

UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES  
CENTER FOR  
INTEGRATIVE AND  
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STUDIES

PROCEEDINGS 2023

# ***A Roundtable Discussion on Literacy Assessments for Grades 4 to 12***

Emerging Themes and Framework  
for 21st Century Learning

4 November 2022

A Roundtable Discussion via Zoom







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CENTER FOR INTEGRATIVE AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

Lower Ground Floor, Ang Bahay ng Alumni

Magsaysay Avenue, University of the Philippines

Diliman, Quezon City 1101

Telephone: (02) 8981-8500 loc. 4266 to 4268 / (02) 8426-0955

Email: [cidspublications@up.edu.ph](mailto:cidspublications@up.edu.ph)

Website: [cids.up.edu.ph](http://cids.up.edu.ph)

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# FOREWORD

These proceedings documents the consultative roundtable discussion organized by the University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies (UP CIDS) Education Research Program (ERP) last 4 November 2022. Held over Zoom, the roundtable was attended by individuals from different institutions and organizations who were invited for their diverse perspectives on assessment, which are based on their experiences and contributions to the field of basic education. The objective of the roundtable was to develop consensus surrounding two salient concerns regarding literacy assessments for older learners. First, what literacies should Grades 4-12 learners develop? Second, what assessments are needed for these literacies and how should these assessments be administered?

With the participants' highly spirited participation during the roundtable discussion, the ERP was able to identify the emerging themes regarding the priorities for assessment as well as relevant insights on methods of assessment for Grades 4-12. Moving forward, the ERP intends to make decisions on the scope of assessment and the subsequent instruments to develop in partnership with the different institutions that also advocate for contextualized and authentic studies of literacy.

The sections of this paper follow the program flow of the roundtable discussion. Papers presented by researchers, practitioners, advocacy groups, and basic and higher education teachers have been compiled in these proceedings. The presentations are followed by a summary of the open forum, a synthesis of the emerging themes, and the next steps for creating an assessment framework and consequent tools for Grades 4-12.

# INTRODUCTION

## The Development of Multi-Literacy Assessments for Filipino Children

Dina Ocampo, Ph.D.,<sup>1</sup> Margaret Mary Rosary Carmel Fua,<sup>2</sup> and Kathrina Lorraine Lucasan<sup>3</sup>

### Context-Setting

Different agencies and institutions have raised alarm bells regarding the literacy achievement levels of Filipino learners. However, it was only in 2018 and 2019, when the results of the Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM) and the Programme for International Scale Assessment (PISA) were released, that the bells were heard loud and clear; the data placed the performance of Filipino learners among the lowest (OECD 2018; DepEd, SEAMEO, and UNICEF 2021). While the results provide a baseline for comparing Filipino learners with similar-aged peers from other countries, the assessment tools used for these cross-country studies were developed for large-scale implementation. These tools did not provide sufficient insight into the cognitive and linguistic processes of literacy development among Filipino children, who are characterized as multilingual and multicultural learners (Gonzalez 2003).

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1 Dina Ocampo, Ph.D. ([erp.cids@up.edu.ph](mailto:erp.cids@up.edu.ph)) is Co-Convenor of the University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies (UP CIDS) Education Research Program (ERP).

2 Margaret Mary Rosary Carmel Fua ([mefua2@up.edu.ph](mailto:mefua2@up.edu.ph)) is Senior Research Associate at the UP CIDS ERP.

3 Kathrina Lorraine Lucasan ([kmlucasan@up.edu.ph](mailto:kmlucasan@up.edu.ph)) is Senior Research Associate at the UP CIDS ERP.

In 2018, the University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies (UP CIDS) Education Research Program (ERP) began developing indigenous assessment materials so that researchers can have the tools to measure the literacy development of Filipino learners over time (Preclaro-Ongtenco 2019). Lucasan (2021) also developed assessment materials in Sinugbuanong Binisaya, which is spoken by those from Cebu, Negros Oriental, Bohol, Siquijor, some parts of Masbate, the western part of Leyte, Agusan, Bukidnon, Davao, Lanao del Norte, Surigao, Misamis Oriental, Zamboanga del Sur, and in some parts of Cotabato (Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino 2021). These assessments are in Filipino and English for Kindergarten to Grade 3, and called the Multi-Literacy Assessments for Filipino Children (MLAF). They are intended to fill the precise gap needed for literacy research. With such appropriate tools, there are more chances to understand the development of literacy among multilingual children of the Philippines (Ocampo et al. 2020).

This research project can provide insights on how Filipino children learn literacy. It can also potentially provide opportunities to investigate the interacting factors that result in optimal reading and writing competencies among learners. In addition, the project addresses the long-felt need for assessment tools that are based on, and can capture, the Filipino child's multilingual nature, experiences, and learning processes. Due to the lack of literacy measures, research on literacy difficulties, dyslexia, as well as other related learning challenges among Filipino children, have also been limited. These have been longstanding questions: What assessments are needed to distinguish between children with dyslexia or second-language learning difficulties? How can children with both sources of difficulties, or who may even have other comorbidities, be identified and supported? These questions need answers. It can be provided by stable and well-developed instruments that yield information on underlying skills that are normally not assessed in school.

There are also gaps in our understanding of how multilingual literacy develops among Filipino children. This compromises our ability to create and implement appropriate instructional programs, approaches,

and materials for children. We also have limited understanding of the interactions between the languages children speak in communities and the target languages of education. Through this project, UP CIDS ERP aims to contribute to research and evidence bases on which to ground curriculum approaches, and teaching methods and materials that are responsive to children’s literacy purposes and needs.

### **The Development of Multi-Literacy Assessments for Filipino Children (Kindergarten to Grade 3)**

In the development of the Multi-Literacy Assessments for Filipino Children for Kindergarten to Grade 3 (MLAF for K-3), considerations included (a) the Philippine education context, (b) concepts of early literacy based on literature reviews, and (c) studies done on literacy learning in multilingual contexts and on multilingual learners.

In the Philippines, the language in which literacy is first developed is the child’s mother tongue. Subsequent languages, such as Filipino and English, are gradually introduced in Grades 1, 2, and 3. The content and performance standards for these languages are articulated in the national K-to-12 language and literacy curriculum (DepEd 2016a; 2016b; 2016c; 2016d).

Evidence on literacy learning in multiple languages and among multilingual speakers shows that their literacy development is substantively different from that of monolingual learners (Durgunoglu and Goldenberg 2011). There are also correlations among literacy skills across languages (Berninger and Abbott 2010; Goswami 2010). This is shown in the research among Filipinos. Their literacy skills are predicted by different underlying competencies in the languages that they know. While the rate of learning to read in Filipino, English, and other Philippine languages differs, the subskills show a high degree of cross linguistic interdependence (Ocampo 2002; Padilla 2021).

Furthermore, a review of literature on early literacy suggests that literacy skills develop along a continuum (Byrnes and Wasik 2019). This means that certain levels of literacy skills in later years build on skills

acquired earlier. Essential skills that must be acquired early include oral language, print concepts, alphabet knowledge, phonological processing, invented spelling, knowledge of syntax, and rapid automatized naming (RAN) (Byrnes and Wasik 2019). Emergent literacy is the construct that defines these early-acquired skills, which are said to be foundational to the development of conventional reading and writing (Byrnes and Wasik 2019; Sulzby and Teale 1991).

On the other hand, conventional reading is traditionally divided into the “learning to read” and “reading to learn” stages (Byrnes and Wasik 2019; Chall 1983). The “learning to read,” or beginning reading stage, involves the acquisition of decoding or word recognition skills, as well as the reading and understanding of simple, connected text (Aulls 1982; Byrnes and Wasik 2019). In typically developing learners, these skills are expected to be acquired until the third grade. Each of the components included in the MLAF K-3 are defined in the succeeding paragraphs.

## **Emergent Literacy Skills**

### *Oral Language*

Oral language refers to the “spoken form of communication” (Reutzel and Cooter 2013, 32). To communicate effectively with adults and peers, children must be relatively fluent in their oral language. Influenced by both the home environment and school experience, oral language development provides students with the opportunity to learn the structure of a language and build their vocabulary. As such, oral language becomes “a critical foundation to the development of reading and writing” (Reutzel and Cooter 2013, 31).

### *Phonological Awareness*

Phonological awareness pertains to the understanding that smaller units make up spoken and written words (Reutzel and Cooter 2013). These can be sounds from individual words (word awareness) and sound chunks (syllable awareness) to individual sounds (phonemic awareness). This ability progresses from whole to part, or from least to most

difficult tasks. An example of this sequence is shown by Reutzel and Cooter (2013, 92–103) below (terms quoted virtually verbatim):

1. Development of word concept
2. Rhyming
3. Hearing sounds in words and making same-different judgments
4. Counting syllables and sounds
5. Isolating beginning, ending and middle sounds in words
6. Substituting and deleting sounds in words and syllables
7. Blending syllables, onsets and rimes, and sounds into words
8. Segmenting words into syllables
9. Representing sounds in language and words with symbols in spelling and writing

### *Book and Print Knowledge*

Book and print knowledge refers to the awareness and understanding of how books and print works. This knowledge is considered a critical part of early literacy development among beginning readers (Reutzel and Cooter 2013). It indicates how children perceive and examine printed language, and covers three distinct aspects: functions of print, sound-symbol correspondence, and print conventions.

### *Alphabet Knowledge*

Mastery of the alphabet is achieved once the child knows that “each letter has a form, name, and corresponding sounds” (Piasta et al. 2022). Knowledge of the alphabet allows children to associate certain sounds with specific letters; thus, it is a prerequisite to decoding and spelling (Ehri 1998).

### *Vocabulary Development*

Vocabulary development is the “knowledge of words and their meanings in both oral and print representations” (Lehr, Osborne, and Heibert 2004). Vocabulary is further defined as a complex process built upon oral language experiences and interactions with various conversational partners (Nagy and Scott 2000; Johns and Lenski 2001). When a word is in a child’s vocabulary, they can recognize and use knowledge of the word combined with other types of knowledge to make sense of texts. Vocabulary development thus has a strong influence on comprehension (Harmon and Wood 2018).

### *Listening Comprehension*

Kim and Pilcher (2016, 3) define “listening comprehension” as “one’s ability” to “comprehend spoken language at the discourse level—including conversations, stories (i.e., narratives), and informational oral texts—that involves the processes of extracting and constructing meaning.” Listening comprehension should be developed as early as possible, since it plays a big role in facilitating reading comprehension (Hogan, Adlof, and Alonzo 2014; Kim and Pilcher 2016).

### *Executive Function*

Executive functions are cognitive processes used to regulate mental functioning and behavior (Diamond 2013). These skills allow us to “use working memory, inhibit fast and unthinking responses to stimulation, and shift the focus of one’s mental frame” (Blair 2016, 3). Diamond (2013) explains that executive functions pave the way for the higher-level skills of planning, reasoning, and problem solving; and for support goal-setting activities such as reading. Diamond further articulates that executive functions involve working memory, inhibition, and cognitive flexibility which are processes that contribute to the development of reading comprehension (in Cartwright, Marshall, and Hatfield 2020, 115 citing Diamond 2013). Assessments of executive functions usually make use of timed tasks, wherein errors and omissions are tallied and counted (Diamond 2013). These include Stroop tests, digit span tests, and pictorial tests.

## Beginning Literacy Skills

### *Phonics and Word Recognition*

Phonics and word recognition refers to the ability to identify a written word. This may be done through decoding or word recognition. Decoding is the ability to identify letters and their corresponding sounds in the correct sequence, and blend these sounds successfully, while word recognition is the ability to recognize a word immediately (Reutzel and Cooter 2013). Word recognition that is accurate, rapid and that requires little conscious attention gives way for better text comprehension. It is thus an important foundation of the reading process (Stanovich 1991).

