles of MI

The principles of MI, described by Miller and Rollnick (2002) are as follows:

- Expressing empathy
- Developing discrepancy
- Rolling with resistance
- Supporting self-efficacy

Although these have not been incorporated into interventions described within an educational context, Burke, Arkowitz and Menchola (2003), define MI interventions, as ones that include these components. Empirical research into MI within clinical settings has subsequently encountered problems defining exactly what constitutes such an intervention and much of the research has evaluated Adaptations of Motivational Interviewing (AMIs). Further information about this can be found in Appendix 6 (i).
6.2.5 Clinical and educational models of MI

One of the reasons that the Model of Stages of Change has become central to MI within educational settings may be to do with the theoretical complexities of MI within clinical settings. MI lacks an overall definition and explicit guidance on the practice of MI (such as that provided by Rollnick et al, 1992) is uncommon. This has caused problems for researchers trying to measure the efficacy of MI (Burke, Arkowitz and Dunn, 2002; Burke et al, 2003, see Appendix 6 (i)). Attention has focused on practitioner issues and the development of counselling knowledge and techniques. Miller and Rollnick (2002) detail some of the skills required for MI, which:

…involves artful skills in reflective listening, attending to subtle shifts in tension, and selectively eliciting and reinforcing certain kinds of client speech (page 195).

New directions in MI emphasise key core skills that should be demonstrated by the counsellor. Following work with experienced counsellors, Moyers, Martin, Manuel, Henrickson and Miller (2005) presented the Motivational Interviewing Skills Code (MISC) for assessing clinician competence and the Motivational Interviewing Treatment Integrity (MITI) Scale that focuses on therapist functioning. The measures looked for counsellor attributes such as acceptance, genuineness and empathy, as well as specific behaviours consistent with an MI style (such as asking permission before giving advice and reflecting). Training issues that have arisen, where staff in non-specialist clinical settings have used MI, are explored in Appendix 6 (ii).

The reality within educational settings is that the same level of counselling training, development and expertise is unlikely to be available to all but the most specialised educational practitioners (such as EPs and counsellors) employed within an educational setting. The advantage of the Model of Stages of Change is that it offers an accessible and visual means of simplifying complex patterns of behavioural change, which allows staff in schools to develop an understanding of the needs of pupils and identify the most appropriate intervention approaches (Atkinson, 2004). It is proposed...
that MI practice has evolved differently within clinical and educational contexts and it is questionable that the model of practice prevalent in educational literature would be immediately recognisable as that defined most recently by its protagonists in clinical practice (Miller and Rollnick, 2002; Moyers et al, 2005).

Within the context of this thesis however, an oversimplification of MI principles and their translation to a learning context, as employed in Study One, has not produced preferred learning outcomes in terms of promoting pupil reading engagement and motivation. The next section will examine the theoretical underpinnings of MI theory, to try and understand whether this is an appropriate framework for an affective reading intervention.

6.3 The theory of MI

Miller (1999) acknowledges that MI lacks a formal theoretical framework, noting that it did not evolve from theory but from clinical practice and experience in working with clients. Miller and Rollnick (1991) related MI to the Transtheoretical Model (TTM) of intentional human behaviour change (Prochaska and DiClemente, 1982). Self-determination theory (SDT) (Deci and Ryan, 1985) has also been proposed as a theoretical framework for MI (Ginsberg et al, 2002; Markland, 2003).

To try and develop a better understanding of the outcomes of Study One, consideration will now be given to general motivational theories that might underpin MI. The TTM, representing a series of stages of change, is described in Section 2.4.3 and will not be discussed further in this chapter. However, other theories that seem most relevant will be explored in the next section.

6.4 Theories of motivation

This section will first offer some definitions of motivation and describe some of its complexities as a psychological construct. Because intrinsic motivation
is identified as a key component of MI (see Section 6.2.3), consideration will next be given to the proposed intrinsic-extrinsic continuum of motivation and its relevance to SDT. Subsequently theories that look at how motivation is socially constructed will be explored and the application of one particular model, Expectancy Value Theory (EVT) will be considered in relation to this research.

6.4.1 Definitions of motivation

‘Motivation lies at the very heart, the very centre of psychology’ (Weiner, 1992, page 1).

Motivation is derived from the Latin word *movere*, which means ‘to move’ (Pumfrey, 1997). Weiner (1992) describes motivation as:

> …the study of the determinants of thought and action – it addresses why behaviour is initiated, persists and stops as well as what choices are made (page 17);

Whilst Huitt (2001) notes that there is:

> … general consensus that motivation is an internal state or condition (sometimes described as a need, desire or want) that serves to activate or energise behaviour and give it direction (page 1).

Motivation is an extremely complex psychological concept, with entire textbooks being devoted to an explanation of its implications, in relation to all aspects of human behaviour (Weiner, 1992; Franken, 1998). Dörnyei (2002) suggests the reason for this is that the determinants of human behaviour are extremely extensive. Numerous theories of motivation have been proposed, including those related to instinct, need, growth, cognition and learning (Franken, 1998).

Wigfield and Guthrie (1997) propose that motivation determines why individuals do, or do not choose to do different activities. Wigfield (1997)
writes that motivation deals with the whys of behaviour; that it determines choices individuals make about which activities they engage, or do not engage in; and their degree of persistence and effort in these activities. Ryan and Deci (2000) argue that people vary, not only in their levels of motivation, but also in the orientation of that motivation. This relates to their underlying beliefs, attitudes and goals, which help determine why they engage in particular behaviours.

6.4.2 Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation

Within academic literature, there has tended to be inconsistent use of the terms ‘intrinsic’ and ‘extrinsic’ motivation. Within educational and clinical settings, intrinsic motivation may generally be thought of as relating to self-regulated or self-motivated behaviour, rather than behaviour executed for tangible rewards.

Deci and Ryan (2000a) offer definitions of intrinsic motivation as ‘...doing something because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable’ and extrinsic motivation as ‘doing something because it leads to a separable outcome’ (page 55). They have proposed a sophisticated model of motivation (see Figure 6.1, overleaf), which involves a ‘self-determining continuum’ of behaviour. This finds intrinsic motivation at one end of the spectrum, followed by different types of extrinsic motivation, which reflect varying degrees of self-regulation and self-determination. The model draws on a substantial body of theoretical proposal and empirical research (e.g. Ryan and Grolnick, 1986; Ryan and Connell, 1989; Deci, Eghari, Patrick and Leone, 1994; Ryan, Stiller and Lynch, 1994).
Ryan and Deci (2000a) propose that individuals can perform different activities that are extrinsically motivating in different ways. A pupil undertaking an activity for which they feel disinterested, or even resentful may comply only in the presence of rewards or punishments that are encouraging task compliance. However, pupils may more readily engage in activities that are seen as valuable (e.g. in relation to career aspirations) and over time these behaviours may become increasingly regulated and internalised. Reeve (2002) observes, ‘It is through the process of internalisation that extrinsic motivation enables self-determined engagement during important but uninteresting endeavours’ (page 195).

In describing the use of MI in the treatment of addictive behaviours, Miller and Rollnick (1991) define its goal as ‘...to increase the client’s intrinsic motivation, so that change arises from within, rather being imposed from
without’ (page 52). Referring to the continuum proposed in Figure 6.1, it is likely that, rather than intrinsic motivation, they are describing processes of self-regulation and self-determination that enable clients to make positive choices in relation to extraneous pressures (e.g. health issues; concerns from friends and family; understanding the impact of behaviour on one’s lifestyle). These would probably fall under the category defined by Ryan and Deci (2000a) as introjected regulation (on the extrinsic continuum), which encompasses regulatory processes such as self-control and internal rewards and punishments.

6.4.3 Self-determination theory
Linked to the intrinsic-extrinsic continuum is Self Determination Theory (SDT) (Deci and Ryan, 1985, 2002; Ryan and Deci, 2000a, 2000b), supported by a significant body of empirical research and theoretical proposal, collected in the Handbook of Self Determination Research (Deci and Ryan, 2002). Self-determination is the need to experience choice in the initiation and regulation of behaviour and reflects the desire to have one’s choices, rather than environmental events, determine one’s actions (Deci and Ryan, 1985).

For events to be accompanied by an internal perceived locus of causality, individuals must experience their behaviour to be self-determined. Reeve (2001) asserts that individuals desire choice and want to be the ones making decisions. Furthermore they want behaviour to be connected to their own interests, preferences and desires. Reeve (2001) suggests that a prerequisite to supporting another person’s self-determination is to identify that person’s needs, interests, preferences and aspirations. He posits that humans are not self-determining when outside forces pressure them to behave in ways not conducive to these features.

Golan, Henrich, Blatt, Ryan and Little (2003) summarise the three key components of SDT as the need for competence, autonomy and relatedness. Competence relates to an inherent drive for mastery, while autonomy concerns the extent to which actions are self-initiated and self-endorsed, rather than being controlled by external forces. Finally, relatedness reflects
the extent to which significant others, who are genuinely interested in the individual and their well-being, are seen as being related to the behaviour (Markland, 2003). There is clear resonance between SDT and the principles defining the spirit of MI; collaboration, evocation and autonomy (Ginsburg, Mann, Rotgers and Weekes, 2002).

The way in which Study One was undertaken did not allow pupils to be self-determined in their approaches to reading engagement and motivation, suggesting that the intervention contradicted the spirit of MI (see Section 6.2.3). Furthermore, the concept of relatedness may be particularly pertinent when considering to what extent researcher factors were influential in determining outcomes of Study One (see Section 5.9). It seemed difficult for the boys to conceptualise the purpose of the research and the possible outcomes for them, as participants, despite repeated briefings (see Section 5.5.1). It is probable that they did not see an external researcher as relevant to their educational and socio-cultural contexts. One would also imagine that they would also be less likely to view an outsider as someone genuinely interested in their well-being.

6.4.4 Social learning theories of motivation

Social learning theories of motivation suggest that human beings will behave in a way that is functional and instrumental to their survival. They propose that human behaviour is determined by information processed about the environment and from observing others, which informs which actions and behaviours will bring pain (punishment) and satisfaction (reinforcement) (Franken, 1998).

Bandura (1997) claims that what people believe influences their behavioural outcomes and that cognitive motivators include causal attributions and cognised goals. Outcome expectations are also likely to be a significant factor in determining motivation and these have been explored specifically within the context of education (Guthrie and Wigfield, 1998). One such model for considering how motivation and cognition intersect is Expectancy-value theory. This will now be described in greater detail.
6.4.5 Expectancy-value theory

Expectancy-value theory (EVT) describes behaviour as a function of the expectancies an individual has, and the value of the goal to which they are working. The seminal work of Atkinson’s achievement motivation theory (Atkinson and Raynor, 1974, cited by Dörnyei, 2002) was based within an expectancy-value framework. It posited that achievement behaviours were determined by expectancies of success and incentive values. The model described two further components which were a need for achievement, which suggests individuals with a high need for achievement are interested in the pursuit of achievement and learning for their own sake. The converse of this is fear of failure, where the main drive comes from avoiding negative outcomes, rather than pursuing positive ones.

EVT proposes that people choose between different tasks, by simultaneously assessing the expectation and value of each (Franken, 1998). An individual’s values for particular goals and tasks can help explain why a child chooses one activity over another (Jacobs and Eccles, 2000). Furthermore, an individual’s choice, persistence and performance can be explained by their beliefs about how well they will do on the activity and the extent to which it is valued (Wigfield and Eccles, 2000).

There are a significant number of cultural, social and affective factors that contribute to a child’s choice of achievement tasks, as well as their persistence and performance. Wigfield and Eccles (2000) propose an expectancy-value model of achievement motivation, which is shown in Figure 6.2, overleaf.
This was developed from previous research (Eccles et al, 1983) in which constructs were identified as psychological mediators of achievement behaviour, and a model of the interrelations amongst these constructs was proposed. Path analysis of the components of the model, using a large-scale study, supported the importance of the variables suggested. For the purposes of this thesis however, the model will be viewed as a theoretical framework through which to explore the determinants and complexities of
achievement-related choices. Several variables illustrated in this diagram have already been identified as possible factors that contributed to outcomes from Study One. Reflecting on the explanatory themes proposed at the end of Chapter Five (Section 5.9), these would include:

- Cultural Milieu;
- Socialiser’s Beliefs and Behaviours;
- The perceptions and interpretations of the boys of the activities within their cultural context (e.g. gender roles, activity stereotypes);
- Task values.

This model of EVT provides a useful framework for understanding the broader influences that might impact on an individual’s motivation. It suggests that in order to begin to understand the mechanisms that affect boys’ reading engagement and motivation in this particular context, a deeper understanding of their socio-cultural context, in particular, needs to be established.

6.5 Conclusions

Further exploration of MI theory and practice has suggested that increasingly differential practice has arisen in educational and clinical settings, to reflect the needs of the client group and the expertise of practitioners working in each area. The model of MI used to generate ideas for Study One differs considerably from current directions in clinical practice. While these might not necessarily be appropriate to a learning context, it would seem important to reflect the MI spirit (autonomy, evocation and collaboration) when planning an intervention based its principles.

There is considerable complexity around the theory and practice of MI, aspects of which are summarised in a mind map (see page 108). In view of this, rather than thinking of the intervention as based on MI, it is perhaps
more accurate to think of applying ideas from a MI paradigm to an educational context.

Different theories of motivation appear to complement MI. SDT offers a way of considering how behaviours may become increasingly internalised by individuals, particularly where these are self-regulated or self-endorsed. EVT enables consideration of the range of variables that may be determinants of achievement behaviour, within an academic context. Transtheoretical Theory yielded the Model of Stages of Change, which may provide a useful assessment framework, but which focuses more on ‘within-person’ factors than socio-cultural influences on learning behaviour.

6.6 New research directions

Revisiting MI and exploring its theoretical rationale offered a new perspective into some of the reasons for the lack of preferred outcomes from Study One. What seemed to be important was to develop a clearer picture of the educational context, and the socio-cultural factors that influence boys’ reading engagement and motivation. Chapter Seven details how an alternative model of enquiry was proposed to explore, not only the usefulness of the materials, but also boys’ views and perceptions of reading and school-based literacy practices.
Figure 6.3 Mind map detailing theory and practice complexities of MI
Chapter Seven: Redesigning the project

7.1 Introduction

The outcomes described in Chapter Five indicated that because of the reported problems with the affective reading intervention, the quasi-experimental design (as described in Section 4.1.3) was not completed as had originally been proposed. Therefore only limited quantitative data was available for exploring whether or not principles from MI theory could be used to develop and extend boys’ reading engagement and motivation (which did not suggest positive results). Although qualitative data provided useful information about the boys’ views and perceptions about the sessions, greater understanding of why the intervention had not produced preferred outcomes was sought.

In light of findings from Study One, the thesis was adapted to consider the usefulness of the materials as an affective reading intervention for individual pupils, supported by staff in school. As the thesis evolved, greater information was also collected from the staff about boys’ views and perceptions of reading. It was hoped that this would help provide some understanding of the reasons for the lack of preferred outcomes from Study One and further exploration of the explanatory themes proposed in Section 5.9. As the research progressed, developing an understanding of the factors that facilitated or inhibited boys’ reading became an increasingly important aspect of the thesis, with the emphasis shifting away from the usefulness of the materials as an affective reading intervention. Instead, these became a vehicle for exploring boys’ views and perceptions about reading within this particular context.

This chapter will explore the research methodology proposed for Study Two. In doing so, it will outline how the research paradigms of action research and
illuminative evaluation were used in conjunction with other qualitative methods of enquiry.

7.2 Rationale for Study Two

Following Study One, discussions took place with the Learning Support management team about its outcomes. Using the model with whole class groups was recognised to be problematic, as was the availability of time to deliver the sessions and the difficulty of tailoring the materials to boys reporting different levels of reading engagement and motivation. However, the team were positive about developing interventions that could enhance individual pupils’ reading engagement and motivation and were keen for staff working within the Learning Support Department to trial the materials with boys they supported.

The research was adapted and a design proposed in which the materials were offered as a resource to support staff. Study Two looked at how the materials might be used with individual pupils, so that the intervention could be tailored to their needs. It was intended to collect qualitative data from focus groups, involving support staff, and through structured questionnaires. As the research progressed, increasingly an illuminative evaluation paradigm was used to gather other information relevant to the key questions and to develop a fuller understanding of the educational context (see Section 7.6.6).

In view of the evolution of the thesis, a new set of key research questions was proposed. These are shown in Table 7.1 overleaf.
### Table 7.1  Key research questions redefined for Study Two

- Can principles and techniques from MI be applied to a learning context?
- Is an understanding of MI theory useful to support staff working with pupils and how does it influence their practice?
- What strategies are useful in helping boys to engage more readily in reading?
- What factors within the school context facilitate or inhibit boys' reading engagement and motivation?

### 7.3 Research methodology

A format for investigating the usefulness of the materials, for working with individual pupils, was devised and is shown in Table 7.2 overleaf. This first involved offering training to support staff about the rationale for applying MI principles to an affective reading intervention and how to use the materials. Discussion groups were later held with support staff to ascertain the usefulness of the materials and the boys' responses to the intervention. Written feedback was also sought via questionnaires.

### 7.4 Participants

Staff participants were members of the Learning Support Department at the high school involved in Study One. They were employed to work with pupils experiencing a range of learning and literacy needs. Many of the staff supported pupils who had a statement of educational needs. Because the school had its own resourced provision, this included a number of pupils identified as having severe and complex educational needs. The pupils staff worked with spanned the secondary age range.
Table 7.2  Format for investigating the usefulness of the materials

1. Training session delivered to members of the Learning Support Department, to familiarise them with the principles of MI and its possible relevance to a reading context. Staff were also introduced to the materials to be used with pupils.

2. Staff given the opportunity to try the materials with individual pupils.

3. Feedback session held, using a focus group format to provide staff with the opportunity to feedback about the usefulness of the materials and the responses of the boys.

4. Questionnaires designed and distributed in order to give staff the opportunity to offer written feedback.

7.5 Training session

A training session was provided to the support staff to outline theoretical aspects of MI and reading motivation and to introduce the materials in a slightly revised form, adapted so that another adult could deliver them.

Fifteen members of staff attended a 45-minute training session offered during afternoon lessons. These included learning and behavioural support workers and learning mentors. The session was within the school day, and support staff were encouraged to attend by the management team. The training was introduced within a pre-existing training programme that involved weekly continuing professional development (CPD) sessions. Therefore, although the structure of the session was atypical, the logistical arrangements did not represent disruption or upheaval to the normal working practices of the staff involved.
Staff were given a pack of materials incorporating the following:

1. An introductory letter outlining the materials (Appendix 7 (i)).

2. Background information about MI in the context of the current research (Appendix 7 (ii)).

3. The reading questionnaires (Appendices 4 (ii), (iii) and (iv)).

4. Activities from the sessions (as used with the whole class groups, subject to minor amendments) as well as instructions for using them with individuals or small groups.

5. An evaluation form to record thoughts and feelings about the materials and pupil responses (Appendix 7 (iii)). Because there was limited opportunity to pilot this, staff were asked to comment on its structure and layout at the initial training session.

Details of the format of the session and the response of the participants are included as Appendix 7 (iv).

7.6 Evaluation using discussion groups

A discussion group session was arranged four weeks after the initial training with the support staff. The aims of this were to enable staff to feed back findings from using the materials and to comment on pupil responses. Prompt questions were provided to enable a semi-structured discussion (more information about this is included in Section 8.2). It was also intended to collect additional written feedback via the evaluation forms.

Because not all staff had had the opportunity to trial the materials by the time of the first discussion group, a second meeting was held after a further four weeks (see Section 8.4). During the first discussion session, it was noted that the materials facilitated rich discussion about boys’ reading views and
perceptions. In view of this, further questions were included to investigate what might facilitate or inhibit reading within school (see Section 8.4).

7.7 Methodological issues

7.7.1 Rationale for methodology

Study One involved the author undertaking work that involved minimal collaboration with staff in school. The limitations of this research paradigm, in providing future opportunities for promoting boys reading motivation and engagement, are acknowledged and the lack of partnership may have contributed to difficulties reported (see Section 5.5.2). A more participatory and collaborative model of enquiry was therefore proposed, which provided opportunities to develop the competencies of the participants, facilitate discussion, share experiences and feedback information about research outcomes and their relevance to school-based literacy practices. This paradigm is more in keeping with action research methodology, which promotes collaboration and participation, focuses on issues of relevance to practitioners and strives to be emancipatory (Cohen et al, 2000).

Using discussion groups seemed the most appropriate way of addressing these research aims. Furthermore, in this particular context, staff could participate within their allocated CPD time and there were not additional bureaucratic pressures of data collection or record keeping.

7.7.2 Use of focus groups

Focus group techniques were used to collect data about the usefulness of the materials and about boys’ views and perceptions of reading. Focus group research is a form of qualitative method used to gather rich, descriptive data from participants focusing on an agreed ‘focus’ topic, within a small group setting (Wilkinson and Birmingham, 2003). Millward (1995) describes how a focus group:

…involve the simultaneous use of multiple respondents to generate data and it is the ‘focused’ (that is, on the ‘external stimulus’) and
relatively staged (that is by a ‘moderator’) nature of the focus group method that separates it from other types of group interviewing strategy (page 275).

In focus group methodology, the interviewer directs the interaction and enquiry, depending on the purpose of the discussion. Group interviews can also be used for triangulation, in conjunction with other data gathering techniques (Fontana and Frey, 1994).

Reference was made to academic literature when attempting to create an atmosphere and framework conducive to the ethos and aims of focus groups (e.g. Cohen et al, 2000; Robson, 2002; Wilkinson and Birmingham, 2003).

7.7.3 Audio taping and transcribing the sessions

Sessions with staff were audio taped and transcribed (an example of a transcribed staff session is provided as Appendix 7 (v)). Permission was sought from all the participants before proceeding. There were limitations to this process in that comments could not be ascribed to individuals. Cohen et al (2000) note that one of the problems with transcription is that it becomes a record of data, rather than of social encounter and that it overlooks important contextual information such as visual and non-verbal cues. This particular criticism could be levelled at Study Two.

Responses made within the group were treated as confidential and not ascribed to individuals. Where comments were made about individual pupils, names have been changed, where these are reported within the thesis.

7.7.4 Methodological issues with focus group research

A full analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of focus group research, as detailed within the literature (e.g. Cohen et al, 2000; Robson, 2002; Wilkinson and Birmingham, 2003), is beyond the scope of this research. These were acknowledged and considered when setting up the groups. However, issues that were particularly relevant in this instance included the relationship between group members. All of the support staff worked closely
together. They may have previously discussed the themes of the focus group and therefore been unlikely to diverge from the group consensus (Wilkinson and Birmingham, 2003). At times, there were members of the group present who had senior responsibilities and this may have had an impact on the response of individuals, as may other dynamics within the group. Care was taken wherever possible to offer all participants the opportunity to offer opinions.

7.7.5 Data analysis
A range of methods for analysing data from transcriptions is provided within research literature. These include coding and scoring (Cohen et al, 2000) and using software packages (Pomerantz, 2004). One problem with these methods is that by breaking transcript data down into its constituent elements, the sense of the whole interview can be lost (Cohen et al, 2000).

Because the discussion group transcripts were not the only source of data in this thesis, a less formal approach was taken to data analysis. Key themes were identified and then presented to staff at the end of the session, to check for agreement and disagreement about these conclusions. Information from the transcriptions was later used to enrich and exemplify these agreed themes. Limitations of this approach are acknowledged, particularly in terms of the lack of rigour in the data analysis. An alternative perspective is offered by Salmon (2003), who suggests that 'strenuous' methods of data analysis, including the likes of grounded theory, triangulation and multiple coding may degrade rather than enrich research and that ‘...real scientific progress results from imagination, creativity and common sense, rather than merely deduction and induction’ (page 25).

7.7.6 Evaluation forms
An evaluation form was provided, in the form of a questionnaire, containing closed questions (about who staff had used the materials with) and open-ended questions (about the usefulness of the materials as an affective reading intervention). This is attached as Appendix 7 (iii). Due to time factors (see Sections 7.8.2 and 8.3.1), staff had limited opportunities to
consider the forms and only one fully completed questionnaire was received. Furthermore, as the research progressed, the focus increasingly became boys’ views and perceptions about reading, whereas the evaluation forms enquired about the usefulness of the materials. Data from the evaluation forms was not therefore analysed separately, but where relevant, has been included with the data from the group discussions.

7.7.7 Illuminative evaluation

Although information from the focus groups provided useful qualitative information about boys’ views and perceptions of reading, it was acknowledged that a clearer understanding of the factors that facilitated and inhibited reading engagement and motivation within the educational context was important.

A helpful standpoint from which to consider the complexities of systemic work is that of illuminative evaluation, as outlined by Burden (1998). This offers a post-positivist or interpretive approach where the emphasis is upon ‘interpreting educational practices, participants’ experiences, institutional procedures and management problems in ways that are recognizable and useful to those for whom the study is made’ (Parlett and Dearden, 1977, cited by Burden, 1998, page 16).

Illuminative evaluation offers a flexible and pragmatic approach to understanding the complexities of school systems. It emphasises how the educational context provides the reference for what is happening and assumes that there are multiple perspectives about a particular situation. It can be helpful in constructing a ‘recognizable reality’ for those working within an educational setting (Burden 1998, page 17). Methodologically, because the aim of the research was to develop a more holistic understanding of the context, an eclectic approach, that did not limit data collection to quantitative and qualitative methods, seemed to be appropriate.

This paradigm appeared to represent a helpful approach to trying to understand the contextual, socio-cultural and political reasons for the
outcomes of Study One. Using illuminative evaluation in tandem with an action research framework meant that, in addition to investigating the usefulness of the materials as an affective reading intervention, further information was sought, both formally and informally about factors within the educational context that facilitated and inhibited boys’ reading.

7.8 Unforeseen difficulties with the research

7.8.1 Sessions and training
Although the sessions were organised at times deemed to be most convenient to members of the Learning Support Department, competing pressures meant that they were not always able to attend. Different members of staff attended the training sessions and the first and second discussion groups, which made continuity difficult. Furthermore, not everyone who attended the discussions had attended the training or received the materials, which meant that focus tended to be boys’ views and perceptions about reading, rather than the usefulness of the materials.

7.8.2 Logistical difficulties in delivering the pack
For reasons described in more detail in Section 8.3.1, opportunities for support staff to use the pack with pupils and to complete the evaluation forms were limited due to other pressures. However, the sessions provided rich information about reading engagement and motivation and lines of enquiry were adapted to try and find out more about boys’ reading and school-based literacy practices.

7.8.3 Difficulties experienced by the boys
The aims of Study Two centred on staff working with individual pupils with additional literacy needs. However, during the discussion groups, it became evident that some of the pupils who used the materials had more severe and complex difficulties. Therefore, although the findings from Study Two may be informative, in terms of addressing the needs of this group of pupils, limitations of the findings, in terms of their general applicability to the broader school population, are acknowledged.


7.9 Summary

This chapter describes how changes to the project were made in the light of outcomes from Study One. The methodology, process of enquiry and research questions were all redefined to enable a more collaborative, participatory and illuminative evaluation of boys’ views and perceptions of reading, as well as the usefulness of the materials.

Chapter Eight will now describe outcomes from the research using focus group techniques. Because of the informal and eclectic nature of these sessions, these will be referred to subsequently as ‘discussion groups’.
Chapter Eight: Study Two – Working with support staff to understand how to promote boys’ reading engagement and motivation

8.1 Introduction

This chapter details outcomes from the two staff discussion groups and considers how information from them provided insight into boys’ views and perceptions about reading in this school. Readers are referred to Section 7.2 for the key research questions, which formed the basis of enquiry for Study Two.

8.2 Outcomes from the feedback session

Eleven support staff joined the first discussion group, four weeks after the training session, to offer feedback on the usefulness of the materials and how pupils had responded to them. Prompt questions were presented to the attendees prior to the session, to stimulate thinking and discussion. These are shown in Table 8.1, overleaf. It was made clear to participants that other ideas and contributions would be welcomed.

Two members of staff present had not attended the initial training session and others had not had an opportunity to use the pack. Although some staff were able to reflect on their experiences of using the materials, discussions led to a more general exploration of boys’ views and perceptions of reading.

