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AN INTERNATIONAL MONTHLY NEWS-MAGAZINE ON TEACHING & LEARNING

# TEACHER'S GUIDE

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## Teacher's Guide

*An international monthly news-magazine on  
teaching and learning*

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## Essay

# Mathematics and Chess: Exploring the Correlation of Two Timeless Intellectual Pursuit

by Dr. Jonathan Edwin V. Remegia

Math and chess are known to be two of humanity's most intellectually challenging activities. Both math and chess require evaluative thinking, strategic planning, and even abstract thought. However, underneath this apparent dichotomy lies an amazing connection between the two disciplines. Thus, this paper explores the intricate relationship between mathematics and chess by looking at how these disciplines coincide with one another in different ways.

Both mathematics and chess are fundamentally based on logical reasoning as well as problem-solving. Players must assess complex positions, calculate future possibilities, and then make decisions based on their appraisals in a game of chess. On the other hand, mathematicians navigate through concepts that don't really exist; they use proof to prove theories or deduce solutions to complex problems, among other mathematical operations handled using logic. This shared foundation of logical thinking creates a natural bridge between the two disciplines.

Elkies & Stanley (2011) also noted this connection, asserting that both domains rely on pattern recognition skills, foresight, and strategy development based on given information. Most importantly, they assert that learning in one field can easily transfer to another, resulting in mutually beneficial effects in both mathematical aptitude and chess playing ability.

Researchers have explored the potential usefulness of chess in education, particularly in enhancing students' mathematics abilities. For instance, Barrett & Fish (2011) conducted a study to investigate if teaching children to play chess could improve their performance on standardized math tests. They compared this to a control group that did not receive any chess instruction during school hours, with no restrictions on age, national origin, or special needs such as autism spectrum disorder (ASD). They reported significant improvement among participants in this program, indicating its potential as an effective intervention to enhance mathematical understanding.

Likewise, Berkman (2004) researched the chess-mathematics relationship among middle school students. The author found that integrating chess into math lessons fostered problem-solving, spatial awareness, and critical skills. In this regard, it is important to note that chess provides a

tangible context for pupils to apply abstract mathematical concepts, which they can more easily relate to.

One of the most intriguing aspects of the connection between mathematics and chess is the development of metacognition. Kazemi et al. (2012) conducted a study to examine the impact of chess playing on students' metacognitive abilities and math problem-solving skills at various educational levels. Among other things, their findings were that non-chess players were unable to perform as well in comparison with those who did play, especially in terms such as planning or evaluation.

Consequently, this understanding resulted in better mathematical problem-solving skills among these individuals. For example, students who engaged in chess during their academic careers demonstrated the ability to approach complex calculations methodically, deconstruct them into smaller parts, and track their progress while attempting to solve complex equations systematically, in contrast to those who relied solely on textbooks to pass exams, without putting much effort into truly understanding what they had learned in their earlier school years. This implies that strategically thinking through various moves made during games can significantly impact one's mathematical reasoning abilities and capacity-related decision-making skills. For instance, solving problems involving numbers through arithmetical operations or finding solutions based on proportions, regardless of their complexity, can be achieved if one knows how to approach them correctly, even though they may appear impossible at first glance.

Another way in which chess relates to math is through spatial ability and geometry. This board itself has a geometrical arrangement where pieces move according to certain rules concerning the space they occupy. There is evidence showing that this aspect of chess improves players' mental images as well as manipulation abilities for geometrical objects.

According to Berkman (2004), players of the game of chess often develop a keen sense of spatial relationships, which can directly result in improved performance in geometric tasks. For instance, comprehending the movement of chess pieces may enable students to understand such concepts as coordinate systems, vectors, and transformations. Therefore, this link between

chess and geometry is one more way chess can help improve mathematical thinking among students.

Both mathematics and chess require the capacity to analyze quantitative information and make decisions based on it. In chess, players must constantly evaluate positions by considering material balance; piece activity and pawn structure are some factors that come into play here. This evaluation process involves assigning relative values to different elements of the position and making decisions based on those assessments.

Several aspects of mathematical thinking parallel this quantitative reasoning skill. Rosholm, Mikkelsen, & Gumede's (2017) study revealed that students engaged in chess programs outperformed their peers in math tests, particularly in their quantitative analysis and decision-making abilities. Ultimately, they suggest that constant practice of evaluating positions in chess improves pupils' numeracy levels, enabling them to make informed choices by acquiring useful numerical data.