### *Phonics and Nonword Recognition*

In MLAF K-3, nonword recognition is the ability to decode meaningless words that subscribe to the orthography of the Filipino and English languages. Dorfman (1994) suggests that this skill is mediated by the mastery of phonemes and morphemes.

### *Grammar Awareness and Structure*

Tupe (2008) defines grammar awareness as one's knowledge of the features and sentence structures of a language in its written form. Grammar is used interchangeably with "syntax," which refers to the set of rules used to make meaningful sentences (Reutzel and Cooter 2013). Tupe (2008) further states that morphology, or the use of grammatical markers (e.g., tense, active or passive voice), is an integral part of grammar awareness.

### *Reading Comprehension*

Lesaux, Kiefer, Faller and Kelley (2010), Schroeder (2011) and Samuels 2006 suggest that reading comprehension is a complex skill that involves understanding of words, sentences, and passages, as well as constructing and reconstructing meanings from the text. They further state that comprehension is not only the ability to make sense of print, but also the ability to combine prior knowledge with the information



on the page to be able to construct meaning. Good decoding skills are necessary to comprehend the material that was read (Stanovich 1991).

### *Fluency*

Fluency is the “ability to read with accuracy (correct word enunciation), speed and ease of decoding (automaticity), and prosody (reading in thought groups following intonation dictated by punctuation marks” (Rasplica and Cummings 2013). It is affected by a child’s level of proficiency in word recognition (Adams 1990; Gough 1984; Share and Stanovich 1995; Stanovich 1991).

### *Spelling*

Spelling refers to the ability to convert sounds to their corresponding print symbols (Berninger and Fayol 2008). It is one of the technical or mechanical aspects encompassed by writing and composing. It also allows children to display phonemic awareness and knowledge of the alphabetic principle. Spelling is developmental; that is, children go through rudimentary forms of spelling (i.e., prephonemic, phonemic, invented/transitional) before developing conventional orthographic skills (Johns and Lenski 2001; Tierney and Readence 2005; Cooper, Robinson, Slansky, and Kieger 2015). Invented spelling, an emergent literacy skill wherein children use an incomplete set of letters to represent an entire word, is said to be one of the top abilities needed for later reading success (Byrnes and Wasik 2019).

### *Writing and Composition*

Writing and composition refers to the ability to formulate thoughts and ideas, and then, by using mastery of orthographic patterns, translate these thoughts and ideas on paper (Donn 1988). It encompasses the capacity to transmit messages effectively, and an understanding of the basic mechanics of writing (Biscontini 2023). Initial writing attempts are seen in young children as they realize that drawings or marks can be used to create meaning (Rohde 2015; Rowe and Neitzel 2011). As children enter school and are provided formal reading and writing instruction, these emergent writing skills mature, enabling the transition from writing simple texts to more complex compositions (Tyner 2019).

Reading (categorized as receptive language) and writing (productive language) develop hand-in-hand because these skills are reflections of the same language process (Reutzel and Cooter 2007).

Several studies in the Philippines have investigated both emergent literacy and beginning reading skills in K-3. These are listed beside each component in Table 1. The studies made use of researcher-made assessment tools which then became the bases for the tools included in ERP's K-3 multi-literacy assessments. The categorization into emergent and beginning literacy skills reflects their development along a continuum.

The emergent literacy skills of rapid automatized naming, logical sequencing, and figure copying have been grouped together to comprise the assessments for executive function (Cantin et al. 2016; Valcan et al. 2020). Executive function was included and given its own category in light of the crucial role of information processing to literacy development (Byrnes and Wasik 2019; Cantin et al. 2016; Valcan et al. 2020).

**TABLE 1:** Literacy Components and Corresponding Local Research Bases for the Multi-literacy Assessments for Filipino Children (K-3)

<b>Emergent Literacy</b>	<b>Beginning Literacy</b>	<b>Executive Function</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oral Language (Bustos 1999; Mendoza 2017; Simbulan 2003)</li> <li>• Phonological Awareness (Tan 2007)</li> <li>• Book and Print Knowledge (Digo 2012; Gloria-Fernandez 2005; Santos 2001; Yanilla-Aquino 2005)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Word Recognition (Digo 2012; Jugo 2005; Ocampo 2002; Santos 2015; Tan 2007; Yanilla-Aquino 2005)</li> <li>• Nonword Recognition (Ocampo 2002)</li> <li>• Grammar Awareness (Ocampo 2002)</li> <li>• Reading Fluency (Ocampo 2002)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Logical Sequencing (Ocampo 2002)</li> <li>• Rapid Automatized Naming (Ocampo 2002)</li> <li>• Figure Copying (Ocampo 2002)</li> </ul>

**TABLE 1:** Literacy Components and Corresponding Local Research Bases for the Multi-literacy Assessments for Filipino Children (K-3)

Emergent Literacy	Beginning Literacy	Executive Function
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alphabet Knowledge (Digo 2012; Santos 2001; Santos 2015; Tan 2007)</li> <li>• Vocabulary (Yanilla-Aquino 2005)</li> <li>• Listening Comprehension (Ocampo 2002)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading Comprehension (Ocampo 2002)</li> <li>• Spelling (Digo 2012; Ocampo 2002; Santos 2015; Yanilla-Aquino 2005)</li> <li>• Written Composition (Dario 2001; Pado 1990; Santos 1995; Bustos 1999; Yanilla-Aquino 2010)</li> </ul>	

Source: Compiled by the authors

## Multi-literacy Assessments for Filipino Children v1.0 (MLAF 1.0)

The development process was composed of two phases. Figure 1 shows the processes followed in Phase 1 of tool development.

**FIGURE 1:** Phase 1 Assessment Tools Development Process (MLAF 1.0)



*Development of a Blueprint*

Studies on early literacy in bilingual and multilingual contexts and the literature on the literacy development of the K-3 child became the basis for the MLAF K-3's final components. These components are listed in Table 1.

Moreover, because Filipino children are taught literacy in at least two languages, it was decided that language-based components—such as oral language phonological awareness, vocabulary, comprehension, word and passage reading, written composition, spelling and rapid automatized naming—will have parallel items in Filipino and English. Non-language components will be administered only once in the child's first language. The components were also distributed according to the manner of administration—by group or one-on-one. Also, since our study focuses on children's literacy development rather than achievement, the MLAF will be administered to all K-3 children instead of being grade-specific.

*Selection and Drafting of Items*

A survey of existing tools on the identified components was then conducted. Most of these tools were developed by researchers of the University of the Philippines and have already been validated. Permission to either use or adapt these tools were sought from the authors and developers.

A table of specifications was then constructed to identify the number of items for each component, as well as the progression of difficulty. Test items were created with the use of SukatWika (literally, "Measure Language"), a psycholinguistic analyzer developed by UP CIDS ERP in collaboration with the UP Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering Digital Signal Processing Laboratory.

Items that were culled from existing tools were checked against existing K-3 learner's materials through the use of SukatWika. The results of this analysis provided valuable linguistic information—such

as word frequency, number of syllables, and number of phonemes—for the writing and selection of word-level test items. It is important to note that a substantial number of items were created in anticipation of the process of item analysis, which will determine the inclusion and possible exclusion of some items.

### *Validation, Revision, and Field Testing*

A two-step validation process was then conducted. Validation of content by early literacy experts and a simulation with a very small but diverse sample became the basis of ensuing revisions. The resulting assessment tool, the Multi-literacy Assessment for K-3 Filipino Children (MLAF 1.0), was field tested in 2019 and was administered face-to-face.

Field test data was used for item analysis, employing item response and classical test theories as well as ANOVA (Analysis of Variance). ANOVA is used to determine differences in means or averages of groups and check if there is a significant difference between these means (Dancey and Reidy 2011).<sup>4</sup> Item analysis informed the decision on which items to retain, revise, or place in an item bank. This gave way to the current iteration of the tool—MLAF 2.0.

### *Results of Initial Analysis of Field Test Data*

It is important to mention that the field test data from Phase 1 was also analyzed to provide an initial glimpse of the relationships between the components within a language, and of the interlanguage relationships of these components. The Pearson correlation coefficient (Pearson  $r$ ) was used to determine these relationships (the higher the  $r$  value, the stronger the correlation). Pearson  $r$  values 0.70 and above are considered high correlations, while  $r$  values below 0.40 are low correlations. Items with low correlations were excluded in the subsequent analysis.

---

4 The formula for ANOVA is  $F$  (ANOVA coefficient) = mean sum of squares between groups (MSB)/mean squares of errors (MSE)

Table 2 lists the positive correlations between different components within and across languages. In Filipino, there are nine correlated components. In English, there are 13 correlated components. Between these two languages, however, are five positively correlated components. The highly correlated components between Filipino and English are reading comprehension, word reading, nonword reading, grammar, and spelling. This implies that children who are able to read words and non-words; spell words accurately; and have a good grasp of grammar of these languages are highly likely to read with better comprehension. Table 3 lists the positive correlations in the same component across languages.

**TABLE 2:** Correlated Components Within and Across Languages

<b>Correlated Components</b>	<b>Correlation in Filipino</b>	<b>Correlation in English</b>	<b>Correlation Across Languages</b>
RC and PWR	0.90	0.89	FRC and EPWR (0.86) ERC and FPWR (0.78)
RC and G	0.86	0.79	ERC and FG (0.86)
RC and PNWR	0.85	0.82	ERC FPNWR (0.73) FRC and EPNWR (0.71)
RC and S	0.84	0.86	ERC and FS (0.84) FRC and ES (0.75)
PNWR and PWR	0.92	0.87	FPNWR and EPWR (0.86) EPNWR and FPWR (0.75)
PNWR and S	0.83	0.74	FPNWR and ES (0.72)
PWR and S	0.86	0.79	EPWR and FS (0.81) FPWR and ES (0.74)
PWR and G	0.83	0.74	FPWR and EG (0.84)
S and G	0.82	0.87	RFS and EG (0.86) ES and FG (0.75)

Legend:

E - English  
F - Filipino

G - Grammar  
PNWR - Phonics and  
Non-word Reading

PWR - Phonics and Word Reading  
RC - Reading Comprehension  
S - Spelling

**TABLE 3:** Correlated Components Across Languages

Component	Correlation Across Filipino and English
Grammar	0.86
Phonics and Nonword Recognition	0.75
Phonics and Word Recognition	0.89
Reading Comprehension	0.82
Spelling	0.79

The similarity of correlations between Filipino and English suggests that there is a transfer of skills from Filipino to English, and vice versa. This claim is supported by the correlations noted in components *across* languages, which are also between the same components found to be correlated within each language.

The findings of this initial analysis correspond with Cook's (2003) integration model of language relationships, since the results show overlaps across language skills. It also provides proof of linguistic transfer, which Odlin (1989, 1) defines as "the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target audience and any other language that has previously been acquired."

