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Reading and Literacy Performance of Grade 2 Learners at Dugmanon Elementary School, Division of Surigao del Sur: A Descriptive Quantitative Approach as Basis for a Reading Enhancement Program

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ABSTRACT

This descriptive quantitative study determined the reading and literacy performance of Grade 2 learners at Dugmanon Elementary School, Division of Surigao del Sur, using the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA) as basis for a Reading Enhancement Program. The analysis focused on decoding and word recognition, oral reading fluency, reading comprehension, CRLA reading profiles, and priority instructional needs. The official CRLA results of 31 continuing Grade 2 learners were analyzed using frequency, percentage, and mean, following prescribed CRLA scoring and classification procedures. At the Beginning of the School Year (BOSY), 33 learners were initially assessed; two later transferred, so comparative BOSY-Middle of the School Year (MOSY) analyses used the 31 continuing learners. Decoding and word-recognition performance improved descriptively: the mean Part 1 score increased from 14.32 at BOSY to 21.03 at MOSY, while Grade Ready learners increased from 22.58% to 45.16%. At MOSY, 23 learners with recorded Part 2 results obtained a mean oral reading rate of 35.74 words per minute, mean reading accuracy of 73.43%, and mean comprehension score of 4.04 out of six. Low Emerging readers decreased from 51.61% at BOSY to 22.58% at MOSY; at MOSY, 29.03% were Developing, 35.48% Transitioning, and 12.90% Reading at Grade Level. The findings show encouraging progression but continuing heterogeneity in foundational word reading, fluency, accuracy, and comprehension. A differentiated CRLA-based Reading Enhancement Program was therefore developed around flexible grouping, targeted instruction, progress monitoring, and enrichment. The study concludes that CRLA evidence can guide responsive early-grade literacy instruction, while the descriptive design does not support causal attribution of observed changes.

Keywords: *Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA), decoding and word recognition, Grade 2 learners, oral reading fluency, reading comprehension, reading enhancement program*

INTRODUCTION

Reading proficiency in the primary grades is foundational to learners' ability to understand instruction, acquire new knowledge, and participate independently across learning areas. Grade 2 is a critical period because learners are expected to consolidate beginning decoding skills and move toward increasingly accurate, fluent, and meaningful reading. When foundational difficulties remain unresolved, the demands of later text-based learning can magnify them. International evidence on learning poverty similarly underscores the urgency of ensuring that

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children can read and understand age-appropriate text during the early years of schooling (World Bank et al., 2022).

Early reading is multidimensional rather than a single skill. Successful reading requires increasingly coordinated word recognition and language comprehension, with decoding, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension contributing to skilled performance (Gough & Tunmer, 1986; Scarborough, 2001). In the Philippine early-grade context, the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA) provides a practical mechanism for examining these competencies and classifying learners according to reading profiles that can guide instructional response. Department of Education guidelines position literacy assessment as a basis for identifying learners who require remediation, reinforcement, or enrichment (Department of Education, 2025a, 2025b).

At Dugmanon Elementary School, classroom-level evidence is necessary because national, regional, and division-level literacy indicators cannot reveal the particular strengths and difficulties of an individual Grade 2 class. Learners may differ markedly in foundational decoding, automatic word recognition, connected-text fluency, reading accuracy, and comprehension even when they share the same grade placement. Assessment-informed instruction is therefore more responsive than a uniform program based on generalized assumptions about reading difficulty (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006; Foorman et al., 2016).

This study addressed that local evidence gap by describing the reading and literacy performance of Grade 2 learners at Dugmanon Elementary School using official CRLA results. It examined decoding and word recognition, oral reading fluency, reading comprehension, and CRLA reading-profile distribution; identified demonstrated strengths and priority reading needs; and used these findings to formulate a differentiated Reading Enhancement Program. The study was descriptive and did not test the causal effect of an intervention. Its contribution lies in translating assessment evidence into school-based instructional planning tailored to the actual reading profiles of the learners.

Literature Review

Foundational Reading and Literacy Development

Foundational literacy develops through the coordinated growth of several competencies. The Simple View of Reading explains comprehension as the product of decoding and language comprehension; weakness in either component can constrain successful reading (Gough & Tunmer, 1986). Scarborough's Reading Rope similarly describes skilled reading as the increasingly fluent integration of word-recognition processes and language-comprehension processes (Scarborough, 2001). These perspectives support a component-based description of Grade 2 reading rather than reliance on a single overall score.

