



Using Poetry in a Textmasters' Environment to Teach Mathematics to Secondary School Students

Chinyere H. Maduabuchi

Ebonyi State University, Department of Arts and Social Science Education, Faculty of Education (Nigeria)
ettachimlo@yahoo.com

Most Nigerian students over the years have phobia for mathematics and its related disciplines because of its abstract and wired nature. Poetry being one of the genres of literature has its peculiarity of lyrical entertainment. Textmasters was created to bring the collaborative learning environment of literature circles to content area reading with a science or social studies textbooks, but in this context mathematics. Students are placed in groups of four and given a schedule of the reading of the upcoming chapter. All the students read the same section of the book but complete a role sheet to guide their perspective: Discussion Director, Summarizer, Vocabulary Enricher and Webmaster. Reading aloud entertaining and informative poems sparked students' interest in posing and solving mathematics problems through textmasters. From the perspective of literacy, poetry will effectively generate students' interest in mathematics. For example, while reading aloud, the students were actively involved and constantly commented about how the poems connected to mathematics, especially how they describe and illustrate between standard and nonstandard measurement. Poetry also functions as a way to support vocabulary growth and development. In this study, a textmasters environment will be harnessed in teaching mathematics using poetry as the ideal entertaining strategy. It will explore the nature and concepts of textmasters and poetry in mathematics teaching; connections between mathematics and literature; practical steps in a textmasters' environment for the teaching of mathematics through poetry. At the end it is hoped that teachers will see poetry as a wonderful tool to teach mathematics that is always difficult for students to understand. It is hoped that it will help teachers to investigate and reflect more on the power and potential of an interdisciplinary curriculum.