ACTION RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Is engaging with boys interests a useful strategy to develop their reading skills and enjoyment of reading?
Research Question

An enquiry into engaging primary school boys in reading.

- Investigate their lack of interest into reading.
- Is providing them with a variety of books on topics they are interested in and giving them a choice in reading preferences a key to developing their reading skills?
- How can I engage my students into becoming life long independent readers?
- This study will also aim to provide an insight into boys interests, attitudes and practices towards reading within the context of the school and beyond.
- What reading resources can I provide to engage primary school boys?
- How can I model positive reading attitudes to my male students?
Justification of the significance of this area of research...

- A number of recent Australian, British and American studies address an increasing concern about boys lack of reading skills.
- Boys in Australian schools achieve significantly lower academic results than girls (House of Representatives Report 2002)
- Teachers should be intent on motivating and helping boys develop reading skills to use throughout their lives.
- Be mindful of making generalisations.
• Literacy, more than any other competency, is essential to academic success.
• So, it is troubling that boys have been falling behind at every level for the past 30 years.
• Boys read less often than girls. Boys read less for enjoyment.
• Boys think girls are better readers. Boys have more negative attitudes about reading.
• Is the problem the reader or the reading? The assumption is that boys and girls are interested in the same kind of books. Are they? What if we could engage boys by encouraging their own interests? By encouraging their quests for facts and action?
• Boys want reading to be fun and functional and have a connection to their lives and have a purpose.
• Most importantly boys need choices. Having choices can make reading relevant and interesting. Is this the key to creating motivated readers? We know that boys want to learn. So let us give them choices and see if they can succeed.
Appropriateness of the topic for teacher research

Research indicates that literacy, and especially reading skills, have a profound effect on boys’ performance in all subjects, as well as their success in secondary and tertiary education, the workplace and their personal lives.
Independent reading will be a key feature in my curriculum
Overview of relevant literature...

Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Work Place Relations.

1. The Boys’ Education Lighthouse Schools (BELS) program was a school-based approach to developing and testing the effectiveness of strategies for improving learning outcomes for boys.

2. Boys Learning Dr Peter West

3. Boys Forward website: Dr Ian Lilllico

4. To be a boy to be a reader – William G Brozo

5. Boys in Schools – addressing the real issue R Browne & Ritchard Fletcher.


Action Research Approach/ Methodology

I intend to do my research with a mixture of qualitative and quantitate paradigms, employing various methodologies.

The participants in my research will be primary school boys and their parents. My mentor teacher and school librarian will also act as informants and supporters in my study.
Data Collection Techniques & Tools

I am considering the following methods of data collection:

- Handing out sticky notes and asking them to write down their interests out of school
- Student Surveys – To determine their interest and attitudes to reading and what books they prefer.
- Pre-test and after test of academic achievements eg. running records
- Structured and semi-structure interview with students and mentor teacher
- Unobtrusive classroom observations recorded as Field notes to determine level of engagement.
- Homework reading log in student diary.
- Literacy Circle.
Data Analysis Procedures

Analyse data from the student surveys which will contain 2 sections. One a rating system and the second open ended questions. I will use the data from the survey to gain insights into the reading experiences and interests of the boys. This data will assist me in selecting books and to develop strategies to engage the boys in reading.

At the end of the inquiry I will also be returning to the original survey data and comparing it to the results found from the same survey being given at the end of the inquiry. The comparison of the two sets of results will allow me to look for any changes in the boys’ interests and opinions of reading.

My analysis will be a daily review of my field notes in my reflective journal. I will need to make time each day to view my field notes & see where I need to make adoptions and adjust my strategies.

Analyse pre-test and post-test results of running records and academic achievements. Compare the homework reading long over the 8 week period and see if there is an increase in reading activities. Analyse the data of the interviews prior to research and after and compare.
References


Questions & suggestions
(please)
Thanks heaps...

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