Evidence-based early reading instruction emphasizes explicit and systematic development of word-reading and meaning-making skills. Guidance synthesized by the National Reading Panel and later evidence-based recommendations for Kindergarten through Grade 3 emphasize phonemic awareness, phonics, word reading, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension as complementary foundations of literacy (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000; Foorman et al., 2016). Such instruction is especially important when learners display uneven performance across components.

Assessment must therefore identify where the reading process is strong and where it breaks down. Early-grade assessment frameworks commonly examine decoding, word recognition, connected-text fluency, and comprehension so that instruction can be aligned with demonstrated needs (Dubeck & Gove, 2015). Regional evidence also shows that primary learners may progress through school with widely varying literacy levels, reinforcing the need for early diagnosis and targeted support (UNICEF & Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization, 2020; UNICEF & Department of Education, 2021).

Decoding and Word Recognition

Decoding enables learners to translate print into spoken language, while word recognition reflects increasingly accurate and efficient identification of familiar words. Ehri (2005, 2014) explains that repeated successful decoding supports orthographic mapping, through which connections among spelling, pronunciation,

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and meaning become stored in memory. As these representations strengthen, word recognition becomes less effortful and more automatic.

The progression from effortful decoding to efficient recognition is central to early literacy because word-level processing competes for limited cognitive attention. When learners expend substantial effort identifying individual words, fewer resources remain for maintaining sentence meaning and understanding connected text (LaBerge & Samuels, 1974). Research on reading acquisition likewise stresses the importance of systematic links among phonology, orthography, and meaning during the development of proficient word reading (Castles et al., 2018).

For Grade 2 learners, assessment of decoding and word recognition is therefore instructional rather than merely classificatory. CRLA Part 1 identifies learners who require different levels of refresher support and those considered Grade Ready. These distinctions can guide explicit review of letter-sound relationships, blending and decoding practice, repeated exposure to high-utility words, and movement toward more automatic word reading (Department of Education, 2025a, 2025b).

Oral Reading Fluency

Oral reading fluency links accurate word recognition with comprehension. Fluent reading involves accuracy, appropriate rate or automaticity, and meaningful phrasing rather than speed alone (Hudson et al., 2005). Automaticity Theory explains that increasingly efficient word recognition frees cognitive resources for constructing meaning from connected text (LaBerge & Samuels, 1974).

Fluency assessment can therefore provide diagnostic information about the efficiency of learners' reading processes. Frequent hesitations, substitutions, omissions, and slow decoding may signal continuing word-recognition difficulty, while apparently rapid reading with low accuracy may also indicate weak fluency. Prosody and phrasing add further evidence that a learner is processing meaningful language units rather than merely pronouncing isolated words (Kuhn et al., 2010).

Instructional approaches such as teacher modeling, assisted reading, phrase reading, and supported repeated oral reading can help learners strengthen connected-text accuracy and automaticity when used with appropriately leveled materials (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000; Rasinski, 2004). Within a CRLA-informed program, fluency data are most useful when interpreted alongside reading accuracy and comprehension instead of being treated as a speed target.

Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the construction of meaning from written text and depends on more than correct pronunciation. The Simple View of Reading emphasizes the interaction of decoding and language comprehension (Gough & Tunmer, 1986), while contemporary accounts emphasize a broader network of linguistic, cognitive, and knowledge-based processes that contribute to understanding (Duke & Cartwright, 2021).

Comprehension develops when learners connect decoded words with vocabulary, background knowledge, sentence structures, and reasoning. Grade 2 instruction can therefore include vocabulary in context, sequencing, retelling, identifying important information, answering literal questions, and making developmentally appropriate inferences. Snow (2002) emphasizes that comprehension emerges from interaction among the reader, text, activity, and context, supporting instruction that combines word-level development with meaning-focused reading.

Comprehension should be developed alongside fluency rather than postponed until every learner reads at an identical rate. A learner may decode accurately yet misunderstand important vocabulary or relationships in a passage, while another learner may show limited comprehension because slow word recognition consumes cognitive attention. CRLA Part 2 provides school-level evidence that can help distinguish these patterns and guide appropriately differentiated support.

