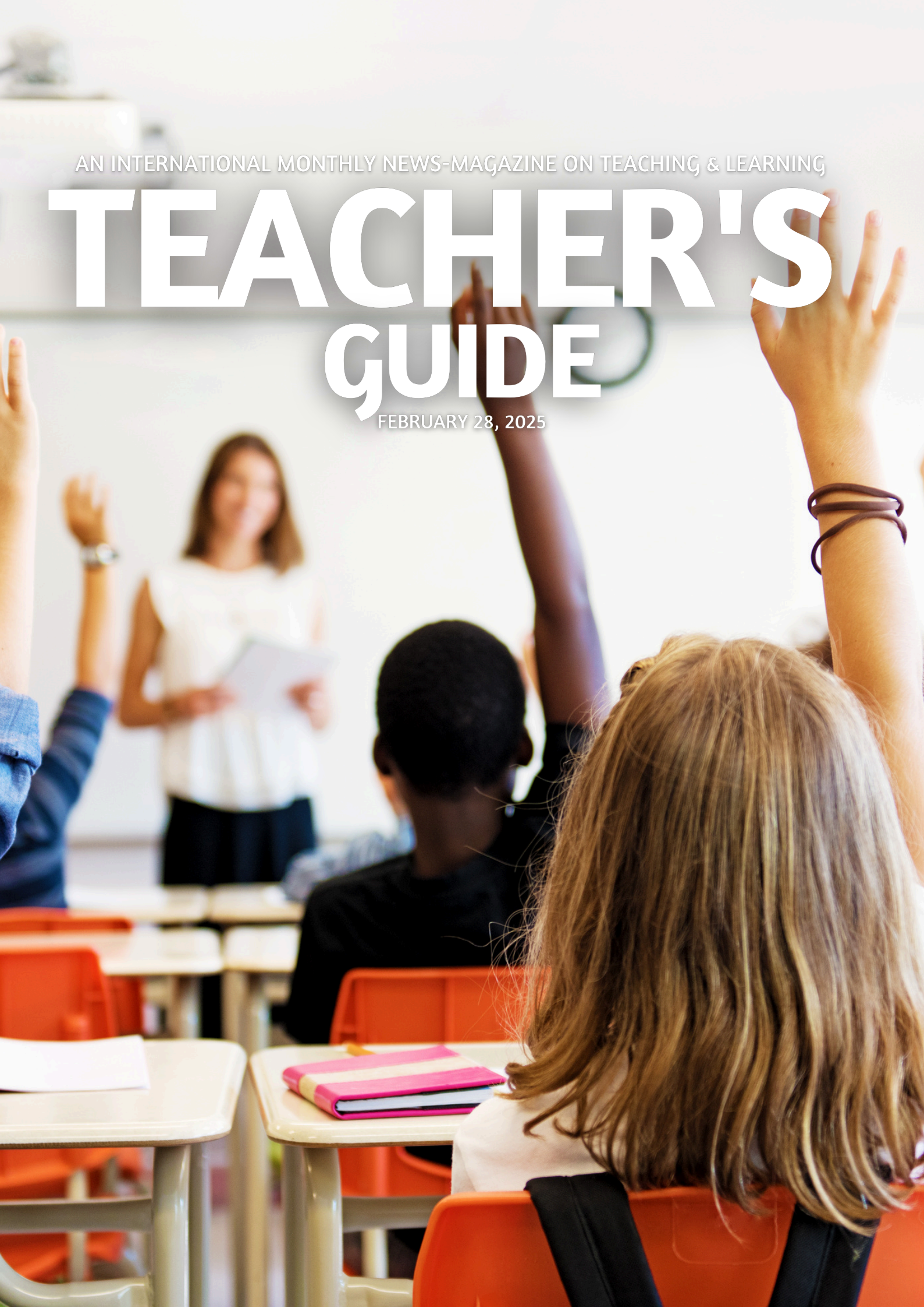


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Teacher's Guide

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In This Issue

Nutrition Tips for Students to Boost Focus and Energy by Mina C. Siapno, 1

Understanding the Effects of Technology on Student Health by Mina C. Siapno, 2

Building Healthy Habits for Better Student Performance by Mina C. Siapno, 3

The Role of Self Efficacy of Teachers in Teaching Strategies and Approaches in Inclusive Education for Learners with Autism in the Philippines by Michaela Glorene E. Jocson, 4

Culturally Responsive Teaching in English Education: Bridging Gaps in Multilingual Classrooms by Cherry S. Tolano, 5

Classrooms on English Language Acquisition in Higher Education: Investigating the Impact of Flipped Classroom Models on Student Engagement and Learning Outcomes by Cherry S. Tolano, 6

Patience and Passion: The Heart of a Grade 1 Teacher's Journey by Josepha D. Esguerra-Antipuesto, 7

Robert's Place ni Jandee A. de Leon, 8

Musika ang Buhay ni Jandee A. de Leon, 10

Tessellated: Fixing the Broken by Rozsi P. Tobias, 11

From Fear to Purpose by Lanny Merry N. Gallarde, 12

Bulakbol na Board Passer: Ang Kwento ni Ke-yam ni Keam Eric L. Malabayabas, 13

BuMPA (Buhay MPA) ni Junn Quirk I. Espiritu, 14

Sapatos ni Mary Jean A. Apuhin, 15

Ang Lihim ng Matandang Puno ni April N. Rolle, 16

Teaching Accounting to the Next Generation of Professionals by Leah Marie S. Urbano, 17

Advances in Accounting Research and Practices by Leah Marie S. Urbano, 18

Enhancing Student Engagement in Accounting Courses by Leah Marie S. Urbano, 19

Nutrition Tips for Students to Boost Focus and Energy by *Mina C. Siapno*



Essay

Understanding the Effects of Technology on Student Health

by Mina C. Siapno

The expanding incorporation of technology in daily life has manifested both positive and negative impacts on the health of students. On the positive side, technology has introduced several advantages in terms of learning aids, educational applications, and access to immense information. Nevertheless, overuse of technology has resulted in several physical and mental health issues. For example, excessive use of screens, especially from mobile phones, laptops, and other electronic devices, has been attributed to problems such as eye fatigue, headaches, and sleep disruptions. Students using screens for hours on end may suffer from digital eye strain, a condition developed from looking at screens for a long time without resting the eyes, resulting in discomfort and blurry vision. Furthermore, blue light produced by devices disturbs the creation of melatonin, a sleep-regulating hormone, leading to low-quality sleep, which is necessary for cognitive performance and overall well-being.

For students, technology presents both advantages and disadvantages. The internet has made a wealth of learning materials, educational sites, and virtual study groups accessible, revolutionizing the way students access information. But it has also created the threat of information overload, pressure, and distractions. Social media, in particular, can prove mentally unhealthy for students. Endless viewing of pre-typed photos and the pressure of projecting an impeccable online self may make people feel inadequate, nervous, and depressed. The web's addictive nature of social media and gaming can also captivate students for extended periods, causing them to neglect their study assignments, physical activity, and interpersonal interactions. Students tend to feel increased stress and lowered self-esteem as a result of the unrealistic expectations generated by online material.

While technology certainly has merits, it is important that students find a balance in its application to prevent undesirable health consequences. Establishing screen time limits, regular exercise, and mindfulness are all measures that can counter the negative effects of technology on students' health. Educational institutions, parents, and students themselves must provide an environment in which technology is employed in a productive and healthy way. Encouraging screen breaks, fostering human interaction, and instructing students on effective time management can create a healthier approach to technology. Through wise and mindful use of technology, students can unlock its learning and productivity potential without compromising their health.

Despite the many benefits technology offers students, we cannot ignore its impact on health. The secret to balancing health is using technology. Students can maximize learning experiences by putting a limit on screen time, taking adequate physical exercise, and cultivating mental health through self-practices. Schools and parents have a vital role to play in leading students toward more healthy tech behaviors and creating educational environments that support academic achievement as well as overall well-being. By grasping the impact of technology and implementing methods to reduce its ill effects, students can excel academically and physically while reaping the benefits of the digital world.

Mina C. Siapno holds an Instructor position, Coordinator of Medical-Dental Services of Pangasinan State University-San Carlos Campus. She finished her Bachelor of Science in Nursing at Virgen Milagrosa University Foundation. She obtained her Masters of Arts in Nursing at Lyceum Northwestern University.



Essay

Building Healthy Habits for Better Student Performance *by Mina C. Siapno*

Developing healthy habits is crucial for students who want to enhance their academic performance and overall well-being. In a world where the pressure to perform academically can sometimes be overwhelming, students tend to overlook their physical and mental health, which can, in turn, impact their academic performance. Establishing a routine of balanced diet, regular exercise, and proper rest is essential to provide students with the energy and mental acuity to excel. Nutrition is a vital component in powering the brain, with food high in vitamins, minerals, and proteins being essential for cognitive functions. Aiming for well-balanced meals every few hours that incorporate fruits, vegetables, lean protein, and whole grains may supply students with prolonged energy throughout extensive study sessions and enable them to stay alert. In conjunction with proper diet, hydration is just as significant to maintain optimal brain function.

Routine physical exercise is yet another pillar of healthy habits that can really improve student performance. Exercise has been proven to enhance mental concentration, enhance mood, and lower stress and anxiety levels—typical issues most students encounter along the way. It doesn't have to involve extreme workouts; daily activities such as walking, biking, yoga, or even small doses of cardio can be of help. Exercise boosts blood flow to the brain, conducive to increased concentration, memory, and problem-solving abilities, which are all important for success in school. Moreover, staying active can contribute to improved sleep quality, which benefits directly both cognitive function and overall health.

