

Effectiveness of Guided Reading Strategies in Improving the Reading and Literacy Performance of Grade 1 Learners

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Abstract —Reading and Literacy is one of the learning areas in Grade 1 under the Revised K to 10 Curriculum Program of the Department of Education. It focuses on teaching learners basic literacy in their first language, decoding high-frequency and essential content-specific words to develop language for learning, understanding how words are used in simple sentences to get and express meaning, and comprehending, responding to, and creating narrative and informational texts based on real-life experiences. As this is a newly introduced learning area in Grade 1, the teacher faces challenges in teaching the competencies, particularly to learners identified at the low emergent level, based on the results of the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA) conducted at the beginning of the school year. Hence, this study aims to determine the effectiveness of guided reading strategies in improving the reading and literacy performance of Grade 1 learners. Employing a quasi-experimental research design with pretest and post-test measures revealed that the twenty-eight (28) Grade 1 learners performed reasonably in the pretest and very well in the post-test. Further, the study showed a significant difference in learners' performance before and after implementing the guided reading strategy in teaching Reading and literacy. The study results indicate that the Guided Reading Strategy significantly positively impacted the Reading and literacy performance of Grade 1 learners. The notable improvement in test scores following the intervention suggests that structured, small-group reading sessions and targeted instructional support effectively enhanced their reading skills. These findings highlight the effectiveness of the Guided Reading Strategy as a valuable approach to strengthening early literacy development among young learners.

Keywords — *Effectiveness, Guided Reading Strategies, Reading and Literacy, Performance, Grade 1 Learners*

I. INTRODUCTION

Reading and literacy are essential skills to succeed academically in school and meet the demands of the ever-changing society. Reading difficulties present severe and potentially lifelong challenges, and children who do not read well are likely to retain a grade in school. To become life-long learners, children in grade 1 and up need excellent instruction and experience with varied, differentiated, and engaging texts. Teachers use evidence-based interventions and instructional strategies to help improve learners reading and literacy skills.

The Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA) result shows that most learners identified as low emergent readers. They have difficulties producing the sounds of the alphabet and determining what else to provide challenges for teachers to help learners read. Formulating reading intervention activities would not suffice since foundations in learning to read are left unattended due to the pandemic. Hence, the Department of Education found ways to help the learners be ready, so they implemented intervention activities that focused mainly on activities for literacy and numeracy.

Having implemented the activities, I noticed that not all learners with difficulty in reading could attend special reading activities. With that, another intervention was formulated to help the learners achieve the learning loss they were supposed to accomplish. One of the interventions or strategies crafted by the researcher is the implementation of guided reading instruction in teaching reading and literacy.

Reading interventions allow learners to read more while in school. Reading interventions, including guided reading with teachers, provide instructional support, daily experience with fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, phonics, phonemes, and exposure to various genres and types of texts to become more proficient readers (Richardson, J., 2009). Guided reading instruction is a strategy teachers use to teach reading in a small group. A differentiated instructional approach is essential to meeting the needs of the learners in a grade. The fundamental goal of guided reading is to teach learners reading strategies to help enhance comprehension and fluency. For guided reading to be successful, the classroom environment should be inviting and engaging, with differentiated and varied reading materials and activities to help build a community of readers.

Guided Reading or small group reading is a strategy that focuses on developing early reading skills, phonics, phonemic awareness, phonological awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The learners are grouped based on their intellectual capability and needs. Then, the teacher formulates differentiated reading activities and conducts individualized or small group discussions to help them acquire reading skills.

High-quality reading instruction encourages teachers to use various strategies to guide their teachings. One strategy used is Guided Reading. Guided Reading is a research-based strategy that has become a well-known "best practice" in creating balanced literacy in the classroom (Iaquinta, 2006). Fountas and Pinnell (2012) state, "Guided Reading has shifted the lens in the teaching of reading to focus on a deeper understanding of how readers build effective processing systems over time and an examination of the critical role of texts and expert teaching in the process." Guided Reading allows teachers to ask questions and guide students' understanding and learning. It also provides small-group, individualized instruction critical for creating independent, life-long learners (Ford & Opitz, 2002).

Thus, on this premise, the researcher decided to conduct this study to evaluate the effectiveness of guided reading strategies in improving the reading and literacy skills of grade 1 learners. A proposed improvement plan was formulated based on the study findings. Likewise, it is in the rationale that the researcher, currently a grade 6 teacher in the above-mentioned local, would like to delve into a worthy research undertaking that will benefit herself, the school she is currently teaching, and the Graduate Program she enrolled in.

