# Urban Student Motivation through Inquiry-Based Learning

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## Abstract

In 2008, the author attempted to determine if inner city student motivation using inquiry-based learning motivated students to learn the life skills necessary to become democratic citizens. This question 155155will be addressed comparing a traditional and inquiry-based lesson. The traditional lesson used direct-instruction as the primary vehicle for information. The inquiry-based lesson used a Mock Nuremburg Trial as the basic unit of instruction following the unit on WWII. The author used completion rate, participation, and retention to determine improvements in student motivation during the inquiry-based lesson. With the implementation of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in 2001. Schools across the country have been trying to improve their core curriculums. As the nation is beginning to shift toward Common Core Assessments, inquiry-based learning is one of the prominent vehicles in social studies education to promote the values of Common Core and critical thinking skills in students.

**Keywords:** Secondary Social Studies Education; Inquiry-based learning; Inner-city Education; Motivation; and Teaching.

## 1. Introduction

Many urban schools are trying to engage their students using inquiry-based learning. This trend leads teachers away from traditional teaching methods and requires extended time in the classroom and teacher preparation. In urban schools, both are precious. Students are not engaged, and there is little to no pressure from home to excel in school or learn the life skills necessary to be successful citizens. If students are taught using inquiry-based learning, will they become motivated and learn the life skills necessary to become democratic citizens?

This question occurred to me while preparing myself to work in an inner city school. My friends went to work in hometowns and smaller communities. They could not understand why I would choose an inner city locale with low student motivation and an even worse student environment. Being from the inner city, I wanted to help students like me with potential but little guidance. At the beginning of my career, I wanted to interest youth in education so they might achieve goals they may or may not have realized. As I was being taught inquiry-based learning throughout college, the theory often became my classroom practice. I wanted to help students not only learn the topic, but help them develop life skills. Now that I am teaching, I hold my classes to the standard that history is meaningful not only to understand the past, but to develop the skills for adulthood and citizenship. I wanted to study the effect of inquiry-based learning on urban student motivation.

## 2. Overview

The first issue that must be concentrated on is what inquiry-based learning is and how it is practiced in the classroom. Inquiry-based learning is defined as using open-ended questions the students must investigate to draw conclusions (Keller, 1970). Inquiry-based learning is where students try to find answers to issues and questions presented to them. This process allows students to develop skills necessary for higher-order-thinking and problem solving. This type of learning style creates an environment where students are required to individually discover information and become involved in their education in social science and citizenship (Newmann, 1975). Ronald Van Sickle (1996) of the University of Georgia finds that this type of learning, when specifically dealing with social studies, is beneficial because it allows students to find relevance in the materials and therefore be more motivated to learn. In *Education for Thinking*, Kuhn (2005) surmises that inquiry-based learning is beneficial because it allows students to develop skills that are necessary for citizenship and adulthood. Kuhn and Newmann theorize that inquiry based learning has many different aspects to contribute to the classroom and motivation.

The inquiry process is very painstaking for both teacher and student because they are forced to develop a deep understanding of history to be able to find an answer to high-level questions that usually test both mental and moral aptitude of an individual. First, students must have a great deal of content knowledge to be able to produce a well-rounded answer. Secondly, they must have a deep moral understanding so they may construct a fabric of morally acceptable historical actions. Third, they must be given the skills to utilize the moral and content knowledge to produce a resolution to the question or issue (Keller, 1970).

Once in the classroom, students will be guided using three steps. The first step is Inquiry, where students learn to question the validity and relevance of materials they are given. After this task is firmly implanted in the students, they can move on to Analysis. Here, students analyze materials given to them so that they may develop a deep understanding of the topic or issue to make a judgment. After students have a firm grasp on the information given to them, they make an inference about the materials. This is the third and culminating step for students where they seek to answer the issue or question presented to them (Kuhn, 2005).

