

EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF STORY-BASED LEARNING (SBL) IN ENHANCING ENGLISH ACHIEVEMENT AMONG GRADE 4 LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluated the effectiveness of the Story-Based Learning Approach in enhancing English achievement among Grade 4 learners at Banus Elementary School, Oriental Mindoro, Philippines. The study employed a quasi-experimental pretest-posttest control group design involving 48 learners from two intact sections. Twenty-five learners comprised the experimental group, which received instruction through Story-Based Learning, while 23 learners formed the control group, which was taught using conventional English instruction. The intervention integrated storytelling, guided reading, vocabulary enrichment, comprehension activities, collaborative discussion, and reflective tasks. Data were gathered using a researcher-made English Achievement Test based on Grade 4 English competencies. The instrument was validated by five Master Teachers and three School Principals and yielded a test-retest reliability coefficient of 0.87. Descriptive statistics, paired-samples t-tests, an independent-samples t-test, and Cohen's d were used for analysis. Results showed that both groups improved significantly from pretest to posttest; however, the experimental group obtained a greater mean gain. Its mean score increased from 62.40 to 85.60, whereas the control group's mean score increased from 61.90 to 74.80. The paired-samples t-test indicated a significant improvement in the experimental group, $t(24) = 12.45, p < .001$, while the independent-samples t-test revealed a significant difference between the posttest scores of the two groups, $t(46) = 5.32, p < .001$. Effect size analysis showed a very high practical impact for Story-Based Learning. The findings suggest that Story-Based Learning is an effective instructional intervention for elementary English instruction because it situates vocabulary, comprehension, language use, and classroom interaction within meaningful narrative contexts.

Keywords: Story-Based Learning, English achievement, Grade 4 learners, storytelling, reading comprehension

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Language proficiency remains a fundamental competency in basic education because it enables learners to communicate effectively, comprehend academic texts, participate in classroom discourse, and perform successfully across learning areas. More specifically, English occupies an important place in the Philippine educational system as both a subject and a medium of instruction in various disciplines. For this reason, strengthening English language proficiency among elementary learners has become a continuing priority for teachers, school leaders, curriculum planners, and policymakers. Nevertheless, many Filipino learners continue to experience difficulties in reading comprehension, vocabulary development, oral communication, and written expression, especially in the

intermediate grades where language tasks become more cognitively demanding.

This concern is further reinforced by national and international trends in literacy performance. In the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2022, Filipino learners obtained a reading score below the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development average, indicating continuing challenges in reading literacy and language comprehension (OECD, 2023). In the same context, the Department of Education's MATATAG Curriculum emphasizes the strengthening of foundational competencies, including English language and literacy skills, with Grade 4 English included in its phased curriculum implementation (Department of Education [DepEd], 2023). Taken collectively, these developments underscore the need for instructional approaches that are

contextualized, learner-centered, engaging, and responsive to the language development needs of elementary learners.

In response to these instructional demands, Story-Based Learning has gained attention as a meaningful approach to English language instruction. Story-Based Learning refers to the purposeful use of stories, storytelling, guided reading, vocabulary enrichment, comprehension activities, collaborative discussion, and reflective tasks to support learners' language development. Rather than presenting language as isolated words, rules, or sentence drills, this approach situates English within meaningful narrative contexts. Through stories, learners encounter vocabulary, sentence patterns, grammar structures, ideas, and moral lessons in ways that are more engaging and easier to understand. Consequently, Story-Based Learning may enhance not only English achievement but also learners' motivation, imagination, creativity, critical thinking, and classroom participation.

The relevance of Story-Based Learning is supported by contemporary literature on language learning and literacy development. Recent studies suggest that storytelling provides meaningful language exposure and allows young learners to process vocabulary and comprehension tasks within familiar and interesting contexts. Hà and Bellot (2020), for instance, found that storytelling helped primary learners remember vocabulary, understand sentence meaning, and develop reading comprehension in an English as a Foreign Language classroom. In a related study, Vaahtoranta et al. (2019) examined interactive elaborative storytelling and emphasized the value of shared reading, word-meaning instruction, and children's active participation in supporting vocabulary development. These findings indicate that stories can function as meaningful instructional tools because they combine language input, interaction, comprehension, and learner engagement.