During the meeting, key points from the discussion were noted down. A précis of the key themes emerging was then provided to attendees, at the end of the session, to ensure consensus that the most important points had been summarised. Data from the transcriptions was then used to enrich these agreed themes, which were then used to inform planning of and discussion at subsequent discussion group sessions.
Table 8.1: Ideas for discussion presented to support staff attending the discussion group session

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideas for discussion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General feelings about the materials and using them with young people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responses of the young people to using the materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has the pack had/is it likely to have any impact on the reading motivation of the young people you are working with?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has the pack had any impact on you, or the way you work with young people?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you think about the activities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there any logistical factors affecting how you might use the pack?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other comments?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The key themes that emerged from this session were as follows:

- The activities
- The questionnaires
- Needs of the boys using the materials
- Promoting reading engagement
- Accessing the literacy curriculum
- Creating a supportive reading environment

These will now be discussed in turn.

8.2.1 The activities

Where the activities had been used, support staff generally reflected that the boys had found them interesting and enjoyable. One person mentioned that they had done all the activities in a single session, which meant that the pupil had lost interest towards the end.

Two activities were mentioned as being particularly useful. The first was identifying a range of items you could read (see Section 3.3.3, activity 2).
This appeared to have engendered a broader understanding of the range of reading materials available, amongst pupils who tried it. For example:

“My lad, Jordan, was quite surprised to know how many things you could read. He’d done it in a minute and a half, which really surprised me. He was looking round the room and seeing play books and plays, but he was quite surprised how often you do read”.

Secondly, the Can reading more make a difference? task (see Appendix 3 (iv)) had reportedly allowed pupils to think about the benefits of reading once they had left school. One boy had mentioned that it would be useful in reading bills and job applications. Another member of staff reported:

“…that’s the one [Learning Mentor] mentioned and she said it provided a good discussion about the importance of being able to read well and not just at school.”

One response received via an evaluation form detailed how:

‘Activity four [Can reading more make a difference?] provided a good discussion base to expand on why it is important to read well as an adult and why it is an everyday skill, not just something used at school.’

Staff felt that the activities and questionnaires had given them some insight into the areas of reading that could be explored (such as looking at the range of reading materials available, or focusing on how reading might make a difference to life after school).

8.2.2 The questionnaires
Staff felt that the Reading Motivation Questionnaire (see Appendix 4 (ii)) was confusing to some pupils. They asked for the descriptors in the rating scale to be simplified (e.g. from ‘very different from me’, to ‘not at all’). They also
felt that the questionnaire was too long and not visual enough and that some boys had perceived it as a ‘test’.

“I had to sit and read David the first bit and then say, “There are no rights and no wrongs.” When he realised that it wasn’t going to be... that nothing depended on the results or anything like that he was all right with that.”

Another member of staff reflected the problems with the questionnaire had affected the pupil’s feelings about using the materials.

“Where they found it confusing, it had to be explained several times and it affected the child’s confidence and he was reluctant then to continue with the other activities.”

After the session, a revised version of the questionnaire was produced and distributed, with changes made in response to comments from staff. The order of the questionnaire was revised so that the Stages of Change (Appendix 4 (iv)) and Frequency of Reading (Appendix 4 (iii)) questionnaires were brought to the front and the Reading Motivation Questionnaire was shortened. The font and layout were changed (to include graphics) and the questionnaires were printed on yellow paper. The revised questionnaire is attached as Appendix 8. These were distributed to support staff before the second discussion group session.

8.2.3 Needs of the boys using the materials

All of the boys staff had worked with had literacy needs. Some of the boys who tried the activities had severe and complex needs (there is resourced provision within the school and some support staff are assigned to work with individual pupils accessing this).

Staff reported that some boys had difficulty with the conceptual understanding of the more abstract tasks in the pack (for example, thinking
about how reading might affect them after they had left school). Methodological implications of this were discussed in Section 7.8.3.

8.2.4 Promoting reading engagement
Strategies for encouraging reading, particularly amongst boys experiencing reading difficulties, were considered. A number of members of the group reported that the Guinness Book of Records had been one resource that had particularly engaged and interested boys. Attendees also noted that the non-fiction books, reading cards, joke books, magazines and games were popular choices. It was recognised that the boys discussed liked to read in short bursts and regularly change their reading materials.

Initiatives involving shared reading or parental involvement were also seen as being successful. The school had run schemes that encouraged Year 6 and 7 pupils to pair up at transition to support each other’s reading. As part of this initiative, staff had visited bookshops with pupils, who had been given money to buy books of their choice. The same scheme had promoted involvement from parents and carers.

8.2.5 Accessing reading opportunities
During the session, members of the group noted that they had observed reading ability to be a barrier to using the materials, but more significantly to accessing literacy components of the school curriculum.

“I did it with David. He’s a very poor reader….he can’t read at all. So when I was doing, ‘I read to learn new information about topics that interest me’, he put a 1 for that, because obviously he couldn’t understand what he’d be reading anyway, because he can’t read.”

The link between reading difficulties, reading motivation and reading opportunities (e.g. Torgeson 2002) was discussed within the group, with staff recognising that pupils with greater difficulty tended to be less engaged in, and motivated for, reading.
8.2.6 Creating a supportive reading context

The boys were positive about leaving the classroom to go and read with an adult, as described in the discussion below, where A and B are members of support staff.

A: “I find when they’re getting books out for English, and if I’m doing some reading out loud with them, I find most of the boys want to come with me.”

B: “They’re fighting to come out to read.”

A: “So I think they do want to do it, but in small groups, because we can read a book and then the boys will have a bash at it. But in a classroom, they just clam up don’t they?”

B: “They all feel as if they’re there to help one another. There’s no competition and they enjoy it.”

This suggests that the boys described did want to engage in reading, but that this was enabled by the creation of a supportive environment, to allow them to feel confident and safe in developing their skills.

Robeck and Wallace (1992) suggest that homogeneous grouping of pupils with difficulties is an ineffective strategy because there are fewer positive role models and teachers can communicate low expectations. However, segregated teaching of children with reading difficulties may enhance their self-esteem (Humphrey, 2001) and an environment that promotes self-efficacy and collaboration is likely to be advantageous in developing their reading skills. This is explored further in Section 9.4.3.

8.3 Discussion with the literacy co-ordinator

After the session, a discussion with the school’s literacy co-ordinator provided additional information about the context for reading within the
school. This interview was not transcribed, although notes were made. It was not intended that the discussion would form part of the core research. However, using the paradigm of illuminative evaluation (see Section 7.7.7) it is important to include information that can *throw light on what is going on*, within an educational context (Burden, 1998, page 16). Some of the points made by the literacy co-ordinator are consistent with observations made during Study One and comments made by support staff in the discussion group session. Furthermore, the interview provides a valuable insight into factors within the educational context that facilitate and inhibit reading engagement and motivation and problems the staff would face in evaluating the usefulness of the materials.

8.3.1 Use of the materials
The literacy co-ordinator described how she was planning to use the materials as part of an intervention (with Year 9 and 10 pupils who were reading at National Curriculum Levels 3 and 4) that would focus on reading for pleasure and try and promote reading engagement and motivation. This reflected a creative and proactive response to reading development within the school. In recent months, the school had begun to use the Manchester Literacy Resource File (Manchester EPS, 2004), which includes a motivational component. This followed training provided by the EPS through a BEST initiative the previous year (Manchester EPS, 2003) (see Section 4.1.1).

The use of the Manchester Literacy Resource File was becoming increasingly widespread, as a way of planning for boys with additional literacy needs. However, this had placed considerable demands on support staff time (in terms of training and assessment) and staff therefore found it difficult to find additional time to trial the affective reading intervention based on MI principles (see Section 7.8.2).

8.3.2 Perceptions about boys' views of reading
The literacy co-ordinator felt that there were socio-cultural factors that contributed to a lack of reading engagement amongst boys. One observation
was that boys saw a limited range of materials as socially acceptable reading matter. Peer approval might be gained from reading kung fu or motorbike magazines. However, pupils who liked books might be referred to as “geeks” and boys seen borrowing books were often questioned about their behaviour (What are you getting that out for?). Reference is made within academic literature to the policing of learning behaviours. This is explored further in Section 8.4.4.

The literacy co-ordinator noted that, for some boys with reading difficulties, reading was viewed as an unpleasant and negative activity, which reinforced a sense of failure and that they would therefore try to avoid reading. When reading is not associated with pleasurable experiences it is likely to lead to reading avoidance (Robeck and Wallace, 1992). This can perpetuate other problems, including emotional and behavioural difficulties (e.g. DECP, 1999, Adams, Snowling, Hennessy and Kind, 1999).

8.3.3 Role models and reading

The school is in an area of high socio-economic disadvantage (see Section 4.1.1). The literacy co-ordinator had observed that the self-image of the boys was very important, to the extent that it was described as what sometimes “holds them together”. This was said to be particularly true for boys who might be experiencing additional challenges in their home or school environments. Jackson (2002) proposed that some pupils may be more motivated to protect their sense of self-worth than to succeed academically at school.

The literacy co-ordinator felt that reading was not seen as “cool” and that there was a lack of male role models providing positive messages about reading, with whom the boys could identify. One exception was the poet Benjamin Zephaniah who had inspired a group of boys on a recent school visit.

The literacy co-ordinator felt that the adult male role models that the boys had at home and within the community sometimes reinforced the idea that
reading and literacy were feminised practices, an idea also posited by Alloway and Gilbert (1997). One boy had reported taking The Wind in the Willows home to read but had kept it hidden from his father for fear of being teased about his reading choice.

8.4 Session Two

A further session involving support staff was held four weeks after the first discussion group session (and eight weeks after the training session). This provided another opportunity to discuss the materials, but placed greater emphasis on providing a forum for staff to discuss wider themes in relation to boys' literacy. Seven staff attended this session. Only one member of staff had attended the previous session, so the constitution of the group was quite different. Two members of the group had only recently joined the Learning Support Department, so had not had access to the initial training session. The literacy co-ordinator also joined the group for part of the session.

In addition to the prompt questions that had been presented to staff at the previous session (see Table 8.1), key themes that had arisen from the previous session were also presented, which were:

- The activities
- The questionnaires
- Needs of the boys using the pack
- Observations about boys' reading
- Promoting reading engagement
- Accessing the literacy curriculum
- Creating a supportive reading environment

These were proposed as exploratory themes, as were other topics that had emerged during Study One and through discussions with the literacy co-ordinator. These were:
Presenting emerging themes to the staff reflected the developing research design. The focus of the enquiry had moved away from the efficacy of the materials as an affective reading intervention, to an exploration of the factors that facilitated or inhibited reading engagement and motivation within the school. Within the paradigm of action research, feedback from data was used to inform an ongoing cyclical process. The research was seen as formative, enabling evaluation and reflection. Furthermore, it strived to make findings usable and shareable and to be emancipatory (Cohen et al, 2000).

As noted in Section 8.2.3, the responses were provided by staff supporting boys identified as having additional literacy, learning and behavioural needs. Caution should therefore be taken in applying research outcomes to boys across the whole school population.

8.4.1 Materials and questionnaires
Although not all of the members of staff had had the opportunity to use the revised questionnaires (Appendix 8), those who had felt that they were more ‘user friendly’ and more appealing to the boys.

Because of competing pressures (see Section 8.3.1) only one of the attendees had had the opportunity to try the materials with a pupil. Because of time constraints, it was suggested by the management team that staff used all the activities in a single session, which meant that the activities felt “very crammed in”.

The individual who had used the pack with a pupil reported that it had given her insight into the reading behaviour of the boy she was working with. She
noted that the *Why Read?* activity (Appendix 3 (iii)) had revealed that he read for information or instruction, rather than for enjoyment:

“…the thing that struck me, when I was going through the different activities, was what I kind of suspected for a while; that boys read for information rather than enjoyment. That was the big thing that came out for the boy I did it with. He reads instructions, he reads to find out how to do things… but to read for enjoyment, to read a story because he might enjoy it didn’t figure at all. It just wasn’t an issue.”

The support worker noted that *Can reading more make a difference?* (Appendix 3 (iv)) had challenged the pupil to think about reading in a broader context. She felt that his responses indicated that this was the first time he had considered the implications of reading outside school.

“When we got through the activities, to ‘Can reading more make a difference?’ and we looked at later life; why it would be important to read; why it would be important to understand money, he kind of said… “Oh yeah”. He understood that… but reading in the literacy withdrawal lesson, he didn’t link to the future, so hopefully that link was made a little bit clearer.”

Although this represented the views of only one individual, these sentiments are consistent with views expressed during the first discussion group session (see Section 8.2.1) indicating that activities from Sessions 3 and 4 appeared to be the most useful for challenging thinking and providing staff with an insight into reading behaviour.

### 8.4.2 Boys’ views of reading at home and school

Some members of the group noted that the boys they worked with viewed reading as an activity that happened at school and not something that extended to the home environment. Similarly they suggested that parents and carers might support and reinforce this view.
“I think it’s how their parents perceive how their education should be… their expectations are different. Reading is something you do at school, so it’s part of the school.”

Additionally they felt that parents/carers viewed books as something that school should provide and tended to ‘reward’ their sons with other gifts, such as gameboys, DVDs or videos. They felt that it was unlikely that a book would be viewed as a treat and that families tended to have other priorities. Staff also felt that the pupils would be less likely to spend their money on books, for example:

“…they get pocket money but wouldn’t spend it on a book. It’s more likely to be a games console or that sort of thing.”

One example given was of an awards night, when some of boys were awarded vouchers in recognition of their achievements. One member of staff reported that a number of the boys tried to trade in their vouchers, as they did not see how they were useful:

“…when we have the end of year assemblies, boys will get gift vouchers, they’re W. H. Smiths and they’ll try and sell them to you. They’re like, “What do I want a voucher for W. H. Smiths for?” because they associate that with books. And I’ve said, “They sell DVDs they sell CDs, they sell all sorts,” but it’s like, “Give me a tenner and you can have it.” I’ve had boys trying to barter, “It’s a ten pound voucher, you can have it for a fiver miss.” You’ve not left the hall and they’re trying to do a deal.”

In a survey of reading practices amongst middle school pupils attending schools in different neighbourhoods in the United States, Worthy, Moorman and Turner (1999) found children from low-income families were less likely to purchase (although more likely to borrow) books than their counterparts from middle-income families, suggesting financial resources to be the main reason for this difference. However, the response of the pupils in the previous
scenario suggests a more general lack of value or interest placed upon books as a medium.

Staff felt that frequently reading was not viewed as a pleasurable activity amongst pupils, and in some cases parents and carers. In some cases parents/carers’ own reading difficulties were thought to contribute to these perceptions. Furthermore, staff identified how reading was not necessarily viewed as an important skill for later life.

“They say they’re going to go and work on the market. That’s what they want to do.”

“…one particular boy was saying, “Why do I need to have maths when I’m going to be a joiner?” and you couldn’t get across that you do need maths. And it’s like, “Why do I have to sit in English to be a painter and decorator?” because they don’t connect that with [his lessons], and the teacher was trying to say, “Look, you do need measurements, you do need to be able to read.”

If young people do not value reading or see it as important and relevant, expectancy-value and self-determination theories of motivation would suggest they are less likely to engage in it (Wigfield and Eccles, 2000; Ryan and Deci 2000a).

8.4.3 Reading and the curriculum

Staff noted that the curriculum consisted predominantly of books and did not tend to reflect the reading preferences of boys outside school, which included magazines, newspapers and cards. Boys appear to be less well adapted to the school-based literacy curriculum than girls, as their home reading preferences differ more significantly from reading in schools (Osmot and Davies, 1987, cited by Maynard, 2002; Millard, 1997a; Hall and Coles, 2001). Undertaking research with Year 6 and 7 pupils, Millard (1997b) noted that books boys liked (particularly comic strip books) were discouraged from the
classroom and that this contributed to a school reading community less relevant to the interests of boys.

The group reiterated findings from the previous session that boys tended to read information books (the *Guinness Book of Records* again being cited as a preferred reading choice).

When asked to what extent materials offered within the literacy curriculum reflected the socio-cultural backgrounds of the pupils, one member of staff voiced strong opinions about the relevance of the National Curriculum to the lives of the pupils attending the school.

“No [the curriculum] doesn’t reflect… and the thing is, you’re only allowed so many books on the National Curriculum and unfortunately the National Curriculum is set by people who can read and read a lot, and probably like classic books. But they don’t live in an inner city area as a kid with limited literacy skills, so… well that’s the way the education system works isn’t it. Certain people make the rules for people in a completely different set of circumstances. That’s the problem I think.”

Furthermore, staff felt that an important development would be to consult with staff in more diverse areas about how to engage young people from a wider range of backgrounds.

“…what might be nice, once in a while, is while they were setting the National Curriculum, to come to see the English Co-ordinators and ask them what they think should be on there. Because what they tend to do is… “These books would be good to read”, etcetera and then for the socially deprived, we’ll stick ‘Kes’ or something on there as a token gesture. They don’t actually ask what they think might engage them and help them achieve and get involved in reading.”
One of the problems with reflecting popular reading choices in school seems to be concerns about their suitability to be included in school-based literacy practices. Worthy et al (1999) noted that teachers and librarians objected to some of the materials ranked highly by pupils because they contained sexual connotations (e.g. teen magazines) or graphic descriptions of violence (e.g. some horror books). They noted that teachers:

…felt pressure to provide and use quality literature in their classrooms. Quality was variously defined as “something from the library,” “something with educational content,” “an award winning book,” “something wholesome,” “appropriate,” or at least not something “frivolous” (page 22).

From discussions with the support staff, concerns about reflecting the boys’ interests in school reading materials might be justified. Note the discussion below:

CA: “And are there any books that you’ve found boys are particularly interested in?”

“If it’s crime or shooting.”

“They like stuff on crime and on the Nazis. They go on the Internet and that and find out about it.”

However, whereas schools have a responsibility to promote positive reading materials, preferred reading choices for adolescents (and adults) are likely to include texts which are accessible, easy to read and very probably ‘frivolous’. Interest is an important factor in reading engagement and motivation (Wigfield and Guthrie, 1997; Moore et al, 1999; Guthrie and Knowles, 2001) and motivating secondary age boys with reading difficulties may be extremely difficult if school resources are not stimulating.
8.4.4 Socio-cultural dynamics

When asked if boys were supportive of each other’s literacy learning, there was strong feeling that this was not the case. Staff responses included:

“They get laughed at.”

“They might want to do it but they don’t.”

“I was in French this morning and Mark was doing really well... and they all dived on him and called him a “geek” and the teacher said, “I’m sick of them picking on him because he does his work” and they all start on him. I’m literally standing there protecting him. I said, “Leave him alone.””

Staff noted that boys received unsavoury comments from peers when they did engage well with their reading. As well as being called a “geek”, the term “gay” was also used pejoratively to refer to pupils who engaged in reading, and more generally in learning. One member of staff commented:

“It’s one of the things that’s always struck me about this school. We’ve got such a wide racial mix and I’ve never really come across any racism, as such, but the biggest insult is “you’re gay”. That’s the insult “you’re gay”, “you’re a geek”. The biggest insult is that you would be gay to enjoy reading.”

The use of the term “gay” was also directed at a pupil showing active engagement in activities during Study One (see Section 5.4.7).

From extensive interviews with high schools Duncan (1999) concluded that ‘gay’ had duality of meaning for boys. As well as being recognised as meaning homosexual, ‘the ascription of ‘gay’ replaced qualities which other boys had, such as sporting prowess, being a good fighter, cheeking teachers and hanging around with cool mates doing cool activities such as smoking and swearing’ (page 19).
Furthermore he notes that:

One of the shields against being hurt by the term ‘gay’ was the sure and certain public knowledge that one was not gay in any sense (page 19).

Martino (1999) observes how homophobic comments can be used to ‘police’ masculinities and can be directed towards boys who demonstrate behaviours that are inconsistent with hegemonic views of masculinity. In their study of schoolboy humour within English secondary schools, Nayak and Kehily (2001) noted that young men who did not cultivate a hyper-masculinity could be subject to brutal forms of homophobic abuse.

Implications of these findings are discussed more fully in Sections 10.5.2 and 10.5.3.

8.4.5 Role models and reading
When asked about other reading role models, many of the staff felt that the boys found it very difficult to envisage life outside their immediate locality and as a result would find it difficult to identify with any ‘celebrity’ male readers.

“I don’t think they’d be influenced at all by someone who’s like an icon, do you?”

“They’re too far removed from someone they don’t know. They don’t see themselves as the next Beckham.”

It should be noted that the nature of the difficulties experienced by some of the pupils might make it difficult for them to relate to unfamiliar people. However, Hall and Coles (2001) note that:

“Developing readers need to see reading, and literacy practices generally situated in as wide a social and cultural context as possible..."
and certainly one which extends beyond the school boundaries” (page 211).

Generally members of the group did not see the parents and carers of boys they worked with as positive reading role models (see Section 8.4.2).

8.4.6 Boys’ views about adult support

Staff reported that although the boys they worked with were reluctant to read aloud in class, they were positive about reading aloud in a small supported group where the atmosphere was ‘safe’.

“Myself and Tracey have a group of about eight boys, all of kind of similar ability. There are some differences… The other week we did a short story called ‘Magnet’ and they quite enjoyed that… and they would go round. But obviously there are two of us and eight of them, so it’s a very small group and you’re there to help and it’s a safe environment. It doesn’t matter if somebody makes a mistake. In a class of thirty… Some kids would rather die wouldn’t they?”

This mirrors the views expressed by the support staff group in the first discussion group session (see Section 8.2.6).

8.5 Key outcomes from Study Two

Key themes emerging from this and the previous discussion group session in relation to supporting boys’ engagement in reading are shown in Table 8.2, overleaf.
Table 8.2 Key themes emerging from Study Two

- Resources offered in school often do not reflect the interests or socio-cultural context of the boys staff were working with;
- Reading practices observed within the boys’ home and community contexts (e.g. by adult role models) may not promote reading engagement and motivation;
- Socio-cultural factors are likely to be influential in facilitating or inhibiting reading opportunities and determining boys’ reading choices;
- Creating ‘supportive’ environments might be helpful in enabling boys to participate in supported, shared reading experiences;
- Materials from the pack from Sessions 3 and 4 may be helpful in helping pupils develop a broader understanding of reading behaviours and their impact on adult life.

Despite the methodological difficulties with trialling the pack, both directly with pupils and through staff, its introduction had enabled discussions and exploration of the literacy needs, views and perceptions of boys (particularly of those experiencing the greatest degree of reading difficulty) within this school. Although Study Two had initially set out to evaluate the usefulness of the pack as an affective reading intervention, it was the qualitative information that emerged about boys’ reading within school that provided the most useful and interesting data. It became evident that there were complex factors within school and home-based literacy practices that facilitated or inhibited reading engagement and motivation amongst Key Stage 3 readers.

Information from the sessions with the support staff had provided a much richer picture of the socio-cultural context determining and influencing school-based literacy practices. Many of the key themes detailed in Table 8.2 relate to the impact of broader issues on boys’ reading motivation and engagement
(e.g. the school curriculum, gender identity and family and community factors). Action research and illuminative evaluation models have informed the enquiry within the educational context. However, the methodological paradigm of critical educational research is proposed below as an additional perspective from which to analyse and evaluate the broader societal and political influences on boys’ reading engagement and motivation.

8.6 Critical educational theory

Cohen et al (2000) describe the emerging paradigm of critical educational research. This proposes that positivist and interpretive paradigms present incomplete accounts of social behaviour because they neglect the political and ideological contexts of much of educational research.

Critical educational research is based on what behaviour within a social democracy should entail, with the intention not just to give an account of society and behaviour, but also to realise a society that is based on equality and democracy for all its members. A key focus of critical educational research involves interrogating the relationships between school and society, such as:

- How schools perpetuate or reduce inequality;
- The social construction of knowledge and the curriculum;
- Who defines worthwhile knowledge and what ideological interests serve this knowledge.

Emancipatory research of this nature subsumes positivist and interpretive paradigms: it requires them but goes beyond them (Cohen et al, 2000). In order to look at some of the political and educational policy issues that affect boys’ reading, in this and other high school contexts, this research paradigm will provide a further frame of reference when drawing conclusions about this research. In the context of this thesis, this will lead to an exploration of how social policy and pedagogical practices impact on the educational
opportunities for boys in this particular school (see Sections 10.2.2 and 10.7.3).

8.7 Study Three – Consulting with the boys

In order to explore the key themes outlined in Table 8.2 and to provide further information about the views of readers of all abilities, a further stage of the research was proposed. This aimed to develop a deeper understanding of the views and perceptions held by boys about reading engagement and motivation, through involving them as participant researchers. The purposes of this stage of the research were as follows:

- To find out to what extent pupils' views and perceptions concurred with the findings of Study One and Study Two of the project;
- Now that a more informed perspective on socio-cultural factors that impacted on boys' reading had been ascertained, to talk to boys who had participated in the registration group sessions with a view to exploring some of the explanatory themes proposed in Section 5.9;
- To provide greater insight into pupils' views about what facilitates and inhibits reading engagement and motivation;
- To offer greater insight into the extent to which socio-cultural factors, within school and within the broader educational context, impact on boys' reading engagement and motivation.

This part of the research will be described in Chapter Nine.
Chapter Nine: Study Three – Consulting with the boys

9.1 Introduction

Chapter Eight described how the pack was introduced to support staff at the school, as a possible affective reading intervention for pupils with literacy learning needs. Limited opportunities for staff to use the pack arose, mainly because other literacy initiatives were being implemented. However, discussion group sessions with the support staff and literacy co-ordinator yielded interesting information about boys’ responses to reading within this particular high school context. Considerations that related to broader educational and social factors were also identified. This chapter describes how pupils attending the school were consulted about their views and perceptions about reading.

The research aims had shifted considerably from those originally defined. Although the pack of activities, based on MI principles, was still a feature of this thesis, it had become an instrument by which the boys’ views and perceptions about reading could be explored. In view of this, once more the key questions were redefined from those previously stated (see Section 7.2). These are outlined in Table 9.1 below.

Table 9.1 Revised key questions following Study Two

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How can the materials enable a better understanding of boys’ reading?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What strategies are useful in helping boys to engage more readily in reading?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What factors facilitate and inhibit the reading engagement and motivation of boys in this context?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What issues are important to bear in mind when considering future resources and teaching strategies?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the broader implications for school-based literacy practices and the role of the EP?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
In Study Three, discussion groups were held with pupils in school about their responses to reading and factors that facilitated and inhibited reading engagement. The main part of this research will be detailed in Sections 9.7 and 9.8, which describe how boys, who had used the materials within their registration groups (Groups A and C) during Study One (see Chapters Four and Five), were involved in discussion groups about reading in school. Prior to this, there was the opportunity to speak to pupils who were accessing a Reading Challenge Group about their views and perceptions. Outcomes from this are described in Section 9.4.

First of all, however, this chapter will consider some of the methodological advantages and issues in involving pupils in research. This is an area that is currently attracting great interest within the area of EP practice and to give it detailed consideration is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, aspects of the research that are particularly pertinent to this thesis will be briefly considered.

9.2 Participatory research with pupils

Increasingly the views of children and young people are being valued and included by educational policy makers. While the SEN Toolkit (DfES, 2001a) offers materials on enabling pupil participation, the government’s Green Paper *Every Child Matters* (DfES, 2003b) was informed by widespread consultation with children and young people. Alderson (2000) notes that the growing awareness of children’s rights has paved the way for involving children as researchers and that children’s participation involves a changing emphasis in research methods.

Lewis (2002) highlights key ethical aspects of interviewing children. These include gatekeepers (who gives the researcher access to the child); consent and assent; issues of confidentiality; feedback to participants; ownership (who has access to research information and the right to use it in certain contexts); and social responsibility (that researchers should acknowledge
both their own value systems and whatever truth emerges from the research). Generally however, these issues are not specific to research with children and Lindsay (2000) notes that BPS guidance (BPS, 2000) makes direct reference to children only in the context of consent.

In challenging researchers to recognise the impact of research on children Alderson (1995) raises a number of questions. These include notions of childhood that may be assumed by adults (for example, that children are weak, vulnerable or dependent) and the need to balance impartial research with respect for children’s worth and dignity. Additionally researchers are encouraged to use positive images in reports and to try and convey findings in children’s own terms. The research described in this chapter aimed to be mindful of these areas.

Alderson (2000) cautions that there are additional issues of control and power imbalance which exist in research with children and that involving children as participant researchers can increase their informed involvement. O’Kane (2000) notes that the use of participatory methods can actually help to resolve a number of ethical problems and can also enhance the validity and reliability of research findings. Conversely, Cohen et al (2000) identify some of the issues involved with interviewing children, which include establishing trust, finding ways to move beyond the responses they think the interviewer wants to hear and pitching questions at the right level.

The rationale for including pupil views in this thesis was described in Section 8.7.