Some debate among scholars exists on what the true focus of inquiry-based learning is. Newmann (1992) in Student Engagement and Achievement in American Secondary Schools, finds that the skills developed during this process are the most valuable aspect of inquiry-based learning. These skills are identifying bias, rational thought, creating persuasive legitimate arguments, and anticipation of what your opponent's argument is (Newmann, 1992). Newmann states that fewer topics explored in-depth would benefit students more. I tend to agree with his argument and firmly believe the general knowledge and skills gained during in-depth study are necessary to education and adulthood. Clair Keller (1970), in Adding Inquiry to the "Inquiry" Method, would also agree, but states that most schools practicing inquiry-based teaching are not providing students with enough free thought because of the materials chosen. She would suggest that students be taught the skills of inquiry, then be given open-ended questions that should lead to student investigation of the topic in the classroom. She stresses the materials that teachers choose should provide students with conflicting interpretations that cause them to seek information and hypothesize (Keller 1970).

In Education for Thinking, Kuhn (2005) finds that when selecting materials for inquiry-based learning, teachers must focus on relevant materials the students can connect with. When specifically dealing with social studies, relevance can be made by making the connection between the past and the present. By doing this, teachers are able to immediately grab a student's attention and make the inquiry connection necessary for engaging students. By providing students with the necessary materials and relevant activities, they will be able to find the connection to real life and begin to analyze the information. For example, when teaching modern China in a world history class, a teacher can relate the unequal treaties acts, communism, and slow industrialization to the current issues of outsourcing, unsuitable imports, and environmental impact. To make the past relevant to students, a teacher must link the effect the past has on today.

In history, all topics are not as easily related to the students' lives. For example, connecting the Ottoman Empire to present day American students is difficult. A teacher must find some relevance in each topic; whether it is by posing societal struggles within the country or studying the watershed moments that began its downfall. Each topic in history has a moment where it has either hindered human development or enhanced it.

Ronald Van Sickle also advocates using relevant activities and materials to motivate students. He states that, "if students believe that an academic goal is personally important to achieve, that the activities involved in achieving the goal is desirable, and that they are likely to

achieve the goal, then they will be highly motivated," (Van Sickle, 1996, p. 84). When trying to motivate students, finding relevance to students' lives is also equally important. Teachers must be able to identify and interact with students to find material that is relevant to them (Brown, 1988).

Once students relate to the information, they can begin to learn and develop the skills that are necessary to becoming democratic citizens, which is one of the goals of the inquiry based method. Kuhn (2005) provides two great examples of what the inquiry-based method attempts to achieve in social studies education. He uses two studies: the first of a middle school class with poor behavior management but high critical thinking possibilities; and the second a very structured class with limited critical thinking possibilities. The first class allowed the students to freely find information for the projects without the teacher scaffolding the information. This limited the students' abilities because they lacked the skills necessary to perform the task properly. The teacher did not have control of the class, but this might also be given to lack of associated relevance in the material. The work students turned in was partially completed and unlike the second class, which was very structured, but forced children into a passive role following adult instruction. Students completed all of their work, but did so in a manner to follow directions. In the second class, students did not learn to think for themselves or develop any critical thinking skills on their own (Kuhn, 2005).

Inquiry-based learning uses elements from both of these classrooms and suggests that strict teacher instruction limits the student's ability to think critically. This point is elaborated on by Teaching Thinking professor Dwight Gibb (2001) and six of his students. They found that inquiry-based learning is set in place to teach student the skills to develop critical thinking skills, not just completion of a task. These skills are necessary to help students as they get older to become democratic citizens that can take social action within their communities (Newmann, 1975).

When defining motivation, Van Sickle determines that three aspects play into a student's motivation goal value, means value, and goal expectancy. Each plays a key role in a student's motivation to learn. The goal value sets the stage for the students to ask themselves what they want to learn from the activity. Means value is a judgment based on the students finding relevance in the activity that will cause them to participate. Goal expectance is where the student decides on their chances for success. These three main goals and values cause the students to ask themselves if the activity is worth their participation (Van Sickle, 1996).