Pattern recognition plays an important role in both mathematics and chess. Indeed, recognizing patterns can be crucial for solving problems or developing new theories in mathematics. Similarly, fast pattern recognition allows chess players to identify familiar positions, tactical motifs, and strategic themes.

Elkies & Stanley (2011) emphasize the importance of pattern recognition in both chess and mathematics, pointing out the similarities between mathematical proofs and the repetitive nature of many chess moves. They contend that mastery in one discipline will naturally influence mastery in the other, fostering a mutually reinforcing relationship between the two domains: math enhances your ability to play well, and more proficient players develop extensive repertoires in algebraic board square counting.

This correlation demonstrates the close connection between intellectual pursuits. Although these two disciplines are different in terms of content, they share basic cognitive processes that make them natural partners in the realm of education and cognitive development. The connection between mathematics and chess has numerous implications, ranging from enhancing problem-solving skills to spatial reasoning to metacognitive ability and quantitative analysis, among other things (Kasparov 2017).

This is a relationship that educationists and researchers will continue to explore, as it may identify more ways through which the two timeless intellectual quests can complement and enrich each other. By acknowledging and making

use of connections between math and chess, there is an opportunity for developing more efficient educational strategies, promoting critical thinking competencies, and nurturing logical and strategic thinkers among our children. Ultimately, exploring this correlation not only enhances our understanding of these subjects but also provides insights into human cognition, as all learning is interdisciplinary in nature.

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## Essay

# Reaching STARS (STudents At RiskS)

by Jenny Rose Q. Amor

“Teaching is a noble profession that shapes the character, intellect, and souls of future generations.”

Teaching doesn't only refer to the sharing of ideas and knowledge but also knowing the background and differences of each student. It does not only end within the four corners of the classroom but also even beyond.

Students nowadays face different challenges that hinder them from continuing learning and result in dropping out of school. The usual challenges that prevent them from attending classes are family problems, lack of guidance and support from parents, financial problems, bullying, numeracy and reading difficulties, distance of home from school, teenage pregnancy, being working students, and many more.

As teachers, it is one of our crucial roles as their second parents to know the stories behind our students' absenteeism. Therefore, we need to spend time monitoring their daily attendance, getting in touch with them and conducting kumustahan to check how they feel and are experiencing. We never know that some of them are dealing with challenges that affect their learning.

Initiating school projects that will help address these challenges that our learners are experiencing is a great important. Let us think of strategies, interventions and learning options that are specifically designed to help our students cope with these challenges and will provide equal opportunity of learning to all of them as this will address problems and challenges that hinder them to continue their studies. In doing this, schools will achieve better performance for ensuring that no students will be left behind.

Let us reach the STARS (Students At RiskS) and help them shine the brightest. They are the hope and the future of our country.

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## Essay

# Teacher Salaries and Incentives: How Increased Compensation Is Shaping Philippine Education

by Rylle Lhenz S. Perez

In recent years, the Philippine government has worked to improve the pay and support given to public school teachers. With a stronger focus on education, teachers are now seeing better salaries, benefits, and access to resources. These changes help increase teacher motivation, improve student learning, and bring positive changes to Philippine education.

For many years, public school teachers in the Philippines faced low salaries and a lack of resources, making it challenging to stay motivated. Many teachers even needed to work extra jobs to support their families. This financial stress made it difficult for teachers to give their full focus to students. Recognizing that teachers play a vital role in quality education, the government has recently made efforts to improve their financial situation.

A big step forward was the Salary Standardization Law, which gradually raised the salaries of government workers, including teachers. Under these new policies, an entry-level teacher (Teacher I) now earns between PHP 25,000 and PHP 27,000 per month. This is a major increase compared to previous years and acknowledges the important role of teachers in shaping the country's future. These higher salaries help ensure that teaching is a more stable career option.

Along with pay raises, teachers are also receiving more benefits and allowances. For example, there is now an annual "chalk allowance" to help teachers buy classroom supplies and performance-based bonuses for teachers who meet certain standards. These rewards not only encourage teachers to perform well but also give them a sense of pride in their work.