9.3 Discussion with pupils accessing a Reading Challenge Group

An opportunity arose to speak to pupils who were part of another initiative offered to support boys’ reading – the Reading Challenge Group. This meant that although they did not access the intensive literacy support offered by staff from the Learning Support Department, they were involved in Additional Literacy Support (ALS) groups (or Wave 2 support, as defined in the NLS
The focus of the Reading Challenge Group was to promote enjoyment of and engagement in reading, rather than to improve technical reading skills.

9.3.1 Rationale
As with the conversation with the literacy co-ordinator (see Section 8.3), this discussion group session was not intended to form part of the core research, but information from it is included within the ethos of illuminative evaluation (Burden, 1998). The initial intention was to use outcomes of discussions with the Reading Challenge Group to inform and direct the focus group sessions with Groups A and C. However, the session provided rich information about the views and perceptions of boys accessing Wave 2 provision and offered a fuller picture of the factors that facilitated and inhibited reading engagement. Therefore outcomes will be explored in some detail.

Another advantage of including the views of the Reading Challenge Group was that it offered a way of representing the perceptions of pupils accessing different waves of provision, as defined in the NLS (DfES, 2003a). Figure 9.3 (i), overleaf, details how pupils in this thesis represented these different waves of provision.

Although the waves of literacy provision tend to represent literacy teaching within a primary context, they are congruent to the levels of support offered to each of the groups of pupils defined in bold.

9.3.2 Participants and research methodology
Six Year 7 pupils from the Reading Challenge Group were consulted about their views on reading. All of the pupils had agreed to participate and parental consent was obtained through the literacy co-ordinator. A half hour discussion group session was centred on the following questions (see Table 9.2, overleaf):
Figure 9.1  Waves of literacy intervention

Wave 1
The effective inclusion of all pupils in a literacy hour and daily mathematics lesson (Quality First Teaching). Pupils may be at any point on the ‘graduated response’, as defined by the SEN Code of Practice (DfES, 2001b) i.e. the usual differentiated curriculum, School Action or School Action Plus.

Represented in this research by pupils from registration groups participating in focus groups (see Sections 9.7-9.11) and by outcomes of Study One (see Chapter Five).

Wave 2
Small group intervention, such as early literacy support and booster classes (or equivalent LEA or school-based programmes), for pupils who can be expected to ‘catch up’ with their peers as a result of the intervention.

Represented in this research by pupils from the Reading Challenge Group participating in a discussion session (see Section 9.4).

Wave 3
Specific targeted intervention for pupils identified as requiring SEN support. Pupils at Wave 3 may have particular needs related specifically to mathematics or literacy, or needs associated with other barriers to their learning.

Needs of pupils described by support staff (see Chapter Eight).

Table 9.2  Prompt questions for Reading Challenge Group

- What helps young people to enjoy literacy/reading in school?
- How can young people support each other with their reading?
- Is there anything that stops you from reading at school?
- If you were in charge of schools, what would you do to help young people enjoy reading more?
In order not to reinforce views about masculinity or ideas that the issues discussed were specific to boys, the term ‘young people’ is used throughout.

9.3.3 Data analysis

Sessions were audio taped and transcribed. Pupil details were not sought prior to the sessions and it was not possible to attribute comments made to individuals. As with the staff group transcriptions, the data was not subjected to rigorous discourse analysis because the discussion was not the only source of data (see Section 7.7.5). Instead, key statements made by the boys were highlighted in the transcript. Links were identified between these, and finally key themes were identified which were:

- Reading at home and at school
- Helping young people engage in reading
- Supporting pupils’ reading

These will be explored further in Section 9.4. Data from the transcriptions is to exemplify these themes.

9.4 Outcomes from discussion with the Reading Challenge Group

9.4.1 Reading at home and at school

Pupils within the group initially stated that they didn’t read at home. However, during the course of the discussion, it became clear that their terms of reference were different for home and school. Pupils did not immediately identify themselves as readers within their home contexts because the things they reported reading out of school (newspapers, magazines, the TV guide, ‘cheats’ for playstation games and text messages) differed from what they were reading in school (predominantly books).

Hall and Coles (2001) note that boys who read avidly in texts and forms unrecognised by official school curricula may see themselves as non-readers. Elsewhere, in a small-scale study, Osmot and Davis (1987) found
that girls tended to be more satisfied with the choice of reading matter available at school than boys, who would have liked the different kinds of materials they read at home (comics and media related fiction) to be available at school. The differences between school and home-based reading practices for boys in this context were also described in Section 8.4.2 and are examined further in Section 10.6.3.

Once the boys had identified the range of materials that they read at school and at home, they were keen to see some of the more ‘home-based’ resources included in the school curriculum.

“The school could, instead of having proper books, get the children to read magazines and newspapers.”

“Say like you support like a team, you want to read about it and that could help you get better at reading. You might just go and pick it up and like read it, like if there were newspapers. You could just pick it up and have a look.”

As a direct outcome of the boys’ suggestions, the literacy co-ordinator and Head of English, who were present for the session, proposed that they would trial having newspapers available for registration periods. This is due to be piloted with a form group early in the academic year (see Section 10.4.3).

9.4.2 Helping pupils engage in reading

In response to the question ‘What helps young people to enjoy reading in school?’ the boys provided the following suggestions:

- Fun things
- Reading about things they like, such as reading about football if they play football
- Picture books
Pupils in the group agreed that they would like “better books” in school, adding that they could not always find a book that they were interested in during class time. They also indicated that they might change their books regularly:

“When you get a book in class… you get a book and then Miss says to change your book, and I’ll change it for another book and then it’s boring. So you’ll get a book and then sit down and then after about two minutes you get back up and get another one.”

When provided with information about previous discussions with members of the support staff, there was consensus that *The Guinness Book of Records* was a popular choice amongst boys at the school, but disagreement on whether instruction manuals were well liked.

A number of the boys felt that fiction books, including popular choices like the *Harry Potter* series were too long and would benefit from illustrations.

“Like some books, you look at the book first and you look down the pages and there’s loads of them and I think that’s why people don’t read them. They’ve got about 150 pages. They’re all writing.”

“…sometimes when it’s long, and then you read it for a bit, you can get into the book, if it’s a good book. But when it’s like a boring book and it’s got loads of pages, you can’t be bothered reading it.”

### 9.4.3 Supporting pupils’ reading

Many of the group’s ideas about supporting pupils’ literacy skills development seemed to rely on adult intervention and additional support. For example when asked the question, “If you were in charge of schools, what would you do to help young people enjoy reading more?” responses included:

“Get more people to help people read.”
“And have more classes. People who can’t read, they should get classes so that they can get better.”

Pupils reported feeling embarrassed about having help with their reading and that it made them feel “like an idiot.” When asked for suggestions to counteract these problems, the boys reflected that they would like to be taught amongst pupils of the same ability.

**CA:** “So is there any other way they could have some help without feeling embarrassed?”

“Different classes.”

“Yeah. Have different classes, then it’s always that class that they go in and they’re like with other children, so they’re all the same.”

“The people that can’t read can go with each other and be helped.”

**CA:** “OK, so you could get to read with other people who are the same level as you?”

“Yeah, because then you don’t get so embarrassed.”

“And you can all read together.”

These ideas do not seem to reflect general ideas about inclusive practice. For example Booth and Ainscow (2000) propose creating inclusive cultures through factors such as pupils helping each other, having lessons that encourage the participation of all students and through students learning collaboratively. Rather, these comments perhaps reflect an ethos in which additionality or special classes are seen as a solution to literacy learning difficulties. This will be explored further in Section 10.6.1.
One pupil indicated how teachers can make more complex texts accessible to pupils:

“There’s all that dead small writing, but when the teacher reads it out, it’s all right”.

9.4.4 Conclusions
This discussion offered additional information about school and home-based literacy practices and about the factors that facilitate and inhibit reading engagement. These outcomes were used to inform the next stage of the research, which involved discussion groups with boys from Groups A and C who had been involved in Study One.

9.5 Discussion groups with pupils who had participated in Study One

9.5.1 Rationale for Study Three
At the end of Study One, it was identified that the proposed affective reading intervention, based around the goals of MI (McNamara, 1998) had not produced the preferred outcome of promoting reading engagement and motivation. In exploring the findings from Study One, some explanatory themes were identified (see Section 5.9). The purpose of speaking to boys that had been involved in Study One was to explore these themes and to try and establish to what extent they might have contributed to the observed outcomes.

Following Study Two and the discussion with the Reading Challenge Group, considerably more information had emerged about factors that facilitated and inhibited reading engagement. It was important that the scope of the discussions went beyond Study One outcomes, to explore the reading views and perceptions held by the boys. Whereas consideration of the materials was still a feature of the discussions, the emerging insight into the contextual factors influencing pupil reading engagement and motivation was a more significant feature of Study Three.
At this point it was clear that simply using a pack of materials as an intervention would not enable significant changes. The activities could potentially be used to support systemic approaches to addressing affective issues in reading, but would be ineffective in isolation. Therefore, while their prospective usefulness is a feature of the discussions (the intention being that they could be transformed into something that could be potentially beneficial to staff and pupils in school) the explanatory themes posited in Section 5.9 will be revisited with reference to the wider context for reading engagement and motivation.

9.5.2 Participants
Six boys from Group A and C respectively, who had participated in the Study One sessions, were asked by their form tutor if they would like to take part in follow up groups to discuss the research. Each form tutor identified three pupils who were positive about reading and three who could be described as ‘reluctant readers’. No distinction was made between these groups of pupils and no information was received about the boys before or after the session. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds were well represented in the discussion groups.

It should be noted that participation in the discussion groups was entirely voluntary. Therefore although the boys had differing attitudes to reading, those who were negative about Study One are less likely to have volunteered (or been asked) and may well have been under-represented.

Once the pupils had given their consent, a letter was sent home to their parents/carers, notifying them of their son’s interest in joining the group. The boys then returned the forms to school, prior to the discussion groups. At the beginning of the session, pupils were asked if they were happy to contribute to the group and given the option of withdrawing. This approach tried to ensure that informed consent was received from all of the boys.
9.5.3 Format of the sessions

Sessions were held in the library and each lasted 50 minutes (one lesson). The literacy co-ordinator offered an introduction at the start of each of the discussion groups.

The boys were offered some feedback about findings of the research to date. These are presented in Table 9.3, below.

It should be noted that the themes presented arose from outcomes of both Studies One and Two of the research. However, they were carefully selected to give positive messages about reading and wherever possible to encourage or extend reading behaviours, rather than convey negative or stereotypical views about reading behaviour. For this reason, some of the findings about socio-cultural influences on boys’ reading engagement were not presented directly. Instead, the pupils were asked the same prompt questions that had been presented to the Reading Challenge Group (see Section 9.3.2) and it was hoped that these would offer further insight into these issues.

Table 9.3 Findings presented to pupil discussion groups

- Young people like to read a wide range of things. Some of the most popular choices are non-fiction books such as the Guinness Book of Records or books that tell you how to do things, as well as magazines, newspapers and fiction books.

- Young people are very good at identifying all the different ways they can read, things they can read and different reasons for reading. They are also good at thinking about different reasons for reading after leaving school.

- The things young people read at school and out of school can sometimes be quite different.
• Young people like to make their own choices about reading. Some young people would like to read more and others feel they are fine as they are.

• Having lots of interesting things to read in school might be a good way of encouraging young people to read more.

• If young people are going to talk about reading, it might be better to do this with adults they know, rather than in a group where different people have different views.

Towards the end of the session, the pupils were presented with a folder containing the session activities (as revised for the support staff, see Section 7.5). They were given the opportunity to look at these again and asked:

• Were there any activities you liked/didn’t like?
• How could the pack be made better?

Because the purpose of the discussion groups was to really explore the boys’ views, additional questions were included, as appropriate, to gain further insight into their experiences and perceptions.

9.5.4 Data analysis
Data analysis follows the same format as that used with the Reading Challenge Group (see Section 9.3.3). An example of a session transcription is provided as Appendix 9.

This section looks first at the feedback given by the boys, in relation to the research findings (Table 9.3) and prompt questions (Table 9.2). Next it briefly considers comments offered by the boys about the affective reading
intervention, focusing on the content, presentation and delivery of the sessions.

9.6 Outcomes from discussions with boys from Group A and C

In view of the dynamics of the whole class sessions (see Section 5.4.8), some apprehension was felt about holding the discussion groups. Care was taken to ensure that boys were happy to participate (see Section 9.5.2), felt able to contribute and understood the purpose of the sessions. The fact that the literacy co-ordinator was able to introduce the sessions, as a way of trying to develop school practice and help pupils enjoy reading, appeared to be highly beneficial in engaging the boys (this is explored further in Section 9.7.4). The boys responded to the sessions extremely well and all participated in the discussions.

Outcomes from the discussions were considered in relation to the key questions defined at the start of Chapter Nine (See Section 9.1). Information from the session transcripts was then coded in accordance with these themes. Each was explored in turn, using feedback from the discussion groups. Information arising from Studies One and Two and from the discussion group session with the Reading Challenge Group is also cross-referenced in this section. Shortened descriptions of the themes identified in the key questions (see Section 7.2) will therefore be used, as follows:

- The materials
- Strategies useful in helping boys to engage in reading
- Factors that facilitate or inhibit reading behaviour
- Resources and teaching strategies
- Implications for school-based literacy practice.

These will be explored in Sections 9.7 – 9.11.
Although time was a constraint, one enhancement of this research would have been to try and identify emerging themes during the sessions with Groups A and C and with the Reading Challenge Group (as had been done with staff, see Section 8.2) and offer the boys the option of challenging or adding to these. This would have provided greater opportunities for greater pupil involvement and given the boys a more informed perspective. It would also have reduced the possibilities of the data being interpreted in accordance with the author's views and beliefs.

9.7 The materials

During the session, both groups of boys were reintroduced to the materials that had been presented during the sessions. These were presented in a clip folder and were in the same format as the 'Thinking about Reading' pack that had been offered to the boys as part of the debriefing (see Section 5.8) and used by support staff in Study Two. The boys from Group C, in particular, took a great deal of interest in the materials and started to complete them during the session. In fact, transcribing was postponed for a short time while the boys undertook the written tasks and questionnaires within the pack. Boys were then asked for their comments about the activities in the pack and for suggestions about how they could be improved. These will be considered first in terms of each of the sessions and finally in view of the general comments made to improve the overall intervention.

9.7.1 Comments on the individual sessions

Session One – To promote Self-efficacy

The boys were generally positive about this session, although they commented that it looked like work. One individual noted that it had been useful in helping the group to understand their skills:

“We didn’t think… we didn’t know about what do you like and how would you do it. Like if you knew you were good at art”.
Session Two – To promote Internal Attribution
The boys reflected generally positive views about this session but did not offer specific comments about what they liked or how it could be improved.

Session Three – To increase Knowledge
The boys did not make any specific comments about the content of this session, but did reflect that they liked the fact that it provided opportunities to talk to each other and share views.

“… you get to talk about what you think and what they think about it.”

Session Four – To increase Concern
It was evident from the boys’ responses that they had given some thought to the importance of reading once they had left school, for example:

“If you couldn’t read and you were going for a job, then you wouldn’t know what to do and couldn’t follow the instructions.”

Another boy described the session as “useful”. However, when recalling the activity Can reading more make a difference? (see Appendix 3 (iv)), one pupil offered the following comments:

“I thought that when people were doing it they were getting a bit restless and thought it was a bit boring.”

CA – “I think you’re right. Can you think why that was?”

“Because it’s not like ticking the boxes. It’s like having to write about things… having to think of ideas and write them down and that.”

The boys thought that this activity would be more interesting and engaging if different groups picked different themes to explore and then shared ideas in whole class discussions.
Session Five – To promote Self-efficacy

Group C did not complete this session during Study One, although all the boys had the opportunity to peruse and comment on the materials during the discussion groups. It is possible that once again the amount of reading and writing involved in this task was discouraging for the boys. However, the boys in Group A understood and were able to articulate the rationale for this particular activity.

CA: [In relation to Session Five] “Do you think it’s helpful to set yourself goals for reading?”

“Yes” (consensus).

CA: “You do?”

“You should push yourself to a target and if… say like there was somebody wanted to read… learn more and go home and start doing it – learn how to read.”

“If you don’t start reading at home… if you haven’t got stuff coming up… It encourages them to read.”

This suggests that there is validity in using a similar activity, but that further consideration should be given to its presentation and delivery.

Other general points about the materials will now be detailed.

9.7.2 Presentation of materials

The way the materials looked was important to both groups of boys. There were a number of comments about the fact that the materials were not “eye-catching” and looked like school work. Just as the support staff had mentioned that the black and white questionnaires were unappealing to pupils (see Section 8.2.2), several pupils offered similar comments about the activities such as:
“It’s all black and white. It looks boring.”

“You could have coloured pictures.”

“It just looks dead depressing and boring.”

It was generally agreed that the use of colour would be an enhancement. One boy remarked that:

“If it was coloured you wouldn’t mind… you’d say, “All right I’ll do that”. But if they just give it you in black and white on loads of sheets of paper then you just think, ‘It looks boring.’”

Boys also reflected that different letter fonts would make the materials look more fun and more visually appealing. One pupil noted that the activities looked better when presented as a pack comment ing, “You’ve made it better by putting it in a folder”.

9.7.3 Written activities
When evaluating the individual activities, the boys commented that activities with a higher written component had been less well received (see Section 9.7.1). One pupil noted that the pack contained “too much writing.”

9.7.4 Who delivers the materials?
When asked if having an outsider coming in to present the sessions was problematic, one boy responded that he thought this had been significant.

“Because you’re a new person no-one would really want to speak. But if it had been our form tutor, they’d be answers flying out all over.”

Prior to both discussion group sessions, the literacy co-ordinator briefed the boys about the purpose of the research and how it would inform future practice in school. Although the content of her introduction did not differ from
previous briefings provided by the author, it was significant that the boys subsequently seemed much more interested in research outcomes and more able to see how these might be relevant within their educational context. One pupil asked:

“Miss, are you doing it to, like, tell the school to get like different books?”

It was not possible at this stage to offer the boys such specific outcomes from the research, beyond those that had already been proposed, such as the newspaper pilot (see Section 9.4.1)). However, the research appeared to take on more relevance for the boys after it was introduced by the literacy co-ordinator. The issue of relatedness has been explored previously in Sections 5.9 and 6.4.3 and this may provide another example of its importance. Another possible explanation is offered by Scott (2000) who stresses the importance of context in interviewing children, to provide a frame of reference, and notes that the way in which children express themselves in terms of behaviour and attitudinal preferences may be context dependent.

9.7.5 Timing of the sessions
One possible explanation as to why the intervention sessions were not successful was that the registration period was not an appropriate time for the sessions (see Sections 5.5.3 and 5.9). When asked for their thoughts on this, boys from Group C recalled that the programme of activities had clashed with the form’s quiz session. However, in the following dialogue, one of the pupils defends the rationale for the sessions.

CA: “I got the sense when I was coming in that it wasn’t a very good time to talk about reading.”

Pupil 1: “No cos everyone wanted to do the quiz, didn’t they?”

CA: “I realise it was a bad time and...”
Pupil 2: “Yeah but a quiz is only a quiz isn’t it. Reading is more important than a quiz.”

This suggests that, certainly on an individual basis, boys were able to reflect on the potential value of the sessions. Another boy from the same group suggested that, had the sessions been at a different time “You would have got better answers… and more information.” There was consensus amongst boys from Group C that the clash with the quiz had been a significant factor in how the sessions were received. This is explored further in Section 9.11.7.

9.8 Strategies useful in helping boys to engage in reading

9.8.1 Reading a range of materials

A range of reading resources was identified in discussions with the groups, including local newspapers; magazines (about sport, cars, pop stars, films, Superbowl and Batman); comics; playstation games; swap cards; and computers; as well as a range of fiction and non-fiction books (further information about book preferences is detailed in Section 9.8.3). Some of these resources were specifically mentioned as being read at home (e.g. newspapers). One boy observed that the magazines available for reading in school were different in style and content to those he would choose to read at home.

9.8.2 Promoting reading engagement

It was identified that teachers selected most reading material covered in school and that greater pupil involvement in reading choices would be appreciated. Boys in Group C mentioned that they enjoyed having Tuesday form periods as a designated time for reading books of their choosing.

From ideas suggested to them, boys felt that having a book week might be a good way of promoting reading participation:
“I think if they did have a book week it would be good because it would make people more confident about reading and it would make them come up and read a lot.”

9.8.3 Book preferences
The boys were able to identify a range of popular genres, which included books covering the following areas of interest: cars; war; history; ghosts; horror; football; guns and fighting. Boys from both groups were positive about reading non-fiction materials and some of them mentioned that they would seek out this type of text to read in the ‘book boxes’ that were available to them in some lessons. One boy remarked that, “...there’s too much fiction” in schools, while another specifically cited a preference for non-fiction books:

“I like reading war books to find out about the war and like history books and that… and the Guinness Book of Records. I don’t really like fiction books because they’re a bit too far-fetched. They get a bit tedious and boring.”

There was a positive consensus amongst boys from both groups about pictures in books. One boy in Group C said that he would be more likely to read short stories, particularly if these were illustrated. Pupils were positive about some fiction texts and individuals mentioned Harry Potter and the Chronicles of Narnia as pleasurable reading matter. Where’s Wally books were also cited as a favourite choice. However, as with the Reading Challenge Group, boys from both groups were discouraged by long texts. Note the following dialogue between boys in Group C:

“Harry Potter – it’s too long.”

“Like five hundred thousand pages.”

And from Group A:
“Lots of the books you try and read, they’ve got more than two hundred pages and small writing.”

Instead, one pupil felt that he would prefer “Books that you can finish in about three days.”

The boys felt that they would like some input into the range of books available in school, with one suggestion that you could, “Do a survey and see what books they [the pupils] like and then get more of them”. Greater pupil input into school-based literacy practices may reflect themes of autonomy and self-determination described within MI principles (Miller and Rollnick, 2002; Ginsburg et al, 2002).

9.9 Factors that facilitate or inhibit reading behaviour

9.9.1 Role of peers
Support staff and the Reading Challenge Group had previously cited peer responses as influential in inhibiting reading engagement (see Sections 8.4.4 and 9.4.3). However, pupils from both groups (representing readers across the ability range) were able to give some positive feedback about support offered to peers who might be struggling with reading, for example:

“When in class you’re reading or you get something wrong, the person next to you normally helps you out.”

Some boys however, acknowledged that peers could be unsupportive. For example, note the responses below in relation to the question ‘How do young people in school help each other with their reading?’

“They don’t help, they make it worse.”

“Sometimes people are stuck on words, words they can’t read in the book and then people like, other people just shout the word out.”
The boys also noted that some of the more accomplished readers would read at a much faster pace.

“...the clever ones, they also go ahead, and Miss goes, “Can you read it”, while they’ve finished it.”

Generally boys agreed that their peers were not particularly supportive of each other as readers. This extended to the home environment as well as in school (see Section 9.9.2 below).

9.9.2 Competing social pressures
Boys identified that, outside school, other activities conflicted with opportunities to engage in home-based reading.

“...outside school you don’t have much time to read because you’re either playing out or you want to relax and you’re not going to read that much.”

Boys from both groups speculated that their peers might discourage reading engagement if this was at the expense of social activities, for example:

“If they said, like, what are you going to do tonight and you said, “Oh I’m going to sit in and read a book,” they’d go... they’d slag you.”

Competing social pressures may be one reason for the decline in reading engagement amongst adolescents (Coleman and Hendry, 1999; Moore et al, 1999). Some boys did, however, associate certain behaviours, such as reading the newspaper, reading about music and reading last thing at night to go to sleep, as pleasurable and relaxing experiences.

9.9.3 Reading role models
Boys’ views about the levels of reading encouragement and engagement parents and carers provided (as reading role models) did not reflect sentiments expressed by support staff in Study Two. Instead, boys in both
groups gave positive comments about how people at home modelled positive reading behaviour or provided support.

“**My mum reads and my dad reads.**”

“My mum when she was in secondary school, she did reading. But when she was older, she knows what it means that when you grow up you’ll know more about English and more about other people in other countries. So she tries and tries and tries and now I have decided to read more. She says anyway you’ll know more about relationships, about food, about sport and so on. She told me that actually she reads almost three times a day.”

Reasons for this difference are unclear. It is important to note that pupils in Groups A and C were reporting direct instances of parental reading, whereas the support staff were offering perceptions based on their involvement with the boys and their parents/carers. Additionally, discussions with staff suggested that parents/carers with literacy difficulties (who therefore might engage less in reading) appeared to be over-represented amongst pupils receiving Wave 3 support. No data is available to support this, although Solity (1996, cited by DECP, 1999) suggests that parental involvement may be a factor that accounts for differences in both pre-school phonological awareness and progress in learning to read.

Another boy suggested that adult role models influence the reading habits of young people.

“I think that teenagers read the things that their mums and dads read. They look at their mum and dad reading and they think, “Um, my mum’s reading that”, and when she’s finished they’ll read it.”

**9.9.4 Gendered perceptions of reading**

Although none of the prompt questions directly addressed this subject, both groups made comments about the differences in reading behaviour of boys
and girls. These seemed to reflect hegemonic views about feminised and masculinised reading practices, for example, with Group A boys:

“More boys like guns or fighting. Girls tend to like make up and horses.”

“We prefer magazines with like sports and things like that. Cars, newspapers and that.”

In Group C, one of the boys illustrated his comments about wanting better books in the library by taking one of the books of the shelf.

Pupil 1: “Look at this Miss [holds up a book called ‘The Silver Brumby’ with a horse on the cover]. Why would a boy want to read that?”

Pupil 2: “It’s got a horse on the front.”

Pupil 3: “It’s girly… and it just looks like one of them old books.”

Boys subsequently identified other books on the library shelves that they considered to be appropriate for girls and not for boys. When asked directly if boys and girls read different things, there was consensus amongst boys in Group C that this was the case. One boy cited his cousin as typifying girls’ reading habits because she read a lot of books.

Barrs (1993) found that boys would not consider reading books that dealt with the feminine experience and rejected books because of their content, title and even the picture on the cover.
9.10 Resources and teaching strategies

9.10.1 Reading and the school curriculum

Some responses about the school literacy curriculum were quite positive and seemed to differ from views expressed by support staff and by pupils accessing the Reading Challenge Group (see Sections 8.4.3 and 9.4.2). For example, when asked about the sorts of books they read in lessons, one pupil replied that:

“I find them a lot more interesting, because everyone in the class takes part, so we all have a part. It’s more interesting and you understand it better.”

Although other pupils had contrary opinions that more closely reflected views previously expressed.

“But you get embarrassed.”

“Some people are shy about reading in class.”

“…the teacher gets text books out, to make you read and you don’t like it. It makes you not want to read anymore.”

Boys from both groups mentioned that, as part of the curriculum, they enjoyed comparing books with the film versions of the same text. This was also something they felt would help them to become more engaged in reading outside school, as in the example below:

Pupil: “We watch videos. I like… we get to compare the videos with the book.”

CA: “And do you talk about the films?”

Pupil: “Yes. We talk about the characters and how they’re different.”
CA: “So outside school, if you see a TV series or a film would you buy the book or borrow the book?”

Pupil: “Yeah because you can compare them, seeing how different the book is to the film, because in the book they have, like, different information to the film.”

This suggests that the curriculum is including a range of genres to encourage and motivate adolescent readers and enable them to develop critical literacy skills (as advocated by Moore et al, 1999 and Alvermann, 2002).

Both groups of pupils identified that staffing problems (e.g. when the class had a supply teacher) could inhibit literacy engagement, as could the behaviour of other pupils.

“You’re trying to read a good part and people start shouting and throwing things across the classroom and then the teacher, she gets proper frustrated and she has to stop everyone and start again.”

9.10.2 The school library

The boys reported limited use of the school library for reading and borrowing books, although they claimed to use the computer and Internet resources regularly. Boys noted that they would prefer a greater range of materials to be available, such as comics, as well as what they described as “hard books”. Boys in Group C were quick to identify books in the library collection that they did not think were suitable reading material for boys (see Section 9.9.4) but were positive about other items, such as Asterix books.

9.11 Implications for school-based literacy practice

Before moving on to discuss the implications for practice in greater detail (Chapter Ten), the explanatory themes identified to possibly explain the lack of preferred outcomes from Study One (defined in Section 5.9) will be
revisited. These will be considered in turn and the potential impact of each of the factors evaluated, in the light of data collected from discussions with staff and pupils in Studies Two and Three.

**9.11.1 Socio-cultural factors**

Discussions with staff and pupils indicated that socio-cultural factors appeared to be significant in facilitating or inhibiting pupils’ access to literacy learning opportunities. These include pupils’ perceptions of gendered practices regarding reading (Section 9.9.4), differences between school and home-based reading preferences (Sections 8.4.2 and 9.4.1) and the evidence of how masculinities are policed within school (Section 8.4.4). The expectancy-value model of achievement motivation (see Section 6.4.5) offers a prototype for how a complex network of socio-cultural factors, beliefs, schemata and task values ultimately influence achievement related choices.