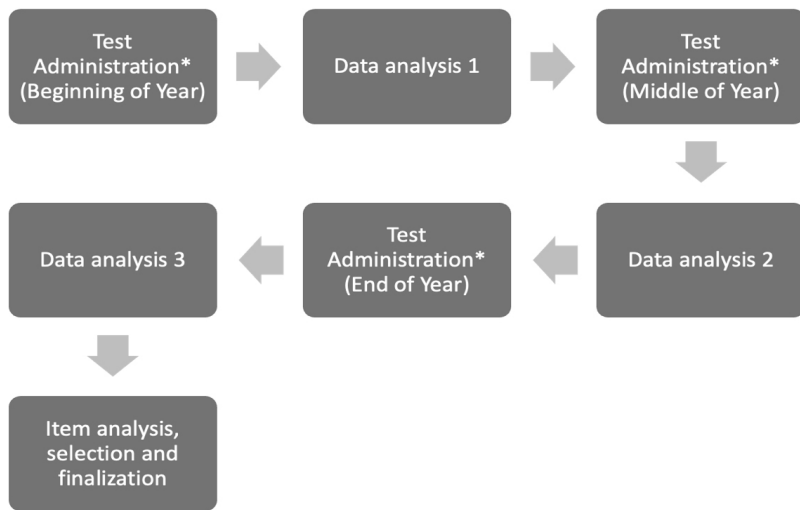
Given that the learner participants underwent the Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education program, the result of the analysis also underscores the point that learning to read and write in one's mother tongue facilitates the ability to read and write in other languages (Begi 2014; Piper, Zuilkowski, and Ong'ele 2016). Therefore, a solid mother tongue base is important to develop "multi-competence" across languages (Nakamura, de Hoop, and Holla 2019; UNESCO 2019; van Staden 2016).

## **Multi-literacy Assessments for Filipino Children v2.0 (MLAF 2.0)**

Lessons from the pandemic led UP CIDS ERP to reimagine assessment administration methods. Because of the lockdowns during

the COVID-19 pandemic, assessments using the MLAF had to cease abruptly. However, monitoring children’s literacy progress and development remains of utmost importance. There likewise remains a need for multiple pathways of literacy assessment so that more children, especially those in hard-to-reach areas, can have access to quality assessments. Alternative assessment modalities such as visual remote or online (Lucasan 2021) and telephony (Angrist et al. 2020; Sobers et al. 2021) were tried and studied during the pandemic. Therefore, for the next phase of tool development, MLAF 2.0 will be field-tested in three different modalities: face-to-face, visual remote or online, and telephony. Phase 2 of the development of the assessment tools is slated to begin in the second quarter of 2023, following the process in Figure 2.

**FIGURE 2:** Phase 2 of Assessment Tool Development Process (MLAF 2.0)



\*Test administration will be conducted in all modalities

For this phase, UP CIDS ERP aims to examine how items behave statistically across modalities, and if the test results across the different modalities are comparable. If these are proven, then the multimodal MLAF 2.0 can be used to assess more children. More importantly, the data will also be used to look at literacy development of young Filipino



children, as well as identify where literacy challenges and difficulties lie. Moreover, UP CIDS ERP also plans to move forward to the development of assessments for Grades 4 to 12, starting with a roundtable discussion with experts and practitioners in the field in recognition of the different literacy learning characteristics and the trajectory of this particular group of learners.

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# THE ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

## **The Delphi Technique**

The Delphi technique was chosen as the format of the roundtable discussion in order to encourage participants to speak freely and to allow for deeper conversations. As Green (2014, 1) notes, “the Delphi Technique is a communication structure aimed at producing a detailed critical examination and discussion. Delphi studies have been useful in educational settings in forming guidelines, standards, and predicting trends.” Delphi studies are usually composed of three rounds. The first round aims to form issues, while the second round provides the select panel of experts with feedback from the previous round. After more probes, questions and analysis of results, feedback is given again in the third round. Panel members are then asked to reflect on and evaluate their opinions, with the goal of reaching a final consensus or to determine if consensus is not possible.

This roundtable discussion, as Round 1 of the Delphi process, covers the scope and tools of Grades 4-12 literacy assessment. Ten eminent, experienced, and critical persons were invited to give five-minute presentations. Faculty from universities and basic education institutions were also invited to participate in the open forum. The participants were divided into three batches. Below are brief profiles of each speaker.

## **The Speakers**

The first four speakers provided a macro view on international large-scale assessments, and discussed research on Philippine basic education and industry. First to speak for this batch was Ms. Danilyn Joy Pangilinan. Ms. Pangilinan is the Chief of the Education Assessment Division of the Department of Education (DepEd) Bureau of Education Assessment (BEA). DepEd-BEA oversees the country’s participation in national and international assessments.

Next was Dr. Aniceto Orbeta, President of the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS). He provided an economic perspective on basic education by citing research and papers he authored throughout his career. His responses build on the skills previously mentioned by Ms. Pangilinan. For the discussion, Dr. Orbeta focused on sharing his insights in response to the first question.

Mr. Elvin Ivan Uy followed. He is the Executive Director of the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP). The data he presented came from two reports. In the first report, “Human Resources Development Readiness in ASEAN,” the section on the Philippines was authored by the PBSP in 2020. To create the report, PBSP talked to all stakeholders: government, the private sector, education institutions, and others. Points from a second report, “Digital Jobs and Digital Skills: A Shifting Landscape in Asia and the Pacific” were also highlighted in his presentation. For the discussion, Mr. Uy likewise focused on sharing insights in response to the first question.

The last to present for the first batch of speakers was Dr. Marie Therese Angeline P. Bustos. Dr. Bustos is the Philippine Director for the Assessment, Curriculum, and Technology Research Centre (ACTRC). ACTRC is a partnership between two universities, the University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies, and the University of Melbourne. She is also currently the System Director for Ugnayan ng Pahinungod and a faculty member of the UP College of Education Special Education Department. Her responses drew from an assessment tool for SWANS (students with additional needs). This particular instrument is used for learners with functional difficulties and disabilities. Ideally, it can be administered to learners up to 18 years old.

Four more speakers shared contextualized or local experiences and situations for both public and private schools. The first for the second batch of speakers was Ms. Perlita Depatillo. Since 2017, Ms. Depatillo has held the position of Public Schools District Supervisor at the Schools Division Office of Quezon City (SDO-QC) of the Department of Education. She also handled the reading remediation program of the division for the last three school years.

SDO-QC supervises the operations of 158 public schools and 577 private schools across the six districts of Quezon City, with a total manpower of around 15,000 teaching and non teaching personnel. It serves almost half a million learners enrolled in public and private schools. These students come with a diverse set of skills and from varying economic backgrounds.

The second speaker was Mr. Roel Lodronio, a teacher at Rizal High School, Pasig. His responses provided the perspective of a public school teacher at the Senior High School level.

The next two speakers provided the perspective of private schools. First was Brother (Br) Dante Amisola, FSC, the former president of De La Salle Lipa in Batangas (a province south of Manila). His response described the curricular framework of De La Salle Lipa. His colleague, Ms. Kristine Anne Dimaculangan, then discussed the details within the framework. Ms. Dimaculangan is the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at De La Salle Lipa. She is also the Principal of their Integrated School. Her responses dissected the broad description of the curricular framework discussed by Br. Amisola.

Finally, the last two speakers hail from the academe. One is a faculty member of the UP College of Education (in Diliman) and a board member of the Reading Association of the Philippines, and the other is from the College of Arts and Letters, University of the Philippines Diliman.

Dr. Marie Grace Reoperez is a faculty member at the Literacy Education Area of the UP College of Education. Her expertise is on adolescent and adult literacy education. Dr. Lalaine Yanilla-Aquino is a professor at the UP College of Arts and Letters. Her response stems from her experience as a teacher of both college students and high school Muslim students in Manila. She has also conducted several studies on reading and writing.

The following faculty, selected from universities and basic education institutions, were invited to participate in the open forum:

- Dr. Portia Padilla and Prof. Maria Hazelle Preclaro-Ongtengco (UP College of Education Literacy Education Area)
- Dr. Romylyn Metila (UP College of Education Language Education Area)
- Dr. Teodora Salubayba (UP College of Education Research and Evaluation Area)
- Dr. Ani Rosa Almario (School director of The Raya School and Vice President of Adarna House, Inc.)
- Ms. Ma. Lourdes Vargas, Ms. Diana Caluag, and Mr. Carlo Pineda (University of the Philippines Integrated School)
- Ms. Donna Carmina Garcia-Castelo (Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Southwestern University PHINMA in Cebu City), and
- Ms. Sheryl Caguioa, (Faculty of the Ateneo de Zamboanga University Basic Education Unit)

Prof. Ana Maria Margarita Salvador, of the UP College of Education Literacy Education Area, served as open forum moderator.

Representatives from UP CIDS ERP were also present. Co-convenor Dr. Dina Ocampo provided the context of the activity and outlined the next steps. Senior Research Associates Margaret Mary Rosary Carmel Fua and Kathrina Lorraine Lucasan discussed the efforts to develop the Multi-Literacy Assessments for Filipino Children (Kindergarten to Grade 3) and shared the syntheses. Research Associate Mariah Erika Manlangit took charge of logistics and technical concerns. The event was also attended by Senior Research Associate Junette Fatima Gonzales and ERP partner, Brigitte Anne Limbo. Angeli Grace Ludovico served as documenter.

**PHOTO:** Participants of the Roundtable Discussion

Source: Kathrina Lorraine Lucasan

Each participant prepared paper presentations. These comprise the succeeding sections of these proceedings. In this round, two key questions were sent to the participants for the preparation of brief papers that address the questions. The questions were:

1. What literacies should Grades 4–12 learners develop?
2. What kinds of assessments and how should these be administered to Grades 4–12 learners?

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Danilyn Joy Pangilinan<sup>5</sup>

*Bureau of Education Assessment, Department of Education*

## **What literacies should Grades 4-12 learners develop?**

The Department of Education (DepEd), with the assistance of the Assessment, Curriculum, Technology Research Centre (ACTRC), has developed a detailed 21st Century Skills Framework to guide and ensure the inclusion of the skills across all governance levels of DepEd. The framework comprises the same four domains originally set out in DepEd Order No. 21, s. 2019 (“Policy Guidelines on the K to 12 Basic Education Program”). These are: “information, media, and technology skills; learning and innovation skills; communication skills; and life and career skills.” Moreover, “it is expected that throughout their education, Filipino learners would develop these 21st Century Skills, in addition to foundational literacy and numeracy skills, and discipline-specific skills/competencies (e.g., scientific literacy)” (DepEd 2019, 6).

Emphasis, however, should be placed on information, media, and technology skills. DepEd further elaborates that

this multifaceted domain manifests 21st century skills referring to the ability to gather, manage, use, synthesize, evaluate, and create information through media and technology. These skills allow learners to navigate the fluid and dynamic environment of today’s technologically and information-driven society and empower them to use plurality of information sources (i.e., private, government, community) and plurality of voices (i.e., from people of all levels of society) for problem-solving, decision-making, and ideation in personal, social, economic, and political life. (DepEd 2019, 6)

Further, DepEd states that

information, media, and technology skills expand life skills, strengthens civic participation, and amplify the self-expression

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<sup>5</sup> Danilyn Joy Pangilinan ([danilyn.pangilinan@deped.gov.ph](mailto:danilyn.pangilinan@deped.gov.ph)) is Chief of the Education Assessment Division, Bureau of Education Assessment at the Department of Education.



of individuals to use various technology, computer, and media resources effectively, efficiently, and responsibly. It also supports and promotes the development of globally competitive Filipinos who can effectively evaluate materials, information, representations, and perspectives considering the vast amount of information accessible nowadays. (DepEd 2019, 6)

Table 1 contains the descriptions of each skill, competency, value, or attribute included under this domain, according to San Antonio (2021).

**TABLE 1:** Descriptions of Skills, Competencies, Values, and Attributes (San Antonio 2021)

<b>Skills, Competencies, Values, Attributes</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Visual literacy</b>	“[I]s the ability to closely examine, interpret, and communicate an understanding of diverse visual texts” (San Antonio 2021, slide 55). This includes, but is not limited to visible actions, objects, symbols, natural or man-made, that are encountered in the environment and across a range of text types to promote critical viewing skills.
<b>Information literacy</b>	“[I]s a set of integrated abilities encompassing the inquisitive, analytical, and reflective process of acquiring, organizing, evaluating, sharing, and producing information” (slide 56). This also includes (a) the understanding of what type of information is needed, (b) when it is needed, (c) where it is accessible, and (d) how the information is socially situated, as well as its ethical and legal considerations to use and communicate accurate and appropriate information relevant to the current context and needs of the target audience.

