

# The Development and Validation of Picture Clues as Media for Developing Reading Comprehension Skills Among Grade 5 Learners

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47175/rielsj.v6i1.1142>

| Ron Gay Marie P. Cabalan<sup>1,\*</sup> | Ma. Gloria E. Liquido<sup>2</sup> |

<sup>1</sup>Teacher III -DepEd Agusan del Sur, Philippines

<sup>2</sup>Caraga State University, Butuan City, Philippines

\* [rongaymarie.cabalan@deped.gov.ph](mailto:rongaymarie.cabalan@deped.gov.ph)



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

## ABSTRACT

Observations of poor reading comprehension highlight the critical nature of learners at a stage where they are transitioning from “learning to read to reading to learn”. Providing effective strategies, such as utilizing picture clues, is essential to support learners in understanding and analyzing texts independently. While picture clues are commonly used in early childhood education, this study was undertaken to determine the efficacy of picture clues as media for developing reading skills among Grade 5 learners. The descriptive-evaluative research design was employed in this study. This study utilized an intact group which composed of the class to which the picture clues were utilized. The data gathered in this study were treated using arithmetic Mean and percentage and the level of ability of comprehension was determined using the Phil-IRI tool. The Paired Samples t-test was used to determine if there was a significant difference between the pre-assessment and post-assessment scores of the learners. Results revealed that the utilization of picture clues facilitated a significant advancement in the learners' reading comprehension skills. The use of picture clues was found effective in improving learners' engagement with the text as well as their ability to identify the main idea, make predictions, and draw conclusions. Specifically, the transition from literal skills to critical skills level demonstrated the effectiveness of incorporating visual aids like picture clues in the learning process of the learners. This suggests that utilizing such instructional media can effectively support and foster the development of higher-order thinking abilities, thereby enhancing their overall reading comprehension proficiency.

## KEYWORDS

Reading comprehension; picture clues; visual aids; Grade 5 learners

## INTRODUCTION

In today's educational landscape, inadequate reading comprehension poses a significant challenge in grasping context, affecting both learners and teachers in basic education. The ability to comprehend what is read lays the groundwork for future learning across all subject areas. Without this foundational skill, students may struggle to succeed academically, particularly in English, Math, Science, and Social Studies (Requiso-Jimenez & Bascos-Ocampo, 2022).

Recognizing the importance of reading skills, the Department of Education (DepEd) has implemented various initiatives to enhance literacy among learners. The importance of early

reading and comprehension abilities in the formative years of school is highlighted by literacy development programs, particularly those incorporated into the K–12 curriculum.

Strong reading skills are fundamental to success in education and life, encompassing the ability to learn, communicating effectively, and thriving. Reading comprehension is more than just word recognition; it also entails interpreting and extrapolating meaning from literature. Using visual hints as a medium is a valuable tactic to improve reading abilities, particularly for younger learners.

The development and validation of picture clues to enhance reading comprehension skills among Grade 5 learners represent a pivotal advancement in educational pedagogy. This attempt for an innovative approach capitalizes on visual stimuli to augment traditional text-based learning, promising to revolutionize how teachers nurture literacy proficiency in young learners.

Observations of poor reading comprehension at Pinamoyanan Elementary School in La Paz, Agusan del Sur, highlight the critical nature of Grade 5 learners. On this stage, learners are transitioning from learning to read to reading to learn as they shift from decoding words to extracting meaning. Providing effective strategies, such as utilizing picture clues, is essential to support students in understanding and analyzing texts independently. While picture clues are commonly used in early childhood education, this study explored their efficacy with older students and ascertained their considerable usefulness in reading instruction.

### ***Theoretical Framework of the Study***

This study on Cognitive Load Theory (CLT) was developed by John Sweller in the late 1980s. As a theory and a framework, it focuses on the cognitive demands placed on a learner's working memory during the learning process. It offers insights into how instructional materials and methods can be optimized to enhance learning by managing cognitive load effectively.

According to cognitive load theory, there are three kinds of cognitive burden: intrinsic, extraneous, and germane. (1) Intrinsic cognitive load refers to the inherent complexity of the material being processed, while (2) extraneous cognitive load relates to factors external to the material itself, such as prior knowledge or distractions. (3) Germane cognitive load represents the resources for constructing meaningful connections between new information and existing knowledge.

Cognitive load theory applies an understanding of how individuals learn, reason, and solve issues to instructional design. In turn, instructional design is the primary responsibility of classroom instructors, curriculum designers, and textbook and educational materials producers, including digital content.

According to Castro-Alonso et al. (2021), cognitive load theory offers various methods to enhance instructional materials and multimedia. These methods are typically advised for educators aiming to facilitate more effective learning among their students. However, learners who wish to take control of their own learning process can also implement these strategies. As suggested by the expertise reversal effect and generative learning theory, less experienced students are likely to gain more from strategies guided by instructors, while more knowledgeable students might find greater benefit from strategies they initiate themselves. In this research, the theoretical framework was instrumental in developing instructional materials. The researcher took into account different forms of cognitive load to ensure that students can successfully process and retain information. In summary, the theory of cognitive load helped the researcher to provide significant insights into how teaching resources such as picture clues improved learners' reading comprehension abilities. The

strategic use of visual aids in the classroom allows the researcher to maximize learners learning and help students overcome obstacles relating to the intrinsic, extrinsic, and germane cognitive demands of reading complicated texts.

