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TEST-TAKING SKILLS AND TEST SCORES OF GRADE 1 PERIODICAL TESTS: BASIS FOR INTERVENTION PLAN

MARY GRACE A. FALLORE
Teacher I
Western Leyte College
Master of Arts in Education
Major in Elementary Education
marygrace.fallore@deped.gov.ph

ABSTRACT

This study evaluates the extent of the test-taking skills and test scores of grades 1 periodical tests in Mathematics. The locale of the study is in Sto.Niño Elementary School, Capoocan I District, Leyte Division with one (1) Grade 1 teacher and her seventeen (17) learners were involved. This research utilizes a survey tool used to measure the extent of test-taking skills of grade 1 learners in terms of test preparation skills, test engagement and strategy and review and checking of the answers used by Munoz & Minas (2024) in their study on, "*Test-taking skills and academic performance in primary grades*". Further, to measure the test scores of Grade 1 learner in Math, the researcher gathered the 4th quarter periodical test score of the learners in Math. Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that the grade 1 learners demonstrated a Very High extent of test-taking skills, showing that they possessed effective abilities in following directions, understanding test instructions, managing time, and answering assessment tasks appropriately during the Quarter 4 Mathematics periodical tests. With these data, the learners were able to obtain High to Very High rating on

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test scores in periodical test in math. Furthermore, the study established a significant relationship between test-taking skills and test scores in periodical test in math, implying that learners with better test-taking skills tended to achieve higher academic performance in Mathematics. This finding confirms that test-taking skills contribute significantly to learners' success in examinations because such skills help learners answer tests more confidently, accurately, and efficiently. Therefore, strengthening test-taking skills among Grade 1 learners may further enhance their academic achievement and overall learning performance.

Keywords: *Test-Taking Skills, Test Scores, Grade 1 Periodical Tests, Intervention Plan*

INTRODUCTION

Assessment plays a central role in measuring student learning and guiding instructional decisions in the basic education curriculum. For learners in lower grades, particularly Grade I, assessment practices serve not only as a measure of performance but also as a tool for learners to build foundational skills. Among essential assessment competencies, test-taking skills represent a key factor that influences how learners interpret questions, manage time, regulate responses, and ultimately perform in classroom evaluations. At the same time, item analysis of periodical tests helps educators examine the effectiveness, difficulty, and discriminating power of test items — ensuring that assessments are reliable, valid, and aligned to learning competencies.

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Developing strong test-taking skills is especially important for young learners, as research reveals that early assessment experiences shape learners' confidence, understanding of assessment formats, and their approach to dealing with examination stress (Munoz & Minas, 2024). Moreover, assessments that lack quality control may produce misleading interpretations of student performance, leading to inappropriate instructional responses (Gonzales & Liwanag, 2023). Therefore, linking test-taking skills with comprehensive item analysis is vital as it provides a dual perspective: how students perform and how well the test instruments measure what they are intended to assess.

In the elementary setting, periodical tests are commonly used to monitor ongoing academic progress. However, the reliability and fairness of these tests often depend on item construction, content relevance, and alignment with grade-level competencies. A study by Ramirez and Torres (2025) showed that many classroom tests used for Grade I learners contained items that were either too easy, ambiguously worded, or misaligned with intended competencies. Their findings suggested that poor item construction not only lowers assessment quality but also negatively affects learners' performance and motivation. Furthermore, test-taking difficulties such as misinterpretation of questions, anxiety, and lack of familiarity with assessment formats have been identified as contributing factors to lower test performance among early grade students (De Vera & Hernandez, 2024).

This study is anchored on the premise that assessment practices should not only evaluate learning outcomes but also support learners' growth. In the early stages of schooling, especially in Grade I, learners are still developing foundational academic and metacognitive

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skills. Test-taking situations present opportunities for young learners to demonstrate knowledge, but they also reveal potential weaknesses in comprehension, response strategies, and familiarity with assessment formats.

Research indicates that test-taking skills are significant predictors of student performance, particularly in early grades where learners may misinterpret questions, struggle with time management even in untimed tests, or feel anxious in assessment situations (Munoz & Minas, 2024). Without understanding how these skills affect performance, teachers may rely solely on score results without addressing underlying factors that hinder achievement.

Considering these concerns, conducting detailed item analysis along with identifying learners' test-taking skills becomes a necessary step toward enhancing both teaching and assessment practices. Item analysis offers teachers empirical evidence on item difficulty, discrimination indices, and distractor functioning — enabling educators to refine tests, adjust instruction, and support learners more effectively (Alcantara et al., 2023). Likewise, understanding test-taking behaviors provides a basis for intervention plans that strengthen learners' assessment competencies, reduce test anxiety, and promote positive assessment experiences.