This study evaluates the effectiveness of guided reading strategies in improving the reading and literacy performance of grade 1 learners at Margen Elementary School, Ormoc District 9, Ormoc City Division. The study's findings were the basis for the proposed improvement plan.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

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

II. METHODOLOGY

Design. This study employed a quasi-experimental research design utilizing the pretest and post-test assessments to evaluate the effectiveness of guided reading strategies in improving the reading and literacy performance of grade 1 learners. The research assessed how this instructional strategy impacted learners' learning outcomes. Margen Elementary School, Ormoc District 9, Ormoc City Division, is the locale of the study. It was situated in the heart of the barangay, 14 kilometers from Ormoc City proper, and accessible to all modes of land transportation. The school is categorized as significant in size and population and managed by a School Principal. It is composed of twelve (12) Teacher I, eight (8) Teacher II, five (5) Teacher III, and three (3) Master Teachers, twenty-eight (28) in all. The study targeted twenty-eight (28) Grade 1 learners who have difficulty in literacy for the school year 2024-2025, employing a complete enumeration method to select participants.

The instrument used in this study was the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA). This brief reading assessment helps teachers identify learners needing more reading support. It evaluates the learners' word attack and decoding skills and their reading performance in English and Filipino. The CRLA can be administered online, over the phone, or in the classroom. This tool helps teachers and other stakeholders pinpoint learners' strengths and areas for improvement, allowing for tailored instruction to support each learner through various support programs. The tool was administered to learners in grades 1 to 3 utilizing the tool stipulated in DM-CT-2024-284. Moreover, the researcher prepared lesson plans for teaching reading and literacy utilizing guided reading strategies in teaching the subject. The differentiated learning materials and reading activities suited for the group of learners and the teacher's mastery in implementing guided reading strategies highlight the delivery of the lesson. The learning materials and differentiated reading activities were submitted to the District Coordinator and Quality Assurance Team for evaluation, validation, and adjustments before the learners utilized them in the classroom. The study utilized a matrix to monitor intervention progress, emphasizing evaluating educational strategies to improve learner outcomes. This research focused on evaluating the effectiveness of guided reading strategies in improving the reading and literacy performance of grade 1 learners through the pretest and post-test and its significant differences. The output of a Proposed Improvement Plan based on the findings of the study is as follows:

Sampling. This study's respondents were twenty-eight (28) Grade 1 learners with difficulty in literacy enrolled in the above-mentioned locale for School Year 2024-2025. Complete enumeration was employed to choose the respondents.

Research Procedure. After the research approval, data gathering commenced with the submission of letter requests for study approval to appropriate authorities. Initially, a letter was sent to the Schools Division Superintendent seeking approval to collect data from identified respondents. Following SDS approval, the responsible individuals submit permission letters to the Public Schools District Supervisor and School Principal. Once the researcher obtained approvals, they proceeded with data-gathering activities. An orientation session was conducted for the respondents, and parental consent was obtained for their children's participation in the study. The pretest was administered during the learners' free time. Subsequently, a four-week intervention was implemented, focusing on teaching reading and literacy using guided reading strategies. A post-test was conducted post-intervention, and responses were collected, tabulated, and prepared for statistical analysis. A matrix of activities was maintained to monitor the progress of data gathering throughout the study.

Ethical Issues. The researcher properly secured permission from the authorities to conduct the study through written communication. In formulating the intervention materials used in the study, offensive, discriminatory, or other unacceptable language was avoided. This study did not include the respondents' names and other personal data to protect their privacy. Participation of the respondents was also voluntary. Orientation was conducted for the respondents with their parents. Issues and concerns were addressed in the orientation, and consent to be included in the study was signed. The researcher maintained objectivity in analyzing and discussing the results. All authors whose works were mentioned in this study were correctly quoted and were acknowledged in the reference.