A study by Woessmann and West (2006) supports the idea that better pay improves education. Their research found that higher teacher salaries led to better student performance because it attracted skilled people to teaching and kept them from leaving. Although this study was international, the results match what we see in the Philippines, where better pay and support help retain talented teachers and bring new ones into the field.

Beyond pay, the government has also provided teachers with modern resources. The recent distribution of laptops to public school teachers, along with training, has helped teachers use new technology in their lessons. Having access to

technology allows teachers to make learning more interactive and helps them adapt to changing educational needs.

These changes indicate a new direction for Philippine education, emphasizing teaching as a respected and stable career. By focusing on teacher welfare, the government is taking important steps to improve both teaching quality and student experiences. While there is still room for progress, the attention to teacher salaries and support is a positive move toward a fairer and more effective education system in the Philippines.

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## Essay

# Shifting Leadership, Shifting Goals: How Changing Administrations Impact Philippine Education

by Rylle Lhenz S. Perez

The Philippine education system has seen notable shifts over the past decade due to leadership changes. Each administration brings a new set of priorities, affecting policies and goals. From the implementation of the K–12 program to the recent introduction of the MATATAG Curriculum by former DepEd Secretary Sara Duterte, these shifts illustrate the impact of administrative changes on Philippine education.

### 1. The K–12 Program: A Major Reform

Introduced in 2013, the K–12 program aimed to align Philippine education with global standards, adding two additional years to secondary education. This extension was designed to prepare students better for employment, higher education, or entrepreneurship. The K–12 shift required adjustments in curriculum, teacher training, and school infrastructure. While it was a necessary reform, implementing it across the entire system posed challenges, such as resource limitations and the need for ongoing teacher support.

### 2. The MATATAG Curriculum: Streamlining Learning

In 2023, DepEd launched the MATATAG Curriculum under Secretary Sara Duterte's leadership. This new curriculum, focusing on early-grade literacy, numeracy, and socio-emotional skills, aims to simplify the educational content for young learners. By reducing the number of competencies, it addresses calls for a more manageable curriculum, prioritizing foundational skills and value formation. The MATATAG Curriculum reflects a shift toward depth over breadth, particularly in early-grade education, addressing the learning gaps exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

### 3. Challenges of frequent administrative changes

The transition from the K–12 program to the MATATAG Curriculum highlights the impact of changing leadership on education policy. Frequent shifts in administration bring challenges like:

- **Policy Discontinuity:** New leadership often revises or replaces previous programs, leading to inconsistencies in long-term educational planning and implementation.
- **Resource Allocation:** Each reform requires reallocation of funds and resources, straining both logistics and budget, particularly in a

- resource-constrained educational environment.
- **Adaptation for Teachers and Students:** Constant changes mean teachers must undergo additional training, and students must adjust to new learning goals, disrupting the learning process.
- **The importance of stability in educational policy:** For meaningful progress in Philippine education, long-term strategies that transcend administrative shifts are essential. Frequent policy changes can disrupt continuous improvement, but a stable, unified approach allows for it. Collaborative efforts among educators, policymakers, and stakeholders can foster a shared vision that benefits students and the education system as a whole.

The evolution from the K–12 program to the MATATAG Curriculum underscores how administrative changes impact the educational landscape. While each reform aims to address real challenges, achieving lasting improvements requires stable, consistent policies. Establishing a shared vision across administrations is key to ensuring Filipino students receive the quality education they deserve.

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## Essay

# Making Math Easier to Understand: Teaching with Our Local Language

by Rylle Lhenz S. Perez

In many public schools in the Philippines, one of the biggest challenges in teaching math is the language barrier. Despite English being the primary language for teaching, most students lack fluency in it. This can make math even harder to learn. One possible solution is to teach math using the students' own language or "vernacular." By teaching in a language they understand well, we can help students grasp math concepts more easily.

When students hear complex math terms like "ratio," "integer," or "exponent" in English, it can feel overwhelming. These terms become much clearer when explained in the students' local language. Understanding these words is essential because they form the foundation of math. Once students know these terms in a language they're comfortable with, they feel more confident in tackling math problems and participating in class discussions.

Using the vernacular in teaching doesn't just help students understand math; it also helps reduce their stress. Math can be intimidating for many students, and if they're also worried about understanding English, the stress can multiply. Teaching in a familiar language helps them feel more relaxed, allowing them to ask questions and share ideas without the fear of making language mistakes. This comfort can lead to a more open and supportive classroom environment.

