Motivation and learning

- When is learning motivating? When is it not motivating?
  - When was a memorable experience of motivation affecting learning?
  - What factors were involved?
What engages students in a task?

- **Expectancies** (pp. 98-102)
  - “What will it take?” [task expectations]
  - “How good am I at…?” [efficacy beliefs]: *(metacognition again!)*

- **Values** (pp. 102-103: interest; 104-105)
  - “Is this interesting?”/”Does it mean a lot to me?” [attainment]
  - “Is it important?” [intrinsic]
  - “What will I gain?” [utility]
  - “What will it “cost?”

**Goals:** What to learn (knowledge, understanding, ‘how to’); what arena (academic, social); when (proximal, distal); what “counts” (process, product)

WHAT IS “IT?”
Expectancies

- Task expectations
  - How calibrated to experience? Age effects?

- Self-efficacy beliefs:
  - accounts for 5-15% of variance in children’s school achievement

- Ability beliefs: younger kids less accurate:
  - 1st graders: no correlation between reading ability ratings & performance
  - 6th graders: $r \geq .70$
  - Young children are overly optimistic; react to failure w/ global negativity
Values

- Learning values from school:
  - Competitive vs. non-competitive (mastery) conditions:
    ✷ Competition decreases interest if children have comparative self-concept

- Value of an activity depends partly on beliefs about own abilities
Learner’s appraisal of task outcome

- Relation between outcome & self-concept
  - Attributions:
    - Internal vs. external
      - Self-serving bias: good outcome = me; bad outcome = outside forces
      - Gender differences? Emotional traits?
  - Development:
    - 5-6-year-olds don’t differentiate effort, ability, outcome;
    - older kids hold “entity” or incremental view of intelligence
      - Performance: Cain & Dweck: non-persistence, negativity in entity-believing 1st-5th-graders
      - Mueller & Dweck: praising kids’ intelligence decreases motivation (entity beliefs)
The glue: Affect

- The myth of “cold” cognition
  - All tasks are affect-laden (ex: Charlie)
  - Impacts values and expectancies

- Anxiety: curvilinear relation
  - Test anxiety: increases w/ age
  - School anxiety: extreme cases (1.7%)

- Changing affect for academic performance:
  - First signs of positive/negative emotion after success/failure: 30-36 mths.
  - Social emotions (pride; shame) emerge after 3 yrs.
Charlie & the myth of cold cognition:


Every Friday after lunch is writing time in English. Charlie (age 11) wonders what the topic will be. This is his most hated moment in the week because he has problems with everything related to writing. These have been pointed out to him since 3rd grade. The dreaded words come: “Clean your desks, paper out, pencils at the ready. This week’s assignment: write about a day you might have w/ Abraham Lincoln….Class, what are you going to look out for? Anyone? Yes Sandy?”

“No spelling or punctuation errors?”

“You’ve got it. This time I take off 5 points for any misspelled words, two for any word that is illegible….”

Charlie stares at his empty paper. It takes him 5 minute to get over the shock of the assignment. He feels his heart beating. “Fucking bastard” he mutters [not clear if he means the teacher or Lincoln].

Summary/Review

- Motivation is related to goals, expectancies & values
- Appraising task outcomes depends on attributions
  - Attributions depend on concepts (e.g., intelligence), which change w/ age AND experience!
- AFFECT ties together motivation & learning
  - Should we work as teachers to improve student affect? How? Should it be part of teacher training?