

Academic Self-Regulation Questionnaire (SRQ-A)

This questionnaire concerns the reasons why children do their school work. The scale was developed for students in late elementary and middle school. (The comparable SRQ for adults is referred to as the Learning Self-Regulation Questionnaire.) Consequently, its format is slightly different from the format of the Self-Regulation Questionnaires intended for adults. First, the responses to each item are on a 4-point scale rather than a 7-point scale because we have found that more than 4 possible responses is not optimal for the children who complete the questionnaire who are as young as about 8 years of age. Second, we typically have the children respond right on the questionnaire by circling the correct response rather than using an answer sheet. Again, this is easier, especially when doing a group administration to a class of students. Of course it is more work for the researcher to get the information off the questionnaires, but it is worth the trade off. Third, there are more items on the SRQs for children than the SRQs for adults in order to ensure good reliability. Fourth, the “very true” response comes first for each item, whereas on the adult questionnaire it comes last. To score the scale: Very True is scored 4; Sort of True is scored 3; Not Very True is scored 2; and Not at All True is scored 1. This way, a higher score will indicate a higher level of endorsement of that regulatory style. The SRQ-A uses four subscales: external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, and intrinsic motivation.

Two versions of the scale. There are two versions of the SRQ-A. The first version is the one that has been used in many studies of school children. It asks four questions about why students do various school related behaviors. Each question is followed by several responses that represent the 4 regulatory styles used in this scale. Validation of this scale is presented in Ryan and Connell (1989). The second version of the SRQ-A, which is a modification of the first, was created for students with Learning Disabilities. In a study of students with LD (Deci, Hodges, Pierson, & Tomassone, 1992), we found that the standard format was too difficult. So, rather than having one question with several responses, every item is formulated as a separate question. The items still represent the responses to the same 4 questions as in the standard version of the scale, but they are written so the children will understand them more easily. Also, we changed the wording of the four responses to make them easier for the children. In this version, Always is scored 4; Most of the Time is scored 3; Sometimes is scored 2; and Never is scored 1. Scoring information for each version of the scale is after that version. First we present the standard version; then we present the version for students with LD.

The Scale (standard version)

WHY I DO THINGS

Name: _____

Age: _____

Grade: _____ () Boy or Girl ()

Teacher:

A. Why do I do my homework?

1. Because I want the teacher to think I'm a good student.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

2. Because I'll get in trouble if I don't.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

3. Because it's fun.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

4. Because I will feel bad about myself if I don't do it.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

5. Because I want to understand the subject.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

6. Because that's what I'm supposed to do.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

7. Because I enjoy doing my homework.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

8. Because it's important to me to do my homework.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

B. Why do I work on my classwork?

9. So that the teacher won't yell at me.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

10. Because I want the teacher to think I'm a good student.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

11. Because I want to learn new things.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

12. Because I'll be ashamed of myself if it didn't get done.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

13. Because it's fun.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

14. Because that's the rule.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

15. Because I enjoy doing my classwork.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

16. Because it's important to me to work on my classwork.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

C. Why do I try to answer hard questions in class?

17. Because I want the other students to think I'm smart.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

18. Because I feel ashamed of myself when I don't try.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

19. Because I enjoy answering hard questions.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

20. Because that's what I'm supposed to do.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

21. To find out if I'm right or wrong.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

22. Because it's fun to answer hard questions.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

23. Because it's important to me to try to answer hard questions in class.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

24. Because I want the teacher to say nice things about me.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

D. Why do I try to do well in school?

25. Because that's what I'm supposed to do.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

26. So my teachers will think I'm a good student

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

27. Because I enjoy doing my school work well.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

28. Because I will get in trouble if I don't do well.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

29. Because I'll feel really bad about myself if I don't do well.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

30. Because it's important to me to try to do well in school.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

31. Because I will feel really proud of myself if I do well.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

32. Because I might get a reward if I do well.

Very true Sort of true Not very true Not at all true

Scoring the SRQ-A (standard version). First, you calculate the subscale score for each of the four subscales by averaging the items that make up that subscale. Very true is scored 4; Sort of true is scored 3; Not very true is scored 2; and Not at all true is scored 1. The four subscales are: external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, and intrinsic motivation. Listed below are the item numbers associated with each of the four subscales.