**TABLE 1:** Descriptions of Skills, Competencies, Values, and Attributes (San Antonio 2021)

<b>Skills, Competencies, Values, Attributes</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Media literacy</b>	“[R]efers to a wide range of skills that involve understanding various media contents and their uses, accessing information efficiently and effectively, and using a broad range of media to express ideas” (slide 57). It involves analyzing media and creating media products and creations. This can be seen when learners examine and use media to learn how and why messages are created, produced, and interpreted, as well as how media shapes culture, values, and behaviors.
<b>Technology literacy</b>	“[R]efers to the effective incorporation of information, communication, and their applications through technology” (slide 58). It includes (a) responsible use of appropriate technology to communicate, solve problems, (b) access, manage, integrate, evaluate, and create information to improve learning across all learning areas, and (c) to acquire lifelong knowledge and skills in the 21st century. This domain ultimately leads to developing abilities to use technology that enables learners to use their inventiveness to design and create ideas and concepts in solving practical problems which are technological in nature.
<b>Digital literacy</b>	“[I]s the ability to define, access, manage, integrate, communicate, evaluate, and create information safely and appropriately through a wide range of digital technologies and networked devices (i.e., internet platforms, social media, mobile devices, etc.)” (slide 59). This is done for participation in education, as well as social and economic life. It requires critical thinking skills, an awareness of the essential standards of behavior for online environments, and an understanding of the social issues created by digital technologies, more than the ability to use software or operate the digital device.

In terms of literacies assessed by international large-scale assessments (ILSA), both the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and the Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics

(SEA-PLM) assess reading literacy and mathematical literacy. In addition, PISA assesses scientific literacy, while SEA-PLM evaluates mathematical literacy. DepEd supported the assessment of these literacies among Filipino students by participating in the 2018 cycle of PISA and the 2019 cycle of SEA-PLM.

## What kinds of assessments and how should these be administered to Grades 4-12 learners?

Assessments conducted for PISA and SEA-PLM used different modes of assessment and sampling frames. The following table lists the literacies assessed by the PISA and SEA-PLM and other aspects pertaining to the tests (DepEd 2017). In Table 1, definitions of the literacies assessed by SEA-PLM are taken from United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) (2020), while those assessed in PISA are taken from Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2019).

**TABLE 2:** Grades 4-12 Assessments

ILSA	Assessed Literacy	Description	Mode of Administration	Year Taken	Sampling Frame
PISA	Reading Literacy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. “[M]easured through a computerized multi-stage adaptive approach” (OECD 2019, 14).</li> <li>2. “[A]ssessed using two sets of subscales:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Process (locate information, understand, evaluate and reflect)</li> <li>b. Source (single and multiple)” (p. 17).</li> </ol> </li> </ol>			

**TABLE 2:** Grades 4-12 Assessments

ILSA	Assessed Literacy	Description	Mode of Administration	Year Taken	Sampling Frame
	Mathematical Literacy	<p>[A]ssessed in terms of three interrelated aspects:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mathematical processes</li> <li>2. Mathematical content</li> <li>3. Context" (p. 74).</li> </ol>			
	Scientific Literacy	<p>[C]onsists of three interrelated aspects</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Understanding of major facts, concepts, and "explanatory theories that form the basis of scientific knowledge"</li> <li>2. The "set of scientific competencies that reflects a view that science is best seen as an ensemble of social practices" and</li> <li>3. "Epistemic practices that are common across all its subfields" and the contexts which cover the applications of science and technology" (p. 16).</li> </ol>			

**TABLE 2:** Grades 4-12 Assessments

<b>ILSA</b>	<b>Assessed Literacy</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Mode of Administration</b>	<b>Year Taken</b>	<b>Sampling Frame</b>
<b>SEA-PLM</b>	Reading Literacy	Assessed using three task characteristics: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. "Content (text format and text type as the text variables)</li> <li>2. Context (the situation to which texts are relevant)</li> <li>3. Process (the cognitive processes used by readers)" (UNICEF and SEAMEO 2020, 41).</li> </ol>	Paper-based assessment	2019	Random sampling of schools and learners
	Writing Literacy	Evaluated based on the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. "Content (types of written text)</li> <li>2. Context (any situations that trigger the writing task to take place)</li> <li>3. Process (application of knowledge and a range of skills in constructing texts)" (p. 46).</li> </ol>			

**TABLE 2:** Grades 4-12 Assessments

ILSA	Assessed Literacy	Description	Mode of Administration	Year Taken	Sampling Frame
	Mathematical Literacy	Assesses the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. "Content (refers to mathematical knowledge and skills acquired to find a mathematical solution)</li> <li>2. Process (refers to the actions required to solve the problem)</li> <li>3. Context (refers to the situation in which the problem to be solved has arisen)" (p. 52).</li> </ol>			

Given DepEd's experience with PISA and SEA-PLM, administration of assessments could be computer-based or paper-based. Considering the digital divide among our learners, hybrid mode—both paper and computer-based modes—can be utilized. It could be based on the learners' choice, so as not to deprive them of the experience of taking assessments using digital devices. Authentic or portfolio assessments may also be utilized for particular skills/literacies. However, the time element for conducting these should be considered.

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Aniceto Orbeta, Ph.D.<sup>6</sup>

*Philippine Institute for Development Studies*

### **What literacies should Grades 4-12 learners develop?**

First, for information and communication technologies (ICT) skills, perhaps what is important is no longer just familiarity with the technology but being able to use the technology to augment personal skills. ICT literacy here is no longer about the ability to use the technology but about knowing when a machine should be doing a task better than a person. Basically, the question is, “How do you use technology to augment what you have?” The ability to determine what is better for the machine and what is better for the person to do is the new knowledge.

Information literacy means being critical about what is presented to us when we are bombarded with information. This is necessary to be able to differentiate fake news from facts.

Next is economic literacy, which is often narrowed down to financial literacy. This is the ability to understand the basic concepts used to describe the operations and the performance of the economy. Economic literacy will help one to grasp basic economic information, and does not necessarily entail that one will become an economist. An example is a person’s ability to understand the source of inflation (or increases in prices). This can be exemplified by having some understanding, say, why the war in Ukraine is the source of domestic inflation. It is not merely about appreciating economic information, but connecting the dots with the shared data and what he knows about the operations of the economy.

Then, “interpersonal literacy” and “intrapersonal literacy” (Care and Lou 2016). Intrapersonal literacies include “self-discipline, the ability to learn independently, flexibility and adaptability, perseverance/

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6 Aniceto Orbeta, Ph.D. ([aorbeta@pids.gov.ph](mailto:aorbeta@pids.gov.ph)) is the President of the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS).



grit, self-motivation/growth mindset, compassion, integrity, self-respect, and even self-awareness” (p. 4). Interpersonal literacies include “communication skills, organizational skills, teamwork, collaboration, sociability, collegiality, and empathy” (p. 4). These are often called non-cognitive literacies/skills. These are important because some people may be cognitively brilliant, but are not successful because of the lack of noncognitive literacies. Heckman (2010), recipient of the 2000 Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences, argues that developing early social and emotional skills, not just cognitive skills, are very important.

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 Elvin Ivan Uy<sup>7</sup>*Philippine Business for Social Progress*

### **What literacies should Grades 4-12 learners develop?**

The report “Human Resources Development Readiness in ASEAN,” which the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP) helped author in 2020, highlights “future skills” (ADB and LinkedIn 2022). These are the skills that need to be learned now to modernize human resource development. Across all the key fields—general education, technical-vocational education and training, higher education—the identified future skills include numeracy and literacy, higher order cognition or higher order thinking skills (HOTS), ICT, digital literacy, science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), and socio-emotional skills (SES) (i.e., learnability, social skills, character qualities, learning and innovation, social life and career skills, and then problem solving).

The findings of the Asian Development Bank and LinkedIn (2022) show that 87 percent of the respondents believed that numeracy and literacy skills, along with higher order cognition and social skills, are definitely and significantly incorporated in the curricula. This is so not only in basic education but also across the educational system, including the tertiary level. These skills will prepare learners in the higher ladder of education and training. The respondents shared the programs they were exposed to, such as employment facilitations, soft skills training, work readiness interventions, values orientation, and so on. However, only 67 percent believe that they were realized or achieved. Across the country reports, it can be seen that the curricula in a lot of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member states “attach limited importance to higher, or to high-order cognitive skills, even in higher education.” This suggests that the “focus” is still merely on the “transmission of knowledge”, and not on the development of higher order or critical thinking skills (ASEAN Secretariat 2021a, 105).

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7 Elvin Ivan Uy ([eyuy@pbsp.org.ph](mailto:eyuy@pbsp.org.ph)) is the Executive Director of the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP).

So, it is no surprise, for example, that the Philippines did not fare as well in its first participation with the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). The recent attempt to participate in Trends in International Mathematical and Science Study (TIMSS) also emphasizes the point on 21st-century skills and that must translate into actual learning outcomes.

From the second report, “Digital Jobs and Digital Skills: A Shifting Landscape in Asia and the Pacific,” there was a question on the “change in demand for digital skills over the past five years” (ASEAN Secretariat 2021a and 2021b). In the Philippines, about 64 percent of respondents believe that demand has increased, while 20 percent said there were no changes. That 64 percent is high, but it is not as high as Bangladesh (90 percent), the United States (75 percent), Indonesia (67 percent), and India (79 percent)(ASEAN Secretariat 2021a and 2021b).

Other information from the report had to do with the requirement of possessing digital skills in the Philippines. Six in every ten hires had at least basic digital skills; four had at least applied digital skills; while two out of the ten hires had advanced digital skills (ASEAN 2021b). What can be emphasized is that having digital skills is no longer a competitive advantage. It is a minimum requirement. While upper secondary education plays an especially big role in enhancing and deepening those skills, that foundation must begin in Pre-K and in Key Stage 1. Like language skills and other multi-literacies, other skills—whether cognitive, technical, or socio-emotional skills—have to be built on a firm foundation at a young age.

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Marie Therese Angeline Bustos, Ph.D.<sup>8</sup>

*Assessment, Curriculum, and Technology Research Program*

### **What literacies should Grades 4-12 learners develop?**

Two specific literacies are highlighted in observation tools for SWANS (Students with Additional Needs): literacy and digital literacy. For literacy, this particular instrument focuses on “the development of the ability to make and interpret meaning using symbols, leading towards early reading and writing” (ARC n.d., 2).

Digital literacy is important even for learners with additional needs. Digital literacy is defined by White, Wood, and Poed (2017, 12) as “the development of the ability to interpret and use the language symbols and tools of digital technologies in culturally appropriate ways or manner. This includes learning to use technologies and using technologies to learn.”

We are pushing to use this instrument in connection with the push for inclusive education. In other communities, we found that while learners of different abilities use technologies, they are not able to use them to learn. Thus, it is very important to look into digital literacy—not just being able to use them but being able to use these technologies to learn.

### **What kinds of assessments and how should these be given to Grades 4-12 learners?**

One characteristic of SWANS is that it was created based on a learning progression. SWANS has nine observational tools, two being digital literacy and literacy. The design of the instrument is inclusive. It describes learners at different stages, instead of saying that learners passed or failed. It indicates where the learner is in the progression of literacy.

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8 Marie Therese Angeline Bustos, Ph.D. ([mpbustos@up.edu.ph](mailto:mpbustos@up.edu.ph)) is the Philippine Director of the University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies (UP CIDS) Assessment, Curriculum, and Technology Research Program (ACTRP).