On the topic of sleep, students tend to undervalue its significance, sacrificing sleep for study time. Lack of sleep can take a significant toll on performance, with memory, concentration, and decision-making skills being affected. A good night's sleep is essential in terms of retaining information and having enough energy levels throughout the day. Experts advise that students get at least 7-9 hours of sleep nightly. In order to encourage healthy sleep habits, students can adopt a regular bedtime routine, drink no caffeine and no heavy dinners in the evenings, and restrict screen time close to bedtime. By ensuring themselves of good habits such as healthy eating, exercise, and sleep, students can equip themselves for achievement, not just in their studies, but in life in general.

Along with these routines, students must also take into account the value of mental health in pursuing academic achievement. Developing resilience, stress management, and a positive attitude are all integral parts of a healthy lifestyle. Mindfulness practices, including meditation or deep breathing, can reduce stress and enhance focus, resulting in more effective study sessions. In addition, seeking social support from family members, friends, or counselors may assist the students in coping with the emotional issues that usually come with academic life. Through a holistic strategy that encompasses both physical and mental well-being, the students can establish a balanced routine that not only improves their academic performance but also maintains long-term happiness and well-being.

Mina C. Siapno holds an Instructor position, Coordinator of Medical-Dental Services of Pangasinan State University-San Carlos Campus. She finished her Bachelor of Science in Nursing at Virgen Milagrosa University Foundation. She obtained her Masters of Arts in Nursing at Lyceum Northwestern University.



Scholarly Article

The Role of Self Efficacy of Teachers in Teaching Strategies and Approaches in Inclusive Education for Learners with Autism in the Philippines by *Michaela Glorene E. Jocson*

In the Philippines, only 2 percent of the targeted 2.2 million children receive adequate education, and the shortage of special education teachers is very evident. Regular teachers often receive students with special needs, despite not having professional preparation (Mendoza & Bolotaolo, 2023).

Educators encounter turbulence in formulating effective instructional programs and teaching strategies for students diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) (Ikhtiar & Parveen, 2023). High teacher's self-efficacy will have a desirable effect on a teacher's work satisfaction and performance. Hence, a decline toward a teacher's self-efficacy can negatively affect his teaching strategy and approach (Yulianti et al., 2018). Similarly, based on the research of Dixon et al., teachers who have more professional development tend to have high self-efficacy beliefs, and they were able to differentiate better for their learners (Porta & Todd, 2023). Therefore, self-efficacy is significant in fostering inclusive education.

Albert Bandura, an American psychologist, coined the term "self-efficacy," which refers to an individual's belief that one is capable of satisfactory performance. According to Bandura, examples of sources of self-efficacy are vicarious learning and verbal and social persuasion. Vicarious experiences involve bolstering self-efficacy through observation without being involved in a particular circumstance. One example is adapting an effective teaching strategy through observation and sharing successful practices. Through verbal and social persuasion, it entails receiving encouragement and evaluative comments from people, like colleagues.

Through further studies, educational sectors of our country may unveil the hindrances in the progress of catering to students with special needs, tailor programs based on the findings of the study, and foster inclusive education.

Michaela Glorene E. Jocson is an Academic Researcher at Upwork. She earned her Bachelor's Degree in Psychology major in Industrial Psychology from Bataan Peninsula State University.

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Essay

Culturally Responsive Teaching in English Education: Bridging Gaps in Multilingual Classrooms *by Cherry S. Tolano*

With globalization now at the helm of almost our day-to-day lives, multilingual classrooms have become the norm rather than the exception. English education, particularly in countries with diverse linguistic settings, faces the challenge of inclusivity. The goal is to ensure that all students, regardless of their native language, feel valued, understood, and capable of academic success. This is where culturally responsive teaching (CRT) comes in. This approach aims to provide an effective approach to resolving long-standing challenges by integrating learners' cultural backgrounds into the teaching-learning experience. This is done in order to foster engagement, comprehension, and a more equitable learning environment. Embracing linguistic diversity, using culturally relevant materials, and adopting inclusive teaching strategies can help educators bridge gaps and establish meaningful learning experiences for all learners.

One of the fundamental aspects of culturally responsive teaching in English education is acknowledging and valuing the learners' linguistic identities. Learners are not blank slates. When they enter the classroom they already come with a rich linguistic background acquired through their experience with their family and the community. However, this principle runs contrary to the traditional English instruction that often operates under an assimilationist approach. Instead of seeing students' native languages as obstacles and, thus, prioritize monolingual proficiency, educators should view these languages as assets. Maximizing bilingual resources, scaffolding techniques to support learning, as well as, encouraging students to use their mother tongue languages when processing complex ideas or expressing themselves creatively can boost confidence and engagement while facilitating deeper comprehension of English structures and vocabulary.

Using contextualized and relevant teaching resources is another important strategy in culturally responsive English teaching. The literature and texts from prevailing cultures are frequently the focus of the standard English curriculum, which may seem divorced from the realities of multilingual pupils. Teachers can maximize different language and literary styles using different learning materials like books, stories, and media, and connect these with real-life experiences to validate different cultural viewpoints. This method promotes critical thinking, empathy, and a deeper understanding of language diversity.

Another important factor in fostering an inclusive atmosphere for multilingual students is classroom pedagogy. Learners can benefit from differential instruction, whereby teachers develop instructional activities that would suit and address the varying language level proficiencies of learners. Another strategy that could help a lot is the implementation of cooperative learning techniques. Peer talks, group projects, and think-pair-share exercises do not just promote language development in real-world settings, it also allows learners to gain access in multimodal

teaching strategies, such as combining visuals, gestures, digital tools, and interactive exercises. Considering that teachers are classroom managers, it also helps to establish a conducive classroom environment that bridges gaps in terms of cultural and language differences. Taking time to learn the culture and practices of the community where the learners belong will also help establish enduring bonds. Also, since learning is a two-way process, it is important to give the learners the opportunity to share their viewpoints, experiences, and stories fosters. This will give them a sense of validation and respect for one another. Additionally, including communities and families in the educational process promotes bilingual development and strengthens cultural bonds both within and outside of the classroom.

Integrating these practices for multilingual learners is merely one aspect of culturally responsive instruction of English. A teacher can also consider redesigning the English classroom as an open and richly diverse community of learners that honors multiple languages and multiple cultures. Teachers can refigure learning English as a level field and enriching experience for learners by capitalizing on their language ability, making use of various texts, utilizing instruction for targeted learners, and creating an engaging classroom climate. In the process, these will empower learners with a chance to prosper in the multilingual environment by bridging the linguistic and cultural divides.

Cherry Sinas Tolano is a committed educator with nearly 19 years of teaching experience, which includes seventeen years in public schools and two years as an ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher in private institutions. She holds a Bachelor of Secondary Education with a major in English and a Master of Arts in English. Currently, she occupies the roles of Assistant Professor IV, Focal Person for Quality Assurance and Accreditation, and Academic Department Head at Benguet State University-Bokod Campus. In these roles, she actively contributes to the ongoing improvement and development of the College of Education, fostering a collaborative environment focused on achieving academic excellence.



Essay

Classrooms on English Language Acquisition in Higher Education: Investigating the Impact of Flipped Classroom Models on Student Engagement and Learning Outcomes *by Cherry S. Tolano*

Learning the English language, particularly in the higher education setting can be challenging, especially for learners who are non-native speakers. However, mastering, or at least obtaining a certain level of fluency, is a must since majority of courses taught in higher education are taught in the English language. Because passive learning styles cannot fulfill the varying needs of language learners, traditional methods, like lecture-based teaching of English, usually fails to connect learners. But the flipped classroom model has found to have fared better, for example, in motivating and enhancing learning experience. This instructional approach flips traditional practice by providing the teaching-learning experience beyond the traditional methods. Flipped classroom also gives learners more opportunities to work together and collaborate in projects and activities. This leads to the flipped model being very useful in English language learning courses in higher education since it shifts the the emphasis from teacher-led lectures to active, student-led learning experience. This can increase opportunities for productive interaction, peer-to-peer collaboration, and individualized instruction.

In a flipped classroom environment, students learn from instructional content. This may be in the form of video lessons, readings, and online content. Through this, students are able to learn content at their own pace, review material as needed, and arrive at class better prepared for discussion and activities. By taking ownership of their own learning, students are able to think critically and become more invested in the learning process. Pre-class exposure to English content also lessens the cognitive load in-class activities, enabling students to focus on language practice and application rather than trying to comprehend new concepts.

In addition to encouraging participation, the flipped classroom design facilitates more effective language acquisition through emphasis on interactive and communicative learning tasks. Traditional classrooms do not provide much time for speaking and group work, denying students English practice in authentic contexts. The flipped classroom, on the other hand, allocates class time to discussion, problem-solving, role-playing, and peer talk, all critical to language acquisition. Debates, case studies, and group projects are structured to encourage students to apply English in real life, promoting fluency and self-confidence. Finally, teachers can provide immediate feedback and targeted support, responding to the individual language issue better than in a lecturing context. The impact of the flipped on the results of English learning is also significant, as it aligns with second language acquisition theories that emphasize contextualized learning and active engagement. Empirical research suggests that students in flipped classrooms have higher levels of comprehension, retention, and use of English skills compared to traditional classroom students. Because students

arrive in the classroom already familiar with key concepts, they are better able to engage in higher-order activities such as text analysis, argumentation development, and synthesis of information. Moreover, greater teacher and peer interaction leads to a more enriched language-acquisition environment, with improved speaking, writing, and listening skills. While there are many positives to the flipped classroom approach, success hinges upon meticulous implementation. Teachers need to create excellent pre-class materials to accommodate various learning styles and effectively instruct students beforehand on what they need to do before they are present in class. Additionally, classroom activities need to be designed to maximize student engagement and ease of language learning, so that all students regardless of level can benefit from the interactive model. Technology access is also an essential factor as students need frequent access to digital material in order to fully take part in flipped teaching.

