APPLYING GAME-BASED ACTIVITIES TO STRENGTHEN NUMERACIES

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Often times, pupils really hate Mathematics as they consider this as one of the toughest subjects. Likewise, they don’t like Math because they think it’s dull and boring. It is not a surprise and it’s not uncommon to hear pupils who are struggling saying, “I hate Math!” This might be one of the reasons why do pupils do not master the four fundamental operations and the different skills in this subject. One must be aware specially the teachers about the reasons why so many pupils dislike Math? What must be our plans and actions to ensure more pupils see how fun and fulfilling it can be.

Teachers must do something to engage the pupils into meaningful and joyful teaching and learning experiences. Moreover, teachers must figure out the best and effective teaching approaches, techniques and strategies to be used to help out and influence the learners to develop love for Mathematics. However, one of the best ways to address this problem is to provide appropriate intervention, one of which is the application of GAMIFICATION Activities or the Game-based activity approach.

Have you ever observed that pupils were more eager, motivated and excited to learn when engaged into a fun way of learning the lessons? Haven’t you noticed that the span of attentions they spent were longer when the lesson was incorporated with games and other exciting activities?

Furthermore, to give a short background about the term Gamification, it is the application of game features for the purpose of promoting motivation and engagement
in learning. The application of Gamification in a pedagogical context provides some 
remedy for many pupils who find themselves alienated by the traditional methods of 
teaching. Hence, teachers must be creative and resourceful in crafting Gamification 
activities that will help improve pupils’ skills in Mathematics and help uplift their 
numeracy levels. The question is, what game-based activities must be considered to uplift 
pupils’ numeracy level? Well, there are many factors to consider in order to craft and 
make game-based activities. To help you out with this, consider the following points to 
remember in creating applicable and effective Gamification activities:

**N – Note your pupil’s numeracy level**

From the very start, it is really significant to test and find out the numeracy levels of our pupils. This will be our baseline in crafting our plans of actions to do to address our pupils’ needs when it comes to improving their skills in Mathematics. Knowing their levels will give us a clear view of the appropriate game-based activities to create.

**U – Unlock their fears and wrong perceptions in Math**

“I really love Math!” This must be the goal of every teacher for their pupils, to hear them saying, they really love Math. Take note of this, some say that when pupils hate the subject, they might also hate the teacher who is teaching the subject or vice versa. Teachers as the facilitators of learnings must establish a strong foundation to engage the pupils into meaningful learning experiences while in Mathematics subject. Applying every lesson into real life situations is also essential for them to realize the value or the significance of the lessons being taught. Let them love you as their Math teacher, and the way you teach them the lessons in Math for them to love the subject.

**M – Make an Action Plan on Gamification Activities in Math**

Planning is truly essential. Action plans will guide us achieve the goals we want to accomplish. After having a prior background about our pupils’ numeracy levels and
establishing their love for this subject, it is about time to create an action plan. This may include our target skills to be improved, the objectives, name of game-based activities to be made, kinds of game-based activities as to (group activity, individual activity, or by pair), time frame and the resources.

E – Exert EFFORT and PATIENCE in crafting your Game-Based Activities

It takes time, effort and patience to create game-based activities, especially if these require lay-outing procedures like using tarpapels for group activities, board-game inspired activities such as Snake and Ladder, Bingo, Word Hunt, Crossword Puzzle and the like. We can also adapt similar activities that are available in the internet and make some modifications to fit with the needs of our pupils. Remember, our goal is to uplift the numeracy levels of our pupils through Game-Based learning and activities so we have to work hard for the realization of our goal.

R – Reflect on their responses on the use of the Gamification Activities

Do your pupils enjoy and learn something through the application of a specific game-based activity you have prepared? Is there any improvement on their performances in Math as you engaged them into fun ways of learning? Are they enthusiastic and eager to participate in class after using Gamification activities? These are the questions we have to consider in order to find out the effectiveness of such game-based activities used during the teaching and learning process.

A - Adjust… Maintain….Change

After reflecting on their responses toward the use of game-based activities, it’s about time to decide. If you think, you need to improve your self-made game-based activities, then make some adjustments. If you think your pupils really enjoy it and learn a lot after using it, then maintain it. If you notice that it seems your pupils did not enjoy
such activities, and they did not improve, then you have to think of other game-based activities and CHANGE it.

C – Consult and learn from others

You are not a one man soldier. You can gain more learnings when you allow yourself to acquire information from others. Coaching, mentoring, and even benchmarking could help us think more, learn more, and do more. Share with them your experiences in doing game-based activities, and listen as they share their own experiences.

Y – You have to be CONSISTENT

When you feel on fire to do more for you pupils’ improvement, keep that fire always burning. Always wear that flame. Do not stop thinking and doing innovations that will help you achieve your goal for your pupils. This will be your great legacy that will somehow change your pupils’ lives. Yes, you might be consumed physically, and mentally, but always remember the impact of the innovations you made for your pupils. Start until you reach the finish line.

References:

www.oxfordlearning.com
https://blog.mindresearch.org