When the goal expectancy is not internal, some students can be motivated in other ways, such as using incentives that are both physical and mental. Van Sickle states that incentives are good because teenagers usually only see short-term goals, but teachers should be trying to enforce the notion that learning and competence is the real reward (p. 88). When dealing with difficult examples in history, such as the Ottoman Empire, incentives could be used until students can be taught self-gratification through achievement in school. There are many different types of incentives. Van Sickle finds that social incentive where public positive judgment is given to a student is helpful because it leads to status and influence. Newmann (1975) would also agree that the social support is necessary from the teacher and other

students to provoke motivation.

Means values can be evoked in students by using emotionally charged topics where individuals have a lot to lose (Van Sickle, 1996). This provokes students into learning the information in a way that it is not seen as overly threatening or boring. This motivation can also be given to students when using relevant activities that the students use or have seen being used in real life situations. (DeMarrais, 2004) This can be achieved by discussion and narrative story telling. Students are given personal accounts of a situation and have to figure out who is or is not telling the truth. This is a real life emotionally provoking way to motivate students.

This type of relevant activity is also important to students' goal expectancies. Students are not likely to attempt an academic goal if they see there is little or no chance of success. Just as public positive judgment helps students; self-image failure has the opposite effect. Stipek (1998) also states the same idea. She finds that students must think they can achieve an activity before they attempt it so that the risk of failure is lower and they are more likely to put in the effort to finish the assignment. She also finds that it is human nature to avoid situations where failure is expected so as to avoid being seen as unintelligent to your peers.

Another article by the Education Research Service (2001), Motivating Reluctant Learners, comes to the same conclusion but focuses on urban students. It states that urban students are faced with many obstacles to achievement; many of these obstacles come from the schools themselves by making courses too easy for students holding low expectations for them, or making excuses for them because of their environment. It advises teachers to use Relevance, Interesting Instruction, Satisfied Learner, and Expectations for Success (RISE). This acronym fits perfectly into Van Sickel's inquiry-based motivation where students find relevance in what they are taught. Because of inquiry, they will retain information better. Students will retain information better because of the hands on learning style that they are presented with.

Motivation for underachieving students has and will always be an obstacle for educators. Urban students they statistically fall far behind their more affluent counterparts. Some of this can be attributed to the environment and the lack of parent involvement, but is that the entire problem? How do different types of teaching styles affect students? I assert that it is not where the students come from, but how they are taught.

When beginning the task of seeking what the role of urban youth is in their communities and how they could benefit the most from learning inquiry based skills, I began to focus more on what their role in education is and how to motivate these students to participate within their schools. Newmann (1975) states, "to keep urban and minority students in schools and participating they must feel a connection to their schools." This connection can be created by using inquiry-based learning that focuses not only on content but provides students with an insight to their own everyday lives. This is most important when dealing with minority student motivation because historically they are less motivated than others.

Another issue is determining if inquiry-based learning leads to higher motivation in urban students. If we as teachers use inquiry as a place where students find relevance, they will be

more motivated to learn because of the personal connection that they have to the information (Kuhn, 2005). Also, if urban teachers choose materials that are relevant and concern local and state focused problems, students will then have a stake in their own learning, finding even more relevance to the subjects taught in class (Flyvbjerg, 2001).

Inquiry-based learning directly affects urban students because of their traditional lack of motivation and need for skills that are not presented to them at home. Students who come from homes with low poverty levels typically have parents who have little to no education (Educational Research Services, 2003). So, students who are not given the opportunity to develop inquiry skills are destined to complete the cycle of having low education and incomes unless they can be taught the skills necessary to improve their lives and societies.

### 3. Study Design

A. Research Participants

I will investigate the effect a mock trial will have on urban student's motivation. I am a full time teacher and graduate student. I teach ninth grade World History in an inner city high school in Charlotte, North Carolina. Out of 265 students, most are primarily African American. 52% were African American, 38% Latino, 5% White, 5% other, and >1% Mixed. Also, 44 students were English-as-a-Second-Language. 142 (65%) were eligible for free and reduced lunch.