Cherry Sinas Tolano is a committed educator with nearly 19 years of teaching experience, which includes seventeen years in public schools and two years as an ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher in private institutions. She holds a Bachelor of Secondary Education with a major in English and a Master of Arts in English. Currently, she occupies the roles of Assistant Professor IV, Focal Person for Quality Assurance and Accreditation, and Academic Department Head at Benguet State University-Bokod Campus. In these roles, she actively contributes to the ongoing improvement and development of the College of Education, fostering a collaborative environment focused on achieving academic excellence.



Essay

Patience and Passion: The Heart of a Grade 1 Teacher's Journey by Josepha D. Esguerra-Antipuesto

Teaching Grade 1 is more than just a profession; it is a calling that demands unwavering patience and deep passion. At this formative stage, children embark on their journey towards discovering the fundamentals of reading, writing, and numeracy while developing essential social and emotional skills. I believe that the role of a Grade 1 teacher is not just to serve as a guide, or mentor, but also as a nurturer of my pupils' lives, shaping their minds with care, dedication, and perseverance. With this, I believe that the daily experiences in the classroom should be filled with moments of joy, challenges, and countless small victories that make the journey both rewarding and demanding.

Patience is the foundation of a Grade 1 teacher's role. Young learners enter the classroom with different levels of readiness, backgrounds, and learning styles. Some grasp concepts quickly, while others require additional support and reassurance. I understand that these learners come from different backgrounds. Hence, a patient teacher understands that learning is not a race but a process that unfolds at its own pace. Repetition, encouragement, and gentle correction become part of the daily routine, ensuring that each child feels valued and capable. Whether it is teaching a child to hold a pencil properly, sound out words, or follow classroom rules, patience allows the teacher to foster an environment where mistakes are seen as opportunities for growth rather than failures.

Beyond patience, passion fuels the journey of a Grade 1 teacher. Passion is what keeps a teacher energized and inspired, even on the most challenging days. It is seen in the creativity put into lesson plans, the enthusiasm that makes learning exciting, and the genuine care shown to each student. A passionate teacher goes beyond textbooks, using songs, stories, and hands-on activities to make learning engaging and meaningful. More importantly, passion ignites a love for learning in young children, encouraging them to be curious, confident, and eager to explore new ideas. The emotional connections formed in a Grade 1 classroom make the experience even more profound. At this stage, children look to their teacher for guidance, reassurance, and support. The teacher becomes a source of comfort, helping students navigate their emotions, build friendships, and develop a sense of responsibility. Simple acts, such as celebrating a child's progress, offering a word of encouragement, or listening to their stories, create a nurturing space where students feel safe and motivated to learn. These bonds often leave a lasting impact, as many children remember their first teacher as someone who believed in them when they were just beginning to understand their potential.

Based on my experience, indeed, while the journey of a Grade 1 teacher is filled with challenges, handling classroom dynamics, adapting to different learning needs, and ensuring every child receives the attention they deserve, it is also one of the most fulfilling roles in education. Watching a child read their first sentence, solve a math problem independently, or gain

confidence in expressing themselves is a testament to the power of patience and passion. These moments reaffirm the teacher's purpose and highlight the importance of their role in shaping young learners' futures.

Being a Grade 1 teacher is about embracing the journey with a heart full of patience and a spirit driven by passion. It is about recognizing that the small steps taken today will build the foundation for a lifetime of learning. The influence of a dedicated teacher extends far beyond the walls of the classroom, leaving an imprint on each child's educational path. In the end, patience and passion are not just qualities of a great teacher—they are the very heart of the journey itself.

Josepha D. Esguerra-Antipuesto is a dedicated Teacher III at Sta. Lourdes Elementary School in Puerto Princesa City. With a passion for early childhood education, she has been nurturing young minds as a Grade 1 teacher. Known for her innovative teaching methods and compassionate approach, She strives to create a positive and engaging learning environment for her students. Her commitment to education and her community makes her a valued member of the school.



Maikling Kwento

Robert's Place *ni Jandee A. de Leon*

Tipikal na gabi ni Robert. Nakaupo sa may tabi ng kalye. Nag-aabang ng kakilala't makikilala. Hinihithit ang sigarilyong binili sa kabilang kalsada. Suot ang kanyang uniporme. Unipormeng shorts at sando, suot ang sumbrero at sukbit ang bag na itim. Ala una na ng madaling araw ngunit wala pa rin ang kanyang mga hinihintay. Magsisimula na ang palabas sa ilang saglit kaya minamadali n'yang siya'y may makita nang makikilala. Nang biglang may tumigil na isang puting kotse sa kanyang tapat. Pumarada sa may gilid. Bumaba ang sakay. Isang matandang lalaki na nasa edad singkwenta.

Medyo ginabi ang kanyang kakilala. Umapir at kumindat lamang ay alam na ang ibig sabihin. Sabay silang pumasok sa isang lumang sinehan. Madilim. lilan ang mga taong makikita sa loob sa tulong ng isang mumunting ilaw. Patay pa ang screen ng inaabangang palabas. Pumwesto sila sa may bandang dulong kanang bahagi ng sinehan. Mataas ang kanilang napwestuhan na tila tanaw ang mga dala-dalawang magkakasama sa panonood sa loob. Ballot ng dilim ang paligid. Ang tanging maririnig ay tawa, halinghing, at ilang mga bulungan ng mga magkakasama. May babae at lalaki. Babae at babae na tila magkakaibigan o 'di mawaring magkasintahan. Pero sa kaso ni Robert, hindi niya kasintahan ang ang kanyang kadaop. Kakilala kung ituring. Suki kung mawari.

Si Robert ay matipuno ang katawan. Moreno, matangos ang ilong, may katangkaran na talaga naming kapag iyong nakasalubong hindi maaaring hindi mo titingnan. Ang kanyang opisina ay sa Escolta Old Manila sa lumang sinehan. Bente sinko anyos ang binata nang mapasok sa kanyang trabaho. Dati siyang kargador ngunit sa hrap ng buhay ay kulang ang kanyang kinikita sa palengke. Nakilala niya si Waldo na isa ring kargador sa palengke na nagturo sa kanya kung paano mamalakad ng sariling oras na kikita sa sarili ring pamamaraan. Noong una ay hindi tinanggap ni Robert ang trabahong alok ng kaibigan. Isang gabi, nang umuwi galling sa pagkakargador dala ang kinitang 200 piso, nadatnan niya ang kanyang ina na nasa salas nakaupo sa bangkito, nag-aayos ng ititindang suman kinabukasan. Ngunit mukhang hrap ang iniharap ni Aling Lina sa anak nang dumating ito. Hrap bitbit ang suman kasama ng matindi at walang tigil na pag-ubo.

"Nay, magpatingin ka na sa doktor. Parang lumalala na ang ubo mo." Sabi ng 'di mapakaling si Robert. "Okay lang ako anak, ipunin natin ang pera para sa pag- aaral mo," amo ng ina sa anak.

Bunsong anak si Robert nina Aling Lina at Mang Andres. Ang mga kapatid niya ay may kanya-kanya na ring buhay na dapat itaguyod. Si Mang Andres ay isang construction worker na kapag sumahod ay diretso na sa pag-intrega sa mga katunggaan sa kalsada hanggang sa walang matira, basta siya ang bida sa mata ng mga katropa. Kaya si Robert ang nagtaguyod sa kanilang mag-ina. Kailangan niyang magdelihensya para mas may kitain at may maitustos sa pangangailangang gamot ng ina. Naawa si Robert sa sarili at sa ina nang makita ng 200 pisong ibibili ng bigas, ulam at kung may sosobra dahil sa katipiran sa pagkain ay ibibili na ng gamot. Tatlong beses lang siya kung magkargador sa palengke kung kailang araw lamang ng palengke at maraming mamimili.

Ito ang nag-udyok kay Robert na simulan ang kalbaryo ngunit mabilisang kita sa trabaho na alok ni Waldo. Araw ng palengke nang kausapin niya si Waldo upang kumpirmahin kung bukas pa ang trabahong ito para sa kanya. "P're payag na ako sa alok mong trabaho." Ika ni Robert. "Nako p're maigi naman at napag-isipan mo na. Nakita ko si Aling Lina kanina na nagtitinda ng suman, grabe na ang ubo n'ya." Sabi ni Waldo. "Oo

p're kailangan ko na ring mapatingnan ang inay pero wala kaming pera." Ngiti lamang ang ibinalik ni Waldo sabay sabing "madali lang 'yan sa trabaho natin mamaya, magkita tayo ng mga alas-diyes." Matagal na ring nababalitaan ni Robert ang trabahong ito ni Waldo. Ito ang kanyang naging unang kakilala at sandigan ng mga diskarte upang mas mapadali ang

kanyang trabaho sa palengke. Ala-5 ng hapon ay umuwi na si Robert upang makapagpahinga bago sumabak sa panibagong trabaho sa Escolta.

