

LEARNING TO READ AND WRITE and LEARNING FOR LIFE SITUATIONS

Our starting point: literacy is not just learning how to read and write, but how this can help emancipate the individual and prepare her/him for day-by day life experiences.

According to UNESCO, there are about a billion people, in the world, who do not know how to read and write, and the number of functional illiterates is on the increase, even in industrialized countries – this is a critical situation.

In his excellent articles: “*The Linguistic and Pedagogical Rights of Literates-to-be*” and “*Children’s Language Learning Rights*”, Dr. Francisco Gomes de Matos, of the Department of Languages at UFPE in Recife, PE, points out the importance of the human right to learn to read, write and do math, as well as the linguistic and pedagogical rights of literates-to-be.

THE LINGUISTIC AND PEDAGOGICAL RIGHTS OF LITERATES-TO-BE

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These rights include:

1. being respected linguistically socially, culturally and cognitively;
2. knowing why and for what reason s/he is becoming literate;
3. learning to identify and explore the many uses of reading and writing;
4. being taught to read and write by the community where s/he lives;
5. learning with and from other learners and not only with/from a “teacher”;
6. being able to apply the processes of reading and writing to all areas of her/his daily life at home, at work and in other community contexts;
7. having her/his learning strategies for reading-writing identified, recognized and activated;
8. being exposed to authentic, adequate and varied reading materials;
9. becoming an independent, critical reader of texts and of the world of information around her/him;
10. knowing how to (re)construct her/his own social, cultural, political, economic and linguistic day to day living situations, as well as how to help others achieve this.

Obs.:

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CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE LEARNING RIGHTS (A *checklist for Teachers*)

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Do you give your children (as language learners) the right to:

1. think about how they learn languages and to experiment with different language strategies? If yes, how?
2. learn to explore the fun element in language, that is, through playful activities such as games, songs, quizzes and so on?
3. enhance their linguistic creativity through language learning?
4. learn language cooperatively through collaborative activities in a spirit of caring and sharing for one's linguistic neighbor?
5. learn languages in an ecologically relevant manner, that is, by considering how, as human beings, we can interact with Nature in mutually respectful and dignified ways?
6. identify and promote their own individual needs, interests and learning styles during classroom as well as extra-class activities?
7. start developing and cultivating their cross-cultural awareness and sensitivity?
8. contribute to their own language learning process by choosing their own language learning materials and activities from time to time?
9. be evaluated with fairness and to understand how errors can be seen as positive steps in language learning growth and development?
10. learn languages as a means of contributing to the goal of communicative Peace, thereby fostering a peace-loving-and-promoting-world?
11. be taught by teachers who love children and whose personalities harmonize with those of their learners?
12. learn to communicate well and for good (in this case, for the good of humanity, applying the teaching of Christ: love-communicate with your neighbor as yourself)?

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