Assessment-Informed and Differentiated Reading Intervention

Assessment-based intervention begins with identifying the specific component or stage at which learners require support. Response-to-intervention principles emphasize using performance data to intensify, modify, or

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reduce support according to learner response rather than providing the same instruction to all learners (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006). This is especially relevant in an early-grade class where some learners may need foundational decoding remediation while others need fluency practice or comprehension enrichment.

The CRLA operationalizes this principle by combining component-level performance with reading profiles. Department of Education literacy-recovery guidelines use early-grade assessment to identify learners requiring targeted support and to organize appropriate remediation and monitoring (Department of Education, 2025a, 2025b). In Caraga, regional implementation of CRLA further reflects the role of systematic assessment in early-grade literacy planning (Department of Education Regional Office XIII-Caraga, 2024).

For the present study, the Reading Enhancement Program was therefore conceptualized as an assessment-identification-intervention-monitoring-reassessment cycle. Flexible grouping, targeted materials, repeated progress checks, and enrichment were preferred over permanent ability grouping. This approach preserves the developmental nature of reading and allows instructional support to change as learners move across CRLA performance levels.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The study was anchored principally in the Simple View of Reading, Ehri's word-reading development and orthographic-mapping perspective, Automaticity Theory, and Scarborough's Reading Rope. Together, these perspectives explain why decoding and word recognition, oral reading fluency, and reading comprehension should be examined as interconnected aspects of literacy rather than as isolated outcomes (Gough & Tunmer, 1986; Ehri, 2014; LaBerge & Samuels, 1974; Scarborough, 2001).

The conceptual model followed an Input-Process-Output structure. CRLA evidence on decoding and word recognition, oral reading fluency, comprehension, and reading profiles constituted the input; authorized retrieval or administration, data organization, descriptive analysis, interpretation, and identification of strengths and needs formed the process; and a differentiated Reading Enhancement Program constituted the output. Figure 1 reconstructs the source manuscript's schematic diagram while retaining its original variables and sequence.

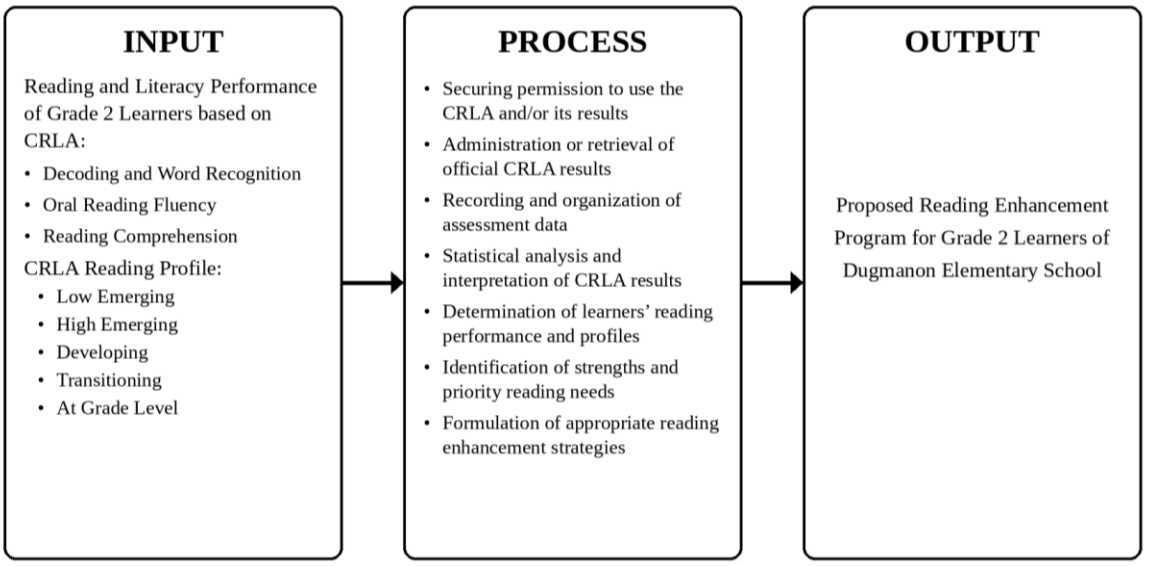

Figure 1. *Schematic Diagram of the Study*

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METHODS

Research Design

The study used a descriptive quantitative research design to determine and describe the existing reading and literacy performance of Grade 2 learners without manipulating variables or introducing an experimental treatment. This design was appropriate because the study analyzed numerical CRLA performance data and used descriptive statistics to characterize learner performance and reading profiles (Creswell & Creswell, 2022; Siedlecki, 2020). The available analysis covered Beginning of the School Year (BOSY) and Middle of the School Year (MOSY) results; no causal inference was made from changes across the two assessment periods.