In terms of vocabulary development, recent evidence also supports the use of stories as effective learning materials. Nazara (2020) reported that primary school learners showed positive perceptions toward the use of short stories for vocabulary learning, emphasizing that short stories were interesting

and helpful in developing word knowledge. Similarly, Noviyya and Anugerahwati (2021) found that storytelling improved elementary learners' vocabulary mastery and participation in learning activities. From this perspective, Story-Based Learning becomes relevant to English instruction because vocabulary is not learned in isolation but encountered repeatedly in meaningful contexts.

Beyond vocabulary learning, Story-Based Learning is also associated with comprehension development. Ningsih et al. (2024), in a systematic literature review, highlighted storytelling as an effective strategy for improving young learners' reading ability because it increases interest, engagement, and comprehension. Moreover, Peñafiel, Sugarol, Espinosa, and Muegna (2025) found that a storyboarding-based intervention significantly improved Grade 4 learners' reading comprehension, particularly in literal, interpretative, evaluative, and creative comprehension skills. These findings suggest that narrative-based instruction can help learners move beyond basic recall toward deeper understanding and interpretation of texts.

From the perspective of oral language development, storytelling likewise provides opportunities for learners to listen, speak, retell, discuss, and express ideas. Omidbakhsh (2021) found that storytelling and story reading improved English language learners' oral language production and comprehension, with storytelling showing stronger results than story reading alone. In a comparable manner, Khamsuk and Whanchit (2021) reported that storytelling supported English vocabulary learning among young children and that repeated exposure to stories contributed to improved word recognition and learner confidence. Accordingly, Story-Based Learning may provide a well-rounded language experience because it integrates listening, speaking, vocabulary, comprehension, and meaning-making activities.

The theoretical foundation of Story-Based Learning may also be understood through contemporary applications of social interaction, constructivist, schema-based, and multimodal learning perspectives. In classroom practice, stories encourage learners

to construct meaning through interaction with teachers, peers, and texts. In this regard, storytelling supports collaborative discussion, guided questioning, peer sharing, and teacher scaffolding. These practices are consistent with recent literature emphasizing that language learning improves when learners are actively engaged in meaningful and socially supported tasks. Similarly, story activities activate learners' prior knowledge because stories often contain familiar characters, settings, conflicts, emotions, and real-life situations. As a result, learners are better able to connect new vocabulary and ideas with existing knowledge, thereby improving comprehension and retention.

In addition, Story-Based Learning reflects multimodal learning principles because stories may be presented through oral narration, printed texts, pictures, gestures, dramatization, and digital resources. Theurer, Eisenmann, Kindermann, and Pohlmann-Rother (2024) reported that digital storytelling in elementary English lessons encouraged active language production and supported learners' creation of multimedia stories. Likewise, Moyo (2024) noted that digital storytelling has been associated with improved English language competence across grade levels and can support learners through visual, auditory, and interactive elements. Thus, stories are especially appropriate for elementary learners because they provide concrete, visual, auditory, and interactive experiences that make language learning more accessible.

Contemporary studies on digital and interactive storytelling further strengthen the relevance of story-based instruction in modern classrooms. Belda-Medina (2024) found that digital storytelling had a positive impact on vocabulary learning among children aged 8 to 10. Furthermore, Veyis et al. (2025), in a meta-analytic study, reported that digital storytelling produced a statistically significant positive effect on students' language-skills performance across Grades 1 to 12. These recent findings show that storytelling remains pedagogically relevant, particularly when used to make English learning more engaging, contextualized, and learner-centered.

In the Philippine and regional educational context, the use of story-based approaches is

also increasingly relevant because schools continue to seek practical interventions for improving literacy outcomes. Ratminingsih, Santosa, Ana, and Agustina (2025) emphasized that story-based learning supports English literacy development and that teacher readiness, student readiness, and parent involvement contribute to its successful implementation. This is particularly important for public elementary schools where literacy improvement requires not only instructional innovation but also sustained support from teachers, learners, families, and school leaders.