Similarly, item analysis is a powerful evaluative tool that supports teachers in improving the quality of their assessments. According to Alcantara et al. (2023), item analysis provides insights into which test items function well and which do not, enabling teachers to revise assessment instruments accordingly. Without item analysis, teachers may continue

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using tests that contain poorly performing items, producing inaccurate representations of learning outcomes.

Recognizing these interrelated concerns, this study aims to investigate the test-taking skills and item analysis of Grade I periodical tests, using the results to design an intervention plan that supports both learners and teachers in improving assessment outcomes.

This study evaluates the extent of the test-taking skills and test scores of grades 1 periodical tests in Mathematics of Sto. Nino Elementary School, Capoocan I District, Leyte Division. The findings of the study were basis for the proposed intervention plan.

Further, it seeks to answer the following sub-problems:

1. What is the extent of test-taking skills of grade 1 learners in periodical test in Mathematics?
2. What is the test score of grade 1 pupils in Math?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the extent of test-taking skills of grade 1 learners and their test score in math?
4. What intervention plan can be proposed based on the findings of this study?

METHODOLOGY

Design. This study employed descriptive-correlational research design to evaluates the extent of the test-taking skills and item scores of grades 1 periodical tests in Mathematics. This study is descriptive because it describes the extent of test-taking skills of grade 1 learners in terms

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of test preparation skills, test engagement and strategy and review and checking of the answers and item scores of grades 1 periodical tests in Mathematics. Further, this is also correlational because it finds the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. This study was conducted in Sto.Niño Elementary School, Capoocan I District, Leyte Division. The grade 1 teacher and her seventeen (17) learners were involved in the study with complete enumeration in choosing the respondents. This research utilizes a survey tool used to measure the extent of test-taking skills of grade 1 learners in terms of test preparation skills, test engagement and strategy and review and checking of the answers used by Munoz & Minas (2024) in their study on, "*Test-taking skills and academic performance in primary grades"*. Further, to measure the test scores of Grade 1 learner in Math, the researcher gathered the 4th quarter periodical test score of the learners in Math.

Sampling. The grade 1 teacher and her seventeen (17) learners enrolled in the said locale for School Year 2025-2026 were involved in the study. Complete enumeration was employed in choosing the respondents of the study.

Research Procedure. Upon securing a research permit, data gathering was initiated. Application letters for study permits were personally submitted to concerned offices. A request letter was first submitted to the Schools Division Superintendent for approval to gather data from targeted respondents. After securing the approval of SDS, letters of permission were also submitted to the Public Schools District Supervisor and School Principals of the identified schools in the district. After getting the approvals, the researcher conducted data-gathering activities. An orientation was also held for the respondents, and their agreement through

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permits was to participate in the research. Then, the researcher gathered the respondents and each one of them were guided in accomplishing the survey. Since the survey is in English version, the researcher translated the questions in vernacular so that learners will be able to understand fully what is in the question. After accomplishing the survey, data were collected, checked, tabulated and submitted for statistical treatment.

Ethical Issues. The researcher obtained the necessary written permission from the authorities to conduct the study. While conducting the survey and in developing the periodical test, the researcher made sure that the use of offending, discriminatory, or other undesirable terminology was eschewed. The names of the respondents and other personal information were not included in this study to ensure confidentiality. The respondents were also voluntarily participating. Orientation was done for the respondents. During orientation, concerns and issues were clarified, and consent to be part of the study was signed. The researcher-maintained objectivity in discussing and analyzing the results. All authors whose works were cited in this study were correctly quoted and were acknowledged in the reference. Keeping of responses from the respondents were given to the researcher and kept under her care.