Teaching in the local language also helps address learning gaps. Some students, especially those from lower-income families, may have had less exposure to English. Teaching math in English may cause these students to feel marginalized. Teaching in their primary language gives every student an equal chance to succeed, regardless of their background.

Research supports this approach. According to a study by UNESCO (2016), students who learn in their mother tongue tend to grasp ideas more easily and perform better academically. This is particularly important in subjects like math, where understanding concepts deeply matters. By teaching math in a familiar language, we're helping students connect better to the material, leading to improved learning outcomes.

However, we can still teach English terms alongside the local language. Teachers can introduce new concepts in the local language first to make sure students understand. Then, they can gradually use the English words. This way, students learn the English terms but don't feel lost during the lesson.

In summary, using the vernacular language in teaching math is a simple, effective way to help students learn better. It respects the diverse backgrounds of Filipino students and helps break down language barriers in the classroom. By teaching math in a language they understand, we're giving students the confidence to succeed not only in math but also in their overall education.

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# Maikling Kwento

## Ang Munting Balsa at ang Baku

ni Jay Ann A. Gadiano

*Ito ay isang mahalagang bahagi ng pag-aaral ng mga batang nasa unang baitang. Nagtuturo sa mga bata na mag-isip ng kritikal, mag-analisa ng kanilang sariling interpretasyon. Nakakatulong ito sa kanilang pag-unlad sa iba't ibang larangan, mula sa sa wika at imahinasyon hanggang sa pag-unawa sa mundo at pagbuo ng ugnayan ng bawat-isa. Ang maikling kwentong, ang Munting Balsa at ang Baku ay nagbibigay diin na kahit sa panahong mahirap, ang puso ng mga Pilipino ay puno ng diwa ng 'bayanihan'—isang malakas na pakiramdam ng komunidad, pakikipagtulungan, at suporta sa isat-isa. Ito ay isang paalaala na kahit sa madilim na panahon, ang diwa ng tao ay makakahanap ng lakas at pag-asa sa pagtutulungan.*

Sa isang munisipyo, likas na mayaman sa berdeng kapaligiran at mapapakinabangan ang mga likas na yaman. Ngunit sa hindi inaasahan pangyayari dito natin makikilala ang ating mga kaibigan na sina Baku at Balsa.

Sa bukid, "aba napakagandang araw naman ito' wika ni balsa," alam mo balsa napakahusay ng gawa sayo' wika ni tipaklong" bakit mo naman iyon nasabi? wika ni balsa na may pagtataka "dahil kaya mong dalhin ang iyong amo sa kabilang parte ng ilog" ayon naman ni tipaklong na may paghanga, "nako tipaklong !" wika ni balsa at nagpaalam na kay tipaklong.

Sa araw - araw na paggamit kay balsa ng kanyang amo ay hindi malilimutan ang napaka laking tulong na nabigay niya. Sa kabilang banda, makikilala natin si baku na katulong sa baryo sa pag gawa ng mga sementong daan, at paglilinis ng lupa at kung ano pang kaya niyang gawin.

"Magandang umaga kaibigan, baku" wika ni bato sa kanyang kaibigan" sa iyo rin bato" wika ni Baku. Sa araw na iyon ay maraming ginawa ang ating munting bida dahil sa kanyang angking kakayan.

Makalipas ang dalawang araw, hindi inaasahan pangyayari ay biglang nagkaroon ng masungit na panahon. Pabugso-bugsong ulan na may kasama ng hangin, nagpatuloy ito hanggang tatlong araw ay naibalita sa radyo at telebisyon na mayroong bagyong darating kaya makakaranas ng maulang panahon. Hanggang umabot ng isang linggo, walang tigil na pag ulan at pag taas ng dagat na at sinamahan ito ng hangin habagat ay naiulat din na posibleng tataas ang mga katubigan sa parte ng mga barangay na mababa kaya nagkaroon ng malawakang pagbaha sa karatig na mga palayan at ganun din sa lungsod nakaranas ito ng mga pagbaha.

Dahil sa dulot ng pagbaha, nagkaroon ng suliranin ang mga byahero mula lungsod at sa kanilang kanya- kanyang munisipyo pag-uwi sa kanilang mga tahanan.

Dali-dali naman nabalitaan ito ng magkaibigang balsa at baku, hindi sila nag-atubiling puntahan ang mga lugar na nanganagailangan ng tulong nila.