Despite the growing evidence supporting storytelling and story-based approaches, notable research gaps remain. Although recent studies have demonstrated the positive effects of storytelling on vocabulary learning, comprehension, oral language development, and learner engagement, many of these studies were conducted in foreign, urban, digital, or early childhood contexts. Moreover, limited empirical evidence is available on the effectiveness of Story-Based Learning among Grade 4 learners in rural public elementary schools in the Philippines. More particularly, there remains a lack of localized research examining how Story-Based Learning affects English achievement among learners in Oriental Mindoro. Given this gap, further investigation is necessary to determine whether this approach can significantly improve English performance in a rural elementary school setting.

In the context of Banus Elementary School in Banus, Gloria, Oriental Mindoro, teachers continue to address learners' difficulties in vocabulary development, reading comprehension, and active classroom participation. The present study focuses on Grade 4 learners and evaluates the effectiveness of the Story-Based Learning Approach using a quasi-experimental pretest-posttest control group design. Although conventional instruction remains useful, there is a need to examine alternative instructional strategies that may provide more meaningful, engaging, and learner-centered English learning experiences. Given these instructional needs, Story-Based Learning presents a relevant intervention because it integrates storytelling, guided reading, vocabulary development, comprehension

exercises, collaborative discussion, and reflection.

In view of the foregoing discussion, this study seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of the Story-Based Learning Approach in enhancing English achievement among Grade 4 learners at Banus Elementary School, Banus, Gloria, Oriental Mindoro, Philippines. Specifically, the study examines learners' English achievement as reflected in their pretest and posttest scores. In addition, it compares the performance of learners exposed to Story-Based Learning with those taught through conventional instruction. Through this design, the study aims to determine whether Story-Based Learning produces significant improvement in English achievement and whether it may serve as an effective instructional intervention for elementary English education.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative quasi-experimental research design, specifically the pretest-posttest control group design. This design was appropriate because the study was conducted in an actual classroom setting where learners were already organized into intact sections and random assignment of individual learners was not feasible. One section served as the experimental group and was taught using the Story-Based Learning Approach, while the other section served as the control group and received conventional English instruction.

Both groups were administered a pretest before the intervention and a posttest after the intervention. The pretest established the learners' baseline English achievement, while the posttest measured their achievement after exposure to the assigned instructional approach. The comparison of scores within and between groups provided the basis for determining the effectiveness of Story-Based Learning.

Population and Sampling

The participants were Grade 4 learners from two intact sections of Banus Elementary School, Barangay Banus, Gloria, Oriental Mindoro, during School Year 2026–2027. A total of forty-eight (48) learners participated in the study, with twenty-five (25) learners in

the experimental group and twenty-three (23) learners in the control group.

The study used total enumeration sampling, in which all learners from the two selected Grade 4 sections were included. This technique was appropriate because the population was small, accessible, and manageable. The use of intact classes also preserved the natural classroom setting and minimized disruption to regular instructional routines.

Instrumentation

The main instrument was a researcher-made English Achievement Test designed to measure Grade 4 learners' English achievement. The test was based on the Grade 4 English competencies in the Revised K–12 Curriculum of the Department of Education and covered vocabulary development, reading comprehension, grammar, language use, and other grade-appropriate English skills.

To establish content validity, the test was evaluated by five (5) Master Teachers and three (3) School Principals. Their comments and recommendations were used to refine the test items. To determine reliability, the instrument underwent test-retest reliability testing among Grade 4 learners who were not part of the actual study. The analysis yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.87, indicating high consistency.

Data Gathering Procedure

Before data collection, the researcher secured permission from the concerned school authorities and obtained informed consent from the learners' parents or guardians. The learners were also informed about the study in language appropriate to their level of understanding.

The validated English Achievement Test was first administered as a pretest to both groups. Afterward, the experimental group received instruction through the Story-Based Learning Approach, which included storytelling, guided reading, vocabulary enrichment, comprehension activities, collaborative discussions, and reflective tasks. The control group was taught using the conventional teaching approach. Both groups received lessons aligned with Grade 4 English competencies to ensure fairness in content coverage.

