

THE READING ROULETTE: ACING GAME-BASED READING IN ARALING PANLIPUNAN

by:

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Every teacher is a reading teacher. This adage emanates from the essential role of teachers in empowering learners to communicate effectively through reading activities, interventions, and remediations in the classroom and at home. In the Philippines, the essential role of teachers had been encapsulated by the provisions of PPST (Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers) as promulgated by DepEd Order No. 42, s. 2017. It mandated teachers to use strategies promoting literacy among learners, making every teacher impart literacy as an essential component in instruction; hence, every Araling Panlipunan teacher is also mandated to incorporate literacy activities in the lessons.

In a nutshell, literacy describes one's ability to communicate and make sense of the world; that is, being able to read, write, speak, and listen. In Araling Panlipunan, there are a lot of materials that can be used to develop the literacy skills of the learners – from the use of primary and secondary sources, either printed, online, audio, or video, etc., up to the locally available resources found in the community. With the reported continuing poor reading performance of Filipino learners to international assessments such as the PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment), the call for teachers to ace the teaching of reading in their respective classes is at the center of attention nowadays.

One fascinating reading strategy that I found very entertaining and engaging for learners is reading roulette. It is a game with pictures, images, or photographs wherein the players need to combine words and letters with the pictures to get the correct answer. In my Araling Panlipunan class, I use roulette or a spinning wheel with pictures and words (concepts) associated with historical figures, places, events, artifacts, etc. Most of

the time I use concepts and ideas that are thought-provoking, leading learners to analyze and relate the words they have seen with the pictures on the spin wheel board. To make the game more interesting, I also use hidden word clues at the back of the wheel, which I make them read aloud (when working in pairs/groups) or silently (when working individually) if learners wanted extra help guessing the correct answer. Once the player or the group gets the correct answer, a reward in the form of a badge, point, learning pass, etc. is given. What is fascinating about this game is that it not only engages learners and provides a meaningful experience to them, but also helps them improve their literacy skills. More so, the use of reading roulettes in my class also redirects the attitudes of my students since most of them think that Araling Panlipunan is a boring, memory-based, and complicated subject to learn. But if the teacher can present the concepts and ideas in a very creative and engaging manner, learners will easily develop deeper understanding and appreciation, leading them to transcend to a higher form of learning. Hence, the use of reading roulettes, through its manipulative and gaming nature, makes learners active players in the educative process, ensuring a smooth transfer of learning and assurance that learners can effectively apply what they have learned in real-life situations through the connections and interactions they had developed inside the classroom. And more significantly, they will not only be independent readers but also communicative learners as well.

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