This lesson was taught to my second block World History class. They are broken down almost identically to the school's make up. I have chosen to focus on this class because they have potential. Most are unmotivated for one reason or another. They usually perform most tasks required of them to satisfy the teacher, but lack the motivation to delve deeper into a subject to find real issues. This class contains 25 "C" students, but has the potential to achieve more. If students are taught using inquiry-based learning, will they become motivated and learn the life skills necessary to become democratic citizens?

B. Data Sources and Collection Methods

Data sources that will be used for this lesson are the handouts that students completed during the span of the two days and the flow and depth of the arguments that were presented in the courtroom. Students in my class have varying motivational levels. Some are internally motivated and others need external motivation from a teacher. Each role that is given to the students is designed to pull out the strongest aspects of each student. Before assigning parts, I have carefully thought about the interest and strengths of each student so that when assessing their part, their assessment would play to their strengths, but also give me proof of their learning.

The first type of data collection was the research handouts that students completed. Students have to present the materials to the teacher periodically so that all work will be completed. This will also tell me about student's motivation in regards to how they complete their work and the effect time has on their motivation. Completion of the research portion of the lesson is a vital part and must be completed if the students are to proceed with the trial section of the

lesson. The percentage of completed work will be weighed against the percentage of completed work done during a traditional lesson. This will help determine the motivational level of the students.

The second form of the assessment will be the trial itself. Students will be evaluated on the following criteria regarding their performance during the trial.

  1. Performance-Did the student adequately perform the task given to them?

2. Critical thinking-Did the student show any personal growth?

3. Participation- Was the student motivated in the task given?

This data will be collected from watching the video of the trial, where students can be observed individually for an extended period of time.

The third form of assessment is a writing assignment given for homework after the trial finished. Students will be given the EQ. When is one country justified in trying citizens of another from crimes they committed in their own country? Here they must answer the EQ using specifics from the research and trial section of the lesson followed by a brief opinionated section. Here students will be given the following criteria for the assignment;

1. Use of evidence

2. Grammar

  3. Sound opinionated section

  4. Following directions.

Finally, I will assess students by videotaping them and weigh the time that students are on task vs. the time they spend on task in a traditional lesson. The traditional lesson will be preformed just before this lesson begins and a teacher journal will be kept to view they progress. Motivation will also be weighted by the engagement, time on task, completion, retention and the amount of work completed.

C. Data Analysis Procedures

Analyzing student motivation is very difficult while doing this type of inquiry-based learning with real world activities. First, I had to analyze student behavior from previous activities and to find the difference in completion rates from other non inquiry-based lessons. I gathered the information from the traditional lessons that will be taught directly before this lesson. The difference in the research project handouts and other assignments will demonstrate the motivation that the activity gave the students. The trial will also help to assess motivation by the participation rate and the motivation of the students.

The difference between the inquiry-based lesson and non inquiry-based lesson will show the motivation of the students, but the homework assignment at the end of the lesson will be the final test of the motivation the lesson provided. Homework, in any form, is the smallest amount of work I receive. If students were motivated by the lesson, they would be more

persuaded to turn in homework.

Van Sickle states that students are motivated because of goal values, goals expectancy, and means value. Using these three components I can determine if my students are motivated. Goal value is what the student finds to be relevant to their lives in the material. Goals expectancy is shown by what the student's expect they can do on their own. This includes what they expect to learn and how much they expect to accomplish. Means Value defines how the material relates to their experiences (Van Sickel, 1996). Using these three components I will gage my students motivation between traditional and inquiry based learning.

## 4. Finding and discussion

A. Implementing the Research Lesson

The research lesson began after a week of preparation on WWII. Students were taught about the events of the war and the Holocaust. The students were given one day to research their position and take on their persona for the mock trial the following day. Students were not shown the official outcome of the Nuremberg Trials because it would interfere with them developing their own opinions, which is a vital part of helping students develop. Each persona was a created by the teacher because their were not any adequate sources that provided an in-depth sources for each of the 'characters' needed. were chosen by the researcher prior to the Research Lesson and were assigned roles based on personal experiences and individual student personality traits.For example, most students who were more difficult to motivate were given the opposite role of Judge or Plaintiff. Students who were more internally motivated were given the role of defendant and attorney. Placing the students in an opposite role that they play in society was a double-edged sword: they could have enjoyed the role or shut down. After implementing the mock trial, the former seemed to take place.

