



EFFECTIVENESS OF STORYTELLING TECHNIQUES IN IMPROVING THE PERFORMANCE OF GRADE 1 LEARNERS IN READING AND LITERACY

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluated the effectiveness of storytelling as an instructional strategy in improving the reading and literacy performance of Grade 1 learners at Don Felipe Elementary School, Kananga II District, Leyte Division. Specifically, it aimed to determine the performance of Grade 1 learners in reading and literacy before and after the integration of storytelling, to identify if there is a significant difference between the two performances, and to propose an improvement plan based on the findings. The study utilized a quasi-experimental research design employing a pre-test and post-test approach. Twenty-one (21) Grade 1 learners were selected through complete enumeration. The Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA) was used to evaluate learners' decoding, word recognition, and comprehension skills. The results revealed that the learners' pre-test performance was generally Poor, with a weighted mean of 5.05, indicating low literacy and comprehension levels prior to the intervention. After the integration of storytelling, a significant improvement was observed, with the post-test yielding a weighted mean of 22.62, interpreted as Very Good. The computed t-value of 34.75 exceeded the critical t-value of 2.09 at a 0.05 level of significance, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This indicates a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores, affirming that storytelling had a substantial positive effect on learners' reading and literacy performance. The study concludes that storytelling is an effective pedagogical approach that enhances learners' comprehension, vocabulary, and engagement

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in reading activities. It is recommended that storytelling be integrated regularly into early-grade literacy instruction, and that teachers receive continuous training in storytelling techniques to foster creativity, motivation, and improved reading outcomes among young learners.

Keywords: *Effectiveness, Storytelling Techniques, Performance, Grade 1 Learners, Reading and Literacy*

INTRODUCTION

Stories are interesting and motivating, thus attracting listeners and promoting communication. As storytellers, students can do it all – read, write, listen, and speak. The relaxed atmosphere and lively environment created by stories encourages the students to talk and discuss with each other. They have fun experimenting with voice, facial expressions, emotion, and gestures that make the story “just right” for telling. As they present their story, the art of listening becomes a two-way street. By using good eye contact and body language these storytellers communicate with their audience. As students tell and listen to a story, they become caught up in the story and forget about themselves and their nervousness. They become more self-confident in expressing themselves creatively. The activities and skills that they learn will be used across the curriculum and throughout life. When we hear the word 'storytelling' automatically people will often think of children. But these people would be surprised to know that those fairytales that we grew up with were not originally meant for kids.

Storytelling has long been recognized as a powerful tool for engaging audiences and conveying important messages. In education, storytelling has also been linked to improvements in reading comprehension, particularly for struggling readers and English language learners. However, there is still much to learn about the specific features of storytelling that are most beneficial for improving reading comprehension outcomes and the contexts in which storytelling interventions are most effective.

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Storytelling refers to a method that conveys or shares a narrative or sequence of events through words, images, or other forms of communication. It is usually provided through the presentation of characters, settings, conflicts, and resolutions within a structured narrative framework while utilizing various elements such as plot, dialogue, description, and imagery to engage the audience and convey a message or meaning (Khamsuk & Whanchit, 2021). Storytelling is an effective teaching strategy for children to enhance their reading abilities and engagement with the material (Satrini, 2019; Fitri & Ginting, 2021). Additionally, listening to stories during learning promotes creativity, empathy, selfconfidence, and overall cognitive and emotional growth (Hammond, 2015; Wajnryb, 2003; Sitaresmi & Ginting, 2022).

In addition to improving reading skills, storytelling fosters critical thinking and helps children understand the order and structure of stories. For example, Renandya (2007) claims that storytelling can improve the comprehension of stories and assist students in transitioning from receptive reading while employing their reading and listening abilities to productive speaking and writing skills. Moreover, Cron (2012) argues that "we are wired to turn to story to teach us the way of the world." It means that, as humans, we are inclined to seek out stories to understand and learn about the world around us. Thus, storytelling is deeply ingrained in our nature and plays a significant role in making sense of our experiences, making connections, and gaining insights into life's complexities.