So, an example of a progression, or if one is trying to create a progression, would be Figure 1, which is referred to as the teaching and testing blueprint.

**FIGURE 1.** Sample Progression (BY PRESENTER or AUTHOR)

<b>Advanced</b>	<b>Beyond what is expected but advantageous to students for future learning</b>
<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Has mastered the competency</b>
<b>Progressing</b>	<b>Has made some progress towards the competency</b>
<b>Prerequisite</b>	<b>Expected competency before teaching begins</b>

**Teaching and Test Blueprint**

When we create items, we specify what would be the prerequisites. Identify a competency that will be tested, and then establish the prerequisite/s for that particular competency.

One should also identify the indicators for each level in the progression—indicators for proficiency, indicators that show if the person has gone beyond what is expected. And so, when SWANS does a report, it will try to show where the students are in the progression. It will describe the skills. This allows us to not only to know where the student is, but also determine what the student should be doing next.

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 Perlita Depatillo<sup>9</sup>*Schools Division Office of Quezon City, Department of Education*

## **What literacies should Grades 4-12 learners develop?**

In the last two school years, when distance learning modalities became the default curriculum delivery mechanism, it was found that this economic diversity translates into diversity in accessibility to, and comfort level with, the use of technology in learning.

As for reading literacy, the results of our last division-wide testing at the Schools Division Office (SDO) of Quezon City (QC) using the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI), conducted at the beginning of School Year 2019 to 2020, showed that only 55.34 percent of test takers from Grades 3 to 7 could independently read Filipino texts written for their grade level. For English texts, only 39.83 percent could do the same.

As for proficiency in the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs), DepEd-National Capital Region (NCR) Regional Office administered the Learning Assurance Mapping Project (LAMP) year-end assessment in School Year 2021-2022 to ascertain the proficiency levels of students in Grades 6, 10, and 12. It was only in Filipino that the greatest segment of Grade 6 test takers ranked in the highly proficient level. In all the other learning areas and in all other grade levels tested, the largest segments of the test takers were in the nearly proficient and low proficient levels. There were hardly any learners in the proficient and highly proficient levels in all the subjects.

The data presented shows the gamut of literacies that need to be developed in learners in Grades 4 to 12: reading, mathematical, scientific, digital—the whole list of literacies. This is why it was difficult to answer the first question. For Quezon City, the more pressing question

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<sup>9</sup> Perlita Depatillo ([perlita.depatillo@depedqc.ph](mailto:perlita.depatillo@depedqc.ph)) is the Public School District Supervisor at the Schools Division Office of Quezon City, Department of Education.



would be: Which of the literacies that need to be developed should be prioritized at this time?

The answer is that we are currently focusing on basic literacies that would hopefully aid in the development of the others. So those are reading and mathematical literacy. Assessments are still being conducted, have been conducted, and are still being conducted by the Division to establish reliable, baseline data for the learning continuity and recovery plan of the division.

### **What kinds of assessments and how should these be administered to Grades 4-12 learners?**

Based on the experience of the Schools Division Office—Quezon City, large-scale assessments are a challenge, taking up much time and human resources. For example, the administration of the pre-testing of Phil-IRI, Group Screening Test (GST), and individual oral assessments in the School Year 2019-2020 took schools one to three months.

Silent reading assessments with multiple choice items also do not give accurate results as it allows guessing on the part of the learners. There are actual cases of learners who scored well, but were actually found to be non-decoders.

Purely online administration of assessments is also problematic due to poor internet connectivity at home and in schools. Teachers are actually clamoring for pen and paper administration of tests instead. Highly individualized testing does not really prepare our learners for PISA and other tests, as well as for the workplace.

More performative and collaborative assessments simulate real-life situations and problems. This is borne by the fact that the schools who tried integrative summative performance assessments gave positive feedback from parents, teachers, and administrators.



Roel Lodronio<sup>10</sup>

*Rizal National High School, Pasig, Philippines*

## **What literacies should Grades 4-12 learners develop?**

Based on my teaching experience, the literacies that Grade 11 and Grade 12 learners should develop are those that are considered 21st-century skills, namely:

### **A. Critical Thinking**

- Generate questions based on information received (i.e., fact-check)

There is a need for learners to have an attitude of immediately asking questions that validate/vet information received—whether from a text, video, vlog, or so on. It should be an automatic response in any given situation. These questions include

- ◇ Where did you get the information?
- ◇ What is your source?
- ◇ How do you know about it?
- ◇ How accurate is the information?

- Evaluate information and arguments

Learners should have the ability to make intelligent judgements on whether to accept or reject information. They should be able to tell whether a piece of information is fact or false/fake information; truth or deception/lies; good or bad; right or wrong; just or unjust; and history or tsismis (gossip or idle talk). In judging historical personalities and events, learners should categorically answer the following questions:

- ◇ Is the person a hero or a tyrant? Why?
- ◇ Should we follow the example of this person? Why or why not?

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10 Roel Lodronio ([roel.lodronio@deped.gov.ph](mailto:roel.lodronio@deped.gov.ph)) is a Senior High School Teacher at Rizal High School.

- ◇ What are the mistakes in the past that should not be repeated?
- ◇ What lessons should be learned from past events?
- ◇ How can we correct the mistakes of the past?

## **B. Growth Mindset/Problem-solving**

- ◇ Work through challenges—showing grit, resilience, and empathy
- ◇ Solve problems without violating or stepping on anyone’s rights

Learners should develop and strengthen positive traits in terms of facing problems and obstacles. These life skills will help them succeed and transform into individuals and citizens of this country. But in the process, they should not be causing trouble to anyone else.

### **What kinds of assessments and how should these be administered to Grades 4-12 learners?**

There are a couple of types of assessment that can be utilized for the proposed literacies. It can be a performance task using the inquiry method, written work, and summative assessments. Below is a sample performance task and written work used in “Disciplines and Ideas in Social Science” (DISS), a specialized subject in the Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) strand taken by Grade 11 learners in Rizal National High School:

#### **DISS Performance Task 1 and Written Work 1 (Inquiry through Interview and Role-Playing)**

Groupings:

1. This is a group performance task. Each group is composed of 9 or 8 members per group.
2. There should be one (1) group leader and one (1) assistant leader.

3. Each member should choose one social science discipline to focus on. The following are the different social sciences one can choose from:
  - a. Anthropology
  - b. Economics
  - c. Geography
  - d. History
  - e. Linguistics
  - f. Political Science
  - g. Psychology
  - h. Sociology

**A. Interview (Actual, Face-to-Face Interview)**

Based on the social science a member has chosen, here are the targeted individuals that he/she can interview and the possible questions that he/she can ask the interviewee:

<b>Social Science Discipline</b>	<b>Interviewee</b>	<b>Questions</b>
<b>Anthropology</b>	Someone who is at least sixty-five (65) years old and a resident of Pasig City since his/her childhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What were common practices among your generation which younger generations do not practice anymore?</li> <li>• What do you think are the effects on the young generation?</li> <li>• What is the best piece of advice you can give to the young generation?</li> </ul>
<b>Economics</b>	A. Someone who owns a business, whether big or small	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How would you describe the quality of your life right now in terms of economics?</li> </ul>

<b>Social Science Discipline</b>	<b>Interviewee</b>	<b>Questions</b>
	B. A family breadwinner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you cope with the rising inflation rate?</li> <li>• How can the government help you during this difficult time?</li> </ul>
<b>Geography</b>	<p>A. Someone who grew up in the province, whether in Luzon, Visayas, or Mindanao</p> <p>B. Someone who worked in another country</p> <p>C. Someone who has travelled to many parts of the Philippines or to other countries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How would you describe the province/country that you have been to?</li> <li>• How is it different from Pasig City?</li> <li>• What can Pasigueños learn from the people of that province/country?</li> </ul>
<b>History</b>	<p>A. Someone who suffered during the Martial Law years</p> <p>B. Someone who joined the 1986 People Power Revolution (EDSA I)</p> <p>C. Someone who joined EDSA 2 in 2001</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How would you describe your experience during those events?</li> <li>• What lessons have you learned from that experience?</li> <li>• What do you think should be the qualities of a young Filipino citizen?</li> </ul>

<b>Linguistics</b>	Someone whose mother tongue is not Tagalog (it can be a dialect or foreign language like English)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the similarities and differences between your mother tongue and Tagalog?</li> <li>• What difficulties have you encountered in being a second language user of Tagalog?</li> <li>• What did you do to overcome those difficulties?</li> </ul>
<b>Political Science</b>	<p>A. A barangay official</p> <p>B. A government or Local Government Unit (LGU) employee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why did you choose to work in the government?</li> <li>• How would you rate the performance of officials in higher positions? Explain your answer.</li> <li>• In what area/s can our government still improve? Why?</li> </ul>
<b>Psychology</b>	<p>A. Someone who is successful in his/her chosen field</p> <p>B. Someone admired by many and serves as an inspiration to others</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What problems/trials/obstacles have you experienced in the past? Can you tell me about it?</li> <li>• How did you overcome these difficulties and storms?</li> <li>• What secret/s of success can you share with the young generation?</li> </ul>
<b>Sociology</b>	<p>A. Community worker (e.g., street sweeper, firefighter, police officer, nurse, doctor)</p> <p>B. Social worker</p> <p>C. Community volunteer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What drives you to serve the community and other people?</li> <li>• What hardships do you experience as you fulfill your duties?</li> <li>• If you were to talk to the people whom you serve, what would you tell them? Why?</li> </ul>

## B. Written Work 1

In at least five (5) paragraphs (at least 7 sentences in 1 paragraph), write a narrative of how the interview went. You can write in either English or Filipino. Put it on your DISS notebook.

### RUBRIC IN NARRATIVE WRITING

Criteria	Excellent (5 points)	Praise Worthy (4 points)	Good Job (3.5 points)	Promising (3 points)	Try harder next time (2.5 points)
<b>Informative</b>	7 details or more	6 details	5 details	4 details	3 details or less
<b>Creative</b>	Very enjoyable to read	Enjoyable to read	Quite enjoyable to read	A little enjoyable to read	Not enjoyable to read
<b>Grammatically Correct</b>	No error	Few errors	Moderate number of errors	Many errors	All errors
<b>Accurate (at least 5 paragraphs with at least 7 sentences per paragraph)</b>	Accurate	Almost accurate	Moderately accurate	Little accurate	Not accurate

## C. Performance Task 1: Role Playing

1. You will take the role of the person you interviewed.
2. You will present as a group.
3. Wear a name tag indicating the role you are playing.
4. Do a “monologue” playing the role based on the interview that you did.