Alas-nuebe pa lamang ay handa na si Robert para pumunta sa Escolta. Naglakad siya ng halos 20 minuto para makarating sa may lumang sinehan. Wala pa si Waldo nang siya'y dumating wari niya'y napaaga lamang siya. Maraming halos kaedad niyang nakatambay sa kanyang gawi. May babae, lalaki, at ikatlong kasarian na tila naka-con todo forma upang madaling mapansin ng mga bagong makikilala. Napapaisip na si Robert kung ano bang trabaho mayroon dito. Maya-maya'y dumating si Waldo suot ang short at sando ngunit kitang mabango ang kanyang dating. Binati ni Waldo si Robert at sinabi ang kanyang gagawin. "P're, kumusta? Nakapagpahinga ka ba? Malaking laban ang haharapin mo ngayon dahil baguhan ka. Siguradong maraming mag-te-take out sayo." Hindi malaman ni Robert ang ibig sabihin ni Waldo. "Okay naman ako p're, anong dapat kong gawin?" Natawa si Waldo sa reaksiyon ni Robert at sinabing "dapat mapasaya mo ang mga parokyano, babae man, lalaki o ano man siya. Basta magkasundo kayo sa presyong iaalok sayo. Dapat marunong kang tumimbang p're ng ibabayad sa iyo."

Noon na lamang napagtanto ni Robert na kailangan niyang pasiyahin ang mga magiging customer niya kahit ano pa ang kanyang gawin. Wala pa siyang karanasan dito ngunit nabanggit ni Waldo na walang mangyayari o mawawala sayo basta mag-iingat ka at tama ang bayad. Nilakasan niya ang kanyang loob. Sa may tabi ng kalye siya'y pumwesto. Habang naghihintay ay bumili siya ng sigarilyo at habang hinihithit ito ay iniabot sa kanya ng kanyang kaibigan ang dapat niyang isuot upang mabilis siyang mapansin at mabilis matapos ang ganap sa kanila ng kanyang customer. Shorts at sando ang ibinigay sa kanya at isang sombrero, sukbit ang kanyang bag na itim. May isang kotseng puti na tumigil. Tinanong siya nito kung available ba siya. Sinabi niyang oo. Bumaba ang parokyanong lalaki na nasa edad singkwenta. Si Sergeant Toto Natividad ang kanyang unang naging parokyano. Isang retired army officer na may kakaibang hanap sa buhay. Mayroon siyang asawa at tatlong mga anak na babae. "Tawagin mo nalang akong Ka Toto," ika ng sarhento. Nagkuwentuhan ang dalawa at nabanggit ni Ka Toto na ngayon lang niya nakita si Robert doon. "Opo, bago lang po ako dito. Ano po ba ang gusto ninyong gawin?" natawa si Ka Toto sa sinabi ni Robert. "'Yun agad ang tanong mo? Gusto muna kitang mas makilala." Duon nagsimulang magkwento si Robert ng kanyang buhay kay Ka Toto ganoon na rin ang sarhento.

Magsisimula na ang palabas na siyang umawat sa kuwentuhan ng dalawa. Kakaibang palabas ang nasaksihan ni Robert na lumabas sa screen. Ito ang bumuhay sa kanyang pagkalalaki na hindi niya mapigilan. Napansin ito ni Ka Toto. "Gusto mo tulungan kitang ilabas 'yan para mas ma-relax ka?" aya niya. "Magkano po ba?" tanong ni Robert. Nakangiti si Ka Toto sa kanya at sinabing "ako ang bahala sa iyo, hindi naman ako kuripot basta ayos ka." Hindi naiintindihan ni Robert ang mga pahiwatig na iyon ni Ka Toto. Pero umayon na lamang siya sa mga susunod na pangyayari. Unti-unting naging malikot ang kamay ni Ka Toto na talaga naming mas dumagdag upang mabuhay ang kanyang pagkalalaki. Di na niya mapigilan ang init na bumabalot sa kanya. Hanggang sa binulong sa kanya ng parokyano, "P'wede ba kitang dalhin? Doble na ang presyo." Umoo si Robert at sinabing "kayo na ang bahala sa akin, sir."

Sa puntong ito ng buhay ni Robert ang nasa isip na lamang niya ay ang kumita ng malaking pera para maipagamot ang kanyang ina sa sakit na iniinda nito. Kahit ano ay kanya nang gagawin upang maibsan ang sakit at hrap ng kanilang pamumuhay. Sumakay siya sa kotse ng parokyano at bumaba sa isang madilim na lugar upang mag- check in.

Nagtuloy-tuloy sila hanggang sa itaas na bahagi ng mga kwarto sa ikalimang palapag at pumasok sa kwarto. Dito na hindi napigilan ni Ka Toto ang sarili at ibinigay kay Robert ang pangungulila na hindi na maibigay ng kanyang asawa tuwing magmamahalan sila. Tila mahaba ang gabing iyon na parang hindi matapos. Tila mga halinghing at hingal dahil sa pagod at tindi ng kanilang ginawa.

Kinaumagahan, magkatabi ang dalawa at inabutan si Robert ng parokyano ng halagang sampung libong piso. Nagulat si Robert pero sinabi ng sarhento na dinagdagan niya ito upang maipagamot na nito ang kanyang ina. Iyon ang unang tikim ng sandal at tikim ng laki ng halagang nahaplos niya ng mga panahong iyon. Laking pasalamat niya at iyon na rin ang simula ng kanyang pagiging call boy sa tabing daan. Mabilisang pera na, hatid pa ay ligaya sa kanyang sariling lugar at sariling pamamaraan.

Dadaan ang mga gabi, madaling-araw hanggang kinaumagahan naging ganon na lamang ang naging ikot ng buhay ni Robert, Lunes hanggang Linggo. Hawak niya ang kanyang oras at unti-unti ay umaahon siya sa pagkakalugmok sa hiras ng kanyang buhay. Isang gabing siya'y naghahanda, tinanong siya ng kanyang ina. "Anak, ano ba talagang trabaho mo?" Ayaw na ayaw ni Robert na pag-usapan ang kanyang trabaho dahil ang kanyang katwiran, mas mahalaga na may kinikita para maiangat sa hiras ang kanilang sitwasyon. Hindi siya sumagot at nagmano bago umalis.

Noong gabing iyon, tila ganado si Robert magtrabaho. Simula alas-diyes sa kanyang pwesto sa sinehan, sunod-sunod ang pagpapakawala niya ng nararamdamang init ng katawan sa mga bisita na siya ang nais kasama sa mga oras na iyon. Hanggang sa mag-alas dos na ng madaling araw. Akmang uuwi na para makapagpahinga nang may biglang tumigil sa kanyang harapan na isang pulang sports car. Sakay dito ang isang kakilala na babago ng kanyang buhay – si Joyce. Ito ay kanyang kababata noong nasa probinsya bago sila lumipat ng Maynila dahil sa trabaho ng kanyang ama. Tinanong ni Joyce kung pwede bang sumama si Robert sa kanya. Sumama naman ito at sinabing kakain lamang sa labas at upang makapagkwentuhan din ng kaunti. Dinala ni Joyce si Robert sa isang Restau Bar, 'di kalayuan. Kumain sila at nagkwentuhan tungkol sa mga buhay-buhay nila. Matapos ito ay omorder sila ng beer. Tila mahaba ang gabi dahil sa saya nilang dalawa na halatang matagal silang hindi nagkita at nagkasama. Alas kuwatro na ng umaga nang magkaayaan ang dalawa na umuwi na.

"Mukhang 'di na kita maihahatid Berto." Sabi ni Joyce na medyo nakararamdam na ng hilo. "Okay lang maglalakad na lang ako." Sagot ni Robert. "Hindi duon na tayo umuwi sa Condo ko 'di kalayuan dito. Para 'di ka na maglakad pauwi, bukas ka na umuwi." Sabi naman ni Joyce. Noong una ay ayaw ni Robert pero dahil malayo-layo na rin ang kanyang lalakaran at gusto niyang makita kung makauuwi nang ligtas ang kababata, sumang-ayon ito sa kagustuhan ng dalaga. Ilimang minuto ay nakarating na sila sa Condo ni Joyce sa ikatlong palapag ng building. Kinuha ang susi sa bag at binuksan ni Joyce ang pinto. Pinatuloy si Robert at tumuloy sila sa salas nang biglang hinalikan ni Joyce ang kababata at nagulat si Robert. Noong una ay sinasalag niya ang mga halik na ito at nang kalaunan ay tinalban na rin siya. Nagpalitan sila ng halik na siyang babago sa buhay ni Robert. Ginawa rin nila ang ginagawa ni Robert sa kanyang mga parokyano nan ais siyang dalhin sa kanilang mga lugar upang matingnan ang husay nito sa romansa. Iba ang kanyang naramdaman sa babang kababata na tala naming hindi na niya napigilan kundi nilahat niya ang lakas at alam tungkol sa pakikipagtalik. Nang mag-umaga, nagising si Robert nang mag-isa. May sulat na naiwan sa kanya mula sa kababata.

"Patawarin mo ako sa nagawa ko sa iyo. Hindi ko napigilan ang aking sarili upang maiwasan ang init ng aking katawan. Ngayong araw ang lipad ko sa Amerika upang magpatingin sa ospital. Hindi ko na naikwento sa iyo pero humihingi ako ng tawad sa iyo dahil hindi ko ito nasabi sa iyo. Hanggang sa muling pagkikita – Joyce."