For young learners, reading comprehension is an essential skill because it allows them to comprehend and infer meaning from written material (Akhmetova et al., 2022; Amalia, 2023). Early acquisition of solid comprehension abilities establishes the groundwork for both lifetime learning and academic performance. Storytelling is one of the techniques in making learners read.

Listening is one of the macro skills in reading. It is a pre-requisite to learning to read. Through listening to stories, children started to speak and imitate the uttered words of the storyteller. Moreover, exposing children to storytelling help them understand the lessons convey in the story. After listening, the children started to decode words. The first approach

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is decoding; it is the capacity to precisely identify and sound out words. It is vital for novices since comprehension is enhanced by decoding fluency (Sinha et al., 2024). The second approach is the development of vocabulary. It means gaining an understanding of word meanings is essential to understand a text's overall meaning. Furthermore, to increase vocabulary, readers may concentrate on word usage and context hints (Moon & Grace Kim, 2024). The third approach of reading comprehension is background information (Valcárcel Jiménez et al., 2024). Learners can better integrate new information with what they already know when they have prior knowledge about a subject. Background information promotes more in-depth interaction with the content. The last approach is active participation. Students are better able to engage with the text in a meaningful way when they ask questions, make predictions, and visualize (Cockerill et al., 2023).

Reading is an important language skill and a highly complicated act that everyone must learn. Reading is not a single skill but a combination of many skills and processes in which the readers interact with printed words and texts for content and pleasure. Improving the reading performance of learners starts with understanding the stories listened to.

The utilization of storytelling as an instructional approach greatly facilitates students in contextualizing the reading text. This is evident through the students' responses, which demonstrate their comprehension of the story's context and their prior exposure to the "Mary and Martha" narrative in a church setting. As a result, when the writer begins teaching, the students already possess a solid understanding of the storyline. Moreover, when encountering unfamiliar English vocabulary, the writer provides direct instruction to assist students in pronouncing and interpreting the words accurately. Hence, it is essential to start teaching reading through the listening of stories.

Being an aspiring grade 1 teacher, it is important to know several strategies that would give impact to learning especially reading. Thus, it is in this premise that the researcher, being a teacher applicant, wanted to evaluate the effectiveness of storytelling in improving the performance of grade 1 learners in reading and literacy. As observed, some of the learners

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still having trouble in understanding what has been listened to. Believing that through constant listening activities, in the form of storytelling, comprehension skills will be developed. Hence, this study was formulated to evaluate the effectiveness of storytelling in the performance of grade 1 learners in reading and literacy. A proposed improvement plan will be formulated based on the findings of the study. Therefore, it is in the rationale that the researcher who is currently an aspirant teacher in the above mentioned local, would like to delve worthy research undertaking that would benefit herself, the school she is currently teaching and that of her Graduate Program she is enrolled at.

This study evaluates the effectiveness of storytelling techniques in improving the performance of grade 1 learners in reading and literacy of Don Felipe Elementary School, Kananga II District, Leyte Division. The findings of the study were the basis for the proposed improvement plan.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the performance of the grade 1 learners in reading and literacy before the integration of storytelling techniques in teaching?
2. What is the performance of the grade 1 learners in reading and literacy after the integration of storytelling techniques in teaching?
3. Is there a significant difference in the performance of the grade 1 learners in reading and literacy before and after the integration of storytelling techniques in teaching?
4. What improvement plan can be proposed based on the findings of this study?