The research lesson began as a research day. Each group was given a handout to help them take on their persona. The attorneys and clients were placed in groups during the last 30 minutes of the day so they could begin scripting their testimonies and questions. As the students were preparing their roles, I walked around to make sure the students were gathering the proper knowledge about each person and checked each handout so the students could perform in the appropriate level.

During the Mock Trial, students were given a summary of the protocol and were allowed to perform their roles almost independently with as little teacher intervention as possible.   The bailiff was in charge of keeping the trial on track and on task. The prosecuting attorney was allowed to give an opening statement, followed by the defense. The prosecution called its first of four witnesses and the defense was allowed to cross examine. The witnesses were summoned in the following order: Ernest Cullesto (Jew) Mrs. Lupian (Jew), Ernest Kalterbrunner (Nazi), Albert Rosenberg (Nazi). After the witnesses were questioned, the students were asked to write a one page opinion paper. These were mostly taken home since most students did not have time to finish in class.

The following day the international law team was asked to present their findings on the outcome of the trial. The class then discussed the opinion papers and I helped them understand the central question and main themes of the trial.

B. Lesson Outcomes and the Interpretations of Those Outcomes

The following questions are based on the curriculum standards and definitions set forth by the state. Below are the questions that had to be answered in order to understand the research question:

Question 1: Does inquiry-based learning motivate urban students?

Data Collection:

1. Did the students complete all work assigned during the research day to their ability?

Data used: Research handouts given on day one of the lesson.

Results: 73% completed the entire handout to the best of their ability and 27% completed over 50% of the handout to the best of their ability. All students turned in this assignment.

Data Collection:

2. Did the students perform to their ability during the Mock Trial?

Data used:　Video of the mock trial

Results: 72% completed all the activity to the best of their ability, 12% completed over 50% of the activity to the best of their ability, and 25% did not complete the work

Data Collection:

3. Did the students complete the opinion piece to their ability?

Data used: opinion pieces

Results: 61% completed all of the writing assignment to the best of their ability, 25% completed over 50% of the handout to their ability, and 11% did not complete the work

Questions 2: How did the completion rate differ during the research lesson and a traditional lesson?

Data Collection: Percentage of students who completed the Research lesson versus a traditional lesson

Data used: Handouts given to the students during the research lesson and a handout given to the students during a traditional lesson.

Results:

Research Lesson: 63% completed all the activity to the best of their ability, 12% completed over 50% of the activity to the best of their ability, and 25% did not complete the work

Traditional Lesson: 68% completed all the activity to the best of their ability, 27% completed

over 50% of the activity to the best of their ability, and 5% did not complete the work

Question 3: Does inquiry based learning help students retain information compared to non-inquiry based teaching methods?

Data Collection: Multiple Choice questions from test

Data used: Questions on the test given a week after activities were completed.

Analysis:

  Questions from the Research lesson

1.      What is Anti-Semitism? 85 right and 14% wrong

2.      What caused the United States to enter WWII? 93% right and 7% wrong

3.      Why was Nuremberg chosen for the site of the Nuremberg trial? 78% right and 22% wrong

4.      What legislation came out of the Nuremberg trial? 42% right and 57% wrong

5.      Why did the United States not enter the war sooner? 71% right and 29% wrong

Questions from a Traditional lesson

1.      What is communism? 50% right and 50% wrong

2.      What was the Dawes plan? 71% right and 29% wrong

3.      Why did the US get involved in WWI? 71% right and 29% wrong

4.      Why did Austria give Serbia an ultimatum? 85% right and 15% wrong

Observation based of the findings of Questions 1 through 3

As the trial was in process, the students were very engaged and motivated to complete the trial to the best of their ability. Students who usually don't participate and very rarely complete assignments participated very well in the trial. They were active and their papers were very insightful. Some students who were placed in the main roles were very uncomfortable. They were unsure of themselves and their roles, but by the end of the trial they were very articulate and understood what was expected of them. Overall, the students participated and were motivated by the trial. This was shown in their desire to be perfect and requested to perform another trial at the end of the year on another topic.