Hindi maunawaan ni Robert ang inihihingi ng tawad ng kanyang kababata. Inisip nitong baka may kailangan lamang isaayos o simpleng sakit nan ais ipatingin ni Joyce. Lumipas ang isang buwan at tuloy pa rin ang trabaho niya sa sinehan.

Ngunit nagkaroon ng pagbabago sa katawan ni Robert. Naging madalas ang pagkakaroon niya ng ubo, sipon, lagnat na kung minsan ay talagang matinding lagnat na nauuwi rin sa pagiging matamlay niya. Halos buwan-buwan ay nararanasan ito ni Robert na kanya lamang iniisip na dahil sa pagod niya sa kanyang trabaho. Madalas din siyang mapagod agad at nakararamdam ng sakit ng katawan. Nagpatingin siya sa doktor at niresetahan siya nito. Hindi agad nakita ang tunay na kondisyon ng kanyang katawan. Makalipas ang ilang mga buwan, Nawala na ang ganitong pakiramdam. Lingid sa kaalaman ni Robert nasa stage 2 na siya ng kanyang sakit na mararamdaman niya sa pagdaan ng panahon. Makalipas ang ilang mga taon, nagkaroon na ng kasintahan si Robert at itinigil na niya ang kanyang trabaho dahil ito ang hiling ng kanyang kasintahan. Hindi alam ni Robert may magbabalik sa kanya – ang sintomas ng kanyang iniindang sakit. Mas matinding sakit ang kanyang naramdaman makalipas ang ilang mga linggo. Mabilis na bumaba ang kanyang timbang at hindi na halos nawawala ang kanyang lagnat na nagresulta sa sobrang pagod na nararamdaman niya. Tumindi nang tumindi ang sakit niya na kita sa kanyang pangangatawan, bibig hanggang sa maseselang parte ng kanyang katawan na kanyang puhunan upang makapagtrabaho noon. Nagpatingin na siya sa doktor upang malaman ang kanyang sakit.

Iba-ibang test ang kanyang pinagdaanan. Isang araw ay dinalaw siya ng kanyang kaibigang si Waldo – ang nagpasok sa kanya sa ganoong trabaho. "P're kumusta ka? Anong nangyari sa'yo?" ika nito. Ito rin ang araw na malalaman ni Robert ang resulta ng kanyang sakit. "Mukhang nadali ka p're. Sabi ko sa'yo mag-iingat ka sa sarili mo." Dumating ang doktor at bago sabihin ang resulta ay tinanong muna si Robert kung sino ang mga nais niyang nandoon. Kasama ni Robert ang kanyang ina at umalis na rin si Waldo para bigyan ng privacy ang pamilya. Sinabi ng doktor kay Robert na siya ay positibo sa HIV-AIDS test. Kaya niya ito nararamdaman ang mga sintomas na nagpapahina ng kanyang immune system. Naiyak ang kanyang ina na handing damayan ang anak. Inisip ni Robert ang kanyang mga nakatalik at ang tumatak sa kanya ay ang sulat na naiwan sa kanya ni Joyce na humihingi ng tawad. Hinala niya ay kay Joyce niya ito nakuha. Hinanap nila ang kamag-anak ni Joyce at kinuha ang numero upang makontak ang kanyang kababata. Nakuha nila ang numero ng ina nito.

"Magandang umaga po, si Robert po ito 'yung kababata ni Joyce. Maaari ko po ba siyang makausap?" sabi ni Robert sa sumagot ng telepono. "This is Joyce's mom, sorry to tell you but Joyce passed away 2 years ago." Sabi ng nanay ni Joyce. "Matagal na po pala siyang Nawala, maaari ko po bang malaman ang kanyang ikinamatay?" sagot ni Robert. "S'ya ay HIV-AIDS positive." Gumuho ang mundo ni Robert at nakumpirma niya na si Joyce ang nakapanghawa ng sakit na ito sa kanya. Nadagdagan pa ito nang tapatin siya ng doktor na ang sandal lamang ang itinatagal ng nasa stage 3 na ng sakit. Pinakamatagl na ang 3 taon kung hindi papalarin. Hindi niya masumbatan ang kababata dahil namayapa na ito ang kailangan na lamang niyang harapin ay ang paglaban dito sa sakit na ito. Nang malaman ng kanyang kasintahan ang kanyang sakit hiniwalayan siya nito. Hindi masisisi ni Robert ang kasintahan dahil hindi niya pinrotektahan ang sarili.

Ipinagsisisi ni Robert lahat ng kanyang nagawa. Tuloy-tuloy ang kanyang pagharap sa mahabaang gamutan ng kanyang sakit. Muli na rin siyang nagbalik-loob sa Panginoon at hiling niyang gabayan nito ang kanyang ina na kanyang sandigan at nagpapalakas sa kanya. Sa mga naipon ni Robert, ibinili niya ito ng lupa at bahay na nakapangalan sa kanyang ina na hindi na rin naman bumabata. Ito ang kanyang pangakong hindi niya binitiwang upang maging maayos ang kalagayan ni Aling Lina. Hanggang sa huling sandali ng buhay ni Robert, kaayusan ng kanyang ina ang kanyang iniisip. "Kung nag-ingat lamang ako sa aking sarili hindi sana ito nangyari. Patuloy na mahalin ang sarili at ang pamilya." Sambit niya.

Hindi man naging mapalad sa kanyang buhay, ipinakita ni Robert ang tatag at pagmamahal na busilak para sa isang taong hindi sumuko sa kanya sa kabila ng mga kinaharap niyang problema – ang kanyang ina. Indikasyon lamang ito na

kailangan mo ring piliin ang mga taong gusto mong pumasok sa iyong buhay. May magdadala ng kaginhawaan at may magdadala ng pasakit na iyong dadalhin hanggang sa dulo ng iyong buhay.

Si Jandee A. de Leon ay isang Teacher III sa Tagaytay City Science National High School – Integrated Senior High School sa Tagaytay City. Siya ay may Master's Degree sa Edukasyon na may espesyalisasyon sa Filipino.

Kasabay ng pag-unlad ng panahon, patuloy pa ring hinaharap ng lipunan ang iba't ibang suliranin. Kabilang dito ang patuloy na pagtaas ng bilang ng mga kaso ng HIV-AIDS sa bansa at prostitusyon, na kailangang harapin at hindi ipagsawalang-bahala. Mahalaga ang pagpapalakas ng edukasyon ukol sa isyung ito, ang pagtatapos ng stigma, at ang pagpapalaganap ng pagtanggap upang labanan ang suliraning ito. Bilang isang guro, bahagi rin ng tungkulin ang pagbubukas ng isipan ng mga mag-aaral at mamamayan sa mga umiiral na suliraning dapat pag-usapan, tugunan, at bigyang-lunas.

Minsan, pinipili nating ibaba ang ating moralidad upang mabuhay at malutas ang mga suliranin. Ngunit unti-unti, dahan-dahan ngunit tiyak, malulutas din ang mga ito. Kailangan lamang nating magtiwala sa Diyos na matatapos din ang ating mga pagsubok, kasabay ng pagtutulungan, pagtanggap, pag-aaruga, at pagmamahal sa isa't isa. Ito ang layunin ng may-akda sa kanyang pagsulat – ang liwanagan at buksan ang isipan ng bawat mambabasa.



Sanaysay

Musika ang Buhay ni Jandee A. de Leon

Musika ang malaking bahagi ng kanyang buhay. Ito ang nagdadala ng kulay sa dilim ng kanyang bawat pinagdaraan. Dilim na gabi-gabi sa kanya'y bumabalot. Gabi-gabi na kanyang nakikita. Pinasasaya ang gabi sa pamamagitan ng mga pitik ng kanyang mga daliri. Pagtaas ng kanyang mga maliliit na kamay at pagtaas ng kanyang makikinis na braso. Pitik na sinasamahan ng kaunting indak sa saliw ng romantikong musika. Suot ang makinang at pulang damit na sa kanyang bawat galaw ay tumutunaw sa paningin ng manonood. Lahat ay nakatingin habang lumilipas ang bawat sandali. Sandali na inaasam ng iba na hindi na matapos. Ngunit ninanais niyang ito na ang huli. Minamadali upang matapos na ang sandaling tuwang inihahatid sa madla.

Bawat pagtaas at pagbaba ay umaani ng hiyaw at palakpak. Hiyaw na bumubuhay sa kamalayan ng lahat ngunit dumudurog sa kanyang pagkatao. Palakpak na siyang buhay at nagbibigay-tustos sa kanyang mga pangangailangan. Sa apat na sulok ng entablado kasama ang kanyang gabi- gabing niroromansa. Ang poste lamang ang nakaaalam ng tunay na kuwento sa likod ng mga tuwang hatid sa iba. Kapalit ay pighati at pagkababa ng moral. Isang hiblang salapi, kapalit ng isang halik sa ninanais ng isang mamamakyaw. Halik na bumubuhay sa libido ng iba at pumapatay sa pagkatao ng isa.

Pagkababae ang kapalit ng lahat ng paghihirap kumita lamang ng kakarampot na salapi. Salapi na bukas ay ubos na dahil sa kamal na gastusin at mahal ng bilinging itutustos sa anak na nag-aabang mapasuso ng gatas na husto. Hindi alam kung saan dakong tutungo. Ang tanging malinaw lamang, gamitin ang alindog para mang-aliw sa mga parokyanong ang nais ay panandaliang kaligayahan ngunit pangmatagalang yurak ang hatid sa pagkatao ng babaeng sumasayaw sa indak at saliw ng mumunting musika.