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METHODOLOGY

Design. This study adopted a quasi-experimental research design utilizing the pre-test and post-test to evaluate the effectiveness of storytelling technique in improving the performance of grade 1 learners in reading and literacy. This study was conducted in Don Felipe Elementary School, Kananga II District, Leyte Division. The twenty-two (22) grade 1 learners were involved in the study. The instrument used in this study will be the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA). This is a brief reading assessment that helps teachers identify learners who may need more reading support. It is used to evaluate the learners' word attack and decoding skills, as well as their reading performance in English and Filipino. the CRLA can be administered online, over the phone, or in the classroom. This tool helps teachers as well as other stakeholders in pinpointing learners' strengths and areas for improvement, allowing for tailored instruction to support each learner through various support programs. The tool will be administered to grades 1 to 3 learners utilizing the tool stipulated in DM-CT-2024-284. Moreover, the researcher prepared lesson plans for teaching reading and literacy utilizing the storytelling in teaching the subject. The researcher will formulate short stories or gather from the books to deliver the story to the class. Learners will be given questions in between the story as the researcher read it. The differentiated reading materials and activities suited for the group of learners and the mastery of the teacher in integrating storytelling highlights the delivery of the lesson. The learning materials and differentiated reading activities crafted were submitted to the District Coordinator and Quality Assurance Team for evaluation, validation, and adjustments before it was utilized by the learners in the classroom.

Sampling. The twenty-two (22) grade 1 learners 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

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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 permits was to participate in the research. Then, survey questionnaires were handed out, and the researcher accompanied the respondents as they filled out the questionnaires. Researcher gathered the result of the 4th quarterly assessment and grades of the students. Once the survey was done, data were gathered, counted, and handed over for statistical processing.

Ethical Issues. The researcher obtained the necessary written permission from the authorities to conduct the study. While developing and checking the survey used in the study, 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 assessed to evaluate the performances of the grade 1 learners in reading and literacy before and after the integration of storytelling technique. t-Test of Mean Difference was used to determine the significant difference in the performances of the grade 1 learners in reading and literacy before and after the integration of storytelling technique.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1

Pre-test Performance of Grade 1 Learners in Reading and Literacy Before the Integration of Storytelling

Score Range	Description	Frequency	%
25–30	Excellent	0	0.00%
19–24	Very Good	0	0.00%
13–18	Good	0	0.00%
7–12	Fair	9	42.86%
1–6	Poor	12	57.14%
Total		21	100%
Weighted Mean		5.05	Poor

Table 1 presents the pre-test performance of Grade 1 learners in reading and literacy before the integration of storytelling as an instructional approach. The data reveal that most of the learners, or 12 out of 21 (57.14%), obtained scores ranging from 1 to 6, which is interpreted as Poor. Meanwhile, 9 learners (42.86%) scored within the range of 7 to 12, which falls under the Fair category. Notably, none of the learners achieved scores in the Good (13–18), Very Good (19–24), or Excellent (25–30) categories.

The computed weighted mean of 5.05, interpreted as Poor, indicates that the overall reading and literacy performance of Grade 1 learners prior to the use of storytelling strategies was generally low. This suggests that most learners struggled with basic literacy and reading comprehension skills before the intervention. The results further imply that traditional teaching approaches may not have been sufficiently effective in engaging learners or developing their foundational reading abilities. Thus, the integration of storytelling as an instructional tool may be necessary to enhance learner motivation, comprehension, and literacy development.

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Table 2
Post-test Performance of Grade 1 Learners in Reading and Literacy
After the Integration of Storytelling

Score Range	Description	Frequency	%
25–30	Excellent	7	33.33%
19–24	Very Good	13	61.90%
13–18	Good	1	4.77%
7–12	Fair	0	0.00%
1–6	Poor	0	0.00%
Total		21	100%
Weighted Mean		22.62	Very Good

Table 2 presents the post-test performance of Grade 1 learners in reading and literacy after the integration of storytelling in classroom instruction. The data reveal a significant improvement in the learners' performance compared to their pre-test results. As shown in the table, most of the learners, or 13 out of 21 (61.90%), achieved scores within the range of 19 to 24, which is interpreted as Very Good. Meanwhile, 7 learners (33.33%) obtained scores between 25 and 30, classified as Excellent. Only 1 learner (4.77%) scored within the good range of 13 to 18, while none fell under the Fair or Poor categories.