The socio-cultural context of the school appeared to be influential in determining reading engagement and motivation, but not the only significant factor. Revisiting the list presented by Barrs (1998) (societal expectations; family influences; early experiences; peer group pressures and stereotyping; classroom contexts; parental expectations; behavioural issues and the range of literacy materials offered by schools), it would seem staff and pupils have described many of these features as significant in influencing reading participation. It is likely therefore, that affective reading programmes need to be cognisant of a range of social, cultural and political factors including school-based practices. This is explored in greater depth in Section 10.5.

**9.11.2 Research methodology**

The predominantly quantitative model, used in Study One, was not suitable, did not take account of the complexities of the high school environment and was subsequently revised (see Chapter Seven). Furthermore, it did not consider the broader social, political and cultural factors that might have facilitated or inhibited literacy learning opportunities and contributed to the lack of preferred outcomes from Study One.
9.11.3 Differential motivation to change amongst groups of pupils
The Stages of Change Questionnaire has not been used or discussed in Studies Two and Three. Possible applications of the model are described in Section 10.3.

9.11.4 Is the study congruent with the principles of MI?
Section 6.2.3 describes how Study One did not appear to reflect the 'spirit' of MI. Further investigation of motivational theory suggests that self-determination is likely to be an important factor influencing whether or not behaviours become internally regulated (Ryan and Deci, 2000a). It is probable that this is what Miller and Rollnick (2002) are referring to when they describe how the focus of MI is on ‘eliciting the person’s intrinsic motivation to change’ (page 25). In promoting literacy learning opportunities using these principles, one needs to go beyond the provision of affective reading materials and examine the complex factors that impact on reading engagement and motivation (see Section 9.5.1), some of which are described in the expectancy-value model of achievement motivation (see Section 6.4.5).

9.11.5 Suitability of materials
Pupil feedback in Study Three suggested that alternative presentation of the materials might have promoted greater pupil engagement, particularly if the activities looked more interesting and less like worksheets (see Section 9.7). Less reliance on written tasks may also have been an enhancement.

9.11.6 Researcher factors
When the research was introduced by the literacy co-ordinator, it appeared to be more relevant to the boys (see Section 9.7.4). The need for greater collaboration with teachers and support staff was previously discussed in Section 7.7.1.

9.11.7 Logistical issues
Logistical factors appeared to be influential in the response of Group C in particular (see Section 9.7.5). However, these are likely to be significant in
any educational research, particularly when it takes place within a secondary context. In view of subsequent information collected, particularly with regard to the socio-cultural factors, it is likely that the outcomes from Study One would have been similar even if the arrangements had been perfect. The contribution of logistical factors in determining a lack of preferred outcomes from Study One is therefore likely to be small, and possibly insignificant.

9.12 Summary

Chapters Eight and Nine have detailed how additional data was gathered in Studies Two and Three, in order to provide more insight into boys’ views and perceptions about reading, in view of Study One outcomes. Chapter Ten will now discuss how the findings from all three studies are relevant, in terms of understanding boys’ reading engagement and motivation, and how they might inform school-based literacy practices within a secondary context.
CHAPTER TEN: Discussion

10.1 Introduction

This thesis has evolved significantly, from quasi-experimental research, investigating the impact of an affective reading intervention, based around MI theories and principles. What has emerged are findings that have begun to reveal some of the complexities around reading engagement and motivation and explore ways in which school-based literacy practices might encourage Key Stage 3 readers.

The factors that facilitated or inhibited boys’ reading in this research were the result of complex interactions between socio-cultural factors, peer influences, gender perceptions and literacy preferences. These will be examined in greater detail throughout this chapter. Because of the limited scope within this thesis for addressing all of these aspects individually, an overview of some of the factors that impact on boys’ reading and school-based literacy practices is shown in Figure 10.1, overleaf. Themes illustrated in this diagram overarch the key research questions and thus Figure 10.1 is included to provide a frame of reference for this chapter. It will explore outcomes in relation to the key questions presented in Section 9.1, which are as follows:

- How can the materials help us to gain a better understanding of boys’ reading?
- What strategies are useful in helping boys to engage more readily in reading?
- What factors facilitate or inhibit the reading engagement and motivation of boys in this context?
- What issues are important to bear in mind when considering future resources and teaching strategies?
- What are the broader implications for school-based literacy practices and the role of the EP?
Figure 10.1 Boys' reading and school-based literacy practices

Concern about boys' literacy relatively recent phenomenon
Previously concerns about girls underachievement

Nature of boys reading

Concern about boys' literacy relatively recent phenomenon
Previously concerns about girls underachievement

Boys' literacy achievement not reflected at higher educational and vocational levels
Calls for school-based practice to promote other less dominant masculinities

Factors affecting boys' achievement in literacy

Reading in school predominantly narrative

The historical context

Boys tend to use reading for finding out
Boys less likely to connect reading to their own experiences

Boys have less interest in books
Less reading for pleasure, particularly amongst adolescent boys

The political context

Boys' literacy skills not always recognised in the classroom
Impetus to reform child rather than the curriculum

Curriculum does not reflect the evolving socio-cultural context of working class boys
By seven, marked differences between reading abilities and preferences of boys and girls

curry does not reflect home based reading preferences of boys

The educational context

Boys and Girls read for different reasons and have different reading preferences

Boys with lowest socio-economic ranking perform least well
Positioning of boys within social and pedagogical practices
Make role models in the school/community
Middle class boys more accepting of school regulation in anticipation of future rewards

Less privileged boys may use school context to assert their masculinity

Social and economic factors

Boys' reading and school-based literacy practices

Reading activities require self disclosure/introspection
Masculine identity, more self-styled, independent
Masculinities policed by other pupils

Constructs of masculinity
It is acknowledged that these questions have been redefined over the course of the thesis. This discussion will be mindful of previous key questions (detailed in Section 4.1 and Section 7.2). Because of the range of factors influential in relation to each of the key questions, information will first be presented as a mind map. Selected themes will then be discussed more comprehensively.

However, this chapter will first discuss the nature of the thesis and how it changed. In doing so, it will analyse the complexities of motivational theory and research and evaluate the different paradigms explored within this thesis.

Throughout this chapter, outcomes will be discussed in relation to the participating school and its pupils. It is however recognised that many of the issues raised may be equally pertinent to other groups of students (e.g. girls; pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds; older adolescents). This is examined further in Section 10.7.6.

10.2 Methodological implications from the research

10.2.1 Quantitative measures and real world research

Originally, using a positivist approach to evaluate an affective reading dimension was based upon a desire to undertake systematic and objective enquiry about the efficacy of an affective reading intervention, based on MI goals. On reflection, this method would have produced little information about the factors that facilitate and inhibit boys’ reading engagement and motivation within this school. Furthermore, it would have provided minimal insight into the way in which the materials were helpful or unhelpful to the boys and how MI and motivational theory might help EPs to understand the mechanisms that may be influential in promoting reading.

The limitations of this type of research methodology are outlined by Burden (1997) in a paper questioning the use of positivist methods for EPs working in ‘natural settings’. He claims that:
An alternative approach has been needed, providing a grounding in naturalistic research, which recognises the limitations of experimental-control group designs when applied to the real world and focuses instead upon ways of throwing light upon the actions of people in their everyday lives (page 13).

10.2.2 Action research, illuminative evaluation and critical educational research

These methodological approaches seemed to be much more appropriate to the ‘real world’ context of this research. While using an action research paradigm (see Section 7.7.1) enabled the research to be more collaborative, participatory and informative to school staff, illuminative evaluation (see Section 7.7.7) offered a flexible model of research for developing a much deeper understanding of boys’ views and perceptions of reading within this particular context. Finally, critical educational research (see Section 8.6) offered a perspective on how broader social and political contexts influence boys’ reading and attainment. Examples of this would include how the construction of the National Curriculum for literacy (see Section 8.4.3) and gendered perceptions of reading (see Section 9.9.4) impact on the reading motivation and engagement of boys in this school.

This method of enquiry has, however, raised as many questions as it has answered (which may not be of direct benefit to the school). Additionally, some of the issues identified, such as those to do with gender perceptions, or the National Curriculum, may be more difficult to influence, although Hutchinson (2004) challenges EPs to ‘point out when issues are based upon a simplistic view of a complex reality’ (page 13). Conversely, one could argue that had the reading intervention trialled in Study One produced preferred outcomes, the school would have been left apparently useful materials, even if the mechanisms underlying their usefulness were not fully understood.
10.2.3 Researching motivation and MI

The methodological complexities of researching motivation are documented in this thesis (see Sections 4.5.4 and 5.4.8). Furthermore, there are complex interactions between contextual factors that are likely to impact on the reading motivation of individual pupils. The reader is referred to the EVT model of achievement motivation, proposed by Wigfield and Eccles (2000) (see Section 6.4.5), which illustrates this.

The complexity of motivation as a concept leads to many researchers defining it as a weak variable, or something that cannot be measured (Guthrie and Knowles, 2001). Similarly MI is psychologically complex and less defined and researching it may be even more problematic (Burke et al, 2002, 2003). Because motivational research is so intricate, researchers may be discouraged from undertaking studies that aim to define motivational variables in terms of learning. However, Guthrie and Knowles (2001) challenge these notions, suggesting that motivational variables make significant contributions to our ability to account for literacy achievement and that basic models can be presented with more easily measured concepts (such as self-efficacy and interest) as the motivational variable.

The application of motivational research to educational contexts is fairly recent and researchers conclude that while motivational variables contribute ‘to the prediction of some reading phenomena for children at some ages’ (Guthrie and Knowles 2001, page 165), motivational effects have not been as fully examined as the cognitive processes (such as word recognition) that underlie the development of reading skills. Further research in this area is therefore important (Pumfrey 1997; Guthrie and Knowles, 2001).

10.3 Key question one: How can the materials help us to gain a better understanding of boys’ reading?

Findings in relation to this key question are detailed in Figure 10.2, overleaf.
Figure 10.2 Uses of the materials in understanding boys' reading

- How can the materials help us to gain a better understanding of boys reading?

Activities introduced in Knowledge and Concern sessions may be most useful in promoting understanding of reading behaviour.

- Can MI principles be applied to a learning context?

Activities did not necessarily reflect MI spirit.

- Usefulness of MI as a paradigm for thinking about affective reading responses?

Possible link to reading programmes/interventions where there is a motivational component (e.g. AOP).

Positive outcomes:

- Model of Stages of Change

Need for autonomy, evaluation and collaboration

Activities not necessary reflections of MI spirit.

- Boys expressed views about importance of reading

Vehicle for research and for finding out more about boys' views and perceptions of reading.

Opportunity for rich discussion about reading behaviours

- Framework within which pupils can express their views

School-based literacy and learning practices to be cognizant of relevant motivational theories (e.g. GVT, TOT).

Future possibilities for developing rapport, discussion and pupil collaboration, if delivered appropriately

- Some pupils reported sessions to be relevant and helpful

Need for autonomy, evaluation and collaboration

Limited information to suggest a positive response when material used with individual pupils

- Materials used with pupils experiencing a range of literacy learning needs

Proposal for future use of the materials in school.

- Broader socio-cultural and political contexts are likely to be far more influential

Delivery of materials is important and linked to SIOT concept of responsiveness.

Staff training, shared models of thinking, in school development issues

Working collaboratively with teachers and support staff is considering interventions based on affective factors

Issuing of materials is important

- Issues about motivation go beyond reading and impact on all areas of the curriculum

Presentation of materials is important

No empirical evidence for the efficacy of materials or MI principles/techniques in terms of promoting reading engagement and motivation

- Greater emphasis on discussion activities, rather than reading and writing

Logistical issues about including effective interventions in a busy curriculum

- Clearer briefing about the nature and purpose of the tasks

Time constraints in delivering effective reading interventions

- Revision of delivery
10.3.1 MI as a research paradigm
During this project it has been acknowledged that, rather than researching MI as the basis for an affective reading intervention, it has provided a useful paradigm for considering factors that may be significant in promoting reading engagement (see Section 6.5). Theories proposed to support MI include the TTM (which recognises that individuals are at differential levels of readiness to undertake certain behaviours); SDT (that stresses the importance of self regulation and self-determination in human behaviour); and EVT (which acknowledges the complexity of factors that can impact on behavioural engagement and achievement motivation).

The principles of MI, defined as collaboration, evocation and autonomy (Miller and Rollnick, 2002), would seem to be important to an adolescent learning context and reflect the proposition made by Jinks and Lorsbach (2003), that opportunities for self-directed learning are important in terms of enhancing pupil self-efficacy (see Section 2.2.3). Ginsburg et al (2002) propose that the theoretical components of SDT (autonomy, competence and relatedness) parallel these principles. Relatedness (or the extent to which significant others, who are genuinely interested in the individual and their well-being, are seen as being related to the behaviour) appeared to be an important consideration in engaging the pupils in the research (see Section 9.7.4).

While MI defines that responsibility for change should be left with the individual (Miller and Rollnick, 2002), Prochaska et al (1994) note that social and environmental conditions can inhibit or facilitate change. Opportunities have arisen, during the course of this thesis, to consider possible changes at a school or educational policy level that might promote reading engagement. This will be explored further throughout this chapter.

10.3.2 Reading engagement and the Model of Stages of Change
One outcome of using a MI paradigm has been the finding that pupils can use an adapted version of the Model of Stages of Change (McNamara, 1998) to report different (and variable) levels of reading engagement and motivation
both in and out of school (see Section 5.6.2). Parker (1999) and Atkinson (2004) note that information about readiness to change can be helpful when planning appropriate intervention strategies for young people. Similarly, the different views and perceptions held about reading by pupils in this research suggest that sophisticated approaches to supporting reading development are important.

Considering pupil statements in relation to the Stages of Change Questionnaire (Appendix 4(iv)) might be useful when planning interventions that take account of motivational factors (e.g. Barrett et al, 2002; Manchester EPS, 2004). Where schools do not create ‘pleasurable experiences’ particularly for struggling readers, low levels of motivation may be observed and thus a necessary condition for successful learning has not been achieved (Galloway, Rogers, Armstrong and Leo, 1998). Therefore, for these pupils, it would be particularly important to look at improving reader interest, attitude (or sense of liking) and self-efficacy; all of which are factors in promoting reader engagement (Guthrie and Knowles, 2001).

10.3.3 Reflections on the materials
Outcomes from the discussion groups with support staff (see Sections 8.2 and 8.4) and with boys from Groups A and C (see Section 9.7) suggest that Sessions 3 (Knowledge) and 4 (Concern) were most useful in terms of helping the boys to consider and challenge their own patterns of reading behaviour.

The purpose of Sessions 1 and 2 was perhaps more to do with rapport building and it is questionable whether they needed to be included. Possibly they enable self-reflection and allow pupils to engage in greater collaboration and self-disclosure, prior to the later activities that might be more challenging for the very reason that they address reading. They might also provide a metacognitive component, in helping young people to understand more about their own learning approaches.
In the present context, it would appear that the materials are more appropriate for individual or small group, rather than whole class work. Because of limited opportunities for staff to evaluate their usefulness, it is difficult to comment on their potential value. However, it is possible that with appropriate time and resources they could offer an insight into the affective reading responses of individual pupils. This might provide helpful information to supporting adults, if used in conjunction with a reading approach such as the Manchester Literacy Resource File (Manchester EPS, 2004), which incorporates affective targets.

10.3.4 Future use of the materials
The materials will be revised in view of comments made by staff and pupils. Revisions are likely to include:

- Presentation of materials to be enhanced using coloured text/paper to make them more appealing;
- Written content of the materials to be minimised (to tick boxes and multi choice answers);
- All sessions to be more discursive and to facilitate greater interaction/discussion between pupils;
- Materials to be presented as a pack;
- Materials to be given to members of school staff so that they can be used with individual pupils or with small groups of boys.

In designing the activities, consideration was given as to how they could be made as ‘boy friendly’ as possible. However, subsequent reflections, in view of research about how schools might reinforce hegemonic views of masculinity (see Section 10.5.3), raise questions about the suitability of using stereotypical themes and images (e.g. football, technology).

Outcomes from the discussion groups with boys involved in Study One suggest that the presentation and delivery, rather than the content of the materials, discouraged pupil participation. However, there is no evidence for their efficacy in promoting reading engagement and motivation. Furthermore,
they are unlikely to be useful in the absence of a more systemic approach to promoting reading (see Section 9.5.1).

10.3.5 MI and behavioural change
Exploring behavioural change using MI techniques and strategies has tended to focus on pupil factors (see Section 2.4). This research challenges whether an exploration of the broader socio-cultural and educational factors that can influence motivation to change should be more integral to MI within behavioural assessment and intervention.

10.4 Key question two: What strategies are useful in helping boys to engage more readily in reading?

The main themes emerging in relation to this key question are summarised in Figure 10.3 overleaf.

10.4.1 Reading resources
The desire amongst pupils to access more stimulating reading resources is a common theme emerging from discussions with pupils and staff. This was the most significant curriculum development suggestion proposed by pupils who took part in Project Three, completed for this doctorate (Atkinson, submitted), outcomes of which provided the rationale for this research (see Section 1.1). It echoes a call for a wider range of reading materials to be made available to adolescents (Moore et al, 1999; Alvermann, 2002).

This argument can be broken down into two strands. The first concerns the need for books that are interesting and accessible (Guthrie and Knowles, 2001; DfES 2003c) and ‘boy-friendly’ (Kent County Council, 2004). This thesis has raised questions about the extent to which texts available in school and studied in the curriculum reflect the socio-cultural context of the boys in this school.
Figure 10.3 Strategies useful in promoting reading engagement

- Suggestion made by pupils led to a proposed pilot study of reading newspapers in registration next term
- Reading resources
  - Newspapers
  - Comix
  - Magazines
  - Cartoons
- Reading a range of materials
  - Books about cars, war, history, ghosts, horror, football, guns and fighting
  - Short stories
  - Picture books
  - Non-fiction texts
- Opportunities for self-directed learning
  - Pupil input into school reading resources
  - Pupil involvement in school reading choices
- Reading initiatives
  - Book weeks
  - Family literacy initiatives
- What strategies are useful in helping boys to engage more readily in reading?
  - Recognition of reading preferences and styles
  - Affective reading interventions
    - Adults reading more complex texts to pupils
    - Comparing reading genres, such as books and films
  - Organisational issues
    - Supportive reading context
      - Creating positive reading environments
      - Structuring of pupils
      - Adult support
    - Shared reading experiences (such as talking parts)
      - Focus on interest and engagement
      - Peer collaboration
  - Curriculum delivery
    - Curriculum content
The focus for secondary school literacy practices continues to be the narrative (Millard, 1997a; Hall and Coles, 2001), whereas research highlights a preference amongst many boys for non-fiction materials (Barrs 1993; Millard 1997a; Hall and Coles, 1999). However, government policy remains centred on the value of promoting fiction reading amongst boys. *Using the National Healthy Schools Standard to Raise Boys’ Achievement* (DfES, 2003c) stresses that:

> Boys need to read to succeed. In particular, they need to read fiction where they will develop their abilities to concentrate and reflect (page 27).

Hall and Coles (2001) note however:

> ...literacy is not just about being able to read and write fiction. School definitions of literacy have been slow to change and slow to acknowledge the changing nature of literacy in society (page 219).

Book preferences identified by staff and pupils in this thesis are included in Figure 10.3 (see previous page). In some cases these genres may not be considered suitable reading materials for schools. In replicating an earlier study into the reading preferences of 12-13 year olds boys and girls, Benton (1995) found the demise of classic fiction, in favour of American teenage horror novels to be ‘a possible cause for concern’ (page 99). Worthy et al (1999) noted that the reading preferences of middle school pupils changed regularly, but that there is an ever-widening gap between student reading preferences and materials that schools provide and recommend. They posit that:

> ...perhaps the answer to motivating students to read is as simple as encouraging them to follow their interests (page 24).

The second strand of the argument relates to the range of reading resources available in school and to what extent they represent contemporary reading
practices for adolescent boys (Moore et al, 1999; Hall and Coles, 2001; Alvermann, 2002). Evidence from this study and from academic literature suggests the continuing preponderance of books as the main curriculum materials (Millard, 1997a; Hall and Coles, 2001; Maynard 2002). However, pupils in this research identified a whole range of other resources that helped them engage in reading at home, but which may not be readily available in school. Moore et al (1999) stress the importance of providing adolescents with a range of reading resources, while Hall and Coles (2001) propose that school systems may be failing to capitalise on the fact that outside school popular literacies might be serving boys very well (e.g. the technological change in information supply). This suggests that the continuing reliance on books to promote boys’ reading engagement (DfES, 2003c) should perhaps be reconsidered.

The range of resources available to pupils in school is part of a wider debate about the curriculum and school-based literacy practices. This will be considered further in Section 10.6. The introduction of the newspaper pilot study (see Section 9.4.1) should provide further information about how providing pupils with a more extensive range of reading materials might help to promote reading engagement.

10.4.2 Self-directed learning
The principles of self-directed learning are grounded in SDT (Guthrie and Knowles, 2001). Motivational research has shown that feelings and beliefs about interest and value lead to more engagement and learning (Linnenbrink and Pintrich, 2003) and are central to achieving reading progress (Alvermann, 2002; Linnenbrink and Pintrich, 2003). It is important for older readers, in particular, to take responsibility for the development of their reading progress. Where conditions for this are not met (e.g. amongst Precontemplative readers in Study One (see Section 5.6.2)) it may be difficult for adults in school to improve pupil reading engagement and motivation.

Opportunities for self-directed learning have also been found to enhance pupil self-efficacy (Jinks and Lorsbach, 2003). In this context, these might be
most successful when they incorporate themes identified by pupils in this research regarding pupil autonomy: namely enjoyment, choice and pupil input into school reading resources and reading choices. Just as autonomy, evocation, collaboration and relatedness are important concepts in creating conditions for change amongst people with ‘problem’ behaviours (Ryan and Deci, 2000a; Ginsberg et al, 2002; Bellg, 2003), this research suggests that establishing school-based literacy practices, that are mindful of these components, is also important.

10.4.3 Reading initiatives
A positive feature of the school-based literacy practices in this context was the range of initiatives that had been offered to pupils and parents/carers, which focused specifically on promoting reading engagement and motivation. These included:

- A Year 6/7 transition project centred around reading;
- Involving parents/carers in reading projects;
- A Reading Challenge Group, aimed at promoting reading engagement and motivation amongst Year 7 pupils, as part of the school’s Wave 2 provision.

Additionally the school proposed a newspaper pilot, as a direct outcome of this research (see Section 9.4.1).

The school had begun to use the Manchester Literacy Resource File (Manchester EPS, 2004) as a way of assessing the specific needs of boys with literacy learning difficulties, which includes a motivational component. Management staff within the Learning Support Department were well aware of the need for the affective aspects of reading development to be considered. Although comparisons were not made with other schools, the fact that affective and motivational aspects of reading have not traditionally had a high profile (McKenna 1994; Pumfrey, 1997) suggests that the school in this thesis is demonstrating innovative and creative practice. It is not clear
however, to what extent this extends beyond the Learning Support and English Departments, to other curriculum areas. This is explored further in Section 10.6.2.

10.4.4 Other strategies

Other strategies useful in developing boys' reading engagement and motivation are considered in key question four (Section 10.6) which discusses teaching strategies and resources.

10.5 Key question three: What factors facilitate and inhibit the reading engagement and motivation of boys in this context?

Some of the factors that facilitate or inhibit reading engagement and motivation amongst boys in this particular context are shown in Figure 10.4 (overleaf). Their potential impact has been explored previously and therefore distinctions are not made in the diagram between potentially positive or negative features.

10.5.1 Socio-cultural factors

Socio-cultural factors and peer interactions appeared to have a significant impact on the boys’ responses in Study One (see Section 5.4.8). More importantly, discussions with staff and pupils suggest that they also influence pupil participation in and feelings about school-based literacy practices (see Sections 8.4.4 and 9.9.1).

The impact of socio-cultural factors on boys' achievement has been recognised at a governmental level. In 1998, the then schools minister, Stephen Byers warned, “We must challenge the laddish anti-learning culture which has developed and we simply can not accept, with a shrug of the shoulders that boys will be boys” (quoted by Woodward, 2000). Sukhnandan (2000) too highlights attention given in academic literature to the negative impact of male subcultures.
Figure 10.4 Factors that may facilitate or inhibit reading engagement and motivation

- What factors facilitate and inhibit the reading engagement and motivation of boys in this context?

- Factors related to the sessions
  - Reliance on written/worksheets activities in considering effective responses
  - Opportunities needed to discuss and share reading experiences in a safe context
  - Within a group context, boys report different levels of reading motivation
  - Variable pupil interest in materials
  - Reading viewed as something that happens in school
  - Pupils find it difficult to see links between home and school-based literacy practices
  - Reading role models
  - Parent/carer support
  - Views, beliefs and values of parents/carers in relation to reading
  - Levels of literacy amongst parents/carers
  - Social disadvantage - link with access to purchasing resources

- Classroom dynamics
  - Relating masculinities
    - Need for peer approval/rejection
    - Fear of peer rejection/disapproval
    - Group structure - inter-member relationships, group norms, group roles and the status hierarchy within the group
    - Levels of maturity, independence and self-reliance with class groups
    - Social influence of individual pupils
    - Predominance of books as curriculum resources, especially "classic" texts
    - Exploring and comparing different genres (e.g., film texts)
    - Relevance of school-based literacy practices to pupils' values and beliefs (Relativeness)
    - Boys preferred reading materials not considered to be suitable reading matter for school
    - National Curriculum not reflecting the socio-cultural context of pupils

- Resources
  - Family literacy schemes
  - High interest reading materials (e.g., The Guinness Book of Records)
  - Perceptions about resources available in the school library
  - Pupils discouraged by long texts
  - Reading perceived to be an unpleasant/negative activity
  - Additional learning/behavioural/social communication needs
  - Pupils' feelings of embarrassment or awkwardness about reading failure

- Pupil factors
  - Literacy difficulties

- Teaching and the curriculum
  - Conflicts between projected self-image and engagement in literacy learning
  - Compelling social pressures
  - Gendered perceptions of reading
  - Logistical factors (e.g., time of session, competing interests)
  - Teacher's leadership style and behaviour
  - Opportunities to discuss reading motivation individually with an adult
  - Supportive group learning environment
  - Adult support
  - Supportive educational context
  - Staff changes
During the research, socio-cultural factors that appeared to impact upon boys’ reading engagement and motivation included:

- Gendered perceptions about reading
- Policing of masculinities
- Need for peer approval/status
- Social factors in underachievement
- Socio-economic disadvantage
- Reading aspirations

These will each now be discussed in turn.

**10.5.2 Gendered perceptions about reading**
Boys interviewed during this research offered stereotypical views of what boys and girls read (see Section 9.9.3). To what extent these perceptions are influenced by being educated in a single sex context, where boys do not see girls reading on a regular basis, is unclear. Previous research suggests that boys may be less willing than girls to read materials that they see as being appropriate for the opposite gender (Barrs, 1993; Maynard, 2002; DfES, 2005).

Following their evaluations of Australian research, Alloway and Gilbert (1997) speculate that school-based literacy has come to be regarded as ‘feminised practice’ noting that, ‘*The practices that are naturalised in the literacy classroom are often practices that boys may experience as incompatible with their understandings of a masculine identity*’ (page 55). Furthermore Alloway and Gilbert (1997) propose that, while boys affiliating themselves with hegemonic standards of masculinity may prefer to see themselves as, ‘*more maverick, self-styled and independent*’ (page 56), school literacy practices tend to require self-disclosure, introspection, empathic response and personalised and creative expression. They add:
The discourses of moral self-regulation offered through children’s literature… and the classroom practices that support these discourses, are often in marked contrast to the ideologies and practices on offer in boys’ culture. They sit far more comfortably with social constructions of the feminine than the masculine, and are more compatible with a feminine rather than a masculine subject (page 55).

More generally, Whitehead (2003) reports that previous research has suggested working-class male pupils regard school success as effeminate, while Martino, Lingard and Mills (2004) note that:

Attention needs to be directed to raising awareness of how the social construction of masculinities influences the social relations and practices of some boys in significant ways to actively cultivate an anti-school attitude (page 451).