Research Locale

The study was conducted at Dugmanon Elementary School, a public elementary school under the Schools Division of Surigao del Sur in the Caraga Region, Philippines. The school was the appropriate locale because the study sought school-specific evidence on the reading and literacy performance of its Grade 2 learners and used that evidence as the basis for a school-level Reading Enhancement Program.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The comparative analysis involved 31 continuing Grade 2 learners, composed of 16 males and 15 females. At BOSY, 33 learners were initially assessed, but two subsequently transferred to other schools; their records were excluded to maintain a consistent analytic group across BOSY and MOSY. Total enumeration was used for the continuing Grade 2 population covered by the study rather than selecting a subsample. The findings therefore describe this specific group and were not intended for automatic generalization to other schools.

Research Instrument

The primary instrument was the official Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA) used by the Department of Education for early-grade literacy assessment. For Grade 2, Part 1 assessed prerequisite Grade 1-level decoding and word-recognition competencies, while Part 2 assessed Grade 2-level connected-text reading fluency and comprehension. Official CRLA materials, administration procedures, scoring guidelines, and classification criteria were retained; the standardized instrument was not modified or subjected to a separate researcher-developed validation procedure (Department of Education, 2025a, 2025b).

Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher secured the required school authorization for the use of CRLA data and coordinated with the school head and concerned personnel. Official CRLA records were used for the analysis, with only information necessary to answer the research questions extracted. BOSY and MOSY scores were checked, organized, coded, and verified prior to analysis. Where learner identifiers were present in administrative records, the research presentation used aggregated data and did not report personally identifying information.

Data Analysis

Frequency, percentage, and mean were used to describe learner performance. CRLA Part 1 distributions and reading-profile classifications were summarized through frequencies and percentages, while mean scores described class performance. For Part 2, the analysis reported the mean words per minute, mean reading accuracy, and mean comprehension score among learners with recorded connected-text results. Strengths and priority needs were identified descriptively from the magnitude and distribution of the observed CRLA results. No inferential test was used because the design was descriptive rather than experimental.

Ethical Consideration

The study observed safeguards applicable to research involving children, including school authorization, confidentiality of learner information, and the source manuscript's requirement for parental or guardian consent

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and learner assent when applicable. Participation and data use were framed as voluntary and research records were handled in a manner intended to protect privacy. These procedures were consistent with national ethical guidance concerning vulnerable participants, informed consent, privacy, and confidentiality (Philippine Health Research Ethics Board, 2022).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Decoding and Word Recognition

The CRLA Part 1 results showed a descriptive shift toward stronger foundational word-reading performance from BOSY to MOSY. At BOSY, 16 learners (51.61%) were Full Refresher, six (19.35%) Moderate Refresher, two (6.45%) Light Refresher, and seven (22.58%) Grade Ready. By MOSY, Full Refresher decreased to eight learners (25.81%), Moderate Refresher to two (6.45%), Light Refresher increased to seven (22.58%), and Grade Ready increased to 14 (45.16%). The mean Part 1 score increased from 14.32 to 21.03, a descriptive increase of 6.71 points.

Table 1. *CRLA Part 1 Decoding and Word-Recognition Performance at BOSY and MOSY*

Part 1 CRLA Level	BOSY f	BOSY %	MOSY f	MOSY %
Full Refresher	16	51.61	8	25.81
Moderate Refresher	6	19.35	2	6.45
Light Refresher	2	6.45	7	22.58
Grade Ready	7	22.58	14	45.16
Total	31	100.00	31	100.00
Mean Part 1 Score	14.32		21.03	

The movement toward Light Refresher and Grade Ready status indicates stronger foundational performance among a substantial portion of the class. The finding is consistent with reading-development theory: more secure orthographic representations and increasingly automatic word recognition reduce the effort required for word identification (Ehri, 2005, 2014). However, eight learners still required Full Refresher support at MOSY, showing that class-level improvement did not eliminate substantial foundational need.