The computed weighted mean of 22.62, interpreted as Very Good, indicates that the overall reading and literacy performance of the Grade 1 learners greatly improved after the integration of storytelling. This result suggests that storytelling served as an effective instructional strategy that enhanced the learners' reading comprehension, vocabulary, and engagement in literacy activities. The notable increase in performance reflects that storytelling made learning more meaningful, interactive, and relatable, which likely contributed to better

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retention and understanding of reading concepts. Overall, the findings affirm that the use of storytelling positively influenced the learners' reading and literacy development.

Table 3
Test of Difference Between the Pre-test and Post-test Scores of Grade 1 Learners

Group	Test Scores (Mean)	Computed t	Critical t	Decision	Interpretation
Grade 1	Pre = 5.05 Post = 22.62	34.75	2.09	Reject Ho	Significant

Table 3 presents the test of difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of Grade 1 learners in reading and literacy before and after the integration of storytelling. As shown in the table, the learners obtained a mean score of 5.05 in the pre-test and 22.62 in the post-test, showing a substantial increase in performance following the use of storytelling as an instructional strategy. The computed t-value of 34.75 is notably higher than the critical t-value of 2.09 at a 0.05 level of significance.

Based on this result, the null hypothesis (Ho) is rejected, indicating that there is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the learners. This means that the integration of storytelling had a statistically significant positive effect on the learners' reading and literacy performance. The findings imply that storytelling not only enhanced the learners' comprehension and interest in reading but also contributed to meaningful improvements in their overall literacy skills. Therefore, the use of storytelling can be considered an effective pedagogical approach for developing early reading proficiency among Grade 1 learners.

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Conclusion

The findings of the study revealed that the reading and literacy performance of Grade 1 learners significantly improved after the integration of storytelling as a teaching strategy. The pre-test results showed that most learners performed poorly, while the post-test results indicated a remarkable increase, with the majority achieving very good to excellent performance levels. The computed t-test further confirmed that there was a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores, signifying that storytelling had a substantial positive impact on learners' reading and literacy skills. Therefore, the study concludes that the integration of storytelling is an effective pedagogical approach that enhances learners' comprehension, vocabulary, and overall engagement in literacy activities. This highlights the importance of incorporating creative and interactive methods such as storytelling in early education to foster a deeper interest in reading and promote meaningful literacy development among young learners.

Recommendations

1. Integrate storytelling as a regular instructional strategy in the primary curriculum to enhance learners' reading comprehension, vocabulary development, and overall literacy performance.
2. Teachers should be trained and encouraged to use storytelling techniques creatively, incorporating visual aids, gestures, and interactive activities to make lessons more engaging and meaningful for young learners.
3. School administrators and curriculum developers may design literacy programs that include storytelling as a core approach to support the development of reading readiness and comprehension skills among early-grade learners.

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4. Conduct regular monitoring and evaluation to assess the effectiveness of storytelling strategies in improving literacy outcomes, ensuring that teaching methods remain responsive to learners' needs.

5. Provide opportunities for teachers to share best practices and success stories related to storytelling through Learning Action Cells (LAC) sessions, workshops, or reading programs to promote collaboration and innovation in literacy instruction.

6. Recognize and reward teachers who successfully implement creative literacy approaches, such as storytelling, that lead to measurable improvement in student performance.

7. Educational policymakers may consider integrating storytelling-based methodologies into national reading and literacy initiatives to foster more engaging and inclusive learning experiences for young learners.

8. School leaders should continue to support teachers by providing appropriate learning materials, time allocation, and training opportunities to sustain the use of storytelling in classroom instruction.

9. Future researchers are encouraged to replicate and expand this study in different grade levels, subjects, and contexts to explore further the long-term impact of storytelling on learners' academic achievement and motivation.