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Short Story

Tessellated: Fixing the Broken by Rozsi P. Tobias

Like a mosaic, Hexan's journey resembled a broken tile; each piece is a memory of struggle. Some of the pieces were dark and sharp; others were bright but short-lived. Concurrently, they formed a vignette of a man who had enough.

Growing up in a propitious family, Hexan spent his childhood with the great expectation of his father. He then lived, trying to fulfill his father's ambitions. The first tile represents self-doubt, symbolized by the color gray.

As a teenager, his world appeared equally harsh. Friends turned against him, love left him bruised, and failures supervened. Once, after a difficult separation, Hexan stood on the edge of a cliff, staring at the abyss. His life, like a collection of broken tiles, seems irreparable. However, the darkness did not engulf him completely. He stepped back. The second tile portrays pain in vivid crimson.

Adulthood was not gentle either. His career was full of dead ends and missed opportunities. Hexan tried to forge connections and build something enduring, but each attempt crumbled. It felt like the tiles of his life were sliding through his fingers and scattering in all directions. A layoff. The project ended in failure. The realization of a dream has been delayed. The third tile: frustration, a sharp, frigid blue.

But then something unusual happened. Hexan slowly started picking up the fragments. Every failure became a learning experience, and every grief was a revelation. The colors of his life, though dark and unpleasant, began to blend together, creating a pattern. What once appeared random now had a logic. He began painting, each stroke an attempt to make sense of the chaos. The fourth tile is hope, soft and golden.

Years have passed, and Hexan found a quiet peace in the simple act of creating. His world felt like a meticulously designed mosaic rather than a collection of random events. Each piece was necessary, and every moment, painful or not, added to the whole. When Hexan glanced at his reflection in the mirror, he saw a man who turned the worst parts of his life into something beautiful.

At the end of his journey, Hexan took a step back and admired the tessellation of his life, knowing that every sharp corner and jagged edge contributed to the man he had become, a masterpiece crafted with resilience and grace.

Rozsi P. Tobias serves as an assistant professor at Benguet State University – Bokod Campus. She holds a masters degree in mathematics.



Short Story

From Fear to Purpose *by Lanny Merry N. Gallarde*

One peaceful night, when everyone else was asleep, three friends sat together—Book, Notebook, and Pencil. They talked about the good and bad times they had with their owners.

“My owner takes very good care of me,” said Book happily. “He covered me with plastic to keep me safe. He reads me every day and takes me to school. If he has to leave me at home, he puts me nicely on the shelf.”

“You are very lucky, Book,” Notebook said kindly.

“I am also happy with my owner,” Notebook added with a smile. “She does not leave me anywhere. She writes in me carefully. She always listens to her teacher and writes what she learns. She never tears my pages or draws silly things on me.”

“What about you, Pencil?” asked Book softly. “Does your owner take care of you too?”

Pencil looked down. A tear rolled down his face, and then another. He could not stop crying.

“What happened, Pencil? Tell us. Don’t be shy. We are your friends,” Book and Notebook said together.

Pencil took a deep breath and spoke. “When I was new, my owner took care of me. But after some time, he started to leave me anywhere. Sometimes, he even threw me like a toy. He gets a new pencil so easily, as if I do not matter. I am so scared that one day he will throw me away.

“Oh, Pencil,” said Book softly.

“I’m sorry for crying,” Pencil said quietly, wiping his tears.

“You don’t have to say sorry, Pencil,” said Notebook.

“We are your friends, and we will be with you, in good times and bad.”

“Thank you, my friends,” Pencil whispered. “I just wish to feel useful again. I want to help my owner until my lead is all gone.”

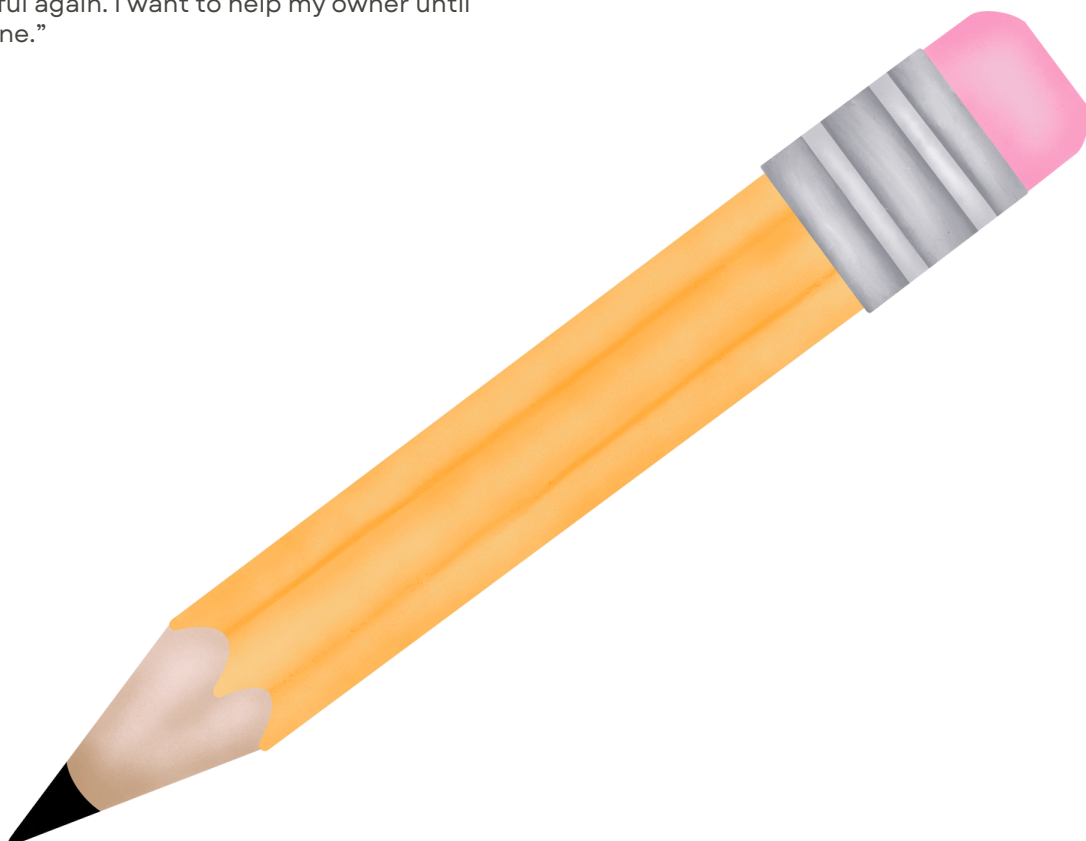
One day, Pencil’s biggest fear came true. His owner threw him away onto the street. Pencil lay there alone, scared and broken. He thought his story was over.

But something wonderful happened. A small boy, who had no parents, found Pencil. For the boy, Pencil was not just any pencil—it was his first. The boy picked Pencil up with care and smiled.

With Pencil, the boy began to draw. His small hands carefully made shapes, and slowly, they turned into letters. He practiced over and over, and one day, he wrote his own name for the first time. The boy’s face shone with joy, and Pencil’s heart filled with happiness. Pencil’s fear turned into hope. His sadness turned into purpose. In the hands of the small boy, he found meaning again.

And so, Pencil worked joyfully until his very last bit of lead was gone—knowing that he had made a difference.

Lanny Merry N. Gallarde is an associate professor at Cebu Technological University - Tuburan Campus in Tuburan, Cebu. She graduated her BSEd - English undergraduate studies at Cebu Normal University and completed her Academic Requirements in Master of Arts in English Language Teaching in the same school. Additionally, she graduated her Master of Education major in Administration and Supervision and Doctor in Development Education at Cebu Technological University. She is also a TESOL certified since 2021.



Sanaysay

Bulakbol na Board Passer: Ang Kwento ni Ke-yam ni Keam Eric L. Malabayabas

Nakakahiya mang aminin, pero kung may presidente ng mga bulakbol sa review, baka ako na 'yon!

Nang malaman kong puwedeng kumuha ng Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) kahit hindi education graduate—basta may 18 units ng professional education subjects—hindi na ako nagdalawang-isip. Sakto naman, may faculty development program ang HR ng MSC para sa Certificate in Teacher's Professional Education (CTPE), kaya sinamantala ko na ang pagkakataon habang kaya pa ng schedule ko. May ilan na nagsabi na hindi ko na raw kailangang kumuha ng LET, pero pinanindigan ko pa rin. Sa awa ng Diyos, natapos ko ang 18 units, kahit inabutan pa ng COVID-19 pandemic.

Habang ipinagpapaliban pa ang mga examination dahil sa pandemya, sinubukan kong mag-apply para sa scholarship ng CHED. Suwerte namang napabilang ako sa mga kwalipikadong aplikante.

Dumating ang anunsyo ng PRC—ang huling batch para sa lumang curriculum ng LET. Hindi ko na pinalampas ang pagkakataon at agad akong nag-file para sa exam, lalo na't magbabago na ang Table of Specifications (TOS) sa susunod na taon.

Habang naka-study leave, nagbukas ako ng maliit na tindahan. Kasabay nito, nagsimula na rin ang LET review. Kahit late na, nag-enroll pa rin ako, kahit na alam kong magiging mahirap pagsabayin ang lahat ng responsibilidad.

Negosyante sa umaga hanggang hating-gabi tuwing weekdays, studyante sa graduate school at reviewee naman pag weekend. Lagi akong late sa review—kung makapasok man, madalas natutulog lang sa likod. Minsan pa nga, absent kapag kasabay ng klase sa graduate school. Sa totoo lang, baka ako nga ang presidente ng mga bulakbol sa review. Hanggang sa mismong board exam, hindi ko naiwasang makatulog dahil sa pagod at puyat.