Students who participated in the inquiry-based lessons were more motivated and retained information better them students who did not. The percentage was higher and of better quality of those students who participated. Ten percent of the questions were answered correctly from the questions given to the students on the research lesson then those from the non-research lesson. The students were more likely to enjoy the lesson, actively participate, and put forth greater effort if they were able to find meaning in the lesson and relate to the information therefore they preformed better on the test.

The quality of work during the research lesson was improved and was turned in more frequently than the handout from the traditional lesson. More students finished work to the best of their ability than when they participated in the traditional lesson. One more student completed the handout during the research lesson to the best of their ability. This confirms that the research lesson did help motivate some students. A certain percentage of students are guaranteed to complete assignments. However, borderline and inconsistent students had a higher percentage and better quality of work during the research lesson.

Throughout the assignments, the students asked very in-depth questions that would take them to a higher order thinking not covered by the handout. This led me to believe that students were interested in the lesson and motivated to learn the information for themselves. They felt that the knowledge was going to be used and perceived value from the lesson. When asked if they would like to learn more from the lesson to determine further motivation on the topic. Six students said they were either minimally or very motivated to still learn about the topic.

The mock trial itself did not go as smoothly as planned. Some kids did not take the trial as serious as they should. Even while being taped, the students did not contain themselves very well, particularly students that played a "minor" role. The international law team did not perform to the best of their ability. However, the majority of the students were performing at their personal highest level. These students formed stimulating questions and preformed their assigned roles excellently. They remained on task and driven, showing that the students gained something from the lesson. Many issues could have been solved with better overall planning, but the mock trial proceeded adequately and the lesson was conveyed to the students. If I were to repeat the activity again, I would spend more time placing students in roles that displayed their best attributes.

Overall, the students preformed as expected on the mock trial. The students were motivated and retained the information that was asked of them. They were excited and related to the information. They saw value and invested themselves in the mock trial, with participating students fulfilling objectives with interest. Even after the lesson and test, students were still motivated about the topic, and wanted to continue conversations related to it.

**5. Conclusion**:

A.   Findings

My findings about motivation and inquiry-based learning coincided with my research. Relevance and inquiry leads to student motivation, which inadvertently helps students retain information better because they are active participants. Students find relevance through the development of inquiry skills and are motivated to perform up to their ability so that they can use these skills that they have learned. This research project helped my students understand how a major theme of the Holocaust was the division of people and how others interpreted those events differently, even though they saw the same act occurring. Other students found that when they were actively participating they retained more information on the test and preformed better in class. Many of the students were able to use inquiry-based questions and activities to understand the courts process and helped them answer the central question of

when people are justified in intervening to prevent or rectify an atrocity committed in another country.

Inquiry-based learning or active learning leads to student motivation and retention and it helps students gain valuable skills when performing an activity. I found that motivation, retention, critical thinking, and participation improved greatly in all of my students who participated in the activity. The hardest aspect for my students to grasp was that the Holocaust effected people differently. For example, some students had to learn that not all the Nazi's wanted or knew what was really happening during the "Final Solution." Others had to find out that Holocaust victims were treated poorly and that many inhumane activities were committed against them.

The ideologies of these two authors and their different approaches are what I intended to cover with my activity. The students were given the skills and then allowed to investigate the topic in the classroom with some guidance from the teacher during the mock trial. However, I found that the mock trial could have been preformed better if I did not underestimate the motivation and inquiry skills of my students. The students preformed well given the situation and lack of faith by the teacher. The teacher should strive to help students be original and focused, with some structure, but left independently to investigate the topic as Keller suggests. Over-scaffolding the mock trial led the students into simple organized questioning when, if left free to investigate, they could have exceeded the expectation placed upon them.

