

## KINDERGARTEN: LITTLE LEARNERS, BIG ADVENTURE

by:

**MARLYN B. MANALANSAN**

*Teacher III, San Benito Elementary School*

The formal educational experience of a child begins in kindergarten. It is where kids first experience structured learning, social connection, emotional development, and creative exploration – it's not just about learning letters and numbers. A vital basis for learning and growth throughout life is established by these early encounters. Through inquiry driven and play-based learning, kindergarteners start to acquire reading and numeracy abilities.

Good early childhood programs prioritize developmentally appropriate methods that incorporate academics with play, curiosity, and hands-on inquiry. Reading and math instruction at a young age greatly improves children's cognitive development. Early reading and math abilities are even more reliable indicators of future academic performance than behavioral or attentional abilities. This emphasizes how crucial purposeful teaching is throughout the kindergarten years. Another important environment for social-emotional learning is kindergarten. Children acquire the skills of cooperation, sharing, conflict resolution, and appropriate emotional expression.

In the classroom, these abilities are crucial for creating a feeling of community and establishing good relationships. Circle time, group projects, and classroom routines all aid in young student's understanding of the framework of social life as well as cooperation and empathy. Teachers are essential in helping kids navigate social situations and modelling these habits. In kindergarten, play is essential to learning. Children explore new ideas, solve issues, and try out different roles through imaginative play. According to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, play helps kids think more deeply and use

higher-thinking reasoning skills (Vygotsky, 1987). These “huge experiences” allow kids to develop their creativity and critical thinking skills, whether they are building a block city, running a store, or exploring a fictional jungle. Play also promotes language development and physical coordination. In order to build a well-rounded learner, gross motor exercises like climbing, jumping, and running are equally as crucial as fine motor exercises like writing and drawing. In addition to being educators, kindergarten teachers also serve as learning facilitators. By offering precisely the correct amount of assistance, they foster independence and curiosity while scaffolding learning. The teacher-student interactions have a significant impact on student’s academic and emotional outcomes. Professional growth and ongoing training in early childhood pedagogy guarantee that teachers remain sensitive to the needs of young learners and the changing educational environment.

Kindergarten achievements are improved when families are involved. Children feel safer and are more eager to learn when families and schools collaborate. Research has indicated that greater social skills, higher school attendance, and increased literacy are all associated with family involvement in early education. Kindergarten provides a variety of avenues for family involvement, including home-based learning activities, classroom volunteer opportunities, and parent-teacher conferences.

#### *References:*

<https://www.firstthingsfirst.org/resources/kindergarten-readiness/>

<https://www.understood.org/en/articles/skills-kids-need-going-into-kindergarten>

[https://w.pauldowling.me/rtf/2021.1/readings/LSVygotsky\\_1978\\_MindinSocietyDevelopmentofHigherPsychology.pdf](https://w.pauldowling.me/rtf/2021.1/readings/LSVygotsky_1978_MindinSocietyDevelopmentofHigherPsychology.pdf)