Alam kong maliit na sakripisyo lang ito kumpara sa pinagdadaan ng iba. Pero sa lahat ng nahihirapan at patuloy na lumalaban, tandaan: kapag naniwala ka sa sarili mo, kalahati ng laban ay panalo ka na! At sa wakas nagbunga din ang aking patitiyaga!

Si Keam Eric L. Malabayabas, PhD, ay isang edukador at mahilig sa panitikan. Siya ay may Doctor of Philosophy sa Criminal Justice na may espesyalisasyon sa Kriminolohiya at kasalukuyang nagsisilbing Assistant Professor I sa Marinduque State University.



Tula

BuMPA (Buhay MPA) ni Junn Quirk I. Espiritu

Labis na pananabik nang kalendaryo'y masdan,
Kasabay ng mga araw na mabilis nagdaan,
Abril akwatro'y matiyagang inabangan,
Nang sa entablado, diploma ay makamtan;

Dalawang taon ang lumipas na tila kailan lang,
Kaya't sa puntong ito'y aking babaliktanawan,
Nawa'y ligaya at tuwa'y inyong maramdaman,
Kwentong BuMPA ko'y, halina't pakinggan;

Sa munting tinig agad akong nawindang,
Kalembang ni guro ay nariyan na naman,
Kaya't kaibigan tanong ko'y iyong pagbigyan,
Nang kung tumapat sa aki'y makasagot man lamang;

Sino na ang kasunod? Alerto ka't listo dapat,
Sa bilis ng tawag sa drill ika'y gulat,
Itong aking katabi, sagot niya'y ikinubli,
Meron namang 'di pa nakuntento'y hinigit pang dali
dali;

Ako'y Pilipino ngunit inaaral ko'y ganito,
Wikang Espanyol bahagi rin sa masterado,
Kaya'y itong si Timoteo, macho at pormado,
Sa awiting Besame Mucho sya ay pinalakpakan ninyo;

Di pa nagpaawat, gusto pang umindak,
Sa saliw ng Mambo No. 5 siya rin pala ang babanat,
Awiting De colores di rin pinalampas,
Kaya't mga manunuod, sa halakhak ay wagas;

Malilimutan ba naman mga pinagdaanan,
Best practices at workshops sa subject nasumpungan,
Pati mga seminars na aming dinaluhan,
Tinamong pagod at pawis ay nasuklian din naman;

Minsan pa'y angking galing ay nasubukan,
Paghabi ng concept paper na siyang basehan,
Ngunit kami'y isa-isang nagulumihanan,
Sa banat ni gurong "What's new? is the only one!";

Heto na at abot't tanaw ko na,
Entabladong mamaya'y maaakyat ko na,
Pagdulog sa bisita'y saka iaabot na,
Kapirasong papel na sadyang mahalaga;

Dalawang taon at ang pagsisikhay ay nagbunga,
Sa bintana ng kaluluwa saya't galak makikita,
Pangamba at alangan ay naparam na,
Sapagkat itong tagumpay itatanan ko na;

Sa haba at hrap ng landas na aking tinalunton,
Pasasalamat sa aking pamilya ang aking tugon,
Maging sa mga guro't kasamahang nag-abot ng tulong,
Sa Gabay ng Maykapal, di sana'y wala ako dito ngayon;

Ang pagkamit sa pangarap ay pagpupunyagi
Harapin mga daluyong ng buhay hanggang sa huli
Ngunit patuloy na mangangarap at magbabaka-sakali
Sa pagdodoktoral, nawa'y magkita-kita tayong muli.

Si Junn Quirk Illorin Espiritu ay isang faculty member ng Marinduque State University – College of Criminal Justice Education (dating School of Criminal Justice Education) at may Master's Degree sa Pamublikong Administrasyon. Noong Agosto 2014, itinalaga siya bilang Dekano ng School of Criminal Justice Education, na naging dahilan upang siya ang maging pinakabatang miyembro ng Administrative Council ng Unibersidad sa edad na dalawampu't dalawa.



Tula

Sapatos ni Mary Jean A. Apuhin

Sa bawat hakbang, sapatos ay kaagapay,
Tulad ng buhay, sa hirap ay matibay.
Kahit sa putik, landas ay sinasablay,
Tiwala sa Diyos, 'wag nating iwawalay.

Kung daan ay liko o sadyang matarik,
Mga hamon sa buhay, minsang nakapanik.
Ngunit sapatos mo'y tibayan ang balik,
Huwag kang bibitaw sa Diyos na matalik.

Sa dilim ng gabi, sapatos ay sandigan,
Liwanag ng Diyos, landas ay gagabayan.
Puso'y titibay, hindi matitibag kailanman,
Pag-asa sa Kanya, laging panghahawakan.

May mga daang malupit at malubak,
Ngunit sa tapang, tagumpay ay tiyak.
Walang dapat ikatakot, puso'y di lalamak,
Tiwala sa Diyos, sa hirap ay tatak.

Sapatos ng buhay, huwag mong babale-walain,
Hakbang mo'y laging Diyos ang yayakapin.
Sa bawat pagsubok, ika'y muling babangon,
Panalangin sa Maykapal ang gabay na iukon.

Kaya't sapatos, gabay sa bawat hakbang,
Kasama ang tapang, pangarap ay buwang.
Sa Diyos manalig, pag-asa'y tatabang,
Buhay ay liliwanag, tagumpay ay tiyakang.

*Si Dr. Mary Jean A. Apuhin ay isang associate professor
sa Capiz State University Burias Campus sa Mambusao,
Capiz.*



Maikling Kwento

Ang Lihim ng Matandang Puno ni April N. Rolle

Sa baryo ng San Roque, may isang malaking puno ng balete sa gitna ng isang lumang parke. Matagal nang may kuwento tungkol sa punong ito. Sabi ng matatanda, may isang mahiwagang nilalang na nagbabantay rito. Ngunit para kay Lito, isang sampung taong gulang na batang mahilig sa pakikipagsapalaran, ang lahat ng ito ay kathang-isip lamang.

Isang hapon, habang naglalaro si Lito kasama ang kanyang kaibigang si Andoy, napadpad sila sa ilalim ng malaking puno. Sa kabila ng babala ng kanilang mga magulang, nilapitan nila ito at inusisa ang nakalantad nitong ugat.

“Andoy, tingnan mo! May parang butas dito sa ilalim ng puno,” ani Lito habang tinuturo ang maliit na lagusan sa pagitan ng mga ugat.

“Baka bahay ito ng duwende,” sagot ni Andoy, bahagyang nanginginig.

“Walang duwende! Titingnan ko lang kung ano ang nasa loob.”

Dahan-dahan, sinilip ni Lito ang butas at napansin niyang tila may kislap sa loob. Hindi niya napigilan ang kanyang sarili. Ipinasok niya ang kanyang kamay at siya ay may nakapa na isang malamig at makinis na bagay. Hinila niya ito palabas at tumambad sa kanila ang isang maliit na gintong singsing.

“Grabe, Andoy! Totoo bang may kayamanan dito?” nanlalaki ang mata ni Lito sa tuwa.

Ngunit bago pa sila makatakbo palayo upang ipagyabang ang kanilang natagpuan, biglang lumakas ang hangin at parang may boses na dumagundong mula sa itaas ng puno.

“Bata, ibalik mo ang singsing na iyan.”

Napaatras sina Lito at Andoy. Mula sa ulap ng alikabok, lumitaw ang isang matandang lalaki na may puting balbas at nakasuot ng lumang kasuotan. Ang kanyang mga mata ay parang kumikislap na bituin, at ang kanyang boses ay may awtoridad ngunit hindi nakakatakot.

“Sino po kayo?” nanginginig na tanong ni Andoy.

“Ako si Apo Luntian, ang tagapangalaga ng punong ito,” sagot ng matanda. “Ang singsing na hawak mo ay hindi isang laruan. Ito ay isang mahalagang alaang iniwan ng isang batang tulad mo, maraming taon na ang nakalipas.”

Nagtinginan sina Lito at Andoy. Hindi nila maintindihan kung paano nagkaroon ng ganoong singsing sa loob ng puno.

“Patawad po, hindi namin alam,” sagot ni Lito habang ibinabalik ang singsing sa butas. Pagkalagay niya nito, biglang humina ang hangin, at ang paligid ay bumalik sa dati nitong katahimikan.

Ngumiti si Apo Luntian at tumango. “Tandaan ninyo, mga bata, hindi lahat ng bagay ay dapat kunin, lalo na kung hindi ito atin. Ang bawat lumang bagay ay may kwento, at ang paggalang sa nakaraan ay kasinghalaga ng paggalang sa kasalukuyan.”

Maya-maya pa, unti-unting naglaho si Apo Luntian sa hangin, na para bang hindi siya kailanman naroon. Nagkatinginan sina Lito at Andoy, hindi pa rin makapaniwala sa kanilang nasaksihan.

Simula noon, hindi na muling ginambala ni Lito ang lumang puno ng balete. Sa halip, tuwing dumadaan siya

roon, nagbibigay siya ng isang simpleng paggalang— isang bahagyang pagtango, na parang kinakausap ang hindi nakikitang bantay nito.

