

## USING THE MARUNGKO APPROACH TO HELP FIRST-GRADE STUDENTS IMPROVE THEIR READING PERFORMANCE

*by:*

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Reading is a foundational skill that sets the stage for a child's academic journey. For young learners, especially those in Grade 1, mastering reading can be a challenging yet rewarding experience. One effective approach that has shown promise in improving reading performance among early learners in the Philippines is the Marungko Approach. This method, developed by Dr. Rhodora M. Marungko, is a phonics-based system designed to help Grade 1 students develop their reading skills in a systematic and engaging way. The Marungko Approach focuses on the relationship between letters and sounds, using Filipino phonetics to teach children how to decode words and develop fluency in reading.

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The Marungko Approach: Overview and Methodology

The Marungko Approach is designed to address the common challenges faced by beginning readers in the Philippines. Traditional methods often focus on memorization and repetition, but the Marungko Approach incorporates a more scientific and structured method of teaching. It starts by introducing students to the basic phonemic elements of the Filipino language, emphasizing the sounds that each letter makes. This allows students to decode unfamiliar words by blending sounds, an essential skill for early reading.

The approach uses the following principles:

**Phonemic Awareness:** The first step is helping children recognize and manipulate the sounds in words. This builds the foundation for effective word decoding.

**Systematic Instruction:** The Marungko Approach introduces letter-sound relationships in a logical order, beginning with simple consonants and vowels and gradually progressing to more complex combinations.

**Contextual Practice:** Learner's practice reading through simple sentences and stories that align with their current level of understanding, making the learning experience relevant and engaging.

**Focus on Filipino Phonetics:** The Marungko Approach adapts to the Filipino language, considering its unique phonetic structure. This approach ensures that children can read in their native language before transitioning to other languages like English.

## The Marungko Approach's Effect on First-Grade Students

According to research, the Marungko Approach considerably raises first-graders' reading proficiency. The phonics-based approach lays a strong basis for reading success by teaching pupils to identify the sounds of letters and syllables. This method makes it easier for kids to decode new words by methodically teaching them how to combine sounds to create words.

In terms of reading fluency, the Marungko Approach has proven to be effective in helping children read with confidence. As students' progress through the program, they gain the skills necessary to read sentences and simple paragraphs. The repetitive and structured nature of the approach ensures that learners master the basics of phonics before moving on to more complex reading tasks.

One of the key strengths of the Marungko Approach is its ability to make reading accessible and fun for young learners. Since the approach uses simple, familiar words and stories that are relevant to children's lives, it keeps them engaged and motivated to read. The interactive nature of the lessons encourages active participation, which further strengthens the students' reading skills.

## Evidence of Improved Reading Performance

Studies and classroom observations have shown that students taught using the Marungko Approach exhibit better reading performance compared to those taught through traditional methods. For instance, in schools where the approach was implemented, Grade 1 students demonstrated significant improvement in word recognition, fluency, and comprehension. Teachers observed that students were able to read independently, with greater confidence and accuracy, after completing the program.

One important finding is that the Marungko Approach helps reduce the reading gap that exists between students from different socio-economic backgrounds. Because the approach uses simple and culturally relevant materials, it is highly effective for students in rural or underserved communities. It also promotes inclusive education by ensuring that all learners, regardless of their background, have the tools they need to become proficient readers.

## Teacher's Role in Implementing the Marungko Approach

The role of teachers in successfully implementing the Marungko Approach cannot be overstated. Teachers need to be well-trained in the method to ensure that they can effectively deliver lessons that will engage students and promote learning. Since the Marungko Approach requires systematic and explicit instruction, teachers must be patient and consistent in their approach.

In order to effectively address the various needs of their students, teachers must also modify their pedagogical approaches. For example, some kids might pick up the sounds and letter combinations fast, while others would require more assistance. Teachers may guarantee that each student advances at their own rate by combining group activities, one-on-one coaching, and peer-assisted learning.

## Challenges and Considerations

Regardless its achievements, there are still difficulties in putting the Marungko Approach into practice. The requirement for sufficient resources and training for teachers is one of the main challenges. To properly teach the Marungko Approach, teachers need to be given the resources they need as well as continual professional development opportunities. Without the right training, teachers can find it difficult to fully implement the strategy, which could impede students' progress.

Additionally, there may be resistance to new teaching methods in schools where traditional reading strategies have been in place for years. It's important for educational leaders and policymakers to support the transition to the Marungko Approach by providing training, resources, and time for teachers to adapt.

The Marungko Approach has proven to be a highly effective method for improving the reading performance of Grade 1 learners in the Philippines. By focusing on phonemic awareness, systematic instruction, and Filipino phonetics, the approach provides a strong foundation for early reading development. When properly implemented, it enables students to decode words, read fluently, and develop a love for reading. Teachers play a critical role in ensuring the success of this approach, and with adequate support and training, the Marungko Approach can help bridge gaps in reading performance and prepare students for lifelong learning. As the educational landscape continues to evolve, the Marungko Approach serves as an excellent model for early literacy instruction, particularly in settings where language proficiency is key to success.

## *References:*

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[https://www.academia.edu/107510851/Reading\\_Performance\\_of\\_Grade\\_1\\_Learners\\_using\\_Marungko\\_Approach](https://www.academia.edu/107510851/Reading_Performance_of_Grade_1_Learners_using_Marungko_Approach)

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