Oral Reading Fluency and Reading Comprehension

At MOSY, 23 of the 31 continuing learners had recorded CRLA Part 2 connected-text performance. Their mean oral reading rate was 35.74 words per minute and mean reading accuracy was 73.43%. The same 23 learners obtained a mean comprehension score of 4.04 correct responses out of six, equivalent to 67.39%. The remaining eight learners were Full Refresher in Part 1 and did not have comparable Part 2 numerical results recorded in the source data.

Table 2. *MOSY Connected-Text Reading Performance among Learners with Recorded Part 2 Results*

Indicator	Result
Learners with recorded Part 2 results	23
Mean oral reading rate	35.74 WPM
Mean reading accuracy	73.43%
Mean comprehension score	4.04 / 6
Mean proportion of correct comprehension responses	67.39%

These connected-text results show that reaching Part 2 did not mean that fluency and comprehension were uniformly secure. A mean accuracy of 73.43% indicates continuing variation in accurate word recognition during passage reading, while the average comprehension performance suggests an emerging capacity to construct meaning among learners who reached the connected-text component. Fluency should therefore be interpreted as a combination of accuracy, efficiency, and meaningful reading rather than speed alone (Hudson et al., 2005; Kuhn

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et al., 2010). Likewise, comprehension depends on coordinated word recognition and language comprehension rather than fluent-sounding oral reading by itself (Gough & Tunmer, 1986; Duke & Cartwright, 2021).

CRLA Reading Profiles

The overall CRLA profile distribution also shifted descriptively from BOSY to MOSY. At BOSY, 16 learners (51.61%) were Low Emerging, two (6.45%) High Emerging, two (6.45%) Developing, and 11 (35.48%) Transitioning; none was Reading at Grade Level. At MOSY, Low Emerging decreased to seven learners (22.58%), High Emerging to zero, Developing increased to nine (29.03%), Transitioning remained at 11 (35.48%), and four learners (12.90%) were Reading at Grade Level.

Table 3. *Distribution of Learners According to CRLA Reading Profile*

CRLA Reading Profile	BOSY f	BOSY %	MOSY f	MOSY %
Low Emerging	16	51.61	7	22.58
High Emerging	2	6.45	0	0.00
Developing	2	6.45	9	29.03
Transitioning	11	35.48	11	35.48
Reading at Grade Level	0	0.00	4	12.90
Total	31	100.00	31	100.00

The combined proportion of Low and High Emerging learners decreased from 58.06% at BOSY to 22.58% at MOSY, whereas the combined proportion in Developing, Transitioning, and Reading at Grade Level increased from 41.94% to 77.42%. This movement is educationally encouraging because it suggests that more learners were demonstrating higher CRLA classifications by MOSY. However, because the study was descriptive and did not introduce or test a controlled intervention, the observed change should not be interpreted as causal evidence for any particular instructional strategy.

Reading Strengths and Priority Needs

The clearest relative strength was the improvement in decoding and word recognition, reflected in the increase in Grade Ready learners and the higher mean Part 1 score. The appearance of four learners Reading at Grade Level and the concentration of 24 learners (77.42%) in the Developing, Transitioning, and Reading at Grade Level categories at MOSY further indicated stronger performance among a substantial portion of the class. Reading comprehension was also an emerging strength among learners who reached Part 2, with a mean of 4.04 correct answers out of six.

Table 4. *Reading Strengths and Priority Needs Identified from MOSY CRLA Evidence*

CRLA Area	MOSY Evidence	Interpretation	Priority
Decoding and Word Recognition	14 (45.16%) Grade Ready; mean Part 1 = 21.03	Improved, but eight remained Full Refresher	High for struggling learners
Oral Reading Fluency	35.74 mean WPM among 23 learners	Considerable variation in connected-text automaticity	High
Reading Accuracy	73.43% mean among 23 learners	Accuracy remained uneven	High
Reading Comprehension	4.04/6 mean among 23 learners	Emerging strength, not consistently secure	Moderate to High
Overall CRLA Profile	4 At Grade Level; 11 Transitioning; 9 Developing; 7 Low Emerging	Most moved beyond emerging levels, but differentiation remained necessary	Differentiated support required

Priority needs remained differentiated. Learners still classified as Low Emerging or Full Refresher required intensive foundational decoding and automatic word-recognition support. Developing learners required

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consolidation of accuracy, automaticity, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension; Transitioning learners needed sustained connected-text fluency and comprehension practice; and learners Reading at Grade Level required continued enrichment. This differentiated interpretation is consistent with assessment-informed instruction and response-to-intervention principles in which the intensity and type of support change according to learner performance (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006; Foorman et al., 2016).