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AUTHOR'S PROFILE



MS. JINKY P. AYROSA

Jinky Ayrosa, born on September 1, 1989, in Brgy. San Isidro, Kananga Leyte, is a dedicated individual known for her commitment to nurturing continuous learning and empowerment for herself. Her journey in education began at Don Felipe Primary School to Montealegre Elementary School, followed by her secondary education at Matag-ob National High School, ALS Alternative Learning School Manila, NSS Night Secondary school Manila at St., Scholasticas College Manila. Her dedication to finish her studies became reality.

Throughout her early years, Jinky was open minded, she finds ways to herself finish her dream She worked as a housemaid, saleslady, to support her study in college. With the help of no tuition fee for college. This scholarship was instrumental in her ability to pursue higher education, providing significant support in finishing her degree and molding her character, academic pursuits, and community events enriched her experience, fostering her growth and resilience.

Jinky continued her academic journey at Eastern Visayas State University - Ormoc City Campus (EVSU - OCC), where she earned her Bachelor of Elementary Education, in 2021. One year after she passed the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET), marking the official start of her teaching career.

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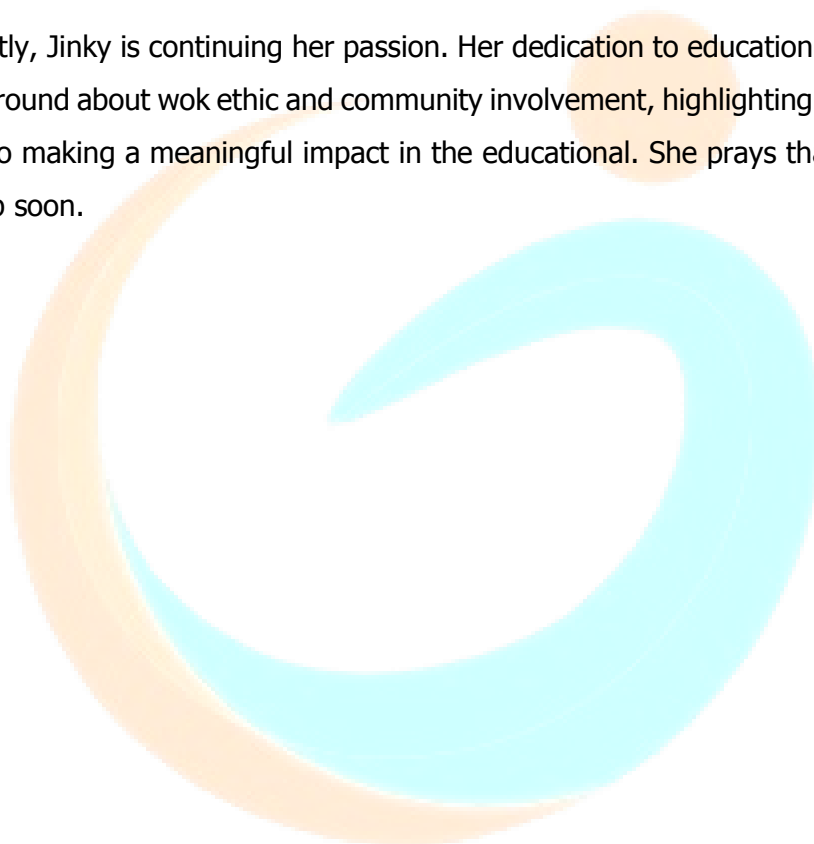
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Despite the demands of being a full-time mom to her daughter, Patrice kaye, Jinky has consistently pursued professional growth. Her commitment to lifelong learning led her to enroll in a Master of Arts in Education (MAEd) program, majoring elementary education. She successfully completed the academic requirements for her MAEd in December 2025, driven by her diverse experiences and the support of different groups she encountered through different works and academic journey.

Currently, Jinky is continuing her passion. Her dedication to education, combined with her rich background about wok ethic and community involvement, highlighting her unwavering commitment to making a meaningful impact in the educational. She prays that she will get a permanent job soon.



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