

## FOSTERING NUMERACY CONFIDENCE IN GRADE 4 LEARNERS: PRACTICAL APPROACHES FOR TEACHERS

*by:*

**Rodeliza R. Bautista**

*Teacher I, Happy Valley Elementary School*

For many Filipino children, mathematics is one of the most intimidating subjects in school. By Grade 4, pupils are introduced to more advanced lessons such as long division, fractions, and multi-step word problems. These topics often bring challenges that make learners say, “Hindi po ako magaling sa Math.” This mindset, if not addressed, can lead to low confidence and even fear of learning. Teachers, therefore, have a crucial role in ensuring that mathematics becomes a subject of discovery rather than discouragement.

Building numeracy confidence begins with connecting math to real life. When learners see how numbers work in their everyday activities, they begin to understand that math is not just about solving problems on paper. Teachers can use simple examples like computing change at the sari-sari store, budgeting a small allowance, or measuring rice when cooking. These familiar situations show that math is useful, practical, and part of daily living.

Another effective practice is to encourage active participation. Allowing pupils to explain their thought process in Filipino or English helps them become more comfortable with the subject. Even if their answers are not fully correct, recognizing the effort behind their reasoning builds courage. In a classroom setting where “hiya” or embarrassment often prevents learners from speaking up, this strategy creates a safe space for learning.

Confidence also grows when small successes are celebrated. A simple “Magaling!” or highlighting a learner’s solution on the board can go a long way. Recognizing effort, not just accuracy, reminds pupils that progress matters. Such encouragement motivates children to keep trying and to believe that improvement is always possible.

Teachers can further enhance confidence by making lessons engaging and playful. Math games, puzzles, relays, and even digital tools can turn difficult lessons into fun challenges. Interactive activities not only make learning enjoyable but also reduce the anxiety many pupils associate with mathematics.

Equally important is cultivating a growth mindset. Learners must be reminded that being good at math is not an inborn talent but a skill that grows with practice. Sharing stories of perseverance whether from community role models, local heroes, or classmates can inspire them to push forward despite challenges.

Fostering numeracy confidence in Grade 4 is more than teaching skills; it is about shaping positive attitudes toward learning. When teachers provide encouragement, connect lessons to real life, and celebrate progress, pupils begin to view mathematics not with fear, but with confidence and curiosity. In doing so, we prepare them not just for higher grade levels, but for real-world situations where problem-solving and critical thinking are essential.

#### *References:*

Calleja, C. O. (2020). Pedagogical strategies in teaching mathematics in the Philippines: Lessons for the new normal. *Philippine Normal University Research Journal*, 15(2), 45–60.

Department of Education. (2020). Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs). DepEd. <https://www.deped.gov.ph>