**RUBRIC IN NARRATIVE WRITING**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Excellent (10 points)</b>	<b>Praise Worthy (9 points)</b>	<b>Good Job (8 points)</b>	<b>Promising (7 points)</b>	<b>Try harder next time (6 points)</b>
<b>Precision</b>	All details are correct	Few details are incorrect	Moderate number of incorrect details	Lots of incorrect details	Almost all details are incorrect
<b>Organization</b>	Perfectly organized	Very good organization	Good organization	Fairly organized	Not organized
<b>Effectiveness</b>	Fully memorized and natural	Almost memorized and natural	Moderately memorized and moderately natural	A little memorized and not so natural	With notes and not natural
<b>Confidence</b>	Highly confident	Confident	Moderately confident	A little confident	Not confident
<b>Impact</b>	Highly entertaining	Entertaining	Moderately entertaining	A little entertaining	Not entertaining



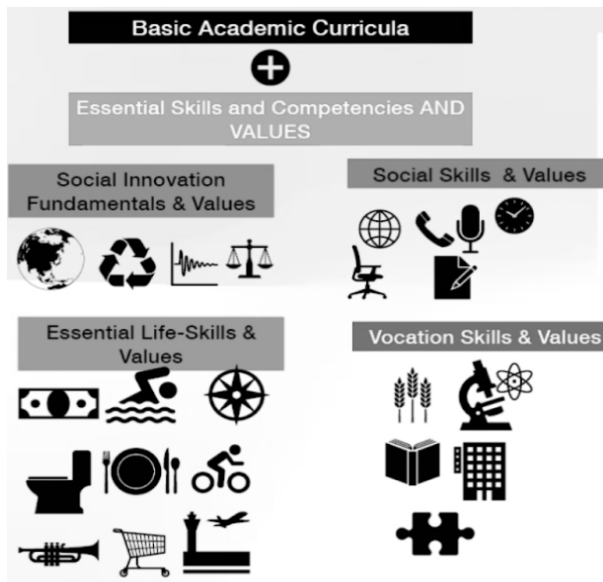
Brother (Br.) Dante Amisola, FSC<sup>11</sup>

*De La Salle Lipa, Batangas, Philippines*

## What literacies should Grades 4-12 learners develop?

What are we lacking? In our work for assessment, maybe we are looking mostly at academics. Maybe we also need to look at values. Shown in Figure 1 are the competencies being taught at De La Salle-Lipa. Also taught are Catholic social teachings but, of course, these can be replaced with universal human values.

**FIGURE 1:** Competencies Taught at De La Salle Lipa (From Presenter)



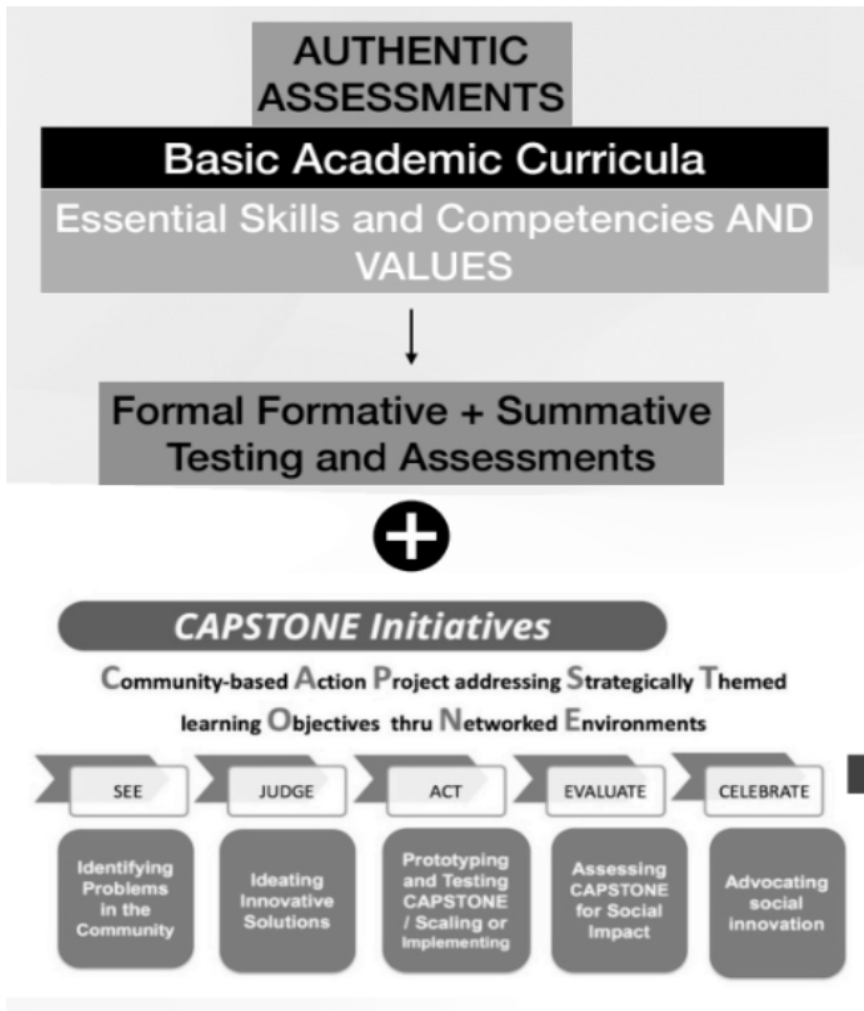
## What kinds of assessments and how should these be administered to Grades 4-12 learners?

Aside from authentic assessments, there are formative and summative assessments, but I think that the distinguishing feature of

11 Br. Dante Amisola, FSC ([fscbdjra@yahoo.com](mailto:fscbdjra@yahoo.com)) is the former President of De La Salle-Lipa.

the De La Salle–Lipa model are the Community-based Action Project, which addresses Strategically-Themed learning Objectives through Networked Environments (CAPSTONE) initiatives. These are projects that will hopefully create social impacts, addressing real-world issues and real world needs in the community of the students. The assessments conducted at De La Salle Lipa are shown in Figure 2.

**FIGURE 2:** Assessments at De La Salle Lipa (From Presenter)





Kristine Anne Dimaculangan<sup>12</sup>

*De La Salle-Lipa, Batangas, Philippines*

### **What literacies should Grades 4-12 learners develop?**

Given the volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA)<sup>13</sup> world of the 21st century, a growing number of studies points to the need for learners to develop “new literacies” to enable them to thrive in the future and to take the lead in ensuring inclusive and sustainable development for all (Rosaen and Terpstra 2012). Putting together the common elements of various frameworks from the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21), World Economic Forum (WEF), The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), among others, De La Salle–Lipa came up with the “Borderfree Curriculum.” It highlights the need for the integration of essential values, essential skills and social innovation fundamentals, along with the minimum competencies required by government regulating bodies, notably the Department of Education in the case of K to 12.

Included in the Borderfree Curriculum is the development of new literacies alongside conventional literacy (in terms of being able to read and write), which include Technical-Vocational Literacy, Financial Literacy, Digital Literacy, Information and Media Literacy, Cultural Literacy, Environmental Literacy, and Socio-Emotional Literacy. Such literacies should also be developed among learners as early as preschool in increasing levels of complexity and depth, alongside 21st-century skills such as “collaboration, communication, critical thinking and problem solving, and creativity (CASEL 2022; Hague and Payton 2010, 16).” These literacies may be deliberately integrated into the curriculum

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12 Kristine Anne Dimaculangan ([kristine.anne.dimaculangan@dls.edu.ph](mailto:kristine.anne.dimaculangan@dls.edu.ph)) is the Assistant Vice-Chancellor for Academics and the Integrated School Principal at De La Salle–Lipa.

13 VUCA was first used by Bennis and Nanus (1985) to describe the managerial and leadership challenges faced in the corporate world.

of different disciplines, or serve as the common theme for integration across disciplines.

Equally important is the development of values that substantiate the need to develop the literacies. For instance, information and media literacy should be developed among learners so that they can manifest and promote truth-seeking behaviors, and ensure that social media will be used as a platform to promote respectful communication and uphold social justice. Civic literacy and socio-emotional literacy should be developed, alongside basic literacies such as language, literacy and numeracy, in line with the development of values such as empathy, respect, compassion, concern for others and an inclination towards common good (UNESCO 2015).

### **What kinds of assessments and how should these be administered to Grades 4-12 learners?**

To ensure the development of each type of literacy among the learners, formative and summative assessments may be designed. Formative assessments such as drills, practice exercises, oral exams, reflective questions, graphic organizers, 3-2-1 charts and the like should be given frequently, with immediate and constructive feedback. Re-take opportunities for these assessments are crucial in ensuring that learners are given multiple chances to build on their learning and correct misconceptions. Summative assessments, on the other hand, should be less frequent, but involve complex tasks and may be best designed as authentic assessments to allow the learners to demonstrate their proficiency/literacy level. Re-take opportunities for summative assessments are also good since they promote a growth mindset among learners, recognizing that failure is not an end in itself but merely a steppingstone to success.

Alongside literacy-specific formative and summative assessments, the development of multi-literacies can be best assessed through project-based learning and integrated authentic assessments, wherein the competencies of certain subjects are intertwined with the literacies being targeted. Having students experience project-based learning better prepares them to be well-rounded, solution-oriented individuals

who approach problems and situations not from a siloed point of view but from a systems framework.

In De La Salle–Lipa, learners as early as Grade 4 engage in a transdisciplinary action project called CAPSTONE (Community-based Action Project addressing Strategically-Themed learning Objectives through Networked Environments). In this initiative, learners, in groups, apply their knowledge and skills from different subjects in coming up with an innovative solution to an identified social problem, or essentially what we can consider a Social Innovation.

In doing so, they develop their communication, collaboration, critical thinking and creativity skills, enhance their socio-emotional literacy, demonstrate ICT literacy and cultural literacy, and apply the social innovation fundamentals such as human-centered design, sustainability, stakeholder engagement, and social impact assessment in addressing global issues in a local context. In this transdisciplinary initiative, learners are given the opportunity to demonstrate multi-literacies and develop values such as empathy, respect and promotion of common good, among others.

Efforts to promote multi-literacies and values development among learners should be aimed at one ultimate goal—to develop future-ready, highly literate citizens who transmit values and change the world.

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Marie Grace Reoperez, Ph.D.<sup>14</sup>

*College of Education, University of the Philippines Diliman*

## **What literacies should Grades 4-12 learners develop?**

Grades 4 to 12 covers the content area literacy phase. Now, there are two types of literacy in the content area: general content literacies and discipline-specific literacies (Fisher and Frey 2015). Grades 4 to 12 learners need to develop general content literacy skills to be able to read across the curriculum. These are transferable skills, meaning they can be used in any subject, e.g., comparing and contrasting, identifying cause and effect, distinguishing facts from opinions, drawing conclusions, and others.

However, possessing general content literacy skills is not enough to acquire content meaningfully. Different content area subjects require different kinds of thinking skills because each one possesses discipline-specific literacy characteristics. For instance, literary criticism, figurative language, and textual analysis are discipline specific literacies unique to the language arts and literature subjects (McWhorter and Sember 2013). These literacies are necessary to understand texts in these subjects. According to experts, discipline literacies describe how different types of texts—which include multimodal and representational texts—should be read in the different disciplines (Siebert et al. 2016; Fisher and Frey 2015).

What's the difference between the two? For example, students in a social studies class may successfully identify cause (efficient government) and effects (peaceful environment, economic growth) after reading an article about how good life was during martial law in the Philippines. That's being able to use the appropriate general content literacy skills, which is identifying cause and effect. But understanding history texts requires sourcing, corroboration, contextualization, and seeking bias (McWhorter and Sember 2013). Thus, knowing who wrote

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<sup>14</sup> Marie Grace Reoperez, Ph.D. ([mcreoperez@up.edu.ph](mailto:mcreoperez@up.edu.ph)) is Assistant Professor, College of Education, University of the Philippines Diliman.

that article is necessary to accept or reject the claims made in that text about martial law. Both general content and discipline literacies are important and should be developed alongside one another. Additionally, essential literacy skills should be nurtured continuously because they are prerequisite skills to effective content reading.

### **What kinds of assessments and how should these be administered to Grades 4-12 learners?**

As I have mentioned, essential literacy skills such as decoding, fluency, and comprehension are prerequisites to the effective acquisition of content area literacy. Thus, literacy assessments provided for Grades 4 to 12 should also integrate assessment of these skills. The best way to do this is to make them read aloud self-contained grade-level passages, then administer a short comprehension test afterwards.