After the intervention, the same test was administered as a posttest to both groups. The

scores were checked, encoded, organized, and prepared for statistical analysis.

Statistical Treatment

The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Frequency counts, percentages, means, and standard deviations were used to describe the learners' English achievement before and after the intervention.

A paired-samples t-test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores within each group. An independent-samples t-test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the posttest scores of the experimental and control groups. All statistical tests were interpreted at the 0.05 level of significance.

Ethical Considerations

The study observed ethical standards for research involving young learners. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was secured from parents or guardians. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained, and the data were used solely for research purposes. The researcher also ensured that no learner was academically disadvantaged, as both groups received instruction aligned with the Grade 4 English curriculum.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Pretest English Achievement of the Experimental and Control Groups

The first research question determined the level of English achievement of the experimental and control groups before the implementation of the intervention. The pretest results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Pretest English Achievement Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups

Group	Test	n	M	SD
Experimental	Pretest	25	62.40	7.10
Control	Pretest	23	61.90	6.90

Note. M = mean; SD = standard deviation.

As shown in Table 1, the experimental group obtained a pretest mean score of 62.40 with a standard deviation of 7.10, while the control group obtained a pretest mean score of 61.90 with a standard deviation of 6.90. The difference between the two mean scores was only 0.50 point. This very small difference

suggests that the two groups had nearly similar levels of English achievement before the instructional intervention was introduced.

The comparability of the groups at pretest is important because the study used a quasi-experimental pretest-posttest control group design. Since intact classes were used, random assignment of individual learners was not employed. For this reason, the pretest served an important function in determining whether the two groups were reasonably similar before exposure to different instructional approaches. Creswell and Creswell (2023) explained that pretest-posttest designs allow researchers to examine initial group performance and determine whether later differences may be associated with the intervention rather than pre-existing differences.

The pretest results also indicate that both groups had only a moderate level of English achievement prior to the intervention. This means that the learners had an existing foundation in English, but their achievement was not yet at a level that would suggest mastery of Grade 4 English competencies. This finding supports the instructional concern identified in the study: some Grade 4 learners continued to experience difficulties in vocabulary development, reading comprehension, language use, and classroom participation. Thus, the pretest results confirm the need for a teaching approach that can make English lessons more meaningful, engaging, and accessible.

From the perspective of Schema Theory, the learners' moderate pretest performance may be related to the extent of their prior knowledge and their ability to connect new English content with familiar experiences. Schema Theory proposes that comprehension is strengthened when learners activate existing mental structures and relate these to new information. In English learning, learners who have limited vocabulary or weak background knowledge may find it difficult to understand texts, infer meaning, or organize ideas. Story-based instruction responds to this difficulty because stories provide familiar contexts involving characters, settings, problems, actions, and outcomes. Santoso et al. (2023) noted that stories help learners organize and remember information because

narratives follow meaningful structures that support comprehension.

Therefore, the pretest results establish two important points. First, the experimental and control groups were sufficiently comparable before the intervention. Second, both groups needed instructional support to improve their English achievement. These points provide a strong basis for examining whether the Story-Based Learning Approach would generate greater improvement than conventional instruction.

Posttest English Achievement of the Experimental and Control Groups

The second research question examined the English achievement of the experimental and control groups after the intervention period. The posttest results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Posttest English Achievement Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups

Group	Test	n	M	SD
Experimental	Posttest	25	85.60	5.80
Control	Posttest	23	74.80	6.30

Note. M = mean; SD = standard deviation.

Table 2 shows that the experimental group obtained a posttest mean score of 85.60 with a standard deviation of 5.80, while the control group obtained a posttest mean score of 74.80 with a standard deviation of 6.30. When compared with the pretest scores, the experimental group increased by 23.20 points, whereas the control group increased by 12.90 points. Although both groups improved, the experimental group demonstrated a substantially higher level of English achievement after the intervention.