External Regulation: 2, 6, 9, 14, 20, 24, 25, 28, 32

Introjected Regulation: 1, 4, 10, 12, 17, 18, 26, 29, 31

Identified Regulation: 5, 8, 11, 16, 21, 23, 30

Intrinsic Motivation: 3, 7, 13, 15, 19, 22, 27

You can use the individual subscale scores in your analyses, and you can also use the Relative Autonomy Index (RAI). To form the RAI for this scale, use the following formula to combine the subscale scores:

$$2 \times \text{Intrinsic} + \text{Identified} - \text{Introjected} - 2 \times \text{External}$$

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The Scale (version for students with LD)

Why I Do Things

Name _____

Age _____

Boy or Girl (circle one)

Teacher _____

12. I try to answer hard questions to find out if I'm right or wrong.

Always Most of the time Sometimes Never

13. I try to do well in school because that's what I am supposed to do.

Always Most of the time Sometimes Never

14. I try to do well in school so my teachers will think I'm a good student.

Always Most of the time Sometimes Never

15. I try to do well in school because I like doing a good job on my school work.

Always Most of the time Sometimes Never

16. I try to do well in school because I will get in trouble if I don't.

Always Most of the time Sometimes Never

17. I try to do well in school because I'll feel really bad about myself if I don't do well.

Always Most of the time Sometimes Never

Scoring the SRQ-A (version for students with LD). As with the standard version of the SRQ-A, you first calculate the subscale score for each of the four subscales by averaging the items that make up that subscale. Always is scored 4; Most of the time is scored 3; Sometimes is scored 2; and Never is scored 1. The four subscales are: external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, and intrinsic motivation. There are fewer items on this version than on the standard version, because students with LD typically have a shorter attention span. Listed below are the item numbers associated with each of the four subscales.

External Regulation: 1, 6, 11, 13, 16
Introjected Regulation: 2, 4, 8, 9, 14, 17
Identified Regulation: 3, 12, 15
Intrinsic Motivation: 5, 7, 10

You can use the individual subscale scores in your analyses, and you can also use the Relative Autonomy Index (RAI). To form the RAI for this scale, use the following formula to combine the subscale scores:

$$2 \times \text{Intrinsic} + \text{Identified} - \text{Introjected} - 2 \times \text{External}$$

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Reference for original SRQ-A (the standard version)

Ryan, R.M., & Connell, J.P. (1989). Perceived locus of causality and internalization: Examining reasons for acting in two domains. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 57, 749-761.

Reference for the adapted SRQ-A (the version for students with LD)

Deci, E. L., Hodges, R., Pierson, L., & Tomassone, J. (1992). Autonomy and competence as motivational factors in students with learning disabilities and emotional handicaps. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 25, 457-471.

Other articles that have used the SRQ-A

Grolnick, W. S., Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (1991). The inner resources for school performance: Motivational mediators of children's perceptions of their parents. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 83, 508-517.

Grolnick, W. S., & Ryan, R. M. (1989). Parent styles associated with children's self-regulation and competence in school. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 81, 143-154.

Grolnick, W. S., & Ryan, R. M. (1987). Autonomy in children's learning: An experimental and individual difference investigation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 52, 890-898.

Miserandino, M. (1996). Children who do well in school: Individual differences in perceived competence and autonomy in above-average children. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 88, 203-214.

Patrick, B. C., Skinner, E. A., & Connell, J. P. (1993). What motivates children's behavior and emotion? Joint effects of perceived control and autonomy in the academic domain. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 65, 781-791.

A variant of the SRQ-A has been used in Japan, as reported in the following articles

Hayamizu, T. (1997). Between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation: Examination of reasons for academic study based on the theory of internalization. Japanese Psychological Research, 39, 98-108.

Yamauchi, H., & Tanaka, K. (1998). Relations of autonomy, self-referenced beliefs and self-regulated learning among Japanese children. Psychological Reports, 82, 803-816.