

## WHY IS SCIENCE DIFFICULT TO TEACH AND LEARN?

by:

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Among the learning areas in elementary schools in the Philippines, science seems to be one of the most difficult (if not really the most difficult) subjects for teachers and learners to teach and learn.

This can be attested by how the Philippines ranked in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) which assesses students' learning performance in the three (3) core subjects – Science, Reading, and Mathematics. The country has been lagging among the lowest ranks all over the world.

Science has been perennially one of the most challenging learning areas – both to teach and to learn.

An article published by Caduceus International Publishing in 2022, entitled, “Why is Science Hard to Learn?” shares some reasons why.

For one, it notes that Science requires the mastery of other subjects and skills –like reading, writing, and Mathematics among others. Learners need to have a strong foundation in such areas to facilitate easier learning in Science. Such areas are also among the challenges of public schools these days; thus teaching Science and making learners learn Science have become more complex.

Another is that science banks on heavy memorization of facts and general truths – one thing that is very complicated for young learners. This is because of the many different distractions in the environment – gadgets, the internet, bad study habits, poor parental support, and simply laziness. Most learners seem to find memorization a big

burden, if not useless. Most of them hate memorizing since they have been used to seeing and hearing everything at the flick of a finger, so taking time to memorize seems odd and futile.

Also, science presupposes abstract and nonlinear learning. Teaching and learning science requires understanding abstract concepts and ideas and relating them to practical life. This can be very difficult nowadays since most of the younger generation are visual – they enjoy and learn better when they see things. Science on the other hand, dwells mostly on abstract ideas like photosynthesis, digestion, and the like. These days, it is very easy to find videos and simulations of many science concepts; there is nothing like learning the actual thing. Learning is more perceptive when real-life objects and situations are experienced.

Non-linear thinking necessitates the identification of causal links between ideas and concepts. This can also be difficult, as youngsters seem to be having a hard time analyzing relationships and interpreting conclusions and results.

Lastly, the same article notes that science demands self-motivation and resiliency.

Learning Science, as it is a difficult subject, needs intrinsic motivation – the will, willingness, and love to learn the subject. Teachers must strive to develop genuine love and inspiration to explore the world and everything in between to elicit active participation and better performance of learners in a Science class. Since Science also deals with experimentation, testing, and research, learners must also develop resiliency – the ability to adapt to changes including failures when experiments do not yield expected results.

It can really be a challenge to teach Science in class and to make learners love the subject and excel in it eventually. Nevertheless, teachers will always find a way to teach this learning area in the simplest yet the most interesting method and strategies to help learners understand Science better.

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