At sa baryo ng San Roque, patuloy na binabantayan ng mahiwagang matanda ang kanyang punong kinalakhan, habang ang mga batang tulad nina Lito at Andoy ay natuto ng isang mahalagang aral, na ang paggalang at pananampalataya sa hindi nakikita ay bahagi ng tunay na hiwaga ng buhay.

Si Gng. April Nonay-Rolle ay isang Teacher III sa Tagaytay City Science National High School-Integrated Senior High School sa loob ng pitong (7) taon. Siya ay isa sa mga tagapayo ng pahayagang pampaaralan na patuloy na nananalo sa Dibisyon, Rehiyon, at maging sa Pambansang kumperensiya sa pamamahayag. Bukod sa pagiging tagapayo, siya rin ay nagsisilbing tagapagsanay at tagapagsalita sa larangan ng pagsulat ng iskrip para sa telebisyon at broadcasting. Natapos niya ang kanyang digring Master of Arts in Education, may espesyalisasyon sa Administrasyon at Superbisyon na may pokus sa Filipino, sa Western Colleges Inc. sa Naic, Cavite. Sa kasalukuyan, siya ay kaanib ng Cavite State University, Main Campus sa Indang bilang isang part-time Instructor III mula Marso 2023 hanggang sa kasalukuyan.



Essay

Teaching Accounting to the Next Generation of Professionals *by Leah Marie S. Urbano*

Accounting is the commonly known "business language" role in the general establishment of organizations. The steps to teach next-generation professionals this knowledge go deeper than mere communication of technical competency. It includes forming people into the future able to deal effectively with an almost ever-changing picture of financial directions and make tangible contributions to achieving the growth or sustainability of such organizations. Therefore, as educators, our role not only includes imparting skills and expertise to the students but also preparing them for a vast future of challenges and opportunities that would be rising in their professional careers.

The first thing that has to be taught to students about accounting is its basic principles. Some of the most common ones include double-entry bookkeeping, financial statements, cost analysis, and budgeting. These are the building blocks of accounting, and it is very important for the student to understand them as early as possible. However, in today's world, accounting is much more than just a number-crunching activity. This is through data analysis, promoting transparency as well as holding people accountable. Accounting professionals need to do more than just perform as numerical answer machines because with the increasingly complex business environment comes the urge to be strategic thinkers, problem solvers, and communicators.

Integration with different teaching styles will help next-generation professionals with such challenges: the educators also have to do away with these old lectures altogether. Instead of only lecturing, the education has to evolve and be delivered with interactive ways, such as case studies and simulations, involving group discussions- this will create the opportunity where the theoretical skills of accounting come to life while trying to handle the dynamic business environments. Technology incorporation in the teaching of accounting is also essential. With the advent of software programs, automation, and artificial intelligence, things have changed dramatically for an accountant. The accounting educator must guarantee that a student is fluent in all these tools that can make things smooth, precise, and aid in decision-making. More technology use from the educator equips students better to enter and be successful within today's realities of the accounting world.

While a technical understanding is important, this should be done in conjunction with the ethical and social responsibilities entailed in practicing the profession of accounting. Maintenance of financial integrity of organizations involves accountants whose work has immediate implications for their stakeholders, employees, and even communities.

Teaching the next generation the accounting profession encourages a passion for lifelong learning.

The accounting industry is constantly transforming, with newer regulations, technological innovations, and best practices on a regular basis. Educators can help create students who don't fear changes but embrace challenges by instilling a mindset for continuous improvement and curiosity. Through sending students to industry conferences and workshops and, after graduation, pursuing certifications in various areas will help them thrive throughout their lives.

It is about being a leader and innovator with the ethics that guide ethical decisions in accounting for the next generation of professionals, not merely being able to count. With an amalgamation of strong technical knowledge and practical experience, technological ability, and in-depth knowledge of ethical responsibility, educators will better prepare the accountants of the future for all the changes ahead.

Leah Marie Simeon-Urbano holds a Master in Business Administration degree. She is a skilled Instructor with extensive knowledge in financial principles and a strong background in Teaching. She is passionate about equipping students with practical skills and knowledge in financial aspect.



Essay

Advances in Accounting Research and Practices by Leah Marie S. Urbano

Accounting, as a field of practice, has undergone significant changes over the years. This change is attributed to the development of technology, globalization, regulatory changes, and how business needs have changed along with the needs of other stakeholders. Accounting no longer only balances books or produces financial statements but now covers fields such as analytics, sustainability report, and forensic accounting, among many others. As a result of these changes, accounting research and practices are evolving constantly to try to keep abreast of such changes. In order to continue being on top of this highly dynamic field, students and professionals need to learn about the most recent developments in accounting research and practices.

Perhaps one of the most significant developments in accounting research is the increased reliance on technology in order to facilitate and improve accounting practices. The past few decades have witnessed the transition of accounting professionals from using manual record-keeping to advanced accounting software like QuickBooks, Sage, and Oracle. This technology automates many traditional tasks, thereby minimizing human error and allowing more time for strategic activities. Of recent, the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning into areas like auditing, fraud detection, and financial forecasting have begun to impact this sector. AI can be used to examine enormous volumes of financial data in real-time for patterns or anomalies that might pass a human accountant's eyes. This may significantly revolutionize the way auditing and compliance are approached: faster, more accurate, and cost-effective.

A growing emphasis on issues of sustainability, and corporate social responsibility, now marks a second major step within accounting practice developments. The call for business is no longer seen as providing mainly financial statements or reports but the environmental and the social impacts for which they become responsible. This has given rise to sustainability accounting and integrated reporting that combines financial information with non-financial information on carbon emissions, water usage, and labor practices to give a more holistic view of a company's performance. Accounting researchers are looking into methodologies and frameworks to ensure companies accurately report in these areas. Aside from the technological and environmental changes, developments in regulations have greatly influenced accounting research and practice. Researchers are looking at how best to make financial reporting more transparent, consistent, and comparable in a way that is flexible for individual markets. This includes, of course, the ongoing debate about fair value versus historical cost accounting and the possibility of somehow harmonizing approaches around the globe.

Another field within accounting research is forensic accounting, which has recently grown at a very rapid rate. Corporate scandals and financial fraud have led to an increased requirement for accountants who can identify not only discrepancies in financial activity but also prevent them. Forensic accountants apply their expertise in investigating suspicious financial activity such as the detection of fraud, money laundering, or embezzlement. Indeed, it will further change how businesses will transact with one another and validate financial information due to blockchain technology's promise of immutable and transparent records.

Advances in the area of behavioral accounting have recently gained momentum. Accounting research and practice are impacting the profession very profoundly. Improved technologies, the emphasis on sustainability, changing standards of regulation, and the increasingly prominent roles that forensic and behavioral accounting play, among others, are some ways in which this field is taking shape. Because these changes keep happening, accountants must learn to stay aware of the situation and adapt. This will help them ensure that accounting continues to be an integral and trustworthy part of the business world, offering transparency, accuracy, and insight into the financial health of organizations worldwide.

Leah Marie Simeon-Urbano holds a Master in Business Administration degree. She is a skilled Instructor with extensive knowledge in financial principles and a strong background in Teaching. She is passionate about equipping students with practical skills and knowledge in financial aspect.



Essay

Enhancing Student Engagement in Accounting Courses by Leah Marie S. Urbano

Accounting is always considered a dull and complicated subject, and sometimes it is really hard to catch the attention of students in learning accounting. There is a big challenge for students to understand its relevance to everyday life. Hence, the methods of teaching and learning should be innovative to create an interactive, relatable, and dynamic process of learning for students. Developing student engagement in accounting courses would be very crucial for deepening understanding and helping students prepare for their future careers.

Moving beyond lecture-based teaching is an effective way to enhance engagement. For example, using case studies would link the theoretical concepts with the real-world business scenarios that are closer to life and therefore make learning more practical and interesting. In addition, if a student analyses financial statements or solves accounting problems of actual companies, they would understand how accounting impacts the decision-making of the business. Group projects, in addition, build collaboration among the students which develops them into good team players and communicators while they were learning the accounting principles.

Technology likewise serves a crucial role in enhancing student engagement. Being able to use accounting software and tools as a widespread practice, teaching professionals can capitalize on this to improve instruction. Hands-on exercises involving QuickBooks or Excel may be conducted to fully immerse students in the practical application of whatever they learn in class live. Gamification is also becoming one of the popular technologies currently applied in accounting education. This can help educators turn seemingly boring assignments into games or challenges that students are interested in and motivated to perform better at. Another aspect is using active learning methods. Some techniques for achieving active learning are role-playing, problem-solving workshops, and peer teaching. In fact, a problem-solving workshop with the accounting concept could help create a lively sense of participation from students. A student who experiences how auditing decisions can impact or change organizational operations or who uses his/her expertise as a financial analyst in the decision-making process at any organizational level begins to connect what happens in class with the world.

Emphasize practical uses of accounting in the real world throughout the course. Accounting is not simply a matter of balancing books. Rather, accounting has a key role in explaining financial health in organizations, in investment management, and even ethics in business practice. By stressing how accounting can be applied in diverse industries like finance, healthcare, or non-profits, instructors can give students a more personal interest in why they might be motivated to

explore the topic further. Student involvement in accounting courses needs a combination of activities, technology utilization, and practical experience. By making accounting more accessible, relevant, and fun, more students will begin to appreciate the importance of the subject and be better equipped for their future careers.

Leah Marie Simeon-Urbano holds a Master in Business Administration degree. She is a skilled Instructor with extensive knowledge in financial principles and a strong background in Teaching. She is passionate about equipping students with practical skills and knowledge in financial aspect.