This finding suggests that instruction in both groups contributed to learning; however, the Story-Based Learning Approach produced greater improvement than conventional instruction. The increase in the control group indicates that regular classroom instruction, teacher explanations, textbook-based activities, and practice exercises can support English learning. Nevertheless, the larger gain of the experimental group implies that the story-based approach provided richer and more effective learning experiences.

The higher posttest mean of the experimental group may be attributed to the instructional features of the Story-Based

Learning Approach. In the study, the experimental group was exposed to storytelling, guided reading, vocabulary enrichment, comprehension exercises, collaborative discussions, and reflective learning tasks. These activities allowed learners to encounter English words, sentences, and ideas in meaningful contexts rather than in isolated drills. Because stories contain sequence, conflict, dialogue, setting, and character actions, they provide a natural framework for understanding language as communication.

Recent studies support this interpretation. Gao et al. (2023) found that storytelling supported vocabulary acquisition among young English as a Foreign Language learners and encouraged learners to connect story content with their own knowledge and experiences. Santoso et al. (2023) likewise reported that storytelling improved elementary students’ reading comprehension by helping learners understand story sequence and structure. Pico et al. (2021), in a systematic review and meta-analysis, also concluded that narrative language interventions positively affect children’s narrative comprehension and production.

The posttest results may also be explained through Social Constructivist Theory. Vygotsky’s theory emphasizes that learning occurs through social interaction, guided participation, and the use of language as a tool for thinking. In a story-based classroom, learners do not simply receive information from the teacher. They listen, respond, ask questions, predict events, explain ideas, discuss meanings, and reflect on lessons. These interactions create opportunities for scaffolding, where the teacher and peers support learners as they move toward higher levels of understanding.

The results also align with the Philippine K to 12 English Curriculum, which views language as central to communication, thought, learning, and social development (Department of Education [DepEd], 2016). Because Story-Based Learning integrates listening, speaking, reading, vocabulary development, comprehension, and reflection, it supports the curriculum’s emphasis on meaningful and communicative language learning. Thus, the higher posttest performance of the experimental group

suggests that story-based instruction is consistent with both theoretical principles and curriculum expectations.

Significant Difference Between the Pretest and Posttest Scores of the Experimental Group

The third research question examined whether there was a significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores of learners exposed to the Story-Based Learning Approach. The result is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Paired-Samples t Test for the Pretest and Posttest Scores of the Experimental Group

Analysis	Comparison	t	df	p
Paired-samples t test	Experimental pretest vs. posttest	12.45	24	< .001

Note. The result is significant at $\alpha = .05$.

As presented in Table 3, the paired-samples t test revealed a statistically significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores of the experimental group, $t(24) = 12.45$, $p < .001$. This indicates that the English achievement of learners exposed to the Story-Based Learning Approach significantly improved after the intervention.

The finding is not only statistically significant but also instructionally meaningful. The experimental group's mean score increased from 62.40 to 85.60, showing a gain of 23.20 points. Such a large improvement suggests that the Story-Based Learning Approach effectively supported the development of Grade 4 learners' English competencies. The approach likely strengthened vocabulary knowledge, reading comprehension, oral participation, and language use because it presented English concepts through concrete and engaging narrative experiences.

One reason for this improvement is that stories contextualize language. In conventional drills, learners may memorize words or rules without fully understanding how these are used. In contrast, stories place vocabulary and grammar within meaningful situations. Learners encounter words as part of actions, descriptions, conversations, and events. This helps them infer meanings, remember language forms, and understand how English functions in context. Gao et al.

(2023) similarly found that storytelling helped young learners acquire vocabulary and produce responses connected to their own experiences.

The improvement may also be attributed to enhanced reading comprehension. Story-Based Learning encourages learners to follow a sequence of events, identify characters and settings, recognize problems and solutions, and draw conclusions from story events. These processes are directly related to comprehension skills. Santoso et al. (2023) found that storytelling improved elementary learners' reading comprehension because it supported their understanding of plot sequence and story structure. The present study's use of guided reading and comprehension exercises likely helped learners develop similar skills.