Alloway and Gilbert (1997) suggest that these factors may be more significant amongst less privileged boys who may use the school context to establish their masculinity (see also Section 10.5.4), while boys from more privileged backgrounds may be more accepting of school practices because they see these as ultimately linked to post school professional and career awards. However, Whitehead (2003) offers empirical research to suggest that while social class is a powerful predictor of performance amongst boys, intrinsic motivation is a more significant factor in achievement than extrinsic motivation.

10.5.3 Policing of masculinities

If (as suggested in Section 10.5.2) perceptions exist about what constitutes appropriate masculinities, there is evidence from observations made during the intervention and from discussions with staff and pupils that these are policed within this particular school (see Sections 5.4.8, 8.3.2 and 8.4.4). Sometimes this was through use of what might be termed ‘…abuse that is used to discriminate against pupils on the grounds of ability or attitude to
work, e.g. ‘swot’, ‘bof’ or ‘geek’ (DfES, 2003c, page 33), at other times, through the use of the term ‘gay’ (as discussed in Section 8.4.4).

In an ethnographic study of adolescent masculinities in school, Martino (1999) noted that:

> What was also highlighted… was the role of homophobia in the construction and maintenance of dominant versions of masculinity. It appeared that homophobia was a mechanism or strategy… for policing and regulating masculinity for these boys (page 257).

Concerns about the ways in which school cultures reinforce hegemonic masculinities are detailed in academic literature (Mac an Ghaill, 1994; Raphel Reed, 1999; Martino, 1999; Martino et al 2004). Although a fuller investigation of these issues is not possible within the limits of this thesis, these are important considerations for policymakers deliberating how to facilitate supportive learning cultures for all boys. Furthermore it suggests that greater account needs to be taken of homophobic and sexual bullying. This may be an important development area for schools generally (Adams, Cox and Dunstan, 2004).

### 10.5.4 Need for peer approval/status

Boys’ self-perceptions, within their socio-cultural context, were identified as being very important in this research (see Section 8.3.3). During adolescence, a young person develops an increasing ability to perceive themselves from the point of view of others. Peer perceptions become increasingly important (Coleman and Hendry, 1999) and adolescents’ views about achievement and motivation are greatly influenced by their peers (Ryan, 2001). The need for peer approval and status may therefore be particularly important to boys in this research.

Jackson (2002) proposes that ‘laddish behaviours’ (see Section 10.5.2) may act as a self-protection strategy to protect self-worth and guard against fear of failure, but that such behaviours may reinforce hegemonic masculinities.
Woodward (2000) quotes the then Home Office minister David Blunkett as saying:

“The [boys’] underachievement is linked to a laddish culture which in many areas has grown out of deprivation and a lack of self-confidence and opportunity” (page 1).

Jackson (2002) notes that these types of comment position ‘laddishness’ and ‘underachievement’ as a working class phenomenon, whereas by contrast Francis (1999, cited by Jackson, 2002) provides some evidence to suggest that ‘laddish’ behaviour spans social class and ethnic groups. Archer and Yamashita (2003) propose that working-class, inner city and certain minority ethnic young men have been positioned as high profile ‘problems’ within recent social and educational policy discussions.

### 10.5.5 Social factors in underachievement

David Blunkett’s comments suggest that factors relating to boys and their communities contribute to their underachievement. Alloway and Gilbert (1997) suggest that when identifiable groups of children (e.g. boys, working class children) present as underachievers, then remediation may not be the preferred response. They propose moving away from a model of practice that pathologises children and their families and looking instead at how social and pedagogical practices contribute to this underachievement. Alloway and Gilbert (1997) note that there is often an impetus to reform the child rather than the system, while pedagogical practices within schools can be influential in determining academic progress for different groups of pupils.

Hutchinson (2004) identifies that a number of factors that contribute to boys’ underachievement at an individual, group, class, school, family and wider community level. Furthermore he claims that:

*What can be seen here is the interaction between gender, teachers’ attitudes and socio-economic status leading to a disadvantage for boys and girls from the earliest stages* (page 8).
Research suggests that socio-economic status (SES) influences both the perceptions and expectations teachers have about boys (Childs and McKay, 2001) and their literacy learning experiences compared to those of other children (Duffield, 1998).

Cohen et al (2000) highlight the importance of critical educational research as an emancipatory model for challenging the inequalities that arise from the relationships between schools and society (see Sections 8.6 and 10.2.2).

10.5.6 Socio-economic disadvantage
The school in this thesis was within an area of high socio-economic disadvantage (see Section 4.1.1). This section briefly examines how school-based literacy practices might disadvantage working class boys. This is acknowledged to be a complex issue and the reader is directed to literature that examines it more thoroughly (Alloway and Gilbert, 1997; Maynard, 2002; Whitehead, 2003; Hutchinson, 2004). This thesis will instead focus on the impact of socio-economic disadvantage within the context of this particular school.

Duffield (1998) states that:

*The association between social deprivation and low attainment is pervasive, persistent and well known, but the factors underlying it are not clear* (page 3).

A minimal insight into the extent to which factors related to SES impact on literacy learning within this particular school context is offered by this research. These might include:

- The literacy curriculum appears not to reflect the socio-cultural context of boys of low SES (Section 8.4.3);
• Boys of low SES may be particularly concerned about self-image (Section 8.3.3 and 10.5.4);
• Boys of low SES may buy fewer books (Section 8.4.2);
• Families of low SES may place less emphasis on reading books and home reading choices may be less reflective of school-based literacy practices (Section 8.4.2).

The boys in this research do not represent a homogeneous group and discussions with support staff suggest that some of the issues described appear to be particularly significant to pupils with literacy learning needs. All of these themes need further exploration and are speculative at this stage. They have emerged within this particular context and may not be typical of a broader picture. However, all have implications for reading engagement and motivation at home and at school.

One enhancement, in terms of making the curriculum more relevant, may be for schools to develop localised strategies, based on an evolving understanding amongst teachers of the socio-cultural contexts of the pupils they teach (Hall and Coles, 2001). This has implications in terms of broader educational policy, which will be discussed in Section 10.7.5.

10.5.7 Reading aspirations
There was evidence from this research that pupils with reading difficulties might have low reading aspirations and not perceive reading as an important life skill (see Section 8.4.2). Robeck and Wallace (1992) note that students who are unsuccessful at reading, over a period of time, are likely to learn to avoid reading and may select vocations for which reading is not required. It is possible that these readers are ‘Precontemplative,’ and may not see their reading difficulties as a problem. It may therefore be particularly difficult to engage and motivate this group of pupils. These behaviours may characterise a ‘Matthew effect,’ (as described by Stanovich (1986), see Section 2.2.4). If pupils are valuing reading less, they are likely to spend less time on it and, without practice, may not acquire and develop reading skills.
Staff and pupils reported that the activity *Can Reading More Make a Difference?* (see Appendix 3 (iv)) helped promote discussion about the importance of reading in adult life. However, raising pupil concern about reading needs to be linked to appropriate resources, support and teaching strategies, to enable reading development. Literacy materials related to vocational ambitions (e.g. application forms, manuals, office paperwork) or adult life experiences (e.g. managing finances, purchasing goods, booking a holiday) might be useful in motivating pupils and making literacy skills more relevant to adult life.

10.6 Key question four: What issues are important to bear in mind when considering future resources and teaching strategies?

Figure 10.5 (overleaf) presents a range of issues that might inform future resources and teaching strategies. There is an overlap with themes discussed in Section 10.4, which included strategies to help promote boys’ reading engagement. This section will look more specifically at aspects of practice, in terms of teaching strategies and whole-school procedures, which might be important in promoting reading engagement and motivation.

10.6.1 Including pupils with literacy learning difficulties

Proactive strategies for promoting reading motivation and engagement may be particularly important for pupils with literacy learning difficulties. Outcomes from Project Three completed for this doctorate (Atkinson, submitted) indicated that pupils with the lowest reading attainment reported reading less than more proficient readers and had lower reading self-perceptions and aspirations. During this research, staff and pupils expressed concern about curriculum access for those with additional literacy learning needs and the subsequent impact on their self-efficacy and curriculum participation (see Sections 8.2.5 and 9.4.3).
Figure 10.5 Issues that might inform resources and teaching strategies

Understanding the Impact of hegemonic masculinities
- Challenge homophobic comments made in relation to learning (e.g., zero tolerance)
- Broader understanding of other masculinities
- Policing of masculinities

Pupil characteristics
- Pupil reading aspirations
- Value/significance given to reading mastery

Understanding gender issues

Inclusive practices
- Curriculum access for all pupils
- Need for supportive reading context
- Promoting collaboration and peer support
- Inclusive practice versus setting
- Difficulties experienced by pupils in accessing the curriculum
- Are affective reading interventions more important for pupils with reading difficulties?

Staff development issues
- Developing pupil engagement and motivation
- Implications extended to all areas of school practice (not just English)
- Implications for PSHE/citizenship
- Promoting literacy skills in all curriculum subjects
- Dealing explicitly with gender issues (e.g., via PSHE curriculum)
- Importance of creating a supportive reading context

Pupil involvement and autonomy

Resources
- Range of resources available across the curriculum
- Presenting a range of accessible and high interest resources
- Presentation of reading materials - visual/high impact

Developing pupil autonomy
- Encouraging pupil participation in selecting resources and reading materials

Affective factors that impact on curriculum access (e.g., fear of failure, self-consciousness)
- Awareness of factors that facilitate and inhibit literacy engagement
- Enhanced understanding of motivational models and theories
- Understanding of home literacy practices and how these may be incorporated into the curriculum
- Exploring and comparing different genres (e.g., film/text)
- Reading aloud more complex texts that pupils may find challenging
- Designated opportunities for reading chosen materials
- Promoting self-efficacy

What issues are important to understand when considering future resources and teaching strategies?
One of the strategies that seems to be well received by pupils experiencing some degree of literacy difficulty (i.e. accessing Wave 2 or 3 provision) was the opportunity to read in small groups with adults, with boys of similar reading ability. Positive views about this type of provision are not inconsistent with previous research. For example, Humphrey (2001) noted that dyslexic children taught in SpLD units developed more positive self-concepts and self-esteem than pupils with similar literacy learning needs attending mainstream schools.

Although the creation of safe and positive reading environments appears to promote reading engagement and motivation, questions might be asked about resourcing (in terms of staff time) and whether or not this denotes inclusive practice (see Section 9.4.3). Significantly, in relation to supporting pupils with literacy learning difficulties, both staff and pupils presented solutions that involved adult additionality or some type of segregated teaching (see Sections 8.2.4, 8.4.6 and 9.4.3).

Booth and Ainscow (2000) and Humphrey (2001) challenge schools to provide supportive and inclusive classroom cultures, particularly for pupils with additional needs. Within the scope of this thesis, there has not been opportunity to consider the range of teaching and learning approaches, in this school, that are effective in motivating readers and enabling curriculum participation. However, positive initiatives may be required to promote peer collaboration, enhance staff response to student diversity and develop an understanding of difference (Booth and Ainscow, 2000). Until this time, the need to offer children with additional literacy learning needs supportive and safe provision, continues to be an important feature of improving their affective responses to reading.

10.6.2 Promoting literacy across the curriculum
Section 10.4.3 detailed initiatives developed within the Learning Support Department for promoting reading engagement and motivation. In discussions with pupils and staff, lessons other than English were rarely
described as a context for reading. In secondary schools, teachers tend see
their responsibility as imparting subject knowledge, rather than teaching
pupils to read and write (Moore et al, 1999). However, it is important that
strategies to develop reading engagement and motivation are delivered
across the curriculum and not restricted to English lessons.

Millard (1997b) advocates that developing boys’ reading in subjects other
than English needs greater attention ‘with an emphasis on materials other
than fiction, which provide meaningful contexts for sharing information’ (page
instruction on reading comprehension and study strategies in all subjects.

10.6.3 Reflecting home-based reading preferences
Outcomes from discussions with support staff and pupils support previous
research that boys tend to have reading preferences that may not reflect
school-based literacy practices (Osmot and Davies, 1987; Millard, 1997a,
1997b; Maynard, 2002) (see Sections 8.4.2, 9.4.1 and 10.4.1).

Although the importance of home school literacy links is well documented
(Wolfendale and Topping, 1996; International Reading Association, 2002)
often these tend to be defined in school terms (Hall and Coles, 2001). One
way of engaging and motivating readers may be for schools to offer greater
acknowledgement of less formal literacy practices accessed in everyday life.
In this research, pupils in the reading challenge group did not immediately
identify themselves as readers within their home contexts, because the
things they reported reading out of school are often unrecognised by official
school curricula (see Section 9.4.1). Hall and Coles (2001) suggest that
home reading experiences tend to be discounted by schools and pupils alike.

Millard (1997b) summarises research findings suggesting that boys’ home
literacy preferences (e.g. computer and hobby magazines; comic strip books)
were discouraged or not allowed during lesson time. Hall and Coles (2001)
ote note that outside school, many boys are able to demonstrate motivation and
competence in reading and suggest that school literacy practices should
'complement and enhance home and community literacy practices. They argue that popular or 'vernacular' reading cultures, that reflect children’s socio-cultural contexts, should be recognised and respected in school and advocate a developmental model of literacy that puts the learner at the centre. They propose that this should be responsive to and recognisant of a contemporary understanding of what being 'literate' means.

The need for reflecting and validating the literacy skills pupils bring into school was also an important issue arising from the Project Three completed for this doctorate (Atkinson, submitted, see Section 1.1).

10.6.4 Boys’ achievement and the PHSE curriculum

Section 10.5 detailed some of the socio-cultural factors that can inhibit boys’ reading engagement and motivation. The DfES guidance Using the National Healthy School Standard to Raise Boys’ Achievement (DfES, 2003c) advocates using Healthy Schools activities to promote positive learning cultures. Furthermore it advises that PHSE programmes should deal explicitly ‘with gender, including the unacceptability of gender stereotyping’ (page, 21) and should ‘Include work on the unacceptability of abuse that is used to discriminate against pupils on the grounds of ability or attitude to work’ (page 33).

These sentiments are consistent with a call from Martino (1999) that ‘...it is imperative for educators to create spaces for discussing the impact and effects of hegemonic masculinities in school’ (page 259). The way in which masculinities are policed in this school appears to be problematic and likely to impact on the reading engagement and motivation of some boys (see Sections 5.4.8, 8.3.2 and 8.4.4). During this thesis, these findings were not discussed with boys from Groups A and C (see Section 9.5.3) in case they further reinforced hegemonic views about masculinity and boys’ behaviour. However, explicit, structured discussions within the framework of the PHSE curriculum may provide opportunities to explore and challenge these perceptions.
10.6.5 Boys’ literacy and school improvement
In the context of boys’ general attainment, the DfES (2003c) has recognised the importance of school development in addressing boys’ achievement and suggests ten areas for school development focus, including policy development; curriculum planning; teaching and learning; school culture; pupil participation; staff development and parent/carer involvement. School development opportunities arising from this research (which are more specific to reading engagement and motivation) would include promoting greater awareness of the affective and socio-cultural factors that impact on curriculum access, an understanding of motivational models and theories and a greater understanding of home literacy practices and how these can be incorporated into the curriculum.

10.7 Key question five: What are the broader implications for school-based literacy practice and the role of the EP?
A range of issues is outlined in Figure 10.6 (overleaf). Further consideration will now be given to specific items.

10.7.1 Motivation, boys, reading and the wider educational context
As described in Section 10.6.4, the DfES (2003c) recognises the importance of whole school development in addressing boys’ achievement. Furthermore, specific strategies for promoting reading are offered, including boy-friendly book displays (‘avoiding stereotyping and incorporating books from a wide range of genres and cultures’, page 28); reading challenges; posters and bookmarks showing men as readers; and book reviews by male teachers and members of the community. Ideas suggested in this and other boys’ literacy initiatives (e.g. Kent County Council, 2004; Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA), 2004) are worthy, practical and challenging at a school development level.
Figure 10.6 Broader implications for school-based literacy practice and the role of the EP

- What are the broader implications for school-based literacy practice and the role of the EP?

- High schools as systems
  - Future of motivational research
  - Understanding of adolescent development
  -Motivational components to reading difficulties
  - Problem solving models
  - Contributing to the wider debate about addressing literacy needs of boys and other pupil groups

- Educational policy
  - Needs of other pupil groups
    - The needs of other groups of pupils (e.g., girls, pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds)
    - Boys' progress should not be at the expense of girls
    - Addressing the needs of Key Stage 3 readers in general
    - Needs to reflect socio-cultural contexts of pupils from a diverse range of backgrounds

- Strategies for promoting boys' literacy
  - Schools and the social construction of gender
  - Schools reinforce gender roles
  - Schools promote hegemonic masculinities
  - Can other masculinities be recognized?
  - Staff development issues
  - Relationship to classroom practice

- Understanding the broader social and political context
  - A broader definition of inclusion
  - The National Curriculum
  - Pedagogical practices in high school
  - Reforming the system rather than the child

- Gendered practice in school
  - Contemporary thinking about what it means to be literate
  - Reflecting the socio-cultural context of adolescents
  - Consultation with school staff and pupils

Focus on organizational development
- Initiatives currently centered on books and fiction
- Single sex lessons
- Male role models
- Boy-friendly curricula
- Government directives (e.g., Healthy Schools programmes)
- Recognizing boys' home-based reading preferences and schools

- Applying psychology
- EPs working at a systems level
- EPs applying psychological theory to learning situations
- EPs contributing to curriculum development
- Action research
- Supporting staff development
It should be noted however, that they place little emphasis on the extent to which the broader political and social context contributes to boys’ literacy underachievement (see Section 10.5.5). Other than noting that addressing the educational needs of boys and girls is, ‘a professional issue about which teachers are divided’ and ‘reflects divisions within the literature and the way boys’ schooling in particular has been presented in the media’ (page 2), the DfES publication Using the National Healthy School Standard to Raise Boys’ Achievement (DfES, 2003c) fails to inform the reader about the competing issues. Hall and Coles (2001) suggest that boys’ literacy initiatives tend to address whole-school level improvement strategies, with a focus on school context and teacher behaviours, but do not acknowledge the central importance of pupils’ cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.

The next two sections will focus on broader curriculum and pedagogical issues and how these might impact on boys’ reading engagement and motivation.

10.7.2 Single sex teaching, boy friendly curricula and male role models

Recently there have been calls from across the political spectrum for single sex classes (Woodward 2000; Millibrand, 2004) and single sex schools (Hinsliff and Temko, 2005) to address issues of boys’ achievement and behaviour. Findings detailed (Daly and Defty, 2004; DfES, 2005) seem to indicate that girls are likely to be the greatest beneficiaries of such initiatives, although extensive investigation into a government data set suggested that lower attaining boys (although not average or high attaining boys) performed better in single sex establishments (Speilhofer et al, 2002). Outcomes of this thesis parallel many of the issues facing boys educated in co-educational establishments (Millard, 1997b; Duncan, 1999; Martino, 1999; Martino et al, 2004), although it is not possible to say whether these might be more or less marked than in a co-educational context.

Following research in an Australian high school, Martino et al (2004) raised questions about its implementation of a ‘boy friendly’ curriculum. They
cautioned that such initiatives might reinforce hegemonic constructions of masculinity and be less cognisant of issues of diversity (including the needs of pupils who were indigenous, from different cultural backgrounds or gay). Instead, Martino et al (2004) suggested that more sophisticated and inclusive definitions of masculinity are required. They warned against the implementation of such a curriculum, in the absence of greater understanding amongst teachers and policy makers about the social construction of gender, and how it may lead to narrow definitions of masculinity, within an educational context.

Another popular suggestion has been to increase the number of male teachers in schools (Morris, 1998; DfES, 2005). Miller (1996, cited by Maynard 2002) expresses concern that the prevalence of young female teachers impacts upon boys’ developing sense of masculinity. Maynard (2002) notes how concerns have centred particularly on boys of lone parents, who do not have a male presence in their lives. However, critics have suggested that this can reinforce sex roles, assume that males present specific (hegemonic) forms of masculinity and belie a deeper discussion about the social construction of gender within schools (Raphel Reed, 1999; Skelton 2002; Mills 2003).

10.7.3 Reforming individuals or pedagogical practices?
Alloway and Gilbert (1997) note that often the impetus is on reforming the child rather than the system, whereas pedagogical practices within schools can be influential in determining academic progress for different groups of pupils. Factors cited for boys’ literacy underachievement by the CCEA in Northern Ireland (CCEA, 2004) are predominantly to do with boy characteristics (e.g. attitudes, genetic influences, puberty) rather than school-based literacy practices. More significantly, reasons given in response to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) on the DfES Gender and Achievement website (DfES, 2005) for boys’ underachievement in schools (included as Appendix 10), make no reference to the potential contribution of school-based literacy practices. Instead, the focus seems to be the need to reform boys, the impetus being performance targets in relation to attainment.
Daniels, Creese, Hey, Leonard and Smith (2001) offer some insight into how pedagogical practices can contribute to boys’ underachievement in primary schools. They suggest boys may be ‘encultured’ into a view that they should learn alone or under the guidance of a teacher, whereas girls are more likely to seek and offer help to each other. Boys are therefore less likely than girls to engage in peer dialogue about learning, a view supported by Millard (1997b).

From their ethnographic study, Daniels et al (2001) concluded that the pedagogy of teachers and their classroom cultures create radically different classrooms, with contrasting communicative practices. Although it is not evident from the paper how their deductions were made, reported outcomes suggested that classroom practice, where the focus is on learning rather than the learners, is associated with low levels of gender difference.

In conclusion, Daniels et al (2001) warn against ‘government interventionist agendas and their over-reliance on male role models and whole class teaching’ (page 116). They speculate that this may have implications for maintaining forms of masculinity that need to be challenged (e.g. competition rather than collaboration).

10.7.4 The literacy curriculum
The author’s understanding of the current National Curriculum and how it influences school-based literacy practices in secondary schools is limited to discussions with staff and pupils within the course of EP practice. Therefore it would be difficult to provide an informed perspective about its suitability and application within this particular context. However, school staff raised concerns about the extent to which it engaged and interested the boys and reflected their socio-cultural context (see Section 8.4.3).

Further research would be helpful in clarifying to what extent curriculum texts and school literacy practices reflect today’s society. One concern is that boys’ preferred reading choices may not necessarily be reflected in the
curriculum. Alloway and Gilbert (1997) note that ‘*Surfing the net, reading video screens and engaging with computers all demand levels of literacy competence that do not figure highly in school measurements of literacy*’ (page 54). There would seem to be a need for a more fluid definition of what it means to be literate (Hall and Coles, 2001) that reflects the demands of ‘...*living in an information age that changes pace rapidly and shows no signs of slowing*’ (Alvermann, 2002, page 189).

At a national level, it is important for EPs to contribute to thinking about a literacy curriculum which reflects the specialist needs of adolescents and considers how the specific needs of particular groups of pupils (such as boys, older adolescents and pupils with reading difficulties) may be better incorporated into curriculum delivery.

**10.7.5 Consulting with pupils and staff**

One suggestion for curriculum development was that educational policymakers might seek greater consultation with schools, particularly those in areas that might not reflect the socio-cultural backgrounds of the policymakers themselves (see Section 8.4.3). Although the logistical difficulties with this are recognised, it might be that school resources and practices need to be more reflective of contemporary society and cognisant of issues related to social and ethnic diversity. Additionally, perhaps there could be more flexibility within the literacy curriculum to allow schools or localities to tailor the curriculum to the interests and aspirations of their pupils.

In the United States, the International Reading Association has challenged policymakers to engage in more sophisticated thinking about the specific literacy needs of adolescents (International Reading Association, 2001). This includes a call for more interesting and diverse reading materials in schools and classrooms, and for staff development to enable all school personnel to integrate reading instruction across curriculum areas and school settings.
An even bolder step might be to offer the pupils a voice. The government green paper *Every Child Matters* (DfES, 2003b) was seminal in the extent to which it consulted with children and young people and provided them with accessible feedback (DfES, 2003d). However, possibilities for pupil input into the curriculum would appear to be limited to PHSE and Citizenship (DfES, 2003c). Wider government research into the learning preferences of groups vulnerable to literacy underachievement such as boys, children from certain minority ethnic backgrounds and pupils with learning difficulties may help to inform the development of inclusive practices.

### 10.7.6 Promoting reading engagement amongst other pupil groups

While the focus for this thesis has been boys’ literacy, there is no suggestion that literacy practices for adolescent girls should not attract the same levels of attention. Indeed, many of the issues raised in this research are equally pertinent to girls.

Concerns have been expressed, particularly within feminist literature, that the development of pedagogical practices to reflect boys’ learning preferences would be at the expense of recent progress made by girls (Raphel Reed, 1999; Peyton Young and Brozo, 2001; Skelton, 2002; Mills, 2003). Alloway and Gilbert (1997) however, caution against a ‘*competing victims syndrome*’. Instead they advocate that:

> ...boys’ gains in literacy should not be promoted at the expense of girls’ gains; efforts to enfranchise the boys should not disenfranchise the girls. Rather than developing programmes that are ‘good for girls’ or ‘good for boys’, we instead need to focus on a critique of school literacy practices and the assumptions upon which they rely, and to widen our understanding of literacy and literate practices (page 57).

Gillborn and Mirza (2000, cited by Maynard, 2002) recognise the impact of gender and social class on attainment, but maintain that neither of these features override the influence of ethnic inequality, particularly in relation to African Caribbean, Pakistani and Bangladeshi pupils. Although further
exploration of the impact of race on reading engagement and motivation is beyond the scope of this research, it seems probable that school-based literacy practices fail to fully represent the pluralist nature of our society or to reflect the diversity of materials read at home by pupils from minority ethnic groups.

10.8 The role of the EP

10.8.1 Applying psychological thinking
What this thesis indicates is that it is important to understand the mechanisms that can impact on motivation (and subsequently literacy learning), when searching for solutions on how to develop literacy practices, particularly amongst vulnerable groups (e.g. boys, adolescents, children from socially disadvantaged families or from certain minority ethnic groups). Understanding how to support older readers who may have experienced reading difficulties over a number of years is also problematic for schools (Torgesen, 2002).

The Educational Psychology Services (England): Current Role, Good Practice and Future Directions – Report of the Working Group (EPWG) (DfEE, 2000b) challenged EPs to ‘apply psychology to the attainment and healthy development of children and young people from 0-19 years’ (page 5). Motivation represents an important psychological construct, albeit a complex one. This research suggests that it is extremely difficult to identify all the motivational determinants of behaviour and how these interact with learning and achievement. This may be one reason why teaching and learning discussions in school may not always consider motivational factors. EPs can support schools in developing an awareness of these factors and how these can facilitate or inhibit reading engagement.

10.8.2 Working at a systems level
The opportunity to undertake this research arose from working in a non-traditional role within an LEA and the nature of the research would probably be uncharacteristic of work normally undertaken by an EP (DfEE, 2000a).
The EPWG report (DfEE, 2000b) suggests that schools welcome input from EPs at a wider school level and that ‘School based project work is seen as another important area for future educational psychology input’ (page 18). It notes that EPs felt that priority areas for future EPS work should include ‘more opportunities for research and application of research; and opportunities to be key agents for change’ (page 39). Furthermore, the government’s SEN strategy Removing Barriers to Achievement (DfES, 2004) embraces a wider role for EPs in supporting the development of school policy and practice.

It is important that EPs are not just seen to be working with children at the margins (Thomson, 1996; MacKay, 2002). EPs are well positioned to make contributions that involve helping schools to understand the contextual complexities of learning within a secondary environment and applying psychological thinking to promote the learning of all children (Atkinson et al, in press). The use of psychological problem solving models, especially those that recognise socio-cultural and organisation factors (e.g. Stoker, 2000; Leadbetter, 2004) is likely to be useful to EPs, as a framework for exploring these different facets and developing solutions.

10.8.3 Contributing to thinking about pedagogical practices

A recognition of the factors that can contribute to boys’ literacy underachievement, such as societal and parental expectations, constructions of masculinity and peer group pressures, can help to inform practice within schools, as well as interventions for individual pupils.

Hutchinson (2004) offers a possible role with regard to the question of raising boys’ attainment, suggesting that EPs should ‘engage intelligently and critically in this debate and others’ (page 13). At a national level, it is important for EPs to contribute to thinking about a literacy curriculum that reflects the specialist needs of boys (and other groups vulnerable to literacy underachievement).
Chapter Eleven: Conclusions

This thesis is based on research undertaken in a single sex school, where there is a strong drive towards innovative and creative literacy practice. The school has had non-traditional EP input that has enabled reflection on and development of pedagogical practices to promote effective learning amongst all pupils, not just those identified as having additional or different needs.

This thesis evolved into an exploration of the factors that influenced boys’ reading engagement and motivation within this context. What has emerged is a formative, not summative, piece of research that prompts further questions, both about using an MI paradigm to consider affective responses to reading and about how school-based practices might develop to promote pupil reading engagement and motivation.