Treatment of Data. The performance of grade 1 learners in reading and literacy before and after guided reading strategies was evaluated using Simple Percentage. Additionally, the t-test of Mean Difference was employed to assess significant differences in their performances before and after the intervention.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1
Pretest Performance of Grade 1 Learners in Reading and Literacy

Score Range	Description	PRETEST	
		Frequency	%
25-30	Excellent	0	0
19-24	Very Good	0	0
13-18	Good	0	0
7-12	Fair	21	75
0-6	Poor	7	25
Total		28	100
Weighted Mean		7.78	Fair

Table 1 presents the pretest performance of Grade 1 learners in reading and literacy, highlighting their scores across various proficiency levels. Notably, none of the learners achieved scores classified as Excellent (25-30), Very Good (19-24), or Good (13-18), reflecting a significant lack of high-level performance. Most learners, comprising 75% of the sample, scored within the Fair range (7-12). This suggests that learners' baseline knowledge is insufficient, and they need the formulated intervention to be implemented. Additionally, a concerning 25% of learners scored in the Poor range (0-6), which highlights substantial challenges in mastering the pre-requisite skills in learning to read. With 28 Grade 1 learners assessed utilizing the CRLA tool, the grade garnered a weighted mean score of 7.78, and the performance was categorized as Fair. The data indicates a pressing need for intervention that will support the learning needs of the learners. The complete absence of learners under the excellent, very good, and sound categories suggests systematic issues and evaluation of the teachers' strategies in teaching lessons in the reading and literacy learning area. The high percentage of fair and poor ranges further underscores the urgency of implementing targeted support to bolster learners' reading and literacy skills. This implies immediate efforts to enhance instructional strategies and provide additional resources to assist the grade 1 learners in mastering the essential reading and literacy skills that will guide them in achieving higher reading performance. Re-skilling and upskilling of reading and literacy strategies and approaches for teachers is necessary. Additionally, the provision of differentiated learning resources and activities is recommended as part of the intervention implemented in this study. This proactive approach will ultimately contribute to better educational outcomes and equip the grade 1 learners with essential skills for their reading and literacy journey.

Table 2
Post-Test Performance of Grade 1 Learners in Reading and Literacy

Score Range	Description	POST-TEST	
		Frequency	%
25-30	Excellent	13	47
19-24	Very Good	6	21
13-18	Good	3	11
7-12	Fair	6	21
0-6	Poor	0	0
Total		28	100
Weighted Mean		21.18	Very Good

Table 2 illustrates the post-test performance of Grade 1 learners in reading and literacy, showing that 47% scored in the Excellent range (25-30), indicating strong mastery of reading and literacy concepts. Additionally, 21% scored in the Very Good range (19-24), reflecting a solid understanding of the concepts in reading and literacy. Unfortunately, since it is still in the 2nd quarter of the school year, 11% of the learners scored in the good range (13-18), while 21% scored fair (7-12), which signifies that not all grade 1 learners were able to master the skills taught. This shows that

teachers must think of possible intervention activities aside from the implemented one to be used. This may indicate late development of the learners because of the many factors affecting their performance. With the 28 grade 1 learners assessed and a weighted mean score of 21.18, the overall performance of grade 1 learners in reading and literacy is categorized as very good. After teachers use guided reading strategies to teach reading and literacy, the post-test outcomes suggest an effective intervention in improving the performance of grade 1 learners, making it a valuable strategy for reading and literacy instruction. Given its success, the guided reading strategy should be sustained and integrated into the regular curriculum to ensure continuous literacy development. The very good performance of the grade 1 learners in reading and literacy implies that continuous use of the strategy and provision of more differentiated activities and resources could be integrated to achieve excellent performance by the end of the school year. Further, equipping teachers with the necessary reading and literacy teaching strategies, approaches, methods, and interventions is still essential for professional growth and support in teaching. Likewise, constant monitoring and evaluation through the conduct of classroom observation and the conduct of the Learning Action Cell (LAC) is important for teachers to be guided in the teaching-learning process.

Table 3

Test of Difference Between the Scores in the Pretest and Post-test of Grade 1 Learners in Reading and Literacy

Test Scores		Standard Deviation	Computed T	Critical T	Decision	Interpretation
Pre	7.78	4.49	15.78	2.05	Reject H_0	Significant
Post	21.18					

Table 3 presents the test results comparing the pretest and post-test performances of Grade 1 learners in reading and literacy, emphasizing the statistical significance of the differences observed. The pretest average score was 7.78, which reflects a baseline of limited reading and literacy achievements among the learners. In contrast, the post-test scores showed a remarkable increase to 21.18. This significant shift was analyzed using a t-test, where the critical t-value was set at 2.05 with a standard deviation of 4.49. The computed t-value of 15.78 decisively rejects the null hypothesis (H_0), confirming a statistically significant improvement in the performance of Grade 1 learners following the implementation of interventions, mainly guided reading strategy. The data indicates a profound enhancement in the learners' reading and literacy performance due to the implemented interventions. The dramatic increase in average scores signifies a mastery of concepts and the effectiveness of guided reading strategy as a pedagogical approach in teaching reading and literacy. This method has facilitated deeper engagement, peer support, and a better understanding of reading and literacy concepts, especially mastery of the pre-requisite skills, ultimately leading to higher academic performance. The statistical significance of the t-test reinforces the reliability of these findings, suggesting that the educational strategies employed had a substantial and measurable impact in terms of reading and literacy performance of grade 1 learners. These findings underscore the importance of adopting innovative teaching strategies such as guided reading by the teacher in the classroom. Educators should consider integrating similar methods into their instructional practices, as they can significantly improve learning outcomes.