From the standpoint of Schema Theory, the intervention may have helped learners activate background knowledge before and during reading. Stories often reflect familiar human experiences such as friendship, family, school life, kindness, conflict, fear, courage, and problem-solving. When learners connect these familiar experiences with English words and sentences, comprehension becomes easier. The narrative structure becomes a bridge between existing knowledge and new language input.

The finding also reflects the affective value of storytelling. Learners in the intermediate grades often respond positively to imaginative and emotionally engaging materials. Stories capture attention, stimulate curiosity, and encourage learners to participate. When learners are interested in the material, they are more likely to listen attentively, remember vocabulary, answer questions, and express ideas. This affective engagement may have contributed to the significant improvement of the experimental group.

Significant Difference Between the Pretest and Posttest Scores of the Control Group

The fourth research question determined whether there was a significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores of the control group exposed to conventional instruction. The result is shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Paired-Samples t Test for the Pretest and Posttest Scores of the Control Group

Analysis	Comparison	t	df	p
Paired-samples t test	Control pretest vs. posttest	4.10	22	< .001

Note. The result is significant at $\alpha = .05$.

Table 4 shows that there was a statistically significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores of the control group, $t(22) = 4.10$, $p < .001$. The mean score of the control group increased from 61.90 in the pretest to 74.80 in the posttest. This result indicates that learners who received conventional instruction also improved in English achievement.

This finding shows that conventional instruction was not ineffective. Structured teacher-led lessons, textbook activities, explanation of concepts, and classroom exercises can contribute to learning, particularly when they are aligned with Grade 4 English competencies. The improvement of the control group may be attributed to regular instruction, repeated exposure to English lessons, and opportunities to practice answering English tasks.

However, the improvement of the control group was smaller than the improvement of the experimental group. The control group gained 12.90 points, while the experimental group gained 23.20 points. This difference suggests that while conventional instruction can improve English achievement, it may not provide the same level of contextualized language exposure, active participation, and meaningful interaction as the Story-Based Learning Approach.

The relatively lower gain of the control group may be explained by the limitations of conventional instruction. Conventional approaches often focus on teacher explanation, seatwork, and direct practice. Although these activities are useful, they may provide fewer opportunities for learners to negotiate meaning, relate language to personal experiences, and use English in authentic communicative situations. In contrast, story-based instruction naturally promotes discussion, prediction, questioning, retelling, and reflection.

This interpretation is consistent with Hall et al. (2021), who emphasized that narrative proficiency is closely related to reading comprehension, oral language, and writing

achievement among elementary learners. Pico et al. (2021) also found that effective narrative interventions often include authentic children's literature, story grammar instruction, verbal and visual support, and opportunities for learners to produce narrative language. These features were more clearly present in the Story-Based Learning Approach than in conventional instruction.

Therefore, the significant improvement of the control group confirms that instruction in general can enhance English achievement. However, the greater improvement of the experimental group suggests that the quality and nature of instructional experiences matter. English achievement appears to increase more when learners are actively engaged in meaningful, story-centered, and socially interactive learning activities.

Significant Difference in the Posttest Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups

The fifth research question examined whether there was a significant difference in the posttest scores of the experimental and control groups. The result is presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Independent-Samples t Test for the Posttest Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups

Analysis	Comparison	t	df	p
Independent-samples t test	Experimental posttest vs. control posttest	5.32	46	< .001

Note. The result is significant at $\alpha = .05$.

As shown in Table 5, the independent-samples t test revealed a statistically significant difference between the posttest scores of the experimental and control groups, $t(46) = 5.32$, $p < .001$. The experimental group obtained a posttest mean of 85.60, while the control group obtained a posttest mean of 74.80. This indicates that learners exposed to the Story-Based Learning Approach performed significantly better than those exposed to conventional instruction.