Hay, Salamat! buti nalang tumila na ang ulan "wika ni balsa" dahil sa malalim pa rin ang baha, kailangan tulungan ni Baku ang mga tao para tumawid sa kabilang daan. Ngayon ay isa-isa ng tinulungan ni Baku ang mga tao dala ang kanilang mga gamit. Nagpasalamat naman ang mga ito kay Baku.

At sumunod din si Balsa sa kanyang pagtulong, isa, dalawa, tatlo, apat, lima na mga tao at marami pang iba, ang sumakay kay balsa papuntang kabilang daan. At nagpasalamat naman sila kay Balsa. Ganun na nga ang kanilang paulit ulit na ginawa habang tinulungan ang mga tao.

Masayang nagpasalamat ang mga tao sa magkaibigang Balsa at Baku.

Nagpahinga muna ang magkaibigan. "Kaibigang Balsa mabuti nalang andyan ka may katulong ako," wika ni Baku". "Alam mo ba mabuti nalang ginawa ako ng aking amo' wika ni Balsa "kaya nga kaibigan balsa' wika naman ni Baku dahil hindi lamang ako sa kanya nakatulong kundi sa ibang tao rin" wika ni balsa na may galak.

Sa pagtutulungan ng dalawang magkaibigan ay nag bigay ito ng ginhawa sa mga mamamayan na naroroon.

Kinabukasan, patuloy pa rin ang pag-ulan sa ibat ibang lugar. Kaya dali daling gumising sa Baku. Pagkatapos nyang kumain at maligo, dumiretso sya sa paghuhukay upang gumawa ng mga kanal upang bumaba ang dami ng ilog. At ganun din si Balsa. Pagkalipas ng ilang linggo, sa tulong magkaibigan Balsa at Baku ay naibalik sa normal ang barangay na naapektuhan kaya naman malaking pasasalamat ng mg taga barangay sa magkaibigang ito. Kaya naman maitututring silang isang mga bayani. Sa paglipas ng panahon si balsa at baku ang laging nadyan upang tulungan ang mga nangangailangan ng tulong sa gitna ng mga kalamidad at pagbaha.

At masayang masaya ang magkaibigan dahil nakita nila ang pagtutulungan ng bawat -isa, nagkaroon ng bayanihan ang mga tao sa gitna ng kalamidad tulad ng pagbaha sa kanilang mga lugar. Tila naging alerto na ang bawat isa sa pagkakaroon ng kalamidad.

Aral: Ito ay isang paalaala na kahit sa madilim na panahon, ang diwa ng tao ay makakahanap ng lakas at pag-asa sa pagtutulungan.

*Si Jay Ann A. Gadiano ay isang Guro III sa Sta. Teresita Elementary School sa Dumaran Mainland District. Siya ay may Master Degree sa Elementary Education.*



## Abstract

# Assessment of Teachers' Utilization and the Challenges Encountered in Digital Game-Based Learning in Selected Schools in Taguig City: Inputs for an Integration Framework

by Hazel Ann B. Alcala

This study examined the assessment of teachers' utilization and the challenges in digital game-based learning in the selected schools in the City of Taguig which will serve as inputs for an integration framework. It used descriptive methods to present facts about the assessment of teachers' utilization and the challenges in digital game-based learning in the selected schools in Taguig City. The study involved 148 English teacher-respondents from the three selected schools in Taguig. The main instrument that served as the data-gathering tool was a teacher-made survey questionnaire. The researcher sent it to the respondents through Google form for speedy retrieval or collection of data. The data were statistically treated with the use of the following: frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and chi-square.

It can be inferred in this study that the English teachers were newbies in teaching hence, exhibiting their competency in terms of instruction. Although they have their technological capabilities like having multiple gadgets and Wi-Fi connectivity, the lack of ICT training was considered a challenge in the application of digital game-based learning. Significant differences were found between respondents' profiles and their assessments of the utilization of English learning, particularly in terms of vocabulary acquisition and grammar comprehension. Additionally, factors such as Internet connections and ICT training influenced respondents' assessments significantly. It

was evident that two components became significant which are the Speaking Proficiency and Vocabulary Acquisition. Mastering the skill in speaking starts with having lots of vocabulary.