Proposed CRLA-Based Reading Enhancement Program

The findings were translated into a differentiated Reading Enhancement Program organized around learner profiles rather than a single whole-class remediation package. The program uses flexible grouping and an assessment-identification-intervention-monitoring-reassessment sequence so that learners can move between instructional groups as their reading performance changes. Instructional emphasis is therefore matched to the demonstrated needs of Low Emerging, Developing, Transitioning, and Reading at Grade Level learners.

Table 5. *Core Structure of the Proposed CRLA-Based Reading Enhancement Program*

Target Group	Primary Objective	Suggested Strategies	Monitoring
Low Emerging / Full Refresher	Strengthen decoding and automatic word recognition	Explicit letter-sound review, blending, syllable work, guided decoding, high-utility words, controlled-text reading	Weekly word-reading checks and CRLA-aligned records
Developing	Increase accuracy, automaticity, fluency, and basic comprehension	Guided/repeated oral reading, phrase reading, vocabulary in context, sequencing, literal questions	WPM, accuracy, and comprehension checks
Transitioning	Strengthen fluent connected-text reading and comprehension	Supportive rereading, partner reading, retelling, prediction, literal and inferential questions	Periodic fluency and comprehension checks
Reading at Grade Level	Maintain proficiency and extend comprehension	Independent reading, enrichment texts, vocabulary extension, inference, summarizing, response-to-reading	Reading logs and comprehension tasks
Whole Class	Sustain growth while responding to individual differences	Flexible grouping, teacher modeling, guided reading, home-reading partnership, periodic regrouping	BOSY/MOSY/EOSY and classroom progress evidence

The proposed program is consistent with evidence that early literacy support should combine explicit foundational instruction, supported connected-text reading, and comprehension development while using progress data to adjust instruction (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000; Rasinski, 2004; Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006). The program remains a proposed output of the descriptive study; its effectiveness would require separate implementation and evaluation.

CONCLUSION

The Grade 2 learners demonstrated heterogeneous reading and literacy performance across foundational word reading, connected-text fluency, comprehension, and overall CRLA profiles. Descriptive comparison of BOSY and MOSY results showed stronger decoding and word-recognition performance, a lower proportion of Low Emerging readers, and the emergence of learners Reading at Grade Level. At the same time, Full Refresher

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and Low Emerging learners remained, and connected-text fluency, accuracy, and comprehension continued to vary substantially among learners.

These findings show that grade placement alone does not adequately represent actual reading competence and that a uniform reading intervention would not match the class's range of needs. CRLA data are most valuable when they are used not only for classification but also for instructional decision-making. The study therefore supports differentiated, flexible, and continuously monitored reading instruction grounded in demonstrated learner performance.

The proposed Reading Enhancement Program operationalizes this conclusion by aligning foundational remediation, fluency practice, comprehension development, and enrichment with CRLA profiles. Because the research used a descriptive design and analyzed BOSY and MOSY results, the observed changes cannot be causally attributed to a specific intervention and should not be represented as end-of-year outcomes.

Recommendation

Dugmanon Elementary School and the Schools Division of Surigao del Sur should continue systematic use of CRLA evidence in early-grade literacy planning. School leaders and the reading coordinator may periodically review learner profiles, ensure the availability of suitable reading materials, provide time for targeted instruction, and support teachers in regrouping learners according to documented progress.

Grade 2 teachers should employ flexible differentiated groups. Low Emerging and Full Refresher learners may receive explicit and frequent decoding and automatic-word-recognition instruction; Developing learners may receive guided and repeated oral reading with vocabulary and comprehension activities; Transitioning learners may receive sustained connected-text fluency, retelling, sequencing, prediction, and inferential questioning; and learners Reading at Grade Level should continue receiving increasingly challenging texts and enrichment rather than being removed from purposeful literacy instruction.

Parents and guardians may be engaged through manageable home-reading routines such as listening to the child read, discussing short texts, reviewing high-utility words, and encouraging regular reading. The proposed Reading Enhancement Program should be implemented with systematic progress monitoring and flexible adjustment. Future research may evaluate its effectiveness through an experimental or quasi-experimental design and may examine additional factors such as attendance, access to reading materials, language exposure, home literacy practices, and instructional conditions.

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