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# Effectiveness of Kwentong Pambata in the Reading Performance of Grade 1 Pupils in Baras Elementary School

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## ABSTRACT

This action research examined the effectiveness of the Kwentong Pambata Strategy in improving the reading performance of 34 Grade 1 pupils at Baras Elementary School during School Year 2024–2025. A one-group pretest–posttest approach was used. Reading status was assessed before and after the intervention using the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) Filipino passage test. Descriptive statistics summarized the number and percentage of pupils at each reading status, while the original analysis reported $F = 5.330$ and $p = .001$. At baseline, 13 pupils (38.2%) were non-readers and 3 (8.8%) were sentence readers. At endline, non-readers decreased to 3 (8.8%), while sentence readers increased to 20 (58.8%). This represented a 76.9% reduction in non-readers. The reported significance value indicated a statistically significant difference in reading status before and after the intervention. Parent feedback further suggested that the stories captured pupils' attention and encouraged reading practice. The findings support the continued use of age-appropriate Filipino children's stories as a structured reading intervention, together with regular progress monitoring and explicit comprehension activities.

**Keywords:** *Kwentong Pambata Strategy, reading performance, Grade 1, reading intervention, Phil-IRI*

## INTRODUCTION

Early reading proficiency is essential to pupils' progress across learning areas. Young learners are more likely to participate when reading materials are age-appropriate, meaningful, and supported by a safe environment in which they can attempt unfamiliar words without fear of embarrassment. Teacher guidance and family support further strengthen reading practice, particularly among pupils who require systematic remediation.

The need for focused reading support is especially urgent in the Philippine context. The source cited in the original action research reported that a large proportion of Filipino children experience difficulty reading and understanding simple text. In response, schools continue to implement intervention and remediation activities intended to develop foundational skills in letter recognition, syllabication, word reading, phrase reading, sentence reading, and comprehension.

The Kwentong Pambata Strategy uses Filipino children's stories to provide engaging and contextualized opportunities for guided and independent reading. Through repeated exposure to meaningful words and sentences, teacher modeling, picture-supported prediction, oral reading, and discussion, pupils may improve accuracy, fluency, vocabulary, and confidence. The intervention emphasized attentive

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listening, guided oral reading, word analysis, practice with unfamiliar and multisyllabic words, picture-based prediction, and opportunities for independent reading.

This study determined the effectiveness of the Kwentong Pambata Strategy in improving the reading performance of Grade 1 pupils. Specifically, it examined the distribution of pupils across reading-status categories before and after the intervention, tested the reported difference in reading status, and determined the extent to which the intervention reduced the number of non-readers.

## METHODS

### Research Design

The study used classroom-based action research with a one-group pretest–posttest design. Quantitative data described changes in reading status from baseline to endline. Qualitative parent feedback provided contextual evidence regarding pupils' engagement with the intervention.

### Research Locale and Participants

The research was conducted at Baras Elementary School during School Year 2024–2025. The participants were 34 Grade 1 pupils identified through teacher assessment and Phil-IRI results as needing systematic and organized assistance to improve their reading skills. All identified pupils participated in the intervention and in the baseline and endline assessments.

### Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling was used because the participants were selected on the basis of their identified need for reading intervention. The study focused on the intact group of Grade 1 pupils requiring additional support rather than drawing a random sample from the entire school population.

### Research Instrument

The Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI), including a Filipino passage test, was used to determine pupils' reading status. The categories reported were non-reader, letter reader, syllabic reader, word reader, phrase reader, sentence reader, and reader with comprehension.

### Data-Gathering Procedure

Permission was secured from the school principal to conduct the study and use the Phil-IRI. A baseline assessment was administered before the intervention. The Kwentong Pambata Strategy was then implemented through guided and supported reading activities using selected Filipino children's stories. After the prescribed intervention period, an endline assessment was administered using the same reading-status framework. Results were tabulated and compared, and parent comments were documented as supplementary qualitative feedback.