Proposals for future development are therefore grouped according to the following themes:

1. How materials and activities developed for this study might be used in the future and how they could be developed further;

2. How practices within the school might be developed, in order to facilitate greater reading engagement and motivation;

3. How MI and motivational theory might provide a framework for future school research and development, in this and other educational contexts;

4. What the broader implications might be for policy makers in terms of school-based literacy practices, particularly in addressing the needs of pupils represented in this research: namely boys educated in an area of high social economic disadvantage.
11.1 Development of the materials

Management staff in the Learning Support Department were positive about the materials and felt that they had gained resources for future use. The activities will be used with Year 9 and 10 boys with reading difficulties as part of a new school reading initiative (see Section 8.3.1). They will first be redesigned in accordance with comments made by the boys, particularly with regard to presentation. Copies will also be provided to the new school EP, who has been allocated additional time for school development work.

Suggested future developments include:

- Materials to be redesigned, using more appealing fonts and colours. Any written activities to be replaced with discussion-based tasks;

- Materials will be presented in a format that should be equally accessible to boys and girls (see Section 10.3.4) and will be offered to the girls’ school that participated in Project Three of this doctorate (see page 19);

- Materials to be used primarily with individuals or small groups until appropriate adaptations have been made to make them useful in a whole class context;

- Activities could be linked to other reading programmes (e.g. the Manchester Literacy Resource File (Manchester EPS, 2004)) where questionnaires and activities can be used to provide motivational information, to contribute to a diagnostic assessment of reading;

- Liaison to take place with the school EP about the further use and adaptation of the materials.
11.2 Development of school-based literacy practices

Outcomes of the thesis, which may help key staff to identify how the development of school-based literacy practices might facilitate greater reading engagement and motivation, will be presented to the school. These will include:

- Providing an increased variety of reading media. The forthcoming pilot study, offering newspapers to Year 7 pupils during registration periods (see Section 9.4.1), may inform future practice;

- Considering the range of books available in school and discussing whether it would be beneficial (and feasible) for pupils to have some involvement in the choice of books available (and studied) in school;

- Enabling greater reflection of home reading choices in school and exploring possibilities for literacy skills developed outside school to be recognised within the school curriculum;

- Considering whether staff in subject areas other than English can help explicitly to promote literacy learning development, engagement and motivation;

- Looking at extending the successful initiatives, such as those promoting parental involvement in reading programmes;

- Considering further exploration of the factors that contribute to the policing by peers of hegemonic masculinities in school. This could be explicitly addressed through the development of school policies, anti bullying initiatives and PHSE programmes;
• Considering ways of exploring and promoting more sophisticated and inclusive definitions of masculinity. This may include staff development and policy review, as well as opportunities for pupil discussion;

• Considering staff development related to the social construction of gender and how it may lead to narrow definitions of masculinity within an educational context;

• Exploring possibilities for the new school EP to be involved in future initiatives and research.

11.3 MI as a framework for research and development

The factors identified in this thesis that facilitated and inhibited reading engagement and motivation within this school were the result of complex interactions between socio-cultural influences, peer responses, gender perceptions and literacy preferences. It is possible that models of motivation (such as EVT, SDT and the TTM) might provide a framework for schools to examine their own learning practices, at an individual, group and whole school level. Providing schools with accessible and meaningful models of motivation might be one way of enabling reflective practice and school development. Specific ideas include:

• Considering how to conceptualise the research findings about motivation and literacy learning, in order to make them accessible to teaching staff. This could provide a structure for exploring the affective reading needs of pupils;

• Developing models of motivation that reflect the educational context. For example, how might the EVT model of achievement motivation (Wigfield and Eccles, 2000) be used as a framework onto which schools can map influences on literacy learning that are significant in their context;
• Exploring whether using an MI paradigm is a helpful way of thinking about the learning and motivational needs of pupils at an individual, group and whole school level.

11.4 **Educational policy and boys’ reading**

The following suggestions are made to enable greater reflection on the factors that facilitate or inhibit change at an educational policy level.

• Closely examining the factors that lead to reported disaffection (e.g. ‘laddish’ behaviour) and considering to what extent pedagogical practices, rather than individual and community factors, contribute to underachievement amongst recognised groups of pupils (e.g. boys living in areas of high socio-economic disadvantage);

• Undertaking a critical evaluation of school-based literacy practices and to what extent they reflect the interests and socio-cultural contexts of pupils from a diverse range of backgrounds;

• Exploring what the demands of being ‘literate’ in today’s society are and the extent to which school practices reflect these demands, particularly for adolescents;

• Enabling greater consultation with school staff and pupils about school-based literacy practices;

• Exploring whether the literacy curriculum might be more flexible, to allow schools or localities to tailor resources and curriculum teaching to reflect the interests and socio-cultural contexts of their pupils;

• Considering how to represent different masculinities within schools, rather than reinforcing hegemonic masculinities;
• Investigating how gender is constructed within schools and offering opportunities for teacher development and training to reflect the issues this raises.
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Appendix 2 (i)
Empirical basis for the Transtheoretical Model (TTM)

The research focus for the TTM tends to have been the processes by which people change, rather than the Model of Stages of Change, which is often assumed in empirical research (DiClemente and Prochaska, 1982; DiClemente, Prochaska, Fairhurst, Velicer, Velaquez and Rossi, 1991; Prochaska, Norcross and DiClemente, 1994). For example Prochaska and DiClemente (1982) claimed that empirical research undertaken, comparing self-reports of processes of change in smoking behaviour for around 60 individuals, who quit through self-directed and therapy directed processes (DiClemente and Prochaska, 1982), supported a Model of Stages of Change. However, greater attention was paid in the research to the differences between the processes used to give up smoking, than the parity of behavioural self-reports with the proposed stages of change model.

However, both the TTM and the stages of change have been regularly revised and updated over a number of years (e.g. Prochaska et al, 1994; Prochaska and DiClemente, 1998) and significant casework and empirical research has taken place to identify behavioural characteristics of individuals at different stages of change (Prochaska et al, 1994). This model is now widely used across health and social work settings (Corden and Somerton, 2004) and is therefore subject to widespread scrutiny and ongoing evaluation.

References


Appendix 2 (ii)
Active listening techniques for use in MI interventions (as described by McNamara, 1998)

*Parroting or repeating* involves the counsellor repeating the exact words the client says, whereas *rewording* necessitates rephrasing their responses using statements not questions.

*Paraphrasing* requires the counsellor to provide a reply that is meant to establish the intention and the underlying meaning of the client’s statement. It can be used as a means of reflecting the client’s thoughts or, of hypothesis testing.

*Summarising* involves the counsellor drawing together remarks from the client into a concise summary.

*Structuring* prompts clients to volunteer more information about the situation they are in by providing a framework for this through questioning techniques.

**Advanced techniques**

*Positive restructuring* refers to the positive interpretation of negative information. For example, were the client to state, “I skived off two lessons yesterday,” the counsellor might respond, “You went to four lessons yesterday.”

**Special reflections**
McNamara (1998) discusses four types of special reflections.

1. *Reflections of feelings* - this describes a process by which the counsellor attempts to reflect the feelings that underlie statements made by the client.

2. *Reflections of conflict* - helps the client to identify some of the pros and cons of the behaviour they are describing.

3. *Overshooting* - here the counsellor tries to exaggerate statements made by the client. The aim of this is to enable the client to ‘refine’ their initial statement or possibly to give some indication of the extent to which the area described is a concern.

4. *Undershooting* is the opposite of overshooting. Here the counsellor deliberately attempts to play down remarks made by the client in order to elicit a response that more accurately reflects their intensity of feeling towards the issue raised.
Provoking involves the counsellor reflecting to the student that he or she has no problems; the objective being that he or she will actually respond that he or she does have problems. This could be one method that might be considered for moving a client from the precontemplative to the contemplative phase in the Model of Stages of Change.

The Columbo Technique derives its name from the television series ‘Columbo’ starring Peter Falk. Here the counsellor assumes a demeanour of incompetence which, McNamara (1998) suggests, might help to counteract client perceptions that the counsellor holds a dominant role in the counsellor-client relationship. A typical prompt would be “I know I’m supposed to help you but I’m not sure what to suggest.”

Reference

Appendix 2 (iii)  
The Menu of Strategies described by Rollnick, Heather and Bell (1992)

1. Opening Strategy: lifestyle stresses and substance use

Rollnick et al (1992) suggest that this provides the client with an opportunity to talk about current lifestyle and stresses. It may relate specifically to the behaviour that is perceived to be problematic. For example, within a school context where the issue is truanting, the EP might ask questions such as, “Tell me about your truanting?” or, “What do you do when you go out of school?”

2. A typical day/session

This item would give the client the opportunity to provide an account of specific experiences. These can be related to times at which the problem behaviour did or did not happen. For example, a typical question might be, “Can we spend the next ten minutes going through a day in which [the behaviour] happened/didn’t happen?” (Rollnick et al, 1992).

3. The good things and the less good things

The *good things and the less good things* would allow the pupil to examine some of the pros and cons of maintaining their behaviour. Rollnick and Miller (1995) highlight the importance of allowing a client to express the contradictory elements of the pros and cons associated with the behaviour. Rollnick and Bell (1991) suggest that this process allows the interviewer to assess whether the behaviour is then of cause for concern for the client. Rollnick et al (1992) point out the importance of describing the ‘less good things’ rather than the ‘concerns’. They suggest that this allows the client to identify problem areas without feeling that these behaviours are being labelled as ‘problematic’.

4. Providing information

Rollnick et al (1992) suggest that the next stage of providing information should be dealt with in a sensitive manner, where the counsellor considers the readiness of the client to receive information. They advocate asking the permission of clients before offering information. The *providing information* stage of the process links to the idea of ‘direct advice’ described by Miller and Rollnick (1991) and to the goal to increase knowledge explained by McNamara (1998).
5. The future and the present

The future and the present is relevant to clients who have expressed some degree of concern about the behaviour in question. This technique would allow the client to explore his or her present circumstances as well as eliciting any desire for change. Typically, this could be done through a question such as, “How would you like things to be different in the future?” and would link closely to Solution Focused techniques.

6. Exploring concerns

Rollnick et al (1992) describe the stage of exploring concerns as the most important of all. This stage involves listening to what the client is saying and intervening at appropriate times to ‘nudge’ the discussions forward and in doing so to raise concerns about behavioural change.

7. Helping with decision making

In relation to the final item, helping with decision making, Rollnick et al (1992, page 35) list the following key principles

- Do not rush clients into decision making;
- Present options for the future rather than a single course of action;
- Describe what other clients have done in a similar situation;
- Emphasise that ‘you are the best judge of what will be best for you’;
- Provide information in a neutral, non-personal manner;
- Failure to reach a decision is not a failed consultation;
- Resolutions to change often break down. Make sure the client understands this and does not avoid contact if things go wrong;
- Commitment to change is likely to fluctuate. Expect this to happen and empathise with the client’s predicament.

References


### Appendix 3 (i)

**My Skills Profile (from Session 1, Self-Esteem)**

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#### Artistic
- Creative
- Good sense of direction
- Remembers things in pictures

#### Picture Smart
- See things clearly in your mind.
- Use pictures to get ideas across.
- Can imagine what something would look like.

#### Like things in order
- Mathematical
- Planner
- Problem Solver

#### Logic Smart
- Like to put things in order.
- Have a logical mind.
- Plan things carefully.
- Need things to make sense.

#### Musical
- Notice sounds around me
- Sense of rhythm
- Singer

#### Sound Smart
- Work out patterns in sounds.
- Play with sounds, compose songs, sing or play instruments.
- Listen to music when working and to feel good.

#### Adventurous
- Environmentally friendly
- Good with animals
- Outdoors Person

#### Nature Smart
- Enjoy being outdoors and feel comfortable there.
- Interested in animals, plants and trees.
- Think about issues that affect the planet, such as pollution.

#### Caring
- Friendly
- Like to be part of a group
- Team player

#### People Smart
- Enjoy contact with people.
- Good with others.
- Understand and notice other people's feelings.
- Good communicator and team member.

#### Aware of my feelings
- Enjoy being by myself
- In Control
- Thoughtful

#### Self Smart
- Enjoy quiet thinking time alone.
- Understand your own reasons for doing things.
- Think about your own feelings and thoughts.

#### Good with my hands
- Learn by trying things out
- Practical
- Sporty

#### Body Smart
- Learn best by doing.
- Like to use your hands.
- Good balance while running, walking and doing sport.
- Hobbies involve being active

#### Enjoy reading
- Good at explaining
- Good with words
- Writer

#### Word Smart
- Good at explaining things.
- Like writing and reading.
- Like word games and new words.
- Speak or write well.

---

**Comments on this session**

........................................................................................................
........................................................................................................

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## Appendix 3 (ii)
### Why do I do well at things? (from Session 2, Locus of Control)

Name………………………..

Have a look at the statements below.

If the things below happened to you, what reason would you give (Choose A, B, C or D)?

- **A - Ability (Something I'm good at)**
- **B - Effort (Trying hard)**
- **C - Task difficulty (It was easy)**
- **D - Luck**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>I played well at football</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>I remembered what I learnt in my Science lesson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>I drew a picture that all my friends said was good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>I managed to find out about something that interests me using the internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>I read a book aimed at older readers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>I mended something that got broken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>I got a good score in a test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>My teacher praised my design work in technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>I helped to make a new pupil feel welcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>I got all my maths questions right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>I gave clear directions to someone who asked the way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>I was able to control my temper, even though I felt angry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>The food I cooked tasted lovely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>I learnt a lot from a book I was reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>I explained clearly to my friend how to do the task we had been given</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How did you score?

Number of As       Number of Bs

Number of Cs       Number of Ds

What it means

Mostly As
You tend to think that the skills you have are the key to your successes. This means you are giving internal reasons (to do with you) for things you do well. If you feel confident, it will help you to achieve the things you want.

Mostly Bs
You think that you do well at things because of the effort you put in. This means you are giving internal reasons (to do with you) for your successes. You know that how hard you try makes a difference to how well you do.

Mostly Cs
You tend to think that your successes are due to how easy the task is. This means you are giving external reasons (not to do with you) for things you do well. Don’t forget about the skills you have. Even if a task seems easy, this suggests that you have the skills to do it confidently without thinking too hard.

Mostly Ds
You have put most of your successes down to luck! This means you are giving external reasons (not to do with you) for your achievements. We all need a bit of luck, but don’t forget that when you do things well it is down to your skills and effort too.

Comments on this session

………………………………………………………………………………………………………..
Appendix 3 (iii)
Why Read? (from Session 3, Knowledge)

Name........................................

In the shapes below are some reasons for reading. Indicate on the faces below how you feel about each of the reasons. Try and think of some of your own ideas for the shapes at the bottom.

- Reading helps you to relax
- Reading helps you to find out about things
- Reading helps you to learn about other people’s lives
- Reading helps you understand different viewpoints
- Reading helps you to think of ideas
- Reading helps you develop your imagination
- Reading helps you improve your reading skills
- Reading helps you to relax
- Reading helps you to find out about things
- Reading helps you to learn about other people’s lives
- Reading helps you understand different viewpoints
- Reading helps you to think of ideas
- Reading helps you develop your imagination
- Reading helps you improve your reading skills

Comments about this session.................................................................
...........................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................
Appendix 3 (iv)
Can reading more make a difference? (from Session 4, Concern)

This boy is 13. How might reading more now make a difference to him when he is 18?

Name………………………………..

Comments about this session…………………………………………
………………………………………… …………………………………
………………………………………… …………………………………
………………………………………… …………………………………
………………………………………… …………………………………

Job

Money

Home

Lifestyle

Comments about this session…………………………………………
………………………………………… …………………………………
………………………………………… …………………………………
………………………………………… …………………………………
………………………………………
Appendix 3 (v)
Goals for reading (from Session 5, Self-Efficacy)

Name………………………………..

Would you like to read more?

YES        MAYBE        NO

If you think you would like to read more, try to set yourself some reading goals. Put any ideas in the arrows below. If you are happy with the amount of reading you do, think about whether you would like to set yourself some different goals.

Comments on this session………………………………………….
…………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………

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### Groups

Group A – Questionnaire + pilot for activities

Group B – Questionnaire only – beginning and end of study

Group C – Questionnaire plus intervention February – March 2005

Group D – Questionnaire plus intervention April – May 2005

### Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Purpose of visit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.1.05</td>
<td>Small group</td>
<td>Pilot questionnaire with small group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.1.05</td>
<td>Small group</td>
<td>Pilot activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.1.05</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Initial questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.1.05</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Initial questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other dates</td>
<td>Small group</td>
<td>Pilot activities to be used with whole group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.1.05</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Pilot programme/activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.05</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Initial questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.05</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Initial questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.05</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Initial questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.2.05</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Intervention programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.2.05</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Intervention programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.05</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Intervention programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.3.05</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Intervention programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.3.05</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Intervention programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be confirmed</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Mid way evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4.05</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Mid way evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.4.05</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Mid way evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.4.05</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Intervention programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.4.05</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Intervention programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.4.05</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Intervention programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.5.05</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Intervention programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.5.05</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Intervention programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be confirmed</td>
<td>BCD</td>
<td>Dates for final questionnaires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be confirmed</td>
<td>CD</td>
<td>Dates for follow up interviews with identified pupils.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 4 (ii)
Reading Motivation Questionnaire

Name……………………………… Form……………………………………
Date………………………………

We are interested in your reading. The statements below tell how some students feel about reading. Read each statement and decide whether it talks about a person who is like you or different from you. There are no right or wrong answers. We only want to know how you feel about reading.

If the statement is very different from you, circle 1
If the statement is a little different from you, circle 2
If the statement is a little like you, circle 3
If the statement is a lot like you, circle 4

Examples

The following three questions have been provided as an example. Please answer them by circling the number which best describes how you feel. If you have any questions, just ask. When you are all happy about what you have to do, we will start the questionnaire.

1. I like ice cream

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very different from me</th>
<th>A little different from me</th>
<th>A little like me</th>
<th>A lot like me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. I like football

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very different from me</th>
<th>A little different from me</th>
<th>A little like me</th>
<th>A lot like me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. I like sprouts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very different from me</th>
<th>A little different from me</th>
<th>A little like me</th>
<th>A lot like me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Reading Motivation Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Very different from me</th>
<th>A little different from me</th>
<th>A little like me</th>
<th>A lot like me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I like hard, challenging books</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I know that I will do well in reading this year</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. If the teacher discusses something interesting I might read about it</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I like it when the questions in books make me think</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I read about my hobbies to learn more about them</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I am a good reader</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I read stories about fantasy and make believe</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I read to learn new information about topics that interest me</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I learn more from reading than most students in my class</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I make pictures in my mind when I read</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I like to read about new things</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I usually learn difficult things by reading</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I feel like I make friends with people in good books</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. I like mysteries</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. If I am reading about an interesting topic, I sometimes lose track of time</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I enjoy a long, involved story or fiction book</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. If the project is interesting, I can read difficult material</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. I enjoy reading about people living in different countries</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. I read a lot of adventure stories</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. If a book is interesting, I don’t care how hard it is to read</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. In comparison to my other school subjects, I am better at reading</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 4 (iii)
Frequency of Reading Questionnaire

How often do you read?

How often do you read the following when you are not in school?

Please circle the number that applies to you

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Every day</th>
<th>Most days</th>
<th>At least once a week</th>
<th>From time to time</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Books</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspapers</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazines</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer/Internet</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text Messages</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 4 (iv)
Stages of Change Questionnaire

Have a look at the statements in the boxes below. Tick or circle the **one** statement that is most like you

1. I don’t read much because I don’t enjoy it
2. I maybe should read more, but there are lots of other things to do
3. I would like to have more time to read things that interest me
4. I have started to make more time to read things I like
5. I enjoy reading and also have time for it
6. I used to read a lot more than I do now
Appendix 4 (v)
Example of a session transcript and audio diary reflections

Session 4 Concern
Pilot group 1.3.05

Italicics – Pupil comments (unless specified as teacher)
Normal type – CA

[Teacher] OK boys. Why I am waiting? Get that jacket off, get that jumper out, get yourselves some pens out. Miss is going to start.

I’m cold.

[Teacher] Well the heater’s on.

Thank you very much for your really helpful responses last week. They were really very good. I’ll make sure I get the responses to you next week. What I’m going to be talking about this week is again looking at reading, but looking at reading for enjoyment and thinking about why reading might be important to us now and also how it might affect our lives after we leave school, all right. OK. So we’re just going to start with a quick activity. What I want us to do first of all is talk to your partner about the less good things about reading. So what’s not good about reading, all right? So, I want you to be talking to your partner about that. [To pupil] I don’t know if you want to join a group.

[Teacher] X [pupil’s name], go and work with Y [pupil’s name] please.

Pupils chatting [inaudible].

[Teacher] That doesn’t sound to me like you’re talking about what Ms Atkinson’s just asked you to talk about.

[Pupils comes in] Hi.

Pupils chatting [inaudible].

OK. One more minute then I’ll take some ideas.

Pupils chatting [inaudible].

OK. Just a few more seconds about what’s less good about reading. What’s not always so good about reading…? Right, can everyone listen now and I’ll take some ideas. One from over here.

[Pupil response inaudible]
So it's too long. Would that be like a book or something?

A novel.

So you get carried away because it’s too long. This group maybe.

[Inaudible] like there’s no music.

OK. So it feels…

Boring.

Yeah.

It’s not sort of a whole experience.

[Teacher] Excuse me boys.

Too quiet maybe?

It’s like; I’d rather go out than learn about stuff, than reading.

OK.

[Same pupil] Like go to a museum, or a film.

No you wouldn’t.

[Same pupil] I would though because I like things.

[Mocking] I like things!

So you would rather go out and look at things and see things for yourself than read about things. Is that right?

Yeah.

Any ideas at the back…? Any ideas from that corner…?

Pictures.

Pictures.

Are pictures a good thing or a…?

Bad thing.

I like them.

I don’t like them.
Don’t look at them then.

[Teacher to pupil] Do you need to go to [inaudible]?

Someone at the back.

You can’t read your bills and all when they come through the door.

OK, is that because there’s too much information or…?

[Support assistant working with pupil] He said it’s a good thing you read, so that you can.

OK, so that would be coming, sort of under good things. You’re a bit ahead. Did everybody hear that? I know we’re not quite onto good things yet, but somebody said when you get bills and things through the door you can read bills.

Learn things from books.

Right, I think we’re already starting to get onto some good things because somebody here has said you can learn things from books. So shall we think now about the good things about reading? Again. Have a chat with the person next to you. I’ll give you a minute… [Responding to boys who already have their hand up]. If you’ve already got some ideas, that’s super.

Pupils chatting [inaudible].

Just a minute to chat then I’ll come back. [Responding to boys who already have their hand up]. Have a quick chat then I’ll take ideas.

Interest.

You can imagine more.

Imagination.

[Other pupil chatter – inaudible]

OK. I’ll stop you there because I can see people itching with ideas…

Imagination.

Pictures.

Stimulates, your imagination.

Pictures.
So pictures. Good for some people, not so good for others.

*For going out like... if you read a book it tells you where you can go out, like on a treasure hunt.*

So you can use it to find information about somewhere you want to go, would that be? One at the back.

*It gives you ideas.*

Brilliant.

*That's what I said [from pupil who suggested imagination].*

It's kind of two different things isn't it. Imagination and ideas are slightly different because you might get ideas for a project, or for how to mend your bike, or how to play football better or... There are loads of things you can get ideas for.

*I've got good ideas.*

OK. Any more? Any other good things about reading?

*You can read about things that you've never done before.*

Right, OK.

*Like origami or something like that.*

So you can learn new skills. Does everyone know what origami is?

*It's when you get paper... you make paper things like.*

*Like yoga?*

Yeah well... slightly different to yoga. Yoga’s more to do with your body

*Meditation.*

Yes. Right. [Pupils chatter].

*[Teacher] Boys.*

*Hush.*

*Hush.*

I've got an activity here which is called “Can reading make a difference?” and what it says is ‘This boy is 13...’ Again this is... you don’t have to sit there and write lots of things. It’s really to prompt some discussion with the person
next to you and you can make some notes if you like. So what it says is, ‘this boy is 13, how make reading make a difference to him when he is 18’. And I want you to think about job, money, home and lifestyle. So how might doing a little bit more reading now, OK, all the different things that we talked about last week. How could that help that young person, when he becomes an adult? So make a list of anything you can think of, then I’ll take some ideas.

[Pupil chatter].

[Teacher] X go and sit over there [directs him to work with another pupil].

Have you got a sheet?

Have you got a pen or a pencil?

[Teacher] Y, Z. Unless you want to do this at dinnertime…

[Pupil chatter].

Read to your kids.

You can teach them how to read can’t you?

Teach them how to spell.

He’s copied me.

Exactly word for word “to get a good job”.

Read books on jobs.

Miss, you might become an author.

Might do, yeah. Think about as well. What if you were going to apply for a job?

[Pupil chatter].

[To pupil] Yeah you might try to find out about jobs.

How about your house?

Have a better life.

Oh, 18, 18.

[Teacher] What can make a difference to having a better lifestyle?

What have we got for first lesson, Science?
OK. One more minute and I’ll take some ideas.

[Pupil chatter].

OK.

[Pupil chatter].

OK. Can I just stop you there because it would be really nice to hear some of your ideas? So in terms of your job. The job you might have in a few years time.

You might become an author.

OK. You might become an author. If you were really lucky. Now authors…it’s not just a case of reading books. Authors need to do a whole load of research before they write a book. They need to do loads and loads of reading and read books other people have written and read about different things. OK, how else might reading more now affect the job you might have?

Gives you more information when you go out to look for work.

OK. So if you wanted to be, say… I don’t know, a mechanic or something like that. If you read more about that sort of job you’d actually have more information.

To know what’s expected.

Excellent. That’s a lovely one. To know what’s expected. And when you get a job. What you tend to get is a contract that actually tells you what’s expected, what your duties are.

To get ideas from a book.

To get ideas from…?

Out of a book.

All right. That might be ideas about what you want to be. How you see your future.

Miss, it will help your skills, if you read a book or, like, you want to do a job. It will help you improve what you know about the job.

OK. Improve your knowledge about the job. OK… go on then.

Qualifications.

Sorry?
You’ll have better qualifications.

That’s a really good one. Better qualifications.

[Teacher] X [pupil’s name]

And obviously, as we said last week; reading is not just about literacy. It’s about all the subjects. What about money? How might reading more now affect money? Anyone who hasn’t spoken yet? Anyone on that table got any suggestions about money?

You’d get loads of it.

OK. We’d hope so, wouldn’t we? We might not have loads of money, but if we had good qualifications then we might be all right off.

You can invest.

Right, OK to invest money, quite often you have to read the small detailed information. I find it quite hard, actually, to read all the information to get the best deal. But if you don’t mind doing that, you can get some good deals. I’ll just take one more then we’ll move on to the other two.

You can manage your money more sensibly.

OK. Now I know we’re short of time, so I’m just going to take one point for home and one point for lifestyle, because I’ll be able to see all the things you’ve written down. Who’s got?

He lives in a crib

Sorry.

He lives in a crib. House.

OK. So again, we’d hope for that wouldn’t we. Go on then.

For lifestyle.

Yes.

If you’re on the motorway, you want to get off. But you might get off at the wrong one.

Right, OK. To help you get around.

Get skills. Books teach you skills, like cooking.

OK.
At school.

He’ll get the mick taken out of him.

So, the aim of today really, is just to think about how reading - it doesn’t have to be books, it doesn’t have to be just school things - can actually help us have a richer life later on. Would you just be able to really quickly, if you can, just to write me a little comment about how you’ve found this session? I’ll just take some more comments as you’re doing that. If you could, that would be really really helpful. It gives me an idea of how the sessions are going.

[Teacher] And then once you’ve done that, I’ll collect these in.

Thank you.

[Teacher] All right. When you’ve done and I’ve collected it in you may go.

