

Should Teachers Use Children's Literature to Teach Mathematics?

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Abstract

Developing creative ways to teach mathematics poses an interesting challenge for educators. In the past, typical mathematical instruction consisted of pencil-and-paper drills, workbooks, worksheets, teacher-led lessons, and textbooks which may not help children obtain the basic understanding of mathematics. The purpose of this literature review was to explore the evidence for the hypothesis that using children's literature to teach mathematics is a valuable pedagogical approach. Specifically, researchers have claimed that the use of children's literature to teach mathematics will improve children's communication skills, allow them to make connections between mathematics and the real world environment, and increase their academic achievement and interest levels for mathematics. I identified several empirical and observational studies that supported the hypothesis that using children's literature to teach mathematics to children between the ages of five and seven provides them with more opportunities to communicate to teachers and peers than that of traditional mathematical approaches. Thus, using children's literature to teach mathematics will help to provide children with the crucial mathematical understanding, skills, and tools they need to succeed in contemporary society.