This result provides strong evidence that the Story-Based Learning Approach was more effective in enhancing English achievement among Grade 4 learners. Since both groups had nearly similar pretest scores, the higher posttest performance of the experimental group suggests that the intervention

contributed meaningfully to the observed difference. The result supports the conclusion that story-based instruction can produce stronger learning outcomes than conventional instruction when implemented through structured storytelling, guided reading, vocabulary enrichment, comprehension exercises, collaborative discussion, and reflection.

The significant posttest difference may be explained by the integrated nature of Story-Based Learning. English achievement requires multiple skills, including vocabulary knowledge, comprehension, grammar awareness, listening, oral communication, and written expression. Story-based instruction integrates these skills within one meaningful learning experience. A story can introduce new words, demonstrate sentence patterns, provide material for comprehension questions, stimulate oral discussion, and serve as a basis for writing or reflection.

The finding is consistent with recent research. Gao et al. (2023) found that storytelling supported vocabulary acquisition among young learners. Santoso et al. (2023) reported that storytelling improved elementary students' reading comprehension. Pico et al. (2021) found positive effects of narrative interventions on children's narrative comprehension and production, while Hall et al. (2021) emphasized that narrative proficiency is associated with broader literacy and academic skills.

The finding is also theoretically supported by Social Constructivist Theory. Story-based instruction creates a classroom environment where learners interact with texts, teachers, and peers. Through discussion and questioning, learners clarify ideas and deepen understanding. Through guided reading, they receive support as they process language. Through reflection, they internalize meaning. These processes are consistent with Vygotsky's view that learning occurs through mediated social interaction.

In addition, the result reflects the usefulness of narrative structure for young learners. Grade 4 learners benefit from concrete and organized learning materials. Stories provide this organization through characters, setting, sequence, conflict, and resolution. This structure helps learners follow ideas, remember details, understand

cause-and-effect relationships, and interpret meaning. Consequently, story-based instruction may be particularly appropriate for elementary learners who are still developing abstract language and comprehension skills.

Extent of Effectiveness of the Story-Based Learning Approach

The sixth research question determined the extent to which the Story-Based Learning Approach was effective in enhancing English achievement among Grade 4 learners. The effect size results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Effect Sizes for English Achievement Comparisons

Comparison	Cohen's d	Interpretation
Experimental pretest vs. posttest	3.20	Very high
Control pretest vs. posttest	1.05	High
Experimental posttest vs. control posttest	1.57	Very high

Note. Cohen's d values indicate the magnitude of the observed differences.

Table 6 shows that the experimental group's pretest-posttest comparison yielded a Cohen's d of 3.20, interpreted as very high. The control group's pretest-posttest comparison yielded a Cohen's d of 1.05, interpreted as high. Meanwhile, the posttest comparison between the experimental and control groups yielded a Cohen's d of 1.57, also interpreted as very high.

These effect size results indicate that the Story-Based Learning Approach had a strong practical impact on learners' English achievement. Statistical significance shows that the observed differences were unlikely to be due to chance, whereas effect size shows the magnitude or educational importance of the difference. In this study, the effect size for the experimental group was very high, suggesting that the intervention produced a substantial improvement in actual learner performance.

The very high effect size may be explained by the combination of multiple instructional supports embedded in the Story-Based Learning Approach. Storytelling increased attention and emotional engagement. Guided reading supported comprehension and fluency. Vocabulary enrichment helped

learners understand word meanings in context. Comprehension exercises strengthened their ability to identify details, sequence, and main ideas. Collaborative discussions encouraged oral language use and peer learning. Reflective tasks allowed learners to process and consolidate what they learned.

The effect size findings are consistent with Pico et al. (2021), whose meta-analysis found positive effects of narrative language interventions on children's comprehension and production outcomes. The findings also support Hall et al. (2021), who showed that narrative proficiency is associated with literacy outcomes, including reading comprehension, oral language, and writing achievement. Together with the results of Gao et al. (2023) and Santoso et al. (2023), the present findings suggest that storytelling and narrative instruction are effective not only as motivational tools but also as academically meaningful strategies for improving language achievement.

Although the control group also produced a high effect size, the experimental group's effect size was much larger. This means that conventional instruction was beneficial, but the Story-Based Learning Approach generated stronger learning gains. The results therefore demonstrate that the approach was highly effective in enhancing English achievement among the Grade 4 learners who participated in the study.