Reflections on that session. I think that’s the best one yet. I was pleased with that. Generally the boys were engaged. There wasn’t another time to take all the ideas. We could have easily gone on for another 10 or 20 minutes. I thought there were a very rich number of ideas. There were essentially about six or seven pupils that were most engaged and provided most of the responses, but I think generally most of them were pretty engaged. At the start there were a couple of boys who didn’t have a partner, which was a bit of an issue. One boy… a support assistant came in to work with him, but obviously in a different situation… I would just need to be sensitive to that really. I thought the ideas they came up with were sound. They’d obviously built on some of the ideas from last week. Some of the suggestions about reading for reading. Things that come out of last week’s session, so I think it’s probably… even though that [last week’s] activity feels a bit squeezed on the end I think it’s possibly justifiable. Again tight for time. I think, with that group. I’m trying to work out what the difference is and I think a lot of it is to do with the fact that most of them are there at the beginning. There were only two or three latecomers really. With the experiment group, essentially, there’s only about half the class there at the beginning. There were about 17 there, I think it would have been, and about 3 came. So I think that might be a factor really, which is perhaps not one I can do a great deal about, but I can be aware of it.
Appendix 4 (vi)
Example of how information from sessions was recorded using a pro forma

Intervention Group C – Session 3 – Knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>Theme of Session</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>2.3.05</td>
<td>Session Number</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of boys participating</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>No. of pupil comments received</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pupil Engagement
Before the lesson, I turned up a bit early. The teacher wasn’t there and one boy ‘A’ spoke out to ask me why the class were doing the session and informed me that the class usually did a quiz on Wednesdays. This was not happening because of my sessions. ‘A’ was quite a dominant character and proactive in leading the discussion.
Pupils actually engaged well with the activities, staying on task and providing a range of suggestions.
Clarified with the pupils that it was up to them if they engaged or not.
Actual session went better than the first two sessions. It was more interactive.
Once the pupils get going on a task, they seem to be quite engaged.

Pupil Response
‘A’ asked the class “Who wants to do this?” to which none of the boys raised their hands. He then asked, “Who wants to do the quiz?” to which a large number of the class raised their hands.
Pupils asked questions relating to topics that arose during the discussion, e.g. “Miss, what are they called, you know, on the side of buses?”
The boys had lots of ideas. Seemed on task during activities.
Discussion generated rich ideas.

Pupil comments (written)
- It was fair but you need to make it more exciting
- It was an OK lesson. It was interesting because you listen to questions
- It was good
- This session was interesting but the questions were difficult
- Why do we do this? What will this do for our education? It can be more interesting? Put games into it
- I don’t see what this is about and how it could help but it was all right
- Boring!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
- It was boring
- Don’t know. It were OK
- I would rather do the quiz. I never read anything. IT’S BORING
•  It is OK but I’d rather do my quiz instead because it is fun
•  I didn’t like it because I didn’t see the point

Pupil comments (verbal)
•  Nearly all the audible comments on tape come from ‘A’.
•  ‘A’ indicated that he did not like the written aspects of the sessions.
  A:  “You said I don’t want to see you again but I want to see you again. I don’t want to see the quizzes again”
  CA:  “So it’s the written bit you don’t like?”
  A:  “Yes”
•  Clarification of the task “Do you have to write down 15 things you can read?” “Miss, what’s this next sheet for?”
•  Seeking recognition of tasks completed (‘A’) “Miss, I’ve done all 15”
•  Task not clear “We can all read anyway”

Materials
•  Good verbal response from the boys to the activity ‘What is reading?’ Boys worked well in pairs/groups on ‘Things you can read’ activity.
•  Discussion prompted interest on other topics – e.g. Sudan Red food scare.
•  Pacing of the session right – plenty of time to fill things in and to explain things.
•  Activities were more ‘stand-alone’. Easier for latecomers to join in.

Social/cultural factors
‘A’ was clearly a dominant character within the registration group. When he was asked, “Who wants to do the quiz?” he was checking the response of the other pupils. It is clear that ‘A’ has some influence over the form group.

How does the response of the boys link to ideas about masculinity?

‘A’ made other attempts to disrupt the session, e.g. “Can I go to the toilet, I’m really desperate?” as soon as teacher had left the room.

Discussion about issues that arose appeared to engage pupils more than the content of the session (e.g. prolonged pupil discussion about the Sudan Red food scare, following mention of reading ingredients on packets).

Role of the teacher
•  Spoke to the boys to say that she would rearrange the quiz for the following day each week.
•  Enforced class rules and quietened pupils on occasions.
•  Intervened when ‘A’ continued to interrupt the session.
•  Teacher reported that the sessions were useful to her and they gave her time to sort other things out.

Logistical factors
Nearly all the pupils were present at the start of the session. Fewer interruptions than in previous weeks.
Process and Practice Issues

I made it clear to the boys on a number of occasions that they did not have to participate. Ethical issues about non-participation. Because the teacher is in the room she is likely to encourage them to complete the tasks.

Something more open ended may be appropriate. Giving things over a bit more to the boys rather than doing something quite so didactic.

It is clear that the aims and objectives are not explicit enough for some of the boys. Does the context of the whole package need to be set out more clearly? Does the package need to be something along the lines of ‘Thinking about Reading’ where the overall aims and objectives are stated?

Should the Model of Stages of Change be made more explicit throughout the programme?

Quantitative study – this methodology no longer seems appropriate. Move towards a more action research based design?

Look at doing qualitative analysis with groups A and C as opposed to quantitative using the control group.

If the programme really is about MI and self-determination, then it should be up to the young person to make choices about the information that they have. Maybe the boys should be given the option of having the materials.

What about my role? How do the boys see me? Thinking about the SDT concept of relatedness, how much do they see me as sharing the same values and beliefs?
Appendix 5 (i)
Things you can read – feedback from Group C

- Books
- Signs
- Posters
- Back of sweatshirts
- Magazines
- Graffiti
- Papers
- Games cases
- Reg plates
- Instructions
- Notes
- Scripts
- TV
- Billboard
- Bills

- Mags
- Books
- Posters
- Language
- Signs
- Notice boards
- Graffiti
- Fortune cookies
- Texts
- Numbers
- Labels
- Dictionary
- TV
- Thesaurus
- CV
- Subtitles
- Rings

- Books
- Graffiti
- Signs
- Papers
- Mags
- Posters
- Sweet wrappers
- Billboards
- Game cases

- Motorway signs
- Read stuff on people’s t-shirts
- Graffiti
- Street names
- Shops
- Licence plates
- Advertisements
- Rubbish
- TV

- Newspapers
- Mags
- Post/letters
- Signs
- Notices
- Signs on T-shirts
- TV
- Billboards
- Graffiti
- Street names
- Shops
- Licence plates
- Logos
- Books
- Advertisements

- Texting
- Letters
- Labels
- Graffiti
- Mags

- Books
- Mags
- Newspapers
- Posters
- Letters
- Signs
- Graffiti
- Notes
- Dictionary
- Fortune cookies
- Car reg plates
- Ingredients
- Fortune cookies
- Car reg plates
- Ingredients
- Instructions
- Notes scripts
- Texting
- Letters
- Labels
- Graffiti
- Mags
- Sport books
- Texts
- Maths books
- English books
- Science books
- Magazines
- Adventure books
- Action books
- Sport books
- Letters
- Postcards
- Maths books
- English books
- Labels
- Texting
- Ingredients
- Reading things on computer (internet)
- Instructions on things
- Spanish-French
- Newspapers
- Books
- Mags
- Signs
- Posters
- Languages
- Graffiti
- Notice boards
- Fortune cookies
- Text messages
- Numbers
- Dictionary
- Thesaurus
- Subtitles
- Instructions
- Scripts
- Billboards
- Magazines
- Books
- Newspaper
- Posters
- Letters
- Signs/notice
- Graffiti
- Scripts
- Rubbish
- Logos
- Fortune cookies
- Dictionaries
- Billboards
- Ingredients
- TV
- Books
- Magazines
- Letters
- Signs
- Graffiti
- Posters
- Newspaper
- Fortune cookies
- Ingredients
- Instructions
- Notes
- Scripts
- Licence plates
- Magazines
- Newspapers
- Comics
- Letters
- Things on internet
- Adverts
- Car registration nos.
- Newspaper
- Billboard
- Magazines
- Signs
- Labels
• Billboards
• Work book
• Labels
• Sweet wrappers
• Fortune cookies
• Car registration
• Ingredients
• Instructions
• Script
• Text messages

• Books
• Mags
• Notices
• Posters
• Graffiti
• Sign
• Billboards
• Newspapers
• Fortune cookies
• Ingredients
• Logo
• Instructions
• Text
• Letters
• Notes
Appendix 5 (ii)
Examples of contributions made by form tutors during the sessions.

Addressing queries
- Provided pens and pencils to boys who did not have the right equipment to complete the sessions.
- Reassured the boys in Group C that the quiz would be rescheduled.
- Dealt with requests from pupils and teachers from other groups that arose during the course of the session (e.g. boys withdrawn in relation to previous behavioural incidents).

Managing behaviour
- Reinforced class rules (e.g. take off hat/coat etc.).
- Reprimanded pupils for inappropriate behaviour.
- Quietened pupils on occasions.
- Told pupils to stay on task during activities.

Contributing to the sessions
- Helped pupils to organise themselves into groups.
- Offered suggestions linked to pupils’ experiences (for example, one teacher offered comments relating to temper control when talking about internal and external control and made an analogy with recent discussions about behaviour).
Appendix 6 (i)
Empirical evidence for the efficacy of MI

There appears to be some ambiguity within the literature as to what actually constitutes MI. Burke, Arkowitz and Menchola (2003) recognised MI interventions to include the four main principles of MI (Miller and Rollnick, 2002) that are:

- Expressing empathy
- Developing discrepancy
- Rolling with resistance
- Supporting self-efficacy

Burke et al (2003) reflect difficulty in identifying interventions that involve a distinctly MI approach. In conducting a meta-analysis of the effectiveness of MI interventions, it is adaptations of MI (AMIs), rather than ‘pure’ MI interventions, that they consider. The AMIs in the study share a key component. This is that feedback from standardised assessments designed to ascertain the level of severity of the client’s behaviour (e.g. questionnaires about alcohol or substance use) is delivered in a ‘motivational interviewing style wherein possibilities for change are elicited from the client in a non-threatening way’ (Burke et al, 2003, page 845).

The level of diversity within clinical settings, as well as between clinical and educational contexts, raises questions about whether MI represents a paradigm, rather than a set of intervention techniques. There appears to be a lack of consensus within the literature about the actual content and structure of MI, Miller and Rollnick (2002) suggesting that the ‘spirit’ of MI is the important feature. This could account for some of the reported difficulties in evaluating MI (Burke, Arkowitz and Dunn, 2002; Burke et al 2003).

References


Appendix 6 (ii)
Training issues in MI

MI interventions have traditionally been delivered by individuals with training in psychology or counselling. Such professionals often require only a moderate refinement of skills to undertake MI. However, more recently other practitioners such as nurses, social workers and dieticians have increasingly begun to use MI. For these individuals (who may have been trained to provide direct advice about behavioural change) learning MI may require a significant change to their paradigms of thinking (Resnicow, Dilorio, Soet, Borrell, Ernst, Hecht and Thevos, 2002).

Within clinical settings, professional training in MI is often delivered via a one-time clinical workshop. In a small scale study, Miller and Mount (2001) noted that counsellors who undertook the training did not make sustained changes to their counselling practice, despite more positive self-reports. It is likely that even more time for training and supervision is required for professionals whose training paradigm is less congruent with MI and this time is frequently limited (Resnicow et al, 2002).

References


Appendix 7 (i)
Letter introducing the activities presented at the training session

Dear Colleague

This pack contains

1. Some information about Motivational Interviewing and about the research I am doing.

2. A questionnaire that can be used to find out more about the reading motivation of young people.

3. Some activities developed around the goals of Motivational Interviewing that may be helpful for individual or group work with young people.

4. An evaluation form for you to record your thoughts about the materials and how young people responded to them.

I would be more than happy to come and talk to anybody who would be interested in finding out more about the project or about Motivational Interviewing. I would also welcome any opportunity to come and talk with staff working with young people to explore ways of adapting or changing the materials to tailor them to the needs of individuals.

Please do not hesitate to contact me:

By phone: __________________
By fax: __________________
Or by email __________________

Any comments you have as you are using the materials would also be much appreciated.

Many thanks

Cathy Atkinson.
Motivational Interviewing
An introduction

Background to Motivational Interviewing

Motivational Interviewing (MI) is a counselling technique that was originally developed within medical settings to help people with addiction problems. It was based on the idea that people are not always in a state of readiness to change their patterns of drinking, smoking, drug use, exercise or diet.

MI differs from many other counselling techniques in that it does not assume a person wants to change a particular aspect of his or her behaviour. It also acknowledges that there may be strong reasons why a person chooses to maintain this behaviour.

Changing behaviour relies on a motivation to do so. Adults will generally seek help to change a behaviour that has become a problem for them. For example:

- Seeking counselling regarding personal difficulties;
- Accessing support for giving up smoking or drinking;
- Joining a gym or taking up a sport to improve fitness and general health.

Motivational Interviewing in Schools

In schools, concern about a young person’s behaviour may have come from home, from teachers or from another agency. Where a third party has expressed concern, a young person may not necessarily be motivated to change their behaviour. Young people may not share the same goals or aspirations as their schools, teachers or parents/carers and might have even have good reasons for maintaining a behaviour that is considered by others to be problematic. Examples might include:

- Disruptive behaviour in lessons masking the fact that a young person is finding the work difficult;
- Social acceptance by a peer group because of truanting or risk taking behaviour;
- Perceived status amongst peers because of aggressive behaviour.
The Model of Stages of Change

There are a series of stages through which people pass when addressing problematic behaviour. These are shown in the diagram overleaf.

Model of Stages of Change (as described by McNamara, 1998)

1. **PRECONTEMPLATIVE**
   - Pupil sees no problem but others disapprove

2. **CONTEMPLATIVE**
   - Weighing up the pros and cons of changing

3. **DETERMINISM**
   - To carry on as before or to change

4. **ACTIVE CHANGE**
   - Putting the decision into practice

5. **MAINTENANCE**
   - Actively maintaining change

6. **RELAPSE**
   - Return to previous behaviour

The aim of MI is to gently nudge the young person round the wheel by helping them to make positive choices about their behaviour.

Using MI to support learning

To my knowledge, MI has only been used to support behaviour. The aim of my research is to see if it is possible to use the same principles to support learning and in particular reading. Young people are not always motivated to read for a number of reasons, including:
1. If reading is a skill they find difficult they may not find the experience to be pleasurable or enjoyable and may tend to avoid it.

2. The materials offered at school may not necessarily reflect areas of interest.

3. The types of reading boys tend to do (e.g. reading comics and games, computer, magazines and newspapers) may not necessarily be valued in school in the same way that books are.

4. There is some evidence to suggest that boys view reading as a feminine activity, so it may conflict with their views about masculinity.

I was wondering if you could use a similar model to look at stages of motivation for reading. It might look a bit like this:

The Model of Stages of Change
(adapted for stages of motivation for reading)
The Goals of MI

McNamara (1998) explains that there are five goals of using MI to help young people address problem behaviour.

| To increase Knowledge |
| To increase Concern |
| To promote Self-efficacy |
| To promote Internal Attribution |
| To promote Self-Esteem |

These are explained below.

1. To increase Knowledge

This involves helping the young person develop a greater understanding of the behaviour that is causing a problem. This could include having a better understanding of why and when the behaviour might occur and what the impact might be on the young person and those around them.

2. To increase Concern

This focuses on helping the young person to identify possible negative impacts of maintaining problematic behaviours (for example, by helping them to identify impacts on long-term life chances).

3. To promote Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy relates to perceived competency in relation to a specific task. For example, someone who is a confident mathematician may anticipate doing well on a maths test, while someone with lower self-efficacy may have lower expectations. In terms of behaviour, it affects how able a young person feels to do something about the behaviour that is a problem. Helping young people to feel in control of the situation will heighten self-efficacy.

4. To promote Internal Attribution

Internal attribution means that you ascribe behaviours to yourself and your own personal characteristics. External attribution means that you relate them to outside factors. An example would be blaming teachers for always picking on you. If internal attribution can be promoted, the young person is likely to take more responsibility for their behaviour and may feel more able to do something about it.
5. To promote Self-Esteem

Self esteem relates to general feelings of well-being you have about yourself as a person. It is easier to help the young person affect desired behavioural change if they can be positive about themselves.

Activities in this pack are designed to reflect the goals of MI.
## Evaluation Form - Motivational Interviewing Approaches to Reading

### Name:

| Preferred contact details: | (via school, email, phone, etc). |

### Introductory session

(Please comment on how useful you found the Motivational Interviewing Approaches to Reading information session)

### Follow up

Did you access any follow up support?  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Any comments about this?

### Materials

Did you use any of the activities with young people?  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

If yes, how many young people did you use them with?  

<p>| |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Did you work with young people individually or with groups?

If you used the pack, which activities did you use? Please tick all that apply.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading Motivation Questionnaire</th>
<th>Activity Three (Knowledge)</th>
<th>Activity One (Self Esteem)</th>
<th>Activity Four (Concern)</th>
<th>Activity Two (Locus of Control)</th>
<th>Activity Five (Self Efficacy)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please comment on any activities you found useful (and why)

Please comment on any activities that could be improved (and how)

**Young people’s responses**
Please include any comments about how the young people responded to the materials. Any specific examples would be really helpful

**Your work with Young People**
Please comment on any way in which the Motivational Interviewing Approaches to Reading information session and the activity pack has influenced your work with young people

**Other comments**
Please include anything you feel the questionnaire has not addressed

**Further questions**
It is hoped that it may be possible to talk to some people at greater length about using the materials. Might it be possible to talk to you about your responses if further information is needed? Yes ☐ No ☐

Thank you very much for all your help with this project. Please feel free to contact me informally at any time. Cathy
Appendix 7 (iv)
Staff session – session format and participant response

The tenor of the session was informal and interactive. Particular attention was paid to the theory underpinning MI and reading motivation. Staff were asked to consider a behavioural Model of Stages of Change (McNamara, 1998) and asked to think of a behaviour pertinent to them and what stage of change they might be at. Responses from the participants indicated that they were quickly able to relate the model to their own behavioural patterns, including dieting, smoking, organisation and exercise.

Staff were also asked to consider the Model of Stages of Change adapted for reading behaviour (see Section 4.3.3 of thesis) and asked to consider an aspect of their own learning that they might be able to relate to the Model of Stages of Change. Conceptually, this too was rapidly grasped with individuals bringing examples of learning an additional language, developing skills at evening classes and CPD within their profession.

The goals of MI were also explained and staff were able to reflect on their own experiences in relation to these and to the Model of Stages of Change. One interesting example cited related to an attempt made by a number of staff to gain a GCSE qualification in maths. Individuals within the group were able to recognise that feelings of low self-efficacy for maths had contributed in difficulties engaging with this programme.

In order to familiarise staff with the activities, the skills profile task from Session 1 (Appendix 3 (i)) was undertaken by all the attendees. This prompted positive discussion about the range of strengths held by members of the group, with staff recognising the skills reported by individuals (according to the profile) and providing additional evidence of these in a supportive and constructive manner.

References

Appendix 7 (v)
Transcript of focus group session with support staff

Italics – Staff comments

Normal type – CA

Number of staff present = 11 (10 female, 1 male)

Right. OK. I can… Anyway first of all, thanks ever so much for coming. I appreciate it’s the last day of term and everything’s really busy. Thank you very much. Just to explain again the rationale for me doing this. It’s part of a research project I’m hoping to write up for September, so obviously if people having managed to do things by today, perhaps if I could at some point to come and talk to people so I can get the data in. So if there’s a time I can rearrange with people. I don’t know what the best way of doing that would be. But that would be really good.

The purpose of today, I mean as far as I’d seen it, was that obviously when I gave out the information at the original session, there was a questionnaire in that which I wondered if people could give some consideration to. The aim of the research is to look at a particular approach which is actually a counselling approach and what the research has told us up to date is that certain groups of young people, particularly boys, particularly adolescents, engage less in reading and because they do that they are disadvantaged in terms of the progress they are making in relation to other groups of young people. Basically the more you read, the better you get. That’s the general feeling. So rather than focus on a programme of reading, what I was trying to do was sort of apply a counselling model to reading and actually see if by talking to young people about reading, about what they like about reading and so forth, then whether or not that would make them feel better about themselves as readers, or make them think about different aspects of reading… or perhaps even feedback to yourselves what is going to be helpful to them in terms of them making progress.

So, these [hands out sheets] are just questions I had in mind. Obviously this is just an idea for the session. I suppose what would be helpful is, if people have used the pack, to comment on that, but maybe also to talk about your own views about motivation and boys and what you’ve noticed. If people have had a chance to look at the materials, they may be able to offer a view as to whether these are the sorts of things that might be useful in working with adolescent boys, or boys with reading difficulties.

So what I was going to do was to tentatively work through these questions (obviously some may be more applicable than others) and just make some general notes.
Hello

Hi. Just make some general notes about each of the points and then just check those out with you to see if that reflects what people have found or what people feel.

Do you want me to read the comments that G’s put on here now?

Well, yes whatever. My first question was just to get general feelings about the materials and I suppose what would be useful to me to start with is, I suppose, just to get a general sense of the levels at which people have engaged with them. If people haven’t had a chance, then please say, but if you’ve maybe had a chance to reflect on the content of the material, even if you haven’t used it… Perhaps people could just go round and just comment on where they’re up to with things that would be really helpful.

Well G’s done all the activities here so you can take them if you want to and see what she’s done.

That would be smashing. Thank you.

But it looks like the general opinion is that the questionnaire was confusing.

Right.

The scoring method. Instead of ‘a lot like me’. One of the suggestions was ‘like a lot’ and then up to 4 ‘didn’t like it at all’. Because I think this, ‘very different from me’ and ‘a little different from me’ was confusing for the lads.

Right.

Yes.

You found that as well did you? Because, I mean I know these are example questions, but ‘I like ice cream’, you know and then there’s options ‘Very different from me’, ‘a little different from me’, I think it confused them. And she’s actually said that.

Yeah.

Where they found it confusing, it had to be explained several times and it affected the child’s confidence.

Right.

And he was reluctant then to continue with the other activities.

OK. And can I just ask, what was the suggestion for how the language would be instead?
‘I like it a lot’ for 4 and then down to 1, ‘didn’t like it at all’.

OK. That’s great. That’s really helpful.

*Then you’ve got your two or three.*

Yeah. Just to point out, that’s lifted from another reading questionnaire. It’s not something I’ve made up. It’s something that has been trialled but obviously I think it was trialled in America, so it’s standardised on a population of American pupils, so that’s really interesting feedback. Thank you. Maybe if we can just go round and... as I say, if you haven’t done anything, please just say.

*I did with it with Daniel. He’s a very poor reader. Basically he can’t read at all. So when I was doing the questionnaire with him about... ‘I read to learn new information about topics that interest me’, so he put a 1 for that, because obviously he couldn’t understand what he’d be reading anyway, because he can’t read.*

So some of the questions weren’t applicable?

No.

*Who did you do it with?*

*I did it with Daniel.*

*What was the... Oh, do you want us to go round in order?*

Yeah that would be really helpful. If you can all have a say that would be great.

*I’ve not used it at all.*

That’s fine.

*No, I haven’t.*

OK.

*The same as with Craig, who’s just gone out the room, the same about the questions.*

Right.

*Would it be any use to you if we did it with children who don’t read at all or can’t read?*
Yeah, I mean obviously the activities are designed to be used flexibly so in a sense the questionnaire is just there as a baseline, I’m not evaluating the questionnaire.

_So if I do the activities. I’m just thinking for the other ones._

_He couldn’t read it._

_No he couldn’t read it, but at least he’s got the idea that he would know, he would be able to give me the answers._

Well, I suppose if I was going to say, “This would be my ideal situation” in a perfect world, they would do the first questionnaire and then the activities and then the second questionnaire would be tried again and that would represent whether or not the young person felt more or less positive about reading. But the activities are designed to be used quite flexibly, so I suppose what would be just as helpful is to dip in and out of the activities if you think there would be anything useful in working with the young people. Or…

_What about a group activity?_

Yes.

_Because I do have a group of different ages. I could perhaps do it with them and then perhaps you’d get a different thing with… I’m just thinking if you have them on a one to one sometimes they [inaudible]._

And I think as much as the activities, it’s also the kind of ethos that it’s … obviously motivation is all important and if young people aren’t motivated to learn or if they are getting activities or resources or materials that, for what ever reason, they’re not finding interesting or stimulating then they’re less likely to engage in reading themselves and become sort of self-directed learners, whereas if we can tap in to what’s exciting and interesting for young people, then that can help us to find the most suitable interventions and at what stage we can work with young people, so that would be great.

_Well going off what G’s put in hers, would you have any objections to if we changed the wording at the top then._

_Absolutely not. Or I can do that. I can do that and fax that through if people feel that would be helpful._

_Still have 1 – 4 but change it._

Yeah, just change the language.

_Is that OK?_

Yeah, I can get that to you by the start of next term. That won’t be a problem.
So you’re going to change it over?

On the questionnaire one. Do you want all the materials that G’s done?

Yes.

She’s started that. She’s done all the activities. The lads written down all the books there that he’s read.

That would be great – or to get copies. I don’t…

That might be better because she may want to keep them.

OK.

So if I get copies and give them to you?

That would be brilliant.

I’ve had a go at it. He was actually quite positive about it. He enjoyed it. You know the one where it’s saying whether things are internal or external; he was quite pleased with the results of that, that he was quite internal, he was quite proud of the things he’d said or whatever. He seemed to quite enjoy it. On the other one, the activity one he [inaudible] and on the first one, the questionnaire, it was, I had to explain it to him – like you like something, you don’t like something, or somewhere in between.

So did it give you any insight to him as a reader? Was there anything you learnt about…?

Yeah. It did actually. It was quite interesting. I didn’t think he was as good a reader as he actually was. He actually is. He does quite enjoy reading, more so on factual things. He doesn’t like the [inaudible] and that sort of thing. He says he doesn’t feel any empathy towards the characters he is reading about. Not sympathising or anything. It’s very objective. He likes facts rather than stories. Like make friends with people in stories – not really that.

Well that seems to be sort of what the research is saying about what some boys like to read. That a lot of the school curriculum, there’s a high content about stories and fiction and that actually many boys prefer factual books, non fiction books.

And activity four – Can reading make a difference? He found that difficult. He couldn’t see what difference it was going to make to the job he’s going to get. He did say that, “Well it will help you get one,” but he didn’t know why and not will it make a difference to your lifestyle?

And do you think that was because he was actually having difficulties envisaging how that would be, or…?
Yeah, possibly. He didn’t really seem to completely understand the content of it.

Can I just explain on that, the kid he’s talking about can read but does have difficulty with emotions and obviously that’s showing in that. And that explains why this would be a problem or why this would be an advantage. Say he could read a story but if you asked him to pick out a part that explained why this person was feeling like that, he’d just pick out any quote. He couldn’t pick out the correct one to say well, “he was feeling like this because...”

He’d just pick out absolutely anything out, even if it’s nothing to do with it. If he does get some empathy from it, it’s because he’s just guessed at it, he’s got that particular one.

OK. The activity on internal and external reasons. Was he able to understand that once he’d done it do you think?

Well he didn’t understand it as such. He understood... like we went through it and he did it and he was quite pleased about sort of what it was saying about him and he seemed to catch onto what the general gist of it was. He was quite pleased about that, but I don’t think he really fully understood why he got things like... so he thought, ‘oh I’m doing well in these particular things’. He could see that external was lucky or it’s easy. That you can either work it out yourself or you can do it. If you’ve got the ability... but he was quite pleased that it was all about himself rather than other things. Quite pleased that it was him doing it.

No I haven’t done it.

OK fine.

And I wasn’t here when you did it.

Mine, Jordan, was quite surprised to know how many things you could read. He’d done it in a minute and a half, which really surprised me. He was looking round the room and seeing like play books and plays, but he was quite surprised how often you do read.

So would it be fair to say he got some insight into the range of things?

Yeah... yeah.

Did you try all of the activities?

Yeah, he got fed up by the time he got to five.

Yeah on the first few he was good, but he got tired.
Right.

So perhaps we should…

Break it down over a number of sessions.

So you did it all in one session?

Yes.

Yes.

And were there any particular bits of it that Jordan was more interested in, or less interested in, apart from towards the end?

Oh, I think he really enjoyed all of it.

Do you think there was anything else that gave him more of an insight into himself as a reader, apart from the range of things he read? The activity about what difference reading might make to his life. How did he find that?

Yeah, oh on this bit. He said about getting bills. Jobs he’d put. When you’re doing DIY you have to read the instructions.

Actually that’s the one [Learning Mentor] mentioned and she said it provided a good discussion about the importance of being able to read well and not just at school.

So I think that that activity four obviously is the one that they can see problems with. Why it makes sense to them to read. How much you do need it. It’s not just when you find a book, it’s to do something at school that they don’t want to do or they find difficult.

Actually [Learning mentor] did activity three – ‘Why read’. I don’t know, with her not being here, whether or not these are the boys’ suggestions or her own, but she’s put down ‘reading instructions helps you to build things’. It could have come from the pupil.