And since they will be reading multiple types of texts in the different disciplines, assessment should be genre-sensitive (Duke and Roberts 2010). This means that we should be aware of the skills demanded of specific genres of text. For example, expository/informational texts require more of the critical evaluation skills, while narrative/literary texts require more of the interpretive skills. Assessment in both should always be provided because we want to know how well they are reading texts with different structure and text organization. Besides, in doing this, we can also assess general content and discipline-specific literacy skills. Assessment can be done by making the students read selections of varied genres and then administering appropriate comprehension tests for each of these genres.

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 Lalaine Yanilla-Aquino, Ph.D.<sup>15</sup>*College of Arts and Letters, University of the Philippines Diliman*

### **What literacies should Grades 4-12 learners develop?**

I conducted a reading-writing connection study. I evaluated the diagnostic reading test and diagnostic writing test of my general education students from 2015 to 2019, so this was pre-pandemic. Reading fluency was the priority area of assessment. The results of the study yielded some interesting insights.

Sometimes, in my General Education class, I have the students read aloud certain parts of the text and, just by listening to them, you can already tell whether they are reading with comprehension or not because, for example, they do not pay attention to punctuation.

I think reading fluency is still going to be part of assessments. And then listening comprehension, both narrative and expository, as well as reading comprehension, again narrative and expository.

Also based on my study results, poor readers and good readers are both good enough in the literal comprehension. But it is in the higher-order thinking skills that you can distinguish the good readers and the poor readers. Poor readers cannot answer questions that are based on reading between the lines, like inferential questions for example.

Vocabulary is another skill that distinguishes good readers from poor readers, and also distinguishes the good writers from the poor writers. So, those who did very well in reading—identifying the meaning of words, identifying the meaning of words in a particular context, identifying the meaning of words that are polysemous, etc.—are also the writers who are able to use words meaningfully and appropriately in different contexts.

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15 Lalaine Yanilla-Aquino, Ph.D. ([lyaquino@up.edu.ph](mailto:lyaquino@up.edu.ph)) is Associate Professor at the College of Arts and Letters, University of the Philippines Diliman.

Outlining is also one of the skills that we need to teach our students, even at the PhD level. To outline is to organize your thoughts. If it is a writing outline, you identify your main topics, your subtopics, the supporting details, and so on. Then, when you do the reading outline, you are able to identify the main ideas of the writer, the supporting ideas, and so forth. I think it has to be part of the assessment, particularly for the senior high school because they at least need to be able to identify main ideas in expository essays, particularly in content areas.

Writing as thinking. We also have to have assessments on how well they are able to address the writing prompt—to have meaningful content, to organize their ideas, to use vocabulary appropriately, use language appropriately, observe grammatical rules, and [follow] mechanics. These are things that we take for granted, but students sometimes do not know how to use punctuation; they do not know the difference between the dash and the hyphen, or the colon and the semicolon. This also affects their reading comprehension.

### **What kinds of assessments and how should these be administered to Grades 4-12 learners?**

The ideal kind of assessment is very holistic, multidimensional, and multilingual. It is a combination of formal and informal, formative and summative, computer-adapted and manual, and it establishes a baseline. It is diagnostic. There should be reading inventories for younger students (Grades 4 to 8) and reading or writing self-assessment for older students (Grades 9 to 12). There should also be observations, portfolios, progress-monitoring assessments, and assessments conducted per semester, wherein students are video-recorded while reading texts aloud. However, listening to the scenario at SDO (Schools Division Office Quezon City), I realize we are far from the ideal. We need a kind of assessment that is also practical. Aiming for the ideal, but still within our resources.

# OPEN DISCUSSION

## What literacies should Grades 4-12 learners develop?

Dr. Metila mentioned assessing how students are able to manipulate and use digital platforms successfully (e.g., use of a translation feature of a web page, the use of an emoji instead, etc.). Prof. Preclaro-Ongtengco added to the conversation, saying that language proficiency plays a crucial part in reading and writing; assessment of executive functions should be included, which will help describe how students approach a task. She also emphasized that not only language and reading skills should be assessed, but also writing skills.

Brother (Br.) Dante reiterated points from Mr. Lodronio and Dr. Reoperez on bias, grit, resilience, critical thinking, and mental honesty, as well as the ways these can be assessed. He further connected this to what is actually taught to students. How are values taught? How can these be taught in the long run?

Dr. Almario suggested critical literacy and political literacy. Mr. Uy agreed, and described how being able to understand memes is a different kind of literacy, which, according to him, scholars call “intertextuality.” Understanding memes means that students are able to understand something that is not clearly expressed. Through the use of edited pictures, they are able to understand the context and the subtext.

Ms. Depatillo agreed that digital literacy is essential, while Ms. Garcia-Castelo suggested that items on study skills proficiency items be integrated within the assessments.

Ms. Vargas emphasized that language and communication literacy must be developed and enhanced, as well as digital literacy and media literacies. She also endorsed her colleague, Ms. Caluag, who reiterated the importance of the inclusion of 21st-century literacies, financial literacy, and digital and media literacies. She also shared that the UP

Integrated School (UPIS) has started plotting the competencies per grade level, which they will share at another time.

Dr. Padilla mentioned civic literacy and cultural literacy, while Ms. Caguioa spoke about how students need to be taught how to be critical thinkers. She commended the efforts of De La Salle–Lipa on the integration of authentic performance and experiential learning. She also talked about the inclusion of metacognitive skills.

Mr. Pineda agreed with other resource persons in that students should know how to read from different perspectives (e.g., feminist, Marxist, and so on).

In addition to the points raised, Dr. Salubayba asked the representatives of the Department of Education on how public schools and their students are prepared for assessments and how gaps in literacy are addressed. Ms. Pangilinan’s response listed the steps conducted at the DepEd’s Central Office level for both national and international level assessments. The Department of Education–Bureau of Education Assessment (DepEd–BEA) communicates with their partners in the field, as well as the regional testing coordinators, division testing coordinators, and the heads of public and private schools. Once the results are released, these are relayed to the respective bureaus under the Undersecretary for Curriculum and Instruction, who will address the results.

As an additional response, Ms. Depatillo relayed how their SDO (Schools Division Office) implements instructions from the Central Office. She illustrated their division’s experience with the Phil-IRI. Gaps are addressed based on the results. The SDO provides the technical assistance needed for schools to develop their own contextualized reading remediation programs. One program of SDO–QC is the *Tutok Basa Program* (for Filipino texts [literally, “Focus Reading Program”]) and *Project Read* (for English texts).

## What kinds of assessments and how should these be administered to Grades 4-12 learners?

Dr. Metila mentioned the use of authentic tests—for tests to be context-based and situation-based assessments that clearly show how students can apply what they learned to real-life situations. She agreed with having performance-based assessments and collaborative assessments. She also emphasized the use of multilingual assessments, stating that it may be possible to combine languages as part of the test (e.g., having Math problems in Filipino and English, allowing the use of Filipino and English in certain parts of the test, etc.). She also mentioned assessing how students can manipulate and use digital platforms successfully (e.g., use of a translation feature of a web page, the use of an emoji instead, etc.).

Following Dr. Metila, Prof. Preclaro-Ongtengco discussed how the use of a variety of texts and text types should be done. Br. Dante asked, “how can long-term assessment be conducted?”

Delving into another aspect, Dr. Almario suggested utilizing texts and platforms that are presently used by learners in Grades 4–12, like Discord and social media platforms. She further discussed how teachers should be *bagetsi-fied*<sup>16</sup> so that they can relate to their students and teach them more effectively. She posed as an example, *Maria Clara at Ibarra*, a recently produced television show based on Jose Rizal’s canonical novel *Noli me tangere*, and how this newer version of an otherwise “old story” seems to have caught the interest of today’s students.

Ms. Caluag emphasized that assessment results can be used as a solid base for diagnostics. Dr. Padilla also mentioned the use of varied texts found or used, tasks done in real life—not just the usual narrative and expository texts read in school. She also reiterated that progressions will be more informative for teachers.

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16 Bagetsi-fied is a colloquial term from the 1980s which means “to make appealing/relatable to the youth.”

Dr. Orbeta agreed with one of Br. Dante's previous points, stating that there should be continuous monitoring of progress on whatever interventions were introduced to address learning issues in order to determine whether these interventions were successful. He also emphasized that assessment results should never be kept secret—these should be publicly discussed because it is a concern which affects us all. There should be a more assessment-friendly society. We should not be angry if we fail; we just strive to do better next time.

Prof. Preclaro-Ongtengco also mentioned that assessment tools should be used for monitoring, and that students should be classified rather than categorized,\* which can then become the basis for plotting trajectories or next steps. This may be more useful for teachers, since teachers often do not know what to do with assessment results. She also mentioned that assessments should be used for diagnostic purposes, which can be used to monitor bridging across key stages.

Dr. Padilla shared that there should be group-administered and individually-administered tests, multiple choice and open-ended questions, face-to-face and online sessions, pen-and-paper and computer-based tests, and classroom-based and high-stakes tests.

\* Teacher Hazelle is referring to how progressions can be used to classify students because progressions are moving targets, as opposed to categories which just label them in terms of ability.

# PRESENTATIONS

Kathrina Lorraine Lucasan,<sup>17</sup> Margaret Mary Rosary Carmel Fua,<sup>18</sup>  
and Dina Ocampo, Ph.D.<sup>19</sup>

*University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development  
Studies (UP CIDS) Education Research Program (ERP)*

## **Emerging Themes on Grade 4–12 Literacies**

On the question, “What literacies should Grades 4–12 learners develop?,” central to the discussion was the development of 21st-century skills—also referred to as soft skills, non-cognitive skills, or transversal competencies (Care and Luo 2016). The Department of Education (DepEd) has adapted these skills and organized them into “life and career skills; information, media, and technology skills; learning and innovation skills; and communication skills” (DepEd–BEA 2019, 2). It is within this umbrella of skills that various literacies and competencies emerged during the discussion as essential to develop among Grades 4–12 learners. Using Coggle, a computer application for semantic webs, these literacies and skills were organized into 4 clusters, as shown in Figure 3.

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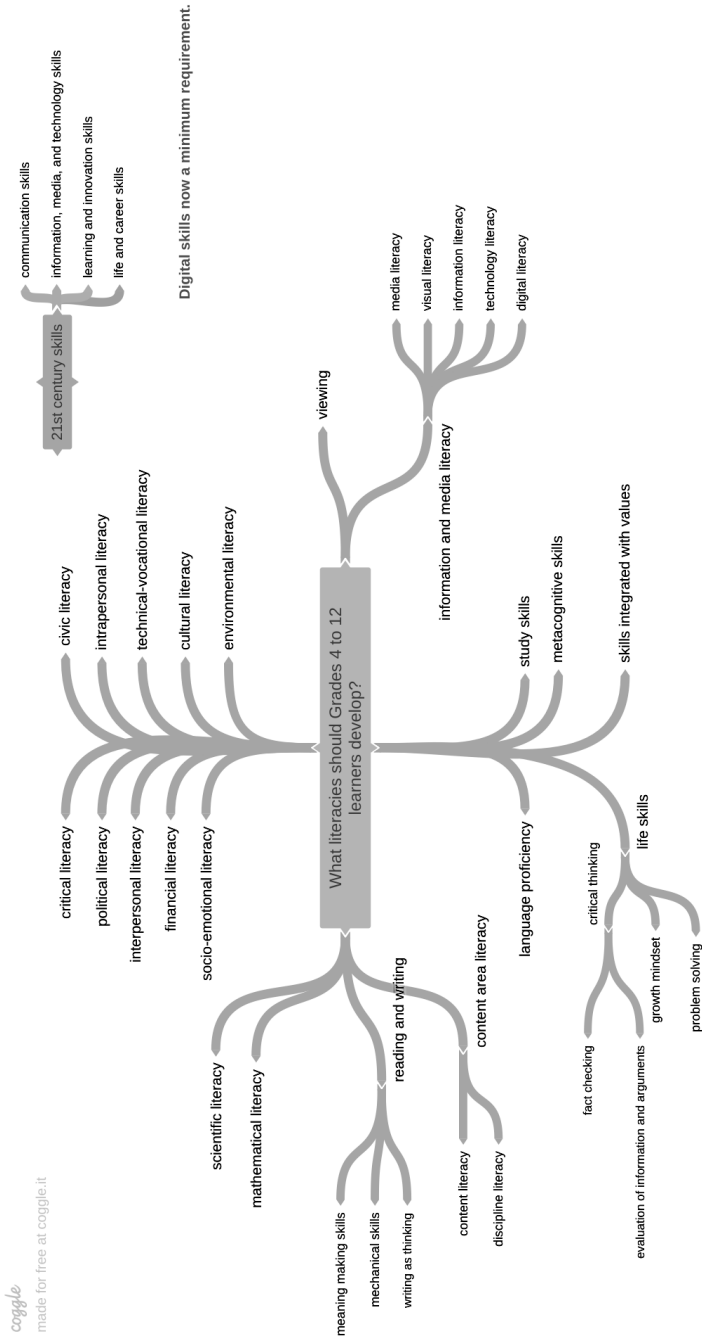
17 Kathrina Lorraine Lucasan ([kmlucasan@up.edu.ph](mailto:kmlucasan@up.edu.ph)) is Senior Research Associate at the UP CIDS ERP.

