

## LEARNING FROM A MIX OF MINDS: THE POWER OF A HETEROGENEOUS CLASSROOM

by:

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Teaching is frequently labeled as an extra ordinary vocation, and certainly it is. Especially if you're handling a heterogeneous class, wherein you'll be dealing with mixed learners of different skills, knowledge, and abilities to learn. As we all know, no two individuals are alike, each with their unique qualities. They learn in different ways and under different circumstances, so as a teacher, you must think of alternative strategies and techniques to cater to their needs and provide opportunities for them to learn in ways they understand best. In a class composed of fast, average, and slow learners, you need to be resourceful and flexible so that you can adjust to their learning levels.

I've experienced this situation because I'm a teacher of heterogeneous classes, and I can say that handling a different set of learners with diverse learning needs is not an easy task - it's very hard and challenging. You need to come up with various activities and exercises that cater to each learner's needs, considering their pace of learning. There are instances when you feel like giving up and just ignoring them, but your love and passion for teaching always prevail, so instead of giving up, you'll think of a better solution to cater to their needs and do what's right and best as a second mother and a teacher to our pupils.

Handling a heterogeneous class has its pros and cons. The positive aspect is that learners can help each other learn, allowing them to grasp lessons or skills together and progress to the next stage simultaneously. However, the negative impact of handling a mixed set of learners is that fast learners may feel that their opportunity to learn is slowed down because they need to wait for their classmates. Sometimes, they may be forced to

become leaders or tutors to their classmates who are struggling with the lesson, even if they don't want to. On the other hand, slow learners can feel out of place or develop low self-esteem because they think they're being left behind by their more advanced classmates. Therefore, as a teacher handling a heterogeneous class, the first step is to get to know your learners so that you can develop effective teaching strategies tailored to their learning needs and capabilities. You need to cater to all learners' needs, regardless of their learning level, to ensure that all learners have an equal opportunity to learn.

In a heterogeneous class, there is collaboration between fast learners and slow learners, where the fast learners can act as tutors or assist their classmates with difficulties in a lesson or an assigned task. Peer teaching or peer tutoring is necessary and a big help to ensure that no student is left behind and that all learners can learn from one another. The teacher can group the learners and assign advanced learners to help their classmates with difficulties, thereby promoting the values of cooperation, sharing, and collaboration among learners.

The Official Website of DepED Division of Bataan

#### *References:*

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