Yes. They are encouraged to fill those in. You know, to have additional ideas of their own.

That’s probably what it is then.

Yeah, he must of put that down. Reads instructions to make things.

And people who have not yet had the opportunity to try the materials. First of all, have you got the stuff you need, if you did want to and secondly, is there anybody particularly that you feel it might be useful for working with?
Well, I’d have problems because I work with children for whom English is a second language. So, I don’t think it would be.

Right. Anybody else?

Well that could be one of the ones that they added to this couldn’t it?

Possibly, yeah.

Cos obviously it would give them a better understanding of the English as well, wouldn’t it?

Yeah, I mean it’s fair to say… because originally I did the sessions with registration groups. But I just felt it was a bit difficult, because some of the boys responded very positively to the activities; those, I suppose, that were interested in developing their reading. Other boys seemed to feel that they didn’t want to do this instead of registration time. So, the boys responded quite differentially in terms of how they found the activities, but the whole group dynamics thing just didn’t work really, because the boys that were positive about it seemed to be getting stick from the boys who weren’t so positive about it. So, that’s why I was looking at it… because essentially the whole nature of the programme is that it gives you the chance to look at individuals’ thoughts about reading and their motivations, so, it’s kind of designed with a mainstream population in mind, but obviously it can be tailored and used flexibly, taking bits or doing shorter questionnaires.

I think there is benefit in doing them and looking at the comments and going through them.

What about… you know the Model of Stages of Change and the reading statements, where you’re actually mapping where young people might be in terms of their reading motivation. So there are a number of stages where you might be [reads examples]. Did anyone get any sense of where the young person might be in relation? How motivated they might be?

He put, ‘Maybe I should read more but there are plenty of other things to do.’

OK. So he’s perhaps at a stage where he’s weighing up the pros and cons.

The one that G’s done says, ‘I enjoy reading and I also have time for it.’

Who was that?

Craig.

Mine is One – ‘Don’t read and don’t enjoy it.’

Right, so did you have difficulties engaging the young person?

Yes.
Mine’s ‘Maybe I should read more but there are plenty of other things to do’.

So what I found, when I used this at a whole class level, is that you could pretty much match what the young person was saying about their reading motivation at the start of it. So if they were saying 1, they tended not to readily engage in the activities, whereas, if they were a 5 or 3, if they enjoyed reading or wanted to have more time for reading, the comments at the end of the programme seemed to reflect that.

When you first started I was in with you, wasn’t I?

That's right.

But there were a couple of boys, James was one wasn’t he?

I don’t know the names, but I know that some boys were far less positive about it and far less interested and engaged than others. And at the end when I took feedback and asked them if they wanted the materials and things like that, I could pretty much map what they had said at the beginning to what they said at the end. So what I’m wondering is whether this programme might reach young people that are already quite positive about reading, but perhaps does not necessarily address the needs of the young people that are saying that ‘I don’t want to read and I don’t enjoy it’ and what might have to be different for those young people to engage in more reading behaviour. So what was the response from your young person?

He’s just about starting to read, and he definitely thinks that when he did the what can you read – the number, he never had any idea about the range of things… I’m saying, “Look round the room, what do you see?” And he couldn’t grasp it at all. I’m saying, “Books, what else can you see, round the room?” And he couldn’t get that.

Is this a person with literacy needs, or does he have a range of learning needs?

He’s dyslexic. He’s not too bad now. He can sound words out but he can’t read them.

But you’re saying he quite enjoyed the actual activities.

Yes.

So you didn’t feel… when you asked him things about reading, was he happy to answer…?

Yes, ‘Am I a good reader?’ – he put 1 (Very different from me). ‘I like to create pictures in my mind when I read’, whether that’s because he’s just looking at pictures. So maybe he’s using pictures…
So you don’t feel that by asking him things about reading, that he actually resented that or was upset?

No. He just couldn’t get to grips with what you were asking him most of the time, like is he interested in reading? What can he read? He’s not really reading anything.

Right. And do you think that after you’d done that activity with him, did he have more of an insight into actually what reading was?

This bit here, where you said, ‘How often do you read?’; ‘Do you read books? – At least once a week. So whether that is just picking them up and looking at them. Newspapers, ‘from time to time’, Magazines, ‘once a week’, Text messages, ‘never.’ So he does have some interests but obviously …[inaudible].

Going back to what you were saying about the boys, that they like to read more factual stuff. If we go in the library with them, they can choose. Most of them want the Guinness Book of Records.

Yes.

Yes.

That is the main book they want to have.

Is that what they think then?

Yes the evidence suggests that.

It’s a male thing that they all want it…

And joke books.

Yes.

Yes, I mean the evidence suggests that from a very early stage that girls and boys actually read different things and read for different purposes as well. So girls possibly read more for enjoyment and to understand themselves in relation to other people for example. Boys tend to read more for the acquisition of facts and information and perhaps, well it’s arguable that that’s kind of gendered practice, that male role models read more factual information, whereas perhaps women generally read more… say, novels. There are all sorts of reasons why that might be the case. Whether it’s family expectations or school expectations or the expectations of other boys. Whether there are just gender differences in what boys and girls like to read and their reading behaviour.

You don’t think that’s something else, like when they’re in the library. They did tend to want to keep changing their book. Possibly because they’re not
getting into the book. And there was a box that had magazines in. Now they went down quite well, when they’d got magazines in. But they do want to change them often. Like, “I don’t like this, can I get another one?”

Some of them like the Internet or the computer. He’s put ‘Never’ for internet/computer. He says he reads books and magazines.

Right. I mean… I’ve got ideas about boys’ literacy but you’re, kind of the experts in actually noticing on a day to day basis what it is that motivates and interests boys and I’m just wondering… the materials are really to get boys thinking about reading, but I just wonder if there’s anything you can think of in terms of activities, that would engage boys more with reading.

What would get them reading more?

Yes. And I suppose to also give people working with the boys an insight into what would be helpful to motivate them more as readers. Is there anything else that would give you that information?

See at the moment, they’re mad on UFL cards aren’t they. If there was some sort of a game to do with reading.

So rather than a kind of worksheety thing.

Yes. We do have scrabble and things like that, but cards seem to be in don’t they?

They do like taking part when they read plays though.

Yes, I was just going to say that and they all like those where they put their own ending. You know like those where they decide which way to go. They like those.

Books that are there all the time. They’ll have a look at the one at the top of the pile and they won’t even bother having a look at the rest of them. It’s only when they get one they’re really into…

UFL books, isn’t it? Stuff like that. Once they’ve found books with big text and pictures, they go them for more so than text, so they’re not reading as much.

That one that used to have the [inaudible]. That was used an awful lot wasn’t it?

The one with the reptiles?

Yes, when they had to say [inaudible]. They were actually doing something as well.
We did a parent course a few years ago. It was like shared reading. They really liked that.

Do they do much shared reading in school?

No.

No. I think it was the parents. Parent partners it was… Reading pals.

It would be really helpful just to revisit and check things out just to make sure that I’ve understood the feedback correctly. So, just to check out with you that what I’ve recorded seems to be about right, then also, just briefly… What everyone has given me today has been really really interesting from my perspective. I really feel as if I’ve got a better understanding of the needs of the boys, but if people felt that they could… if they haven’t had the opportunity to try some of the activities out, then I’d still like the opportunity to maybe talk to yourselves and maybe to anyone who has been positive or negative about the pack. If some of them think, “Oh no I don’t want to do this, it’s really boring,” then it would just be nice to have the opportunity to actually come and have a word with those young people themselves, to actually try and establish a little more about their views of reading. So I don’t know if there’s a good way of doing that. To either pop back into one of these sessions or pop in and see people individually. I know people’s time is very precious.

Well if you want to come back in, I will make sure that I do this with a boy that I know will read them.

That would be super.

Then you’ve got a different perspective.

You be able to have more chance…then if you come back.

Well thank you for all your feedback. Regarding the questionnaire. Do you feel that it’s about the right length, if it was made more straightforward?

Yes I think its all right if the statements are changed.

I think if it looked more interesting.

Different text and that.

They think it’s like a test or something.

Right.

So that could also have an impact on it. They’ve just had SATs and then…
I had to sit and read Daniel the first bit and they say, “There are no rights and no wrongs”. When he realised that it wasn’t going to be... that nothing depended on the results or anything like that, he was all right with that.

So would it be helpful do you think to change the instructions?

They way I did it; I gave him the choice of reading it himself or me reading it.

Did he want to read it himself?

I just think anything like this when you give them a sheet... they’re not interested.

It’s not very visual is it?

Have it on cards.

Or if you had given him the opportunity to discuss the answers. Do you think that would have been different?

I don’t think they’re interested in it. I just think, anything like this...

Is it because it’s about reading or is it the way it’s presented?

Reading.

Reading.

No because when he reads a book to me, he’s really good.

I think if it wasn’t on white.

OK. So if I got some run off on a brighter colour or something?

I find when they’re getting books out for English, and if I’m doing some reading out loud with them. I find most of the boys want to come with me.

They’re fighting to come out to read.

So I think they do want to do it, but in small groups, because we can read a book and then the boys will have a bash at it. But in a classroom, they just clam up don’t they?

They all feel as if they’re there to help one another. There’s no competition and they enjoy it.

So it’s not necessarily that they don’t want to read, it’s that the environment has to be right to support that?
Because they could read silently in the classroom, whereas I know I can help to boost his skills, make him more confident in reading out, whether it be a play or a book.

That’s really helpful. Well thank you ever so much. If I can just quickly recap, as well as I can. There’s been some use of the questionnaire and we’ve reflected that the language of the questionnaire in terms of the descriptions isn’t very good and I’ll also look at putting it in a format that looks more appealing. Would having some graphics help?

I think that might help.

I think it’s too long.

Maybe for more visual readers…

I think maybe if you did five.

Some on each sheet.

So maybe if I look to break it up a bit more. Bigger spaces. Bigger writing. That’s all right. I can do that. Now, am I right in thinking that a lot of the boys you have used it with quite significant difficulties in terms of reading… or perhaps additional learning or social communication needs? Would that be fair to say as well?

Yes.

I have got quite a lot of insight from this session about the sorts of things that are useful to boys as readers, in that they tend to enjoy non-fiction books – The Guinness Book of Records, reading cards. They seem to like to read in short bursts. So to read bits of books, rather than sitting down and reading a lot. Joke books, magazines, games might be a way of actually engaging the boys. In terms of the actual activities, there seems to be a reasonable level of enjoyment and interest in the actual activities themselves, although perhaps some activities are viewed as more interesting than others and that can vary between individuals. The activities have given people some insight into other areas that can be explored, getting boys to look at a greater range of resources or thinking about how reading could make a difference to their lives after school. Some interesting comments about the sorts of things that can be useful to boys, which makes me think that the picture is quite complicated. So we might make an assumption than boys who have reading difficulties don’t particularly like reading, but actually what you are saying is that if the situation is right and they feel supported and they feel that perhaps other people aren’t going to say things then actually they are quite keen to engage.

And they help one another. It’s nice.
So it’s creating that kind of supportive reading community, which fits again with the parental reading group.

I think that was really good. Because it was before they started school. It was Year 6 and 7 boys came and then they paired up with boys that were actually going to the school.

Sort of a transition project.

Yeah. If they’d found something they liked in primary, then they brought it with them to secondary. Everybody got something out of it, the boys and the parents, because they weren’t just doing things in class, they were going out and visiting. We actually visited [name of] bookshop and the boys were actually given money to pick their own books.

I came on that reading pals for them starting in Year 7. I think there were only two parents that turned up.

No we had, it might have been…

We did one the year before I think because [pupil] was before then. I did it before that and it really went well.

So just to finish off, if anyone has had chance to complete this form or has any examples of work they’ve done with young people, I would be really interested in picking them up, but if people feel they would be able to come along at another session.

I just forgot all about it and it was having time to get someone to do it.

I appreciate you’re really busy.

But next time I could put more into it and do more.

That would be lovely. So if I arrange a time to come back in, is that all right?

Yes.

Yes.

Thanks ever so much for all your help.
Appendix 8
Redrafted reading questionnaire

Reading Questionnaire

Name……………………………………………  Form……………………………………………
Date………………………………………………

Have a look at the statements in the boxes below.
Tick or circle the one statement that is most like you

1. I don’t read much because I don’t enjoy it
2. I maybe should read more, but there are lots of other things to do

3. I would like to have more time to read things that interest me
4. I have started to make more time to read things I like

5. I enjoy reading and also have time for it
6. I used to read a lot more than I do now
How often do you read?  

Please circle the number that applies to you.

How often do you read the following when you are not in school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Every day</th>
<th>Most days</th>
<th>At least once a week</th>
<th>From time to time</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
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<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Newspapers</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer/Internet</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text Messages</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reading Motivation Questionnaire

The statements below tell how some students feel about reading. Read or listen to each statement and decide whether it is like you. There are no right or wrong answers. We only want to know how you feel about reading.

If when you read or hear the statement you think:

Not at all, circle 1  
Not really, circle 2  
A little, circle 3  
A lot, circle 4

Examples
The following three questions have been provided as an example. Please answer them by circling the number which best describes how you feel. If you have any questions, just ask.

1. I like ice cream
   1 2 3 4
2. I like football
   1 2 3 4
3. I like sprouts
   1 2 3 4
## Reading Motivation Questionnaire

1. I like hard, challenging books  
   - Not at all  
   - Not really  
   - A little  
   - A lot

2. If the teacher discusses something interesting I might read about it  
   - Not at all  
   - Not really  
   - A little  
   - A lot

3. I like it when the questions in books make me think  
   - Not at all  
   - Not really  
   - A little  
   - A lot

4. I read about my hobbies to learn more about them  
   - Not at all  
   - Not really  
   - A little  
   - A lot

5. I am a good reader  
   - Not at all  
   - Not really  
   - A little  
   - A lot

6. I read stories about fantasy and make believe  
   - Not at all  
   - Not really  
   - A little  
   - A lot

7. I read to learn new information about topics that interest me  
   - Not at all  
   - Not really  
   - A little  
   - A lot

8. I learn more from reading than most students in my class  
   - Not at all  
   - Not really  
   - A little  
   - A lot

9. I make pictures in my mind when I read  
   - Not at all  
   - Not really  
   - A little  
   - A lot

10. I like to read about new things  
    - Not at all  
    - Not really  
    - A little  
    - A lot

11. I like mysteries  
    - Not at all  
    - Not really  
    - A little  
    - A lot

12. I read a lot of adventure stories  
    - Not at all  
    - Not really  
    - A little  
    - A lot

13. If a book is interesting, I don't care how hard it is to read  
    - Not at all  
    - Not really  
    - A little  
    - A lot

14. In comparison to my other school subjects, I am better at reading  
    - Not at all  
    - Not really  
    - A little  
    - A lot
Appendix 9
Example transcript of discussions with boys in Study Three

Feedback session with Group C boys
13.7.05

*Italics – Boys’ comments*

_Normal type – CA_

…I’ve spoke to lots of people in school since then, so really both of those things have been really helpful. So what I’d like to do today is to ask you some questions about reading, to get your views about young people’s reading in school and also to tell you some of the things I’ve found out so far to see if they are about right. And then if we’ve got time at the end, I’ve brought some of the packs you did when I worked with you in the groups and I thought that, maybe if we looked at them, you could think of some ideas about how they could be improved and made better and more interesting. Does that sound OK?

Yes.

Shall I start by talking about the things I’ve found out so far and see if they sound about right? OK. So one of the things I’ve found out is that young people like to read a wide range of things. Some of the popular choices are non-fiction books, like the Guinness Book of Records, instruction books on how to do things, how to make things…

*Car books.*

Car books. As well as magazines and newspapers. And books, but some people are saying to me that they prefer books where there are pictures as well as text. I don’t know if that’s true.

Yes.

Yes.

Great, that’s really helpful. The thing I found out from the exercises we did in class was that young people are really very good at identifying all the different things they read and they’re also very good at thinking about why reading would be useful when they’re grown up.

[Pause]
The things young people read at school and at home can be quite different. I think young people were saying to me that they tended to read more books in school and that they tended to read more magazines, instructions, cheats for playstations, those sorts of things at home.

Yes.

Yes.

Young people like to make their own choices about reading. When I did the study, some people said they would like to read more and others said, “No, I’m fine as I am now”.

[Pause]

Having lots of interesting things in school to read might be a better way of encouraging young people to read than talking about reading. I don’t know what you think about that…

[Pause]

…And if you do want to talk about reading, it might be better to do it with someone you know, rather than someone like me. So they’re just some ideas. What about those things? Do you think they sound about right?

Yes.

They sound about right.

Right. I’ve got some questions to try and find out about what might by useful to help young people reading in school. Can you tell me about the sorts of things that would help young people enjoy reading at school?

Like get them to read books that they like… like that they’re interested in.

Miss, every Tuesday in our form we get the books out and read all morning.

You’d make them read?

Say to them, you can choose them, but most people don’t [inaudible].

I’m just going to repeat that just in case it hasn’t picked up. So you think… to make them read, because if they choose, they may choose to do a different sort of activity. You were saying books about areas of interest (cars and motorbikes) and you were saying you have reading time on Tuesday.

Yeah. Morning.

Right. And what sort of things do you read in that time?
Every type of books. We’ve got like car books. Where’s Wally books. Miss said you can bring a book in and you can read what you read at home.

So it can be different to what you’re reading at school. Are there any other things that can happen in class to help young people enjoy reading? [Silence]. What sort of books are you reading in English at the moment- can you remember?

Stories… horror.

We’re reading [inaudible]… It’s a bit or a horror. It’s got all creatures in and things.

Oh that [inaudible].

So the books you read in English – are they books that you kind of quite like – that you’re interested in?

Yeah.

Yeah.

Yeah. Because they’re about topics that we like.

We all like.

The Machine Gunners.

What our teacher does, she reads the book to us and then she puts the film on at the end.

So you get the chance to compare…?

So you can read some of the comments about it.

Sometimes we compare how the film’s different from the book. Sometimes the book’s better than the film.

And does the teacher choose the books or do you…?

No the teacher chooses the books.

I watched the video and it’s like eh, that’s boring.

I’ve read Machine Gunners but I haven’t watched the film yet.

We’ve also been watching that – what is it…?

[Boys interrupted by another pupil making comments].
Does it help to talk to staff in school about your reading or writing?

Yes.

Yes.

How do young people in school help each other with their reading, do you think?

They don’t help, they make it worse.

Sometimes people are stuck on words like, words they can’t read in the book and then people like, other people shout the word out.

And they laugh…right.

Yeah

The people that need help with their reading that don’t know.

And say the person can’t read that word then the teacher would say it out loud.

Miss, if they were reading a book together some people like go ahead of them.

Like the clever ones, they also go ahead, and Miss goes, “Can you read it?”, whilst they’ve finished it.

So is it fair to say that young people don’t really help each other? Do you talk about the different things you read?

No, not really.

If you said, like, “What are you going to do tonight?” and you said, “Oh I’m going to sit in and read a book,” they’d go… they’d slag you.

Why do you think that is?

Cos, you’re mostly used to going out aren’t you?

So is it that young people are expected to be going out rather than reading?

Yes. That’s what it is.

They’d prefer to all go out, but I’ll read the newspaper.

I read the Metro.

I read the Manchester Evening News.
That’s what I read, because it comes through the post or I get one from school.

So if you said you’re reading a newspaper, would that be OK?

If there’s nowt on on the night and I don’t want to watch any DVDs or that I’d go and get a book. Cos, I’ve got all that Chronicles of Narnia.

So you do read books at home…?

Most of the time, yeah.

Some games as well, like when they don’t talk.

So you’d read playstation games and things. Right OK. Well my next question, and you’ve kind of answered it a bit is ‘Are there things that stop you reading in school?’ Is there anything that makes you feel uncomfortable…?

With my young brother, but say you said you was reading, they’d slag you and all that.

Do you think that stops people reading at school, that they call you?

Yeah.

Or like the teacher gets text books out, to make you read and you don’t like it. It makes you not want to read anymore.

It wouldn’t stop you, but it would make you not want to read that much.

So can I ask you to imagine then? Say you were the prime minister and you were put in charge of schools and your job was to encourage young people to enjoy reading more at school, can you think of anything you’d do?

Put like another library or school or something.

Another library.

Better books.

Like the books are [looks towards library shelves].

Choose one at random.

What is that one about?

What sort of books would you like to see then?
Not that one.
That’s the horror section there.

Harry Potter.

Harry Potter – it’s too long!

Like five hundred thousand pages!

So are you thinking about shorter books?

Books you can like finish in about three days or something.

Look at this Miss [holds up a book called the Silver Brumby with a horse on the cover]. Why would a boy want to read that?

The Silver Brumby.

You can just read that on the back to see what it’s all about.

Boys wouldn’t want to read that.

They wouldn’t.

[Holds up another book with a pink cover] ‘Love secrets.’

So boys wouldn’t want to read that?

I doubt it because it looks in good condition.

[Reads out blurb] “I’m 14, I’ve got no love life, my best friends all…[inaudible]”

[Looks at library slip] Two people have taken it out. September 2000 and January 2004 so it’s not a book that people read.

So what is it about the Silver Brumby that makes it not very popular?

It’s got a horse on the front.

The horse on the front.

It’s girly… and it just looks like one of them old books.

Do you think girls and boys read different things then?

Yeah. Because girls like all them pony books.
OK, so you’d get better books, you’d get another library. What else would you do to help young people…?

*Do like a survey to see what books they like and then get more of those.*

What about in English lessons?

This week Miss, you know cos like there’s one week left and that it’s like you can go and do whatever you want. In English we’re just reading the book all week cos we’ve got to finish it. But she wasn’t in for two or three weeks something like that, but we were only supposed to reading it on Thursday but since she’s not been in, we’ve got to read it all but we would have been given work on them odd days.

So do you like having time in school just to read?

Yeah.

*I like when [inaudible]… then you can swap them and read them.*

And do you like reading in a group or by yourself or…?

Sometimes we just… I don’t mean to be tight or anything but people are dead slow and people read over you.

So would you like to read with people who read at the same level as you?

Yeah.

Yeah.

Right. Well if its OK with you, I’ve brought along the materials that we used in class, because what would be interesting is to say if there were any activities that were any good. If they’re any that you didn’t like and if something like this was going to be used with boys in school, how could it be made more useful. [Gives out pens and packs] So if you just go through the activities and if there’s anything you can remember about them or any comments you have. The first activity was about the skills you have – does anyone have any comments about that?

*Do you have to fill these in?*

No. You can if you want, but… Do you remember when I came to do this activity with you in class…?

[Boys become interested in activities].

*What does good sense of direction mean?*

*Are you allowed to tick two boxes?*
You don’t need to do these. Do you remember doing these when I came round?

[Pause].

Can I ask you then about the sessions in general? I mean… I got the sense when I was coming in that that wasn’t a very good time to talk about reading.

No cos everyone wanted to do the quiz didn’t they.

I realise it was a bad time and…

Yeah but a quiz is only a quiz isn’t it. Reading is more important than a quiz.

It is. But I suppose there might have been a time when it would have been better to do those activities.

You would have got better answers… and more information.

Right. So was the quiz a big factor; that it clashed with the quiz?

Yeah.

Right, because I didn’t know about the quiz when I came to do it. OK, so is there anything else that people thought about…? If I went and did that with another form say, what could I do differently that would help people enjoy it more?

Make it more fun.

Is it because there’s too much writing?

It’s all black and white. It looks boring.

You could have coloured pictures.

It just looks dead depressing and boring.

Too much writing and all.

And reading.

If it was coloured you wouldn’t mind it because it could be like that… but if it was colourful you’d say, “All right I’ll do that”. But if they just give it you in black and white on loads of sheets of paper then you just think, ‘It looks boring.’

So colour’s better than black and white. That’s a really good point. When I asked you to talk about things and then feed back to me and I wrote answers
on the board, you seemed to have loads of ideas. Did you enjoy talking about things more than writing about things?

[Boys engaged in filling in sheets].

You don’t need to fill these in if you don’t want to. I brought them along so that you could remember about them. I can see you’re all busy now… I’m just thinking. Is it better just to have the information than to have me talking?

No, it’s just something to do.

Colour would be one thing. Would it have been different if it had been someone else rather than me talking to you because…?

Because you’re a new person no-one would really want to speak. But if it had been our form tutor, they’d be answers flying out all over…

So you think this is important to do. Do you think it would be something young people would do if it was done by the form tutor and everyone did it?

[Pause].

You’re all busy with the activities now aren’t you? Shall I stop the tape recorder and give you a chance to look through them again and then perhaps when you’ve had a go at them again you can tell me what you think.

Yeah.

Yeah.

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So do you think that as a pack this is OK if we made it more colourful?

You’ve made it better by putting it in a folder.

Change that.

Activity Five?

Why?

Because there’s all those things.

A lot of writing? I mean, they’re just suggestions. You might not do all those things.

You can’t think of your own ideas. There’s just a list of things.
Any other comments.... No. Well thank you very much for your help today. What I'll do... When I've got all the findings together, I'll make sure I give Ms H a printout so she can read what I've found out to all the form. Does that sound OK? Your ideas will help us to think about the best way for boys to enjoy reading in and out of school. Right, are you OK to go back to lessons or are you staying here for the lesson?

_Miss said stay here._

Fine, its quarter to ten what time do you finish?

_Ten to._

Oh OK, so that's only five minutes. You're welcome to carry on looking at that, or get a book, or ask me any other questions about my research.

_Miss, are you doing it to like tell the school to get like different books?_  

Yeah, it's like.... I'm not in a position to tell the school to get different books, but what I can do is that I can give them some ideas about the sorts of things that young people are going to find interesting. Say for example, one of the things young people have said is that they like reading newspapers and magazines. So that's maybe something we could think about. Whether or not we could have more of those in school for people to read.

_[Picks up book] That's the type of book I'd read._

_'Ghost stories.'_  

_Yes because it's got short stories and it's got some pictures in it like that. Some of the books... the writing's just so small._

Do you use the library regularly?

_I come in every night and use the computers._

Do you borrow books from the library?

_You can do._

_When you come here, they want to go on the Internet._

_The moshers come in._

The moshers come in?

_Yeah. They all sit there with... You see those pictures up there. You're not allowed to... You're not allowed. There doesn't seem really any point because people like a lot of music, but when you come in here you're not allowed to play music on the computer._
You’re not allowed to bring your coat in.

But the moshers are… They’re allowed.

If say you’re in the queue and they start calling you and you’re calling back or something like that and they just say, “Get out.”

The people you’re talking about.

They think they own it. They put all their calendars up and all that.

So they use it as, sort of a club do they?

Yeah. And one of them’s in our year and [inaudible]

So are they in here cos they like books?

No they’re just sat there.

They give you passes and that.

They’re just like messing about and all that.

Well thank you very much for all your help. It’s very important that we understand what young people like and what they’re interested in. [Explains research again and how information will be used].
Appendix 10
Reasons for boys' underachievement (as described on the DfES Gender and Achievement website)

Q  What is the cause of boys' underachievement?

A  The gender gap is variously construed as resulting from:

- Girls' greater maturity and more effective learning strategies at all ages, and the apparent success of equal opportunities programmes in schools; the emphasis amongst girls on collaboration, talk and sharing;

- [Some] Boys' disregard for authority, academic work and formal achievement, and the identification with concepts of masculinity which are frequently seen to be in direct conflict with the ethos of the school;

- Differences in students' attitudes to work, and their goals and aspirations, linked to the wider social context of changing labour markets, de-industrialisation and male employment;

- Differential gender interactions between pupils and teachers in the classroom, particularly as perceived by (some) boys;

- The influence of laddish behaviour, the bravado and noise as boys seek to define their masculinity; the inclination of many boys to act in ways in line with peer group norms, in ways which protect their macho image - itself a form of self-defence for many boys; peer group pressure against the academic work ethic, resulting in male behaviour which is less likely to know to acknowledge and accept boundaries; the influence of personal and social development, including the role of language in boys' achievement. For example girls have been observed to develop their vocabulary sooner and acquire some language concepts (such as passive voice) earlier than boys;

- Boys' efforts to avoid the culture of failure, to seek explanations - through their off-task behaviour, their lack of effort in terms of class work, homework and coursework, their lack of acceptance of the aims/objectives of the school - for their poor performance in school, to protect themselves against failure and competition; the possibility of failure can lead to anger, hostility and disaffection; a 'can't do/can't win' insecurity leads to a 'won't try/don't won't play' culture, which leads to a self-sabotaging, anti-learning stance which in turn can be expressed in physical anger, fighting and dominance; such boys are seen to lack self-esteem as learners.
Reference