18 Margaret Mary Rosary Carmel Fua ([mefua2@up.edu.ph](mailto:mefua2@up.edu.ph)) is Senior Research Associate at the UP CIDS ERP.

19 Dina Ocampo, Ph.D. ([erp.cids@up.edu.ph](mailto:erp.cids@up.edu.ph)) is Co-convenor of the UP CIDS ERP.



**FIGURE 3: Literacies which Grades 4-12 Learners Should Develop**



The left cluster depicts key contents or subjects of learning, which includes conventional reading and writing, covering both mechanical as well as meaning-making and thinking aspects. Also mentioned were science and math content, termed as separate literacies.

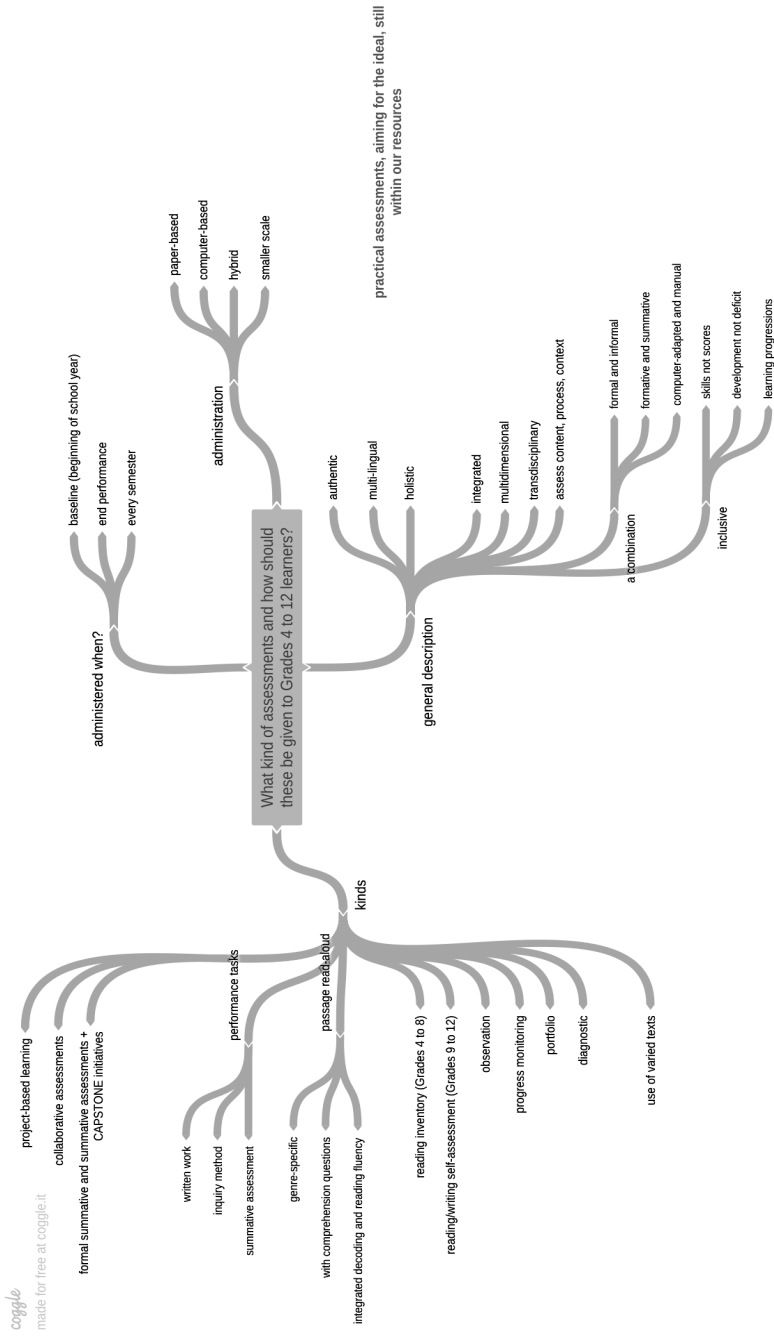
Consistent with DepEd’s 21st Century Skills Framework, the top cluster places together themes that are considered literacies and are essential for the 21st century. These include critical, political and civic literacies; interpersonal and intrapersonal literacies; financial literacy, technical-vocational literacy; socio-emotional and cultural literacies; and environmental literacy.

Information, media, and technology skills are clustered together at the right side of the web. Life and career and innovation and learning skills are clustered together at the bottom part of the figure. Aside from the usual competencies—such as language proficiency, critical thinking, study skills and problem-solving—new skills relevant to current global circumstances were also mentioned. These include fact-checking and having a growth mindset. It was also expressed during the discussion that, in the 21st century, digital skills are considered to be a minimum requirement.

### **Emerging Themes on the Kinds and Modalities of Grade 4-12 Assessments**

On the question, “What kinds of assessments and how should these be administered to Grades 4-12 learners?,” three main themes emerged from the participants’ responses and statements (Figure 4).

**FIGURE 4:** Assessments for Grades 4–12 Learners and How They Should be Administered



The first theme pertains to the characteristics of these assessments. These include general descriptions, such as authentic, multilingual, holistic (assesses content, process, and context), integrated, multidimensional, and transdisciplinary. More specific characteristics include inclusivity, as well as considering different kinds of assessments, such as formative and summative, and formal and informal, among others.

Different forms and manners of literacy assessment comprise the next theme. Recommendations ranged from more common forms of literacy assessments, such as reading inventories, to more innovative ones, such as project-based and capstone initiatives. The next themes are related to assessment administration. Modes of administration, such as paper-based, computer-based, or a combination of both, were mentioned. The suggested timeline of assessment administration indicated different timepoints within the school year.

Based on the themes that emerged from the roundtable discussions, emphasis was placed on 21st-century skills and competencies and on the development of various literacies that were deemed relevant to current global and national issues. Assessments should also be more diverse and should consider more innovative means and forms.

DepEd has further iterated the Philippines' 21st Century Skills Framework using an "assessment cube" (DepEd-BEA 2019). The "cube" shows the intersecting and complex relationship of content, skills, and 21st-century skills, which is similar to the network of emerging themes generated from the roundtable discussion. The input from the roundtable discussion suggests that the same kind of thinking should be undertaken for the MLAF assessments for Grades 4-12. Given what has been learned from the speakers and the discussions with the roundtable participants, UP CIDS ERP will embark on the following ways forward, outlined below.

## Ways Forward

### *Creation of a Literacy Assessment Framework for Grades 4 to 12*

The work moving forward is to review and synthesize what has been discussed and map it on the literature. More conversations are expected, in order to seek advice on whether the ideas and thoughts put forward during the discussion are represented. This is an important step towards the creation of indicators and assessment items. A plan is necessary for assessments to be valued and taken seriously.

### *Determination of the Identity of the MLAF Grades 4 to 12*

At the moment, the MLAF for K-3 has been designed to become a third-party tool that researchers, schools, and teachers can use for their own students. It is an alternative to assessments created by DepEd to assess itself. It is not intended to be a national assessment.

The purpose of assessments for Grades 4-12 must be well-defined according to the fundamental skills assessment of basic literacies. Consideration will also have to be given to technologies and digital literacies. Later, the ways in which these are applied in disciplines, in trades, and areas of work, as well as in improving people and the larger world, will also have to be examined. In other words, the MLAF might be viewed as a galaxy of assessments that many people will have to conceptualize and work on creating.

Therefore, UP CIDS ERP aims to clearly define the purpose/s for MLAF 4-12. A clear target will streamline the development process and enable identification of areas which will need deeper discussion or elaboration.

### *Prioritization of Components*

Based on the discussion, areas for literacy assessment for Grades 4 to 12 are quite huge. If a certain aspect is important, then it should be measured. If it will be measured, it should be done truthfully and

judiciously. And it must be judicious to the one being assessed—the child or the learner. The learner should have direct access to the results of assessment.

This relates directly with the identification of MLAF’s identity. Once the focus of the MLAF 4–12 has been determined, then it will be easier to identify which areas of literacy assessment should be given priority, taking into consideration input from the literature and the roundtable discussion participants.

### *Creation of an Integrated Multilingual Assessment*

Similar to the process followed for the development of the MLAF K-3, UP CIDS ERP will further consult and learn from the studies conducted by local researchers vis-à-vis studies conducted internationally. Acknowledging the interrelated skills of multilingual Grades 4–12 learners, UP CIDS ERP aims to develop integrated assessments and build on existing efforts already made by other Filipino researchers. For example, there are literacy assessments in Sinugbuanong Binisaya and Kapampangan respectively authored by Kathrina Lucasan (2019) and Dr. Portia Padilla (2021) which are already available. However, these were still developed on a per language basis and have not been integrated with other languages in a single assessment.

### *Creation of Assessments in Other Philippine Languages*

With the multilingual Filipino learner in mind, UP CIDS ERP developed SukatWika, a phonological assessment tool that can analyze Ilokano and Sinugbuanong Binisaya (Lucasan et al. 2019). Aside from this effort, UP CIDS ERP aims to create assessments in these languages in order to determine how the MTB-MLE program is helping Filipino children. As part of the initial phases of development, UP CIDS ERP also considered developing versions of the MLAF for learners with visual and hearing impairments. Given the input from the roundtable discussion, learning more about Melbourne University’s SWANS from the Assessment, Curriculum, Technology Research Centre (ACTRC) might be helpful and interesting.

Apart from MLAF versions for learners with visual and hearing impairments, roundtable participants agree that MLAF K-3 and 4-12 will have to be developed in other Philippine languages as well. This is an important stage in developing indigenous and inclusive assessments. It will entail the participation of experts and users of the different languages in both school and community settings.

### *Establishment of the Value of Assessments*

Among the challenges of research for K-to-12 literacies assessment are (a) ensuring children take it seriously, and (b) ensuring schools, teachers, and students value the process of assessment and its results. In the work done for K-3 MLAF, it was difficult to secure the schools' participation and allow UP CIDS ERP to conduct assessments among learners. Though this may perhaps be due to tightly packed school schedules, it may also point to general undervaluing since at the time, the MLAF was still in development stages. However, there is a real need to create assessments that are credible and can become the "gold standard," which can be correlated with PISA or SEA-PLM.

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