### Data Analysis

Frequencies and percentages were computed for each reading-status category at baseline and endline. Percentage-point changes described shifts in the distribution. Effectiveness in reducing non-readers was computed as (baseline non-readers − endline non-readers) ÷ baseline non-readers × 100. The inferential findings were reported using the values in the original manuscript: df = 3, mean square = 5.162, F = 5.330, and p = .001.

### Ethical Considerations

The intervention was conducted for educational improvement. School authorization and appropriate parent or guardian consent was observed. Pupil identities were kept confidential, and assessment results were used to plan instruction and provide reading assistance.

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## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Reading Status Before and After the Intervention

Table 1. *Distribution of Pupils by Reading Status (N = 34)*

| Reading Status | Baseline n | Baseline % | Endline n | Endline % | Change (p.p.) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Non-reader | 13 | 38.2 | 3 | 8.8 | −29.4 |
| Letter reader | 5 | 14.7 | 3 | 8.8 | −5.9 |
| Syllabic reader | 5 | 14.7 | 4 | 11.8 | −2.9 |
| Word reader | 2 | 5.9 | 2 | 5.9 | 0.0 |
| Phrase reader | 6 | 17.6 | 2 | 5.9 | −11.7 |
| Sentence reader | 3 | 8.8 | 20 | 58.8 | +50.0 |
| With comprehension | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| **TOTAL** | **34** | **100.0** | **34** | **100.0** | **0.0** |

The distribution shifted markedly after the intervention. Non-readers decreased from 13 pupils (38.2%) to 3 pupils (8.8%), whereas sentence readers increased from 3 pupils (8.8%) to 20 pupils (58.8%). The letter-, syllabic-, and phrase-reader groups also became smaller, consistent with movement to higher reading categories. The number of word readers remained two, and no pupil was classified as reading with comprehension at either assessment.

The strongest movement was toward sentence reading: the proportion of sentence readers increased by 50.0 percentage points, while the proportion of non-readers decreased by 29.4 percentage points. The pattern suggests that contextualized stories, teacher scaffolding, repeated practice, and picture support may help beginning readers consolidate letter–sound knowledge, word recognition, phrasing, and sentence-level reading.

### Significant Difference in Reading Status

Table 2. *Reported Test of Difference Before and After the Intervention*

| df | Mean Square | F | p-value | Decision on $H_0$ | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | 5.162 | 5.330 | .001 | Reject | Significant |

The original analysis reported $p = .001$, lower than the .05 significance level. On the basis of this reported result, the null hypothesis was rejected, indicating a significant difference in pupils' reading status before and after the intervention.

### Reduction in Non-Readers and Parent Feedback

The number of non-readers declined from 13 to 3, a reduction of 10 pupils. Relative to the baseline count, the reduction was 76.9%: $(13 - 3) \div 13 \times 100 = 76.9\%$. Parent feedback described the stories as enjoyable, useful for home reading, and effective in capturing children's attention. These observations suggest that the strategy was acceptable to families and helped motivate pupils to interact with print.

Despite the gains in decoding and sentence reading, no pupil reached the "with comprehension" category at endline. Future implementation should therefore include explicit vocabulary instruction, prediction, sequencing, retelling, literal and inferential questioning, and short response activities after each story. The findings should also be interpreted cautiously because the study involved one class, had no comparison group, and did not specify the exact duration, frequency, or statistical procedure used. Future studies should retain pupil-level paired scores and use an analysis appropriate for matched ordinal or categorical data.

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## CONCLUSION

The Kwentong Pambata Strategy was associated with improved reading performance among the 34 Grade 1 pupils. After the intervention, non-readers decreased by 76.9%, and sentence readers increased from 3 to 20 pupils. The reported statistical result ($p = .001$) indicated a significant pre-intervention to post-intervention difference. The strategy may therefore be continued as a structured and engaging approach for beginning readers. However, the absence of pupils in the comprehension category indicates that the next intervention cycle should place stronger emphasis on meaning-making and comprehension. Regular individual progress monitoring, home-reading support, complete documentation of the intervention, and a stronger future research design are recommended.

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