

DEVELOPING READING AND WRITING SKILLS THROUGH INNOVATIVE TEACHING STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT THE BASIC LITERACY PROGRAM LEARNERS IN THE ALTERNATIVE LEARNING SYSTEM (ALS)

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Every Filipino learner has a chance to learn the basic skills in reading and writing. These fundamental skills are the steps to develop the capability of a learner to read and write which are essential to establish his/her comprehension and self-confidence. Reading and writing are taught first at home but because of the different consequences that may affect a learner's interest to learn with what his/her parents being taught. The most common problems on why some learners in Alternative Learning System cannot go to school in a first place because they chose work over education due to financial constraint and lack of confidence to learn because they do not know how to read and write. Some other problems too are the long distance of school from home and a lack of financial support from parents for their children.

The Alternative Learning System caters the prospective learners with no learning experience yet at school or only grade one to grade two is their highest educational attainment. These kinds of learners are under the Basic Literacy Program of ALS. Hence, innovative, and effective teaching strategies used by ALS Teachers in instruction will help a lot to gradually develop the reading and writing skills of the BLP learners. Reading and writing are significant parts to be developed by the learners at the first stage. Continuous Professional Development Program of ALS Teachers like seminars/workshop related to reading and writing are helpful ways to obtain knowledge that will eventually apply in the class. There are innovative teaching strategies that will be used by the ALS teachers

to support BLP learners in learning basic skills in reading and writing. First and foremost is the use of technology during instruction. This could help learners arouse their interest to learn through observation and listening using a particular device. The second is the use of flash cards containing different words and pictures or the traditional instructional aids that all the words are written on the manila paper. The third is the printed tracing words that allow learners to trace a word to practice their writing formation. The fourth one is the social communication. This strategy can help learners to build confidence and word recognition through communicating with their teacher and peers. Finally, is the inclusion of instructional games during the learning session. It may help the learners increase motivation to learn reading and writing through active participation in an activity in the form of creative games.

Furthermore, developing the skills in reading and writing are perhaps the avenue also to establish the values of the learners. Therefore, Alternative Learning System is giving a chance to educate the learners under the Basic Literacy Program who wish only to learn how to read and write. The factor of illiteracy in our society today is a major problem that needs a necessary solution. That's why through education even in the ALS will always be there to give support and help those potential learners become productive citizens in our country.

Reading and writing are hard to develop for the learners without the effective teaching strategies used by the teacher. Applying innovations and current trends in reading and writing instruction will help a lot in order to improve the basic skills in reading and writing of the learners in plenty of time and sustain their learning needs and interests.

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