Furthermore, school administrators should promote professional development programs focused on collaborative teaching techniques to prepare educators for successfully implementing these strategies. The results also imply the necessity for ongoing assessments to track learners' progress and the effectiveness of teaching methods over time, ensuring that interventions remain responsive to learner needs. According to Richardson (2016), "Guided Reading has propelled millions of children into successful, independent reading." Numerous teachers have tried to provide instruction by intentionally implementing various components of the Guided Reading approach to increase students' reading scores. When intentionally integrated, a few components research suggests are grouping students, individualizing the learning instruction, and considering teachers' and students' roles during Guided Reading instruction. By fostering a guided reading strategy, schools can enhance academic achievement in reading and literacy across subjects, contributing to more engaged and successful learning outcomes.

IV. CONCLUSION

The data presented revealed a significant difference in the pretest and post-test performances of grade 1 learners in reading and literacy before and after implementing the guided reading strategy in teaching and learning. The study results indicate that the Guided Reading Strategy significantly positively impacted the reading and literacy performance of Grade 1 learners. The notable improvement in test scores following the intervention suggests that structured, small-group reading sessions and targeted instructional support effectively enhanced their reading skills. These findings highlight the effectiveness of the Guided Reading Strategy as a valuable approach to strengthening early literacy development among young learners.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Utilize the proposed improvement plan formulated.
2. Teachers must develop differentiated instructional materials and reading passages to effectively implement the guided reading strategy and enhance learners' reading and literacy skills.
3. Teachers must demonstrate resilience in addressing the diverse needs of learners, ensuring that their teaching remains engaging and enjoyable while fostering meaningful learning experiences.
4. School heads should actively promote and support guided reading initiatives by integrating them into the curriculum and ensuring teachers have the necessary resources, time, and training for effective implementation.
5. Implement structured systems for continuous assessment and feedback on the effectiveness of the guided reading strategy in the classroom. This enables data-driven teaching methods and curriculum design refinements for improved learning outcomes.
6. Foster parent and community involvement in guided reading initiatives by organizing workshops and informational sessions emphasizing the benefits of collaborative educational approaches.
7. Conduct longitudinal studies to evaluate the long-term effects of the guided reading strategy on learners' academic performance and literacy development and
8. Future researchers should explore and analyze the methods, strategies, and techniques used by problem-based learning school administrators and teachers to effectively address learners' reading and literacy needs and ultimately enhance their academic performance.

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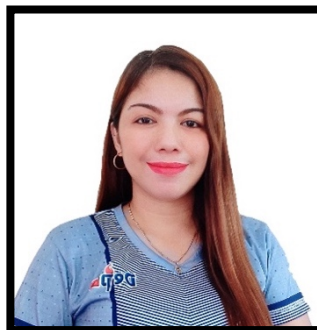
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AUTHOR'S PROFILE



MRS. GLAYDELENE GRADO-DURANTE

Glaydelene Grado-Durante, born on March 4, 1989, in Brgy. Sto. Niño, Julita, Leyte is a dedicated educator known for her commitment to nurturing continuous learning and empowerment among her pupils. Her journey in education began at Del Carmen Primary School, followed by her secondary education at Dulag National High School.

Glaydelene continued her academic journey at Western Leyte College of Ormoc, INC., where she earned her Bachelor of Elementary Education and graduated in 2011 as an Academic Awardee. After two years, she finally took and passed the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET), marking the official start of her teaching career.

Glaydelene has continuously sought professional development despite her responsibilities as a working mother to her son and daughter. She enrolled in a Master of Arts in Education (MAEd) program with a major in Elementary Education because she was dedicated to lifelong learning. In 2025, she successfully finished the coursework needed to earn her MAEd.

Glaydelene is a distinguished Grade 1 teacher at Ormoc City's Margen Elementary School. Her unwavering drive to significantly influence the educational environment is demonstrated by her dedication to education, which continues to inspire her peers and pupils.