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Numeracy in secondary school mathematics.

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Summary: This article describes a project that focuses on numeracy in secondary school mathematics. During the course of the project a teacher had the chance to develop and trial new tasks and styles of teaching and learning numeracy. She became increasingly comfortable with using more extended tasks for learning mathematics. However, she believes that it is beneficial if larger projects are made up of self-contained sub-tasks that allow students to move towards smaller, achievable goals. Surveys of students indicated that many of the class appreciated the variety of tasks that they had the opportunity to tackle, and many were quite happy to complete exercises from the textbook interspersed with these other tasks to practise their skills. Throughout the course of the project the teacher also had an increased focus on developing activities that provided a critical orientation towards the use of mathematics. It also became obvious how vital the role of positive dispositions is in encouraging students to try approaches to solving a problem for themselves rather than relying on the teacher to provide all the answers. (ERIC)

Classification: D33 E43

Keywords: numeracy; literacy; student attitudes; teaching methods; task analysis; surveys; student activities; student projects

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