Hence, vocabulary acquisition and speaking proficiency are interconnected and should not be taught or learned in isolation but through meaningful methods to which learners can relate easily. Digital game-based learning focusing on language games will help educators create fun learning materials to arouse learners' interest, fluency, and motivation as well as to suit their proficiency level and learning styles. Educators should adopt game-based learning to enhance English proficiency. This approach boosts engagement, fluency, and motivation, essential for effective communication in today's digital age.

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# Maikling Kwento

## Ang Kuwento ni Mona at Moning

ni Amor V. Dionisio

Si Mang Onding at Aling Karla ay nakatira sa bayan ng Santa Maria. May dalawang anak silang lalaki at babae. Ang panganay ay si Rod at bunso naman si Mona. Ang hanap buhay ni Mang Onding ay ang pagtitinda ng malulutong na Chicharon. Sa kabila ng pagiging mabuting magulang ng mag-asawa at maunlad na pamumuhay, mayroon silang suliranin na nagpapahirap sa kanilang kalooban ito ay tungkol sa kanilang anak na si Mona.

Isang batang tamad si Mona. Wala siyang ibang hilig kundi maglaro at magkulong sa kaniyang silid. Madalas din itong nagsisinungaling sa kaniyang kapatid at mga magulang. Isang araw may iniutos si kuya Rod sa kaniya. "Hugasan mo ang pinamili ni Inay na isda," wika nito kay Mona. "Oo," sagot niya. Lumipas ang ilang oras, walang ginawa si Mona. Hanggang sa mamalayan niyang oras na sa pag-uwi ng kaniyang mga magulang at kapatid mula sa pagtitinda. Naalala niya ang mga isda na ibinilin ng kanyang kuya Rod. Wala na siyang oras kaya nag isip siya ng paraan.

Ibinigay niya sa pusa ang isda at sinabi na kinain ito ng pusa. Mahusay nga sa pagpapalusot si Mona ngunit napalo si Moning, ang kanilang alagang pusa dahil sa kaniyang ginawa.

Isang araw, inutusan ni Aling Karla si Mona, "Anak ilalagay ko na lang ang gatas dito sa lamesa ikaw na ang bahalang magligpit," bilin niya. Muling nakalimutan ni Mona ang ibinilin sa kaniya at para hindi siya mapagalitan, kinuha niya si Moning at inakyat sa mesa. Natapon ang gatas kaya noong malaman ni Aling Karla inilagay niya sa isang kulungan si Moning.

Napansin ni Mang Oding na may kakaiba sa ikinikilos at ipinapakita ni Mona. Napailing na lamang ito at nalungkot para sa kaniyang anak. Natuwa pa si Monang nilapitan si Moning sa kaniyang kulungan. "Oh, kawawang Moning," nakangiting sambit niya. Umiyak nang malakas si Moning dahil nagugutom na ito. Ngunit hindi siya binigyan ng pagkain ni Mona. Aalis na sana si Mona, ng biglang may lumapit sa kaniya. "Malupit kang bata at wala kang awa sa iyong alaga," galit na wika nito. "Mula ngayon nararapat lamang na maramdaman mo ang sinapit ng pusa," dugtong pa nito.

Ilang saglit lang naramdaman ni Mona na may kakaiba sa kaniya. Biglang naging pusa si Mona at nasa loob na siya ng kulungan. Umiiyak si Mona. "Ayaw ko dito, ibalik mo ako sa anyo ko!" sigaw niya. Ngunit biglang nawala na ang matanda. Magkasama si Mona at Moning sa kulungan. Habang umiiyak si Monang pusa, nilapitan siya ni Moning at niyakap siya nito.

Naawa si Moning sa sinapit ng kaniyang among si Mona. Sinikap niyang makawala sila sa kulungan. Nagtagumpay naman si Moning at tinulungan niya

si Mona. Dahil isang pusa na siya, naunawaan na ni Mona ang kalagayan ni Moning. Nagsisisi na ang kaniyang puso at nagising na siya sa kaniyang mga pagkakamali. Humingi siya ng tawad kay Moning habang kausap ni Mona si Moning biglang lumiwanag ang paligid, bumalik bilang isang bata si Mona. Napaiyak siya sa tuwa at niyakap niya si Moning. "Pangako Moning mula ngayon magiging mabuti na ako sa iyo at sa aking pamilya," taimtim na wika niya.