Overall Discussion

Taken as a whole, the findings demonstrate that the Story-Based Learning Approach significantly enhanced the English achievement of Grade 4 learners. The experimental and control groups began with almost similar pretest scores, indicating comparable baseline performance. After instruction, both groups improved; however, the experimental group achieved a higher posttest mean, showed a larger mean gain, demonstrated a statistically significant pretest-posttest improvement, and outperformed the control group in the posttest comparison.

The findings confirm the central assumption of the study that English achievement improves more when learners are taught through meaningful, contextualized, and interactive instruction.

Story-Based Learning provided learners with opportunities to experience English as language in use rather than as a set of isolated words and rules. Through stories, learners encountered vocabulary, grammar, comprehension, and communication within meaningful situations.

The findings are strongly supported by Social Constructivist Theory. In the story-based classroom, learners constructed understanding through interaction with the teacher, classmates, and story texts. They listened, responded, explained, predicted, discussed, and reflected. These activities transformed the classroom into a social learning environment where language served as both the content and the tool for learning.

The findings are also supported by Schema Theory. Stories helped learners connect new English concepts with familiar experiences and prior knowledge. By activating learners' schemas, stories made comprehension more accessible and meaningful. This is especially important for elementary learners, who benefit from concrete contexts and organized structures when learning a second language or developing literacy skills.

Recent studies further strengthen the interpretation of the findings. Gao et al. (2023) showed that storytelling supports vocabulary acquisition among young English language learners. Santoso et al. (2023) found that storytelling improves reading comprehension among elementary students. Pico et al. (2021) concluded that narrative language interventions positively affect children's narrative comprehension and production. Hall et al. (2021) emphasized that narrative proficiency is linked to reading comprehension, oral language, writing achievement, and broader academic skills.

The findings also align with the goals of the K to 12 English Curriculum, which emphasizes meaningful communication, active language use, and the development of learners' ability to process and express ideas (DepEd, 2016). Since Story-Based Learning integrates listening, speaking, reading, comprehension, vocabulary development, collaboration, and reflection, it supports curriculum expectations for communicative and literacy-based English instruction.

In summary, the Story-Based Learning Approach was found to be an effective

instructional intervention for improving the English achievement of Grade 4 learners. The significant improvement of the experimental group, the significant difference in posttest scores, and the very high effect size all indicate that the approach produced meaningful learning gains. Therefore, English teachers may consider integrating storytelling, guided reading, vocabulary enrichment, comprehension activities, collaborative discussions, and reflective learning tasks into classroom instruction. The findings suggest that story-based instruction can be a valuable strategy for improving English achievement, particularly among elementary learners who benefit from concrete, imaginative, socially interactive, and context-rich learning experiences.

CONCLUSION

This study affirms the pedagogical value of the Story-Based Learning Approach as a meaningful and effective intervention for enhancing English achievement among Grade 4 learners. Beyond showing improvement in test scores, the findings demonstrate that learners benefit more when English instruction is situated in purposeful, engaging, and socially interactive narrative contexts. The substantially higher posttest performance, larger mean gain, and very high effect size of the experimental group indicate that Story-

Based Learning produced both statistically significant and educationally relevant outcomes.

The indispensability of this research lies in its localized contribution to elementary English instruction, particularly in a rural public school context where learners require concrete, motivating, and context-rich learning experiences. By integrating storytelling, guided reading, vocabulary enrichment, comprehension tasks, collaborative discussion, and reflection, the approach transforms English learning from isolated language practice into a holistic process of meaning-making. Thus, the study provides teachers, school leaders, and curriculum implementers with evidence that Story-Based Learning can strengthen learners' language development while supporting active participation and comprehension.

Future research may examine the long-term effects of Story-Based Learning on retention, writing performance, oral fluency, and learner motivation. Similar investigations may also be conducted across larger samples, different grade levels, and varied school settings to further establish the approach's adaptability, sustainability, and broader instructional impact.

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