



Measure of Enjoyment of Reading and Perceived Competence

WoW Research Team, Child and Family Research Centre, NUI Galway

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Background

This measure was created by members of the WoW Research Team at NUI Galway in 2009, as part of the evaluation of the Barnardos reading programme Wizards of Words (WoW). The members of the research team included Dr Noreen Kearns, Dr Allyn Fives, Dr Carmel Devaney, Ms Rena Lyons, Dr Patricia Eaton, and Dr John Canavan. Expert advice was received from Professor Morag Stewart of the University of London.

Description

This measure is intended for use with emergent readers, i.e. children beginning to read and in the first years of formal schooling. It records children's opinions of reading both at home and in school, and also their views on their academic ability in terms of reading and homework. More specifically, the measure asks whether or not children read at home and how frequently. Children are asked two questions about attitudes to reading: 'attitude to reading at home' and 'attitude to reading in class.' They are asked one question about general academic self-competence: 'schoolwork self-competence'; and one question about self-competence related specifically to classroom reading: 'classroom reading self-competence.' The scale for attitudes runs from 'really like it' to 'really don't like it,' and the scale for self-competence runs from 'very good' to 'really not good.'

Rationale

Children's academic self-belief can be significantly associated with reading achievement (see Hansford and Hattie, 1982; Guthrie et al., 1999; Chapman et al., 2000; Marsh, 2002; Valentine et al., 2004; Marsh and Craven, 2006; Marsh and O'Mara, 2008; Mucherah and Yoder, 2008; Pullman and Allik, 2008; Coddington and Guthrie, 2009; Logan and Johnston, 2009; Mata, 2011). However, conceptualising and measuring self-belief create their own challenges. Not only is children's self-belief increasingly seen as multi-dimensional (see Valentine et al., 2004) it is also thought to be unstable for emergent readers, i.e. those learning to read (see Chapman et al., 2000: 704).

Children's beliefs about self-competence are important, according to attribution theory, self-efficacy theory, and self-worth theory, for if children believe they can accomplish a particular task they will also perform better and be more motivated to select increasingly challenging tasks (Bandura, 1994, Covington, 1984, Weiner, 1985, in Jacobs et al. 2002: 509).

The child's attitudes to reading, in the sense of liking or disliking reading (Logan and Johnston, 2009), includes 'the idea of intrinsic motivation in the form of a positive self-concept as a reader, a desire and tendency to read and reported enjoyment of or interest in reading' (Sainsbury and Schagen, 2004, p. 374).

Piloting of measure

The measure was piloted in July 2009 on 16 pupils in a primary school in Galway city. Children were aged between 6 and 7 years, and they were in 1st class (1st grade). The school was designated as economically disadvantaged as per Irish government (DEIS) guidelines.

The measure was subsequently used to assess 229 pupils as part of the WoW evaluation. There were 113 girls and 116 boys; 131 were in 1st class and 98 in 2nd class. Children were aged between 5 and 8 years old (0.5% were 5, 48% were 6, 45% were 7, and 6.5% were 8). The children were drawn from 9 Irish schools in Dublin and Limerick cities. All schools were situated in socio-economically disadvantaged areas, and seven were formally defined DEIS schools. No further socio-economic data were collected.

Reliability

Reliability analysis for this measure returned a Cronbach's alpha value of .6. A value of .6 or greater is usually required to consider a scale reliable, although it is difficult to get high values with scales with so few items.

Administering of measure

To safeguard the validity of the findings from this measure, it is vital that those collecting data do not unintentionally influence the answers given by the children. Researchers should use a neutral tone of voice when reading through the two scales, to try to ensure the children do not get a sense of the socially desirable response.

The word 'good' was removed from earlier versions of the questions regarding the children's perceived competence. This was in order to construct neutral question wording and to minimise the risk that the children give a socially desired response.

The research team also decided to administer the measure at the start of the assessment process, rather than at the completion of the process. This was to minimise children's answers being influenced by their experience of the assessment process itself.

Citation

The measure should be cited as follows:

Kearns, N., Fives, A., Devaney, C., Lyons, R., Eaton, P., Canavan, J., (2009) *Measure of Enjoyment of Reading and Perceived Competence* (WoW Research Team, Child and Family Research Centre, NUI Galway, Galway, Ireland).

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Insert Child's ID Number

Begin with the following sentence:

“Now I am going to ask you a few short questions about reading, and what you think of it”.

(1.1) Do you read at home either on your own or with someone else¹ ?

Yes No

(1.2) How often do you read **at home**?

Every day Most days Sometimes

(1.3) What do you think about reading **at home**? Do you

(USE 1st PROMPT CARD FOR THIS QUESTION, READING OUT EACH OPTION SLOWLY AND ASKING CHILD TO PUT THE ‘HAND SYMBOL’ ON THE ONE THEY CHOOSE.

NOTE – THE ‘DON’T KNOW’ OPTION IS NOT ON THE PROMPT CARD (as it’s not part of the scale), IF THE CHILD DOES NOT KNOW MARK THIS ON THIS SHEET)

Really like it

Like it

Like it a little

Don't like it

Really don't like it

Don't know

¹ For example - father, mother, aunt, uncle, older sister or brother etc.

(2.1) (At school) Do you read with your teacher **in class**?

Yes No

(2.2) What do you think about reading **in class** (at school)? Do you

(USE 1st PROMPT CARD)

Really like it

Like it

Like it a little

Don't like it

Really don't like it

Don't know

(3.1) How do you think you are at your **schoolwork**? Would you say you are ...

(USE 2nd PROMPT CARD FOR THIS QUESTION)

Very good

Good

Sort of good

Not good

Really not good

Don't know

(3.2) How do you think you are at reading in **school**? Would you say you are...

(USE 2nd PROMPT CARD FOR THIS QUESTION)

Very good

Good

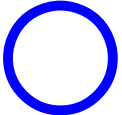
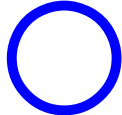
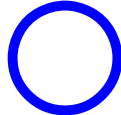
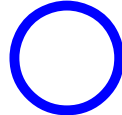
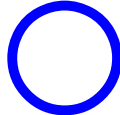
Sort of good

Not good

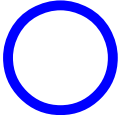
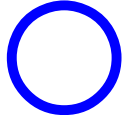
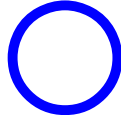
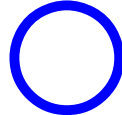
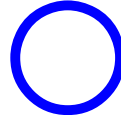
Really not good

Don't know

PROMPT 1

Really like it	Like it	Like it a little	Don't like it	Really don't like it
				

PROMPT 2

Very good	Good	Sort of Good	Not good	Really not good
				

This symbol can be used in the assessment process. The child can be given the option of placing the 'hand' on the chosen response (i.e. the place on the scale that represents the child's response).