Dahil sila ay magkasama sa bahay, inalagaan ni Mona si Moning. Palagi na silang magkasama. Walang ibang nakakaalam sa sinapit ni Mona. Napansin naman ng kaniyang Tatay Onding, Nanay Karla at kuya Rod ang malaking pagbabago sa kanilang bunso. Masaya silang lahat sa mabuting pagbabago na ipinakita ni Mona. Naging matalik naman na magkaibigan si Mona at Moning. Napapasaya ni Mona si Moning. Palagi silang naglalaro lalo na sa tuwing nasa tindahan ang ibang kasapi ng kanilang pamilya.





# Maikling Kwento

## Bakit Maputi ang Labanos?

ni Rose Anne Tonelada Wael

Noong unang panahon, sa isang malawak na kagubatan sa bayan ng Santa Maria, ay may nakatirang iba't ibang uri ng gulay. Isa dito si Labanos. Siya ay napakaganda dahil sa taglay nitong matitingkad na kulay na nagbibigay sa kanya ng maaliwalas na mukha, na siya nitong laging pinagmamalaki. Ang kanyang kulay ay nakalinya na parang inayos nang sunod-sunod ayon sa tingkad ng bawat isa. Siya ay may kulay berdeng buhok na lalong nagpapaganda sa kanya sa tuwing ito ay kanyang inilulugay.

Si Labanos ay masayahin at masigasig na bata. Gayundin, siya ay may angking kagalingan sa pakikipagtalastasan. Ito ang paboritong gawin ni Labanos—ang makipagkwentuhan at magdaldal sa mga taong kanyang nakakasalubong sa paglalakad. Ngunit sa kabila ng kagandahang taglay, ay may hindi magandang pag-uugali si Labanos—ang pagiging mapagmataas at mayabang. Kaya naman, walang gustong makipagkaibigan sa kanya. Sa tuwing may nakikita siyang maganda, ay lagi niya itong hinahanapan ng hindi magandang katangian. Isang araw, sa kanyang pamamasyal, ay nadaanan niya ang umpukan ng mga magkakaibigang gulay na masayang nagkukuwentuhan at nagtatawanan. Gusto sana niyang makisali sa usapan, ngunit hindi niya alam kung paano sasabihin. Nakita niya si Ampalaya, na noo'y masayang nangunguna sa kwentuhan, at walang ano-ano ay bigla na lamang niya itong sinabihan, “Ano ba ‘yan Ampalaya, bakit ganyan ang kutis mo? Iisang kulay, kulubot pa na parang bulateng nakakadirikang tingnan at hawakan.”

Dahil sa sinabi niya, nagtinginan ang lahat kay Labanos dahil nakuha niya ang atensyon ng mga gulay. Muli siyang nagsabi, “Bukod sa pangit mong itsura, balat ko ay mapait pa ng iyong lasa,” sabay tawa nang malakas.

Dahil sa mga pangungutya ni Labanos, biglang nakaramdam ng pagka-pahiya si Ampalaya. Dahil doon, bigla na lamang itong tumakbo nang nakayuko. Huli na nang makita niya na si Ampalaya ay babangga sa isang malaking puno. Dahil doon, labis na nasaktan si Ampalaya na halos naging sanhi ng kanyang pagkamatay.

Hindi alam ni Labanos na nakamasid at laging pinagmamasdan siya ng kanilang Engkantada. Dahil sa kanyang ginawa, ay hindi na nakatiis ang engkantada at nagpakita ito sa kanila. Walang ano-ano ay nagwika ang engkantada,

“Labis-labis na ang iyong pagsasalita ng masama sa iyong kapwa. Dahil sa iyong kapalaluan na naging sanhi ng pagdaramdam at muntik na pagkamatay ng isa sa inyo, ay nararapat na ikaw ay parusahan. Ang lahat ng iyong kulay sa katawan ay mawawala, at ang kulay na lamang ng iyong buhok ang matitira.”

Nagsisi man si Labanos, ay hindi na muli pang mababawi ang parusa ng engkantada. “Ngayon ay magtatanda ka na kung ayaw mong pati ang kulay ng iyong buhok ay mawala rin,” wika ng engkantada.

Dahil sa pangyayari, nagtanda na si Labanos at humingi ng tawad kay Ampalaya. Ngunit kailanman ay hindi na bumalik ang dati niyang kulay at ganda.

