

STORIES AND SUCCESS: STRENGTHENING READING IN THE MOTHER TONGUE

by:

MARY GRACE N. BARTOLOME

Teacher I, Sto. Niño Biaan Elementary School

Lifelong learning is built during the early years of schooling, with each story told and every word learned forming the building blocks. For young children, one of the most effective ways to teach is through storytelling using their mother tongue. In addition to being encouraging and entertaining, hearing and participating in stories in their native tongue is essential for kindergarten students in the Philippines to develop solid basic literacy abilities.

When taught in a language they can understand, kindergarten learners excel. Children can relate new ideas to their own experiences when stories are told in their mother tongue. Children gain self-confidence and a stronger sense of cultural identity when they can identify with the characters and places in stories. More significantly according to studies, academic success in later years is correlated with early reading success.

This approach also aligns with DepEd's vision of nurturing Filipinos who deeply love their country and are equipped with the values and skills needed to reach their full potential and actively participate in nation-building. When young children are exposed to stories in their own mother tongue, they not only improve their reading and language skills but also absorb cultural values, traditions, and time-honored lessons passed down from previous generations.

Teachers need to be deliberate in their approach if they want to accomplish this successfully. It's important to choose stories that are both age and culturally appropriate. Fables, communal narratives, and local folktales can captivate young minds while

exposing them to moral values and linguistic frameworks. Prior to, during, and after reading, asking questions fosters comprehension and critical thinking. Dramatization, props, and images can all be used to enhance the experience.

Professional growth is also important for teachers in pre-elementary education. Section 56 of DepEd Memorandum No. 2011 was issued to ensure that MTB-MLE is implemented successfully, teachers are encouraged to participate in ongoing training. Consistent literacy development across classes is ensured by providing teachers with strategies in contextualized material development, phonological awareness, and oral language development.

To sum up, telling stories in one's mother tongue is a nation-building tactic rather than merely a classroom exercise. Young children who are taught to read and comprehend stories in their native tongue are not only better equipped for success in school but also feel more a part of their Filipino identity. This method of enhancing early literacy guarantees that no kid is left behind and that every child takes the first step toward a future in which they will be able to read, dream, and achieve success.

References:

DepEd Order No. 16, s. 2012 – Guidelines on the Implementation of the Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE)

DepEd Order No. 21, s. 2019 – Policy Guidelines on the K to 12 Basic Education Program

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