### ***Objective of the Study***

This study endeavored to develop and validate picture clues as media for developing reading comprehension skills among Grade 5 learners.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

### ***Research Design***

The descriptive-evaluative research design combines two independent but complementary methods to study the technique. Descriptive research seeks to objectively characterize and quantify the qualities, behaviors, or phenomena of interest within a specific population or sample. This part of the study design focuses on giving a clear and accurate portrayal of the subject matter under examination, which is generally accomplished through the use of surveys, observations, or archival data analysis. Evaluative research, on the other hand, focuses on determining the effectiveness, value, or impact of specific treatments, programs, policies, or practices. It aims to establish how well these interventions satisfy their intended goals, achieve desirable outcomes, or make meaningful changes. By combining descriptive and evaluative components, this research design provides a thorough picture of the subject under consideration and assesses its effectiveness or relevance.

The study employed a descriptive-evaluative research design as it ascertained the utilization of picture clues as media for developing reading skills among Grade 5 learners. It aimed to describe how picture clues are currently used in Grade 5 classrooms to teach reading skills. It is valuable because it provides a detailed and accurate snapshot of the current scenario, shedding light on the prevalence and effectiveness of using picture clues as a teaching tool. Closely, it looked into the level of reading skills before and after the use of picture clues using descriptive statistics.

### ***Research Locale***

This study was conducted in Pinamoyanan Elementary School in Sitio Pinamuyan, Brgy Bataan, Lapaz, Agusan del Sur, for the School Year 2023-2024. La Paz is a municipality in the landlocked province of Agusan del Sur, Caraga Region, Philippines. Bataan is a barangay in the municipality of La Paz. Its population, as determined by the 2020 Census, was 2,051, which represents 6.62% of the total population of La Paz.

The Pinamoyanan Elementary School is accessible by single motorcycle or by a modified motorcycle, locally known as ‘habal-habal’.

### ***Population and Participants of the Study***

The Pinamoyanan Elementary School in Lapaz, Agusan del Sur, has a total population of 182, comprising 7 teachers, 1 school head, and 175 learners from Grades 1-6. The 22 learners in Grade 5 were taken as the participants of the study.

Three (3) validators validated the developed picture clues along content, format, presentation and organization, and accuracy and updatedness of information. The validators were recognized as Outstanding Reading Coordinator, Outstanding School Publication Adviser; Outstanding Master Teacher II, awarded as Best Reading Implementer, received 3 Presidential Awards for teaching, 14 Research Publication Awards, and published the book

Teaching English in Elementary Grades. Two completed their Master of Arts in Education, and one the Doctorate Degree.

### ***Sampling Design***

This study utilized an intact group composed of the class to which the picture clues were utilized. These learners were identified as frustration readers based on their performance in reading comprehension.

### ***Research Instrument***

This study utilized a reading material test validation tool composed of picture clues taken from the story, the Phil-Iri Full Package. The same reading material was utilized for the pre-assessment and post-assessment. The focus of the reading materials was on reading comprehension.

### ***Validation and Reliability of the Research Instrument***

The researcher prepared stories with picture clues and comprehension questions for pre-assessment and post-assessment. Ten (10) stories with picture clues for implementation were validated by the three (3) experts. The validation of the picture clues was done using a draft of the developed reading material presented to the experts. After the validation, the suggestions and the recommendations were incorporated into the material. The content was scrutinized based on the grade level for which the picture clues were intended.

### ***Data Gathering Procedure***

The researcher administered the instrument to her pupils of the 3rd Quarter of this School Year 2023-2024. A reading assessment tool was used to record their reading level at the time of the administration.

### ***Statistical Treatment***

The arithmetic Mean and percentage were used to describe the level of reading comprehension skills before and after the utilization of picture clues.

The Paired t-Test was used to determine if there was significant difference between the pre-assessment and post-assessment scores of the learners.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### ***Level of Reading Comprehension Skills Before the Utilization of Picture Clues***

The level of reading comprehension skills includes the measures for literal skills, inferential skills, and critical skills with corresponding score ranges and descriptive ratings. Say, the score range of 80-100 across all skills has the descriptive rating of independent, interpreted that, at this level, the learners can comfortably read and comprehend a text on their own without needing assistance. Texts at this level pose minimal challenges to the reader, allowing for smooth and fluent reading with high comprehension.

The instructional level, which has a score ranging from 59-79, is interpreted as the level at which a reader can read and comprehend a text with some degree of challenge but still with comprehension support from a teacher or other instructional resources. Texts at this level offer opportunities for growth and learning as they provide a moderate challenge to the reader's skills.

The lowest level is the frustration level, with a score ranging from 58 below, interpreted as the level at which a reader struggles significantly to comprehend a text even with assistance. Texts at this level are too complex for the reader's current skill level, resulting in frustration and limited comprehension despite efforts to understand the content.

The learners' level of reading comprehension skills reveals their ability to understand and recall explicit information directly stated in the text. This includes comprehending facts, details, events, and other information presented by the author. Readers with strong literal comprehension skills can accurately identify and retrieve specific information from the text without needing to infer or make interpretations beyond what is explicitly stated.

**Table 1.** The Level of Reading Comprehension Skills of the Learners Before the Utilization of the Picture Clues

Score Ranges	Literal Skills		Inferential Skills