Treatment of Data. The quantitative responses underwent tallying and tabulation. Statistical treatment involved using specific tools: Simple Percentage and Weighted Mean were employed to evaluate the extent of test-taking skills of grade 1 learners in periodical test in Mathematics in terms of test preparation skills, test engagement and strategy and review and checking of the answers and test scores of grades 1 periodical tests in Mathematics while

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Pearson r was used to determine the significant relationship between the independent (test-taking skills) and dependent (test score in periodical test in Math) variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1

Extent of Test-Taking Skills of Grade 1 Learners

Domain	Indicator	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Test Preparation Skills	1. The learner listens attentively to test instructions.	5.00	Very High
	2. The learner reads or views test instructions before beginning (with teacher support).	5.00	Very High
	3. The learner asks for clarification if unsure about the instructions.	5.00	Very High
	4. The learner checks that they have all needed tools (pencil, eraser, test sheet) before starting.	5.00	Very High
Test Engagement and Strategy	5. The learner attempts all items on the test.	5.00	Very High
	6. The learner focuses on the test and avoids distractions.	5.00	Very High
	7. The learner works steadily throughout the test period.	5.00	Very High

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Domain	Indicator	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
	8. The learner approaches easier items first before harder ones.	5.00	Very High
	9. The learner appears calm and confident while taking tests.	5.00	Very High
	10. The learner uses simple strategies such as elimination or careful reading of pictures.	5.00	Very High
Review and Checking	11. The learner reviews answers before submitting the test.	5.00	Very High
	12. The learner corrects obvious mistakes when observed.	5.00	Very High
	13. The learner marks answers clearly and correctly.	5.00	Very High
	14. The learner demonstrates patience and persistence with challenging items.	5.00	Very High
	15. The learner expresses understanding of test formats (e.g., multiple choice, matching) with teacher guidance.	5.00	Very High
Overall Weighted Mean		**5.00**	**Very High**

LEGEND:

RANGES	***INTERPRETATION***
4.21 – 5.00	*Very High (Always)*
3.26 – 4.20	*High (Often)*

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2.51 – 3.25 Moderate (Sometimes)

1.76 – 2.50 Low (Rarely)

1.00 – 1.75 Very Low (Never)

Table 1 presents the extent of test-taking skills of grade 1 learners in math in terms of test preparation skills, test engagement and strategy and review and checking of the answers. It was revealed on the table that the extent of test-taking skills of grade 1 learners in math in terms of test preparation skills, test engagement and strategy and review and checking of the answers received an overall weighted mean of 5.00 which is interpreted as Very High. This means that grade 1 learners always rated themselves very high in test preparations, test engagement and strategy and review and checking. Being responsible in taking test and possessing the skills needed to pass the test is a manifestation that the teacher is seriously motivating the learners and providing the best preparations before taking the test. This implies that the learners were already developing positive testing behaviors and strategies appropriate to their grade level. At the primary level, test-taking skills are considered foundational competencies that help learners demonstrate what they have learned during classroom instruction. Learners who can understand instructions, focusing during examinations, and applying simple problem-solving techniques are more likely to perform well academically. As mentioned, test-taking strategies provide tips on correctly answering the test within the allotted time (Rafi & Fatikhul, 2017). Further, Gonzales & Liwanag (2023) emphasized that classroom assessment must inform instruction; combining test-taking profiles with item quality

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data enables teachers to design targeted interventions that enhance learner understanding and performance.

Table 2

Test Scores of Grades 1 Learners in Mathematics

Scale	Score Range	Interpretation	Frequency	Percentage
5	25–30	Very High	15	88.24%
4	19–24	High	2	11.76%
3	13–18	Moderate	0	0.00%
2	7–12	Low	0	0.00%
1	0–6	Very Low	0	0.00%
Total			**17**	**100%**

Table 2 presents the test scores of Grade 1 learners in periodical test for quarter 4. It was revealed on the table that among the 17 grade 1 learners, 15 (88.24%) got a score of 25-30 which is Very High and 2 (11.76%) got a score of 19-24 which is High. This means that all the grade 1 learners able to pass the test and this implies that grade 1 learners applied the test-taking skills they learned. They were able to master the skills and relate these skills in their day-to-day activities. High academic performance among young learners may also be attributed to effective instructional practices, regular assessment activities, reinforcement exercises, and parental support. Francisco et al., (2025) emphasized that strong foundational skills and effective classroom support significantly contribute to improved academic achievement among elementary learners. For instance, a study on elementary learners'

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numeracy skills found that learners with better academic competencies tended to achieve higher Mathematics performance (Francisco et al., 2025).