When teaching life skills as Newmann (1975) and Keller (1970) advocate, students need to be taught these skills then left to use them to investigate their surroundings. By binding my students to a simple detailed scaffold they were unable to put the life skills they were taught to work. This inhibited the outcome of the mock trial and prohibited the creativity of my students. Keller's progressive idea to let students investigate the topic alone would have been a better form of teaching a mock trial. However, I would speculate that this would only work if students were previously motivated about the topic before allowed to research.

B. Weaknesses of the Mock Trial

A mock trial is a very intricate activity to maneuver in the class and has many working parts. All students have to be focused and participating for the activity to be a success. The lesson suffered because I was not prepared earlier in the year for such an activity. The lack of planning on previous units created a detrimental after-effect when trying to get my students to build skills while still in the inquiry/research stage of the activity. If I was to do the lesson over I would have the students to perfect many of the skills we used in the lesson. The lack of motivation of some of the students was counteracted by the over-enthusiasm of some, but each had its effect on the activity (shown in the video). The activity could have been planned differently if this were anticipated. The lack of anticipation of the activity date within the time constraints of the approaching end of the year led to some areas of the activity being poorly prepared. One section that needed to be better prepared was the research day. Students should have been given more well-rounded and thoughtful questions. However, given the student's performance of an inquiry-based activity, most exhibited understanding and critical thinking.

C. Strengths of a Mock Trial

The mock trial was a very exciting activity because the students were allowed to control the classroom but also had to work together. Those students that rose to the occasion and excelled were mostly students who are aware of their grades and were internally motivated. Some students that usually do not perform well excelled, possibly because of the roles they were placed in during the mock trial. One student who is consistently disciplined was given the position of judge and acted accordingly. He was socially motivated by his peers to participate and fill his role as his peers thought it should be. The results might have been different if all the students were able to have a leading role in the trial. Only about one-half of the students were able to have leading roles in the trial and the others caused the majority of bad grades and lack of motivation in their research, trial work, and performance. More leading roles could have been produced with more preparation and inquiry time for the students and teacher.

D. Recommendations to Teachers

After I finished the activity and was reflecting on the outcome, five major points of improvement arose to make this activity excel. First, follow Keller's advice and trust the students' inquiry abilities. With the use of the internet, the students should have been able to find information independently. The students did not have free reign of the subjects chosen, because they were a compilation of different individuals created by the teacher, for the sole purpose of the study.   Second, complex activities can work. If all students were allowed to participate in larger roles, motivation, participation, and behavior would improve greatly. Those students who felt left out were the ones that caused the major disruptions and did not perform as well on the test or on the handouts. Third, students' internal motivations seem to exceed their everyday motivations during an intricate project. They are more prone to focusing and performing to their best when they know that they are relied upon to make an activity successful. Vansickel (1996) would call this social motivation, where students are expected by their peers to act a certain way. This expectation allows for students to be externally motivated by the need for acceptance. Fourth, students also discovered their personal niche that causes the student to perform at a high level. Some students worked well with in their comfort zone, while others did best while in different roles that took them out of their normal routine. This was shown best in the example of the judge. He was a behavior problem for most of the semester, but as shown in the video, he was motivated and participated in the activity to the best of his ability. He was never a behavior issue during the activity because he took his role seriously. Fifth and finally, utilize better scaffolding in the beginning of the year. The final activity was not decided and planned until a few weeks before the activity was implemented. If the activity was planned long before the semester began, the students could have been more prepared and could have established the building blocks of inquiry. If more planning time was given in the beginning of the year, students would have been taught independent research skills, taught how to create questions, and how courts are run in the United States. They had preformed many smaller inquiry-based activities throughout the year but none were as demanding as the mock trial. If any advice is given, it would be to have the students be more inquiry-savvy. This would have been accomplished if

the students were taught and able to use the skills needed for the activity before the mock trial. Overall, the research lesson showed that students can and will be more motivated if taught using inquiry-based activities.

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