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Supporting indigenous students' achievement in numeracy.

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Summary: In this article, the authors report on a state project designed to explore numeracy outcomes of Indigenous students. The "Supporting Indigenous students achievement in numeracy" project (2003-2004), commissioned by Education authorities in the Northern Territory, was aimed at researching the impact of the development and implementation of authentic (rich) assessment tasks on the numeracy outcomes of middle years Indigenous students in a targeted group of remote, non-urban schools. The project involved the schools in trialing and/or implementing a range of rich tasks aimed at identifying starting points for numeracy teaching. Results indicated that students in the target group found the "rich" tasks difficult to access, even though a concerted attempt had been made to ensure that the tasks were relevant and the literacy demands were kept to a minimum. It was also evident that there was considerable variation in task administration both within and between schools. This has important implications for the wider use of these types of tasks and suggests that much more work is needed to ensure equity of access across very different communities. Another extremely important outcome of this project was the reported growth in teacher knowledge and confidence about how to teach mathematics more effectively to students in remote, non-urban communities. (Contains 3 figures.) (ERIC)

Classification: C62 D32

Keywords: numeracy; achievement; indigenous populations; teaching methods; elementary school mathematics; minority group children; cultural influences; culturally relevant education

<http://www.aamt.edu.au/Professional-learning/Journals/Journals-Index/Australian-Primary-Mathematics-Classroom2/APMC-9-4-50>