Table 3

Test of Relationship Between Variables

Variables Correlated	t-Test	Computed t	Table Value @ 0.05	Decision on Ho	Interpretation
Test-Taking Skills (Table 1) and Mathematics Test Scores (Table 2)	0.52	2.43	1.96	Reject Ho	Significant Relationship (Moderate Positive)

Table 3 presents the test of relationship between the extent of test-taking skills and test scores of Grade 1 periodical test in Mathematics. It was revealed on the table that the extent of test-taking skills and test scores of Grade 1 periodical test in Mathematics received a computed t of 2.43 which is higher than the table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance, so null hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship between the of test-taking skills and test scores of Grade 1 periodical test in Mathematics. The r value of 0.52 shows moderate positive correlation between the dependent and independent variables. The finding supports the idea that test-taking skills play an important role in learners' academic success because these skills enable learners to answer tests more confidently, accurately, and efficiently. Even at the elementary level, test-taking strategies such as listening carefully to instructions, reviewing answers, managing time wisely, and maintaining concentration can

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positively influence academic performance. Samson's (2015), quantitative synthesis revealed that learners who received test-taking skills training performed better academically compared to those who did not receive such training. According to Lomagdong (2020), learners who employ effective academic strategies tend to achieve better classroom outcomes and higher test scores. Therefore, the significant relationship identified in the study suggests that strengthening learners' test-taking skills may further enhance their Mathematics achievement and overall academic performance.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that the grade 1 learners demonstrated a Very High extent of test-taking skills, showing that they possessed effective abilities in following directions, understanding test instructions, managing time, and answering assessment tasks appropriately during the Quarter 4 Mathematics periodical tests. With these data, the learners were able to obtain High to Very High rating on test scores in periodical test in math. Furthermore, the study established a significant relationship between test-taking skills and test scores in periodical test in math, implying that learners with better test-taking skills tended to achieve higher academic performance in Mathematics. This finding confirms that test-taking skills contribute significantly to learners' success in examinations because such skills help learners answer tests more confidently, accurately, and efficiently. Therefore, strengthening test-taking skills among Grade 1 learners may further enhance their academic achievement and overall learning performance.

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Recommendations

1. Teachers should implement the proposed intervention plan to help achieve positive learning outcomes among learners and sustain the high and very high test scores in math.
2. Teachers should integrate activities and classroom practices that enhance learners' test-taking skills such as guided practice tests, drills, review exercises, and strategies in following directions and managing time during assessments.
3. Teachers should provide varied formative assessments to help learners become more familiar and confident with test formats and examination procedures.
4. School Head should strengthen instructional support programs and monitoring mechanisms that promote effective assessment practices in the classroom.
5. School head should also organize seminars, coaching sessions, or capability-building activities for teachers focusing on assessment literacy, development of test-taking strategies, and learner support interventions in Mathematics.
6. Parents should provide encouragement and academic support at home by helping learners develop good study habits, confidence, and positive attitudes toward examinations. Regular monitoring of learners' assignments and review activities may also help sustain high academic performance.
7. Schools should implement enrichment and intervention programs that further develop learners' foundational numeracy skills and test-taking competencies.

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8. Continuous collaboration among teachers, parents, and school administrators may also help maintain and improve learners' academic achievement in Mathematics.
9. Future researchers are encouraged to conduct similar studies using other variables such as study habits, motivation, parental involvement, or learning environment to further explore factors affecting learners' academic performance.
10. They may also replicate the study in other grade levels, subject areas, or larger populations to validate and strengthen the findings of the present study.

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AUTHOR'S PROFILE

MS. MARY GRACE A. FALLORE

Mary Grace A. Fallore, born on October 8, 1985, in Sto.Niño, Capoocan, Leyte, is a dedicated and passionate educator who believes that education is a powerful instrument for empowerment. She is committed to providing meaningful learning experiences that promote academic excellence, character development, and values formation among young learners.

She completed her Elementary Education studies at Kananga Central School and pursued her Secondary Education at Kananga National High School. These formative years helped shaped her discipline, perseverance, and strong sense of purpose, which continue to guide her in her chosen profession.

In 2021, she earned her Bachelor of Elementary Education degree, graduated as one of the academic achievers at Eastern Visayas State University-Ormoc Campus. In October 2022, she successfully passed the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET), marking the beginning of her professional teaching career.

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Currently, she serves as a public school teacher, applying her knowledge and skills in creating meaningful lessons, managing inclusive classrooms, and guiding learners toward reaching their full potential. Her teaching philosophy is grounded in patience, equity, and student-centered learning, ensuring that every child receives the support and encouragement needed to succeed.

To further enhance her professional competence and contribute more effectively to the field of education, she is currently pursuing a Master of Arts in Education, major in Elementary Education, at Western Leyte College of Ormoc City, Inc. Her continuous pursuit of professional growth reflects her unwavering commitment to quality education and her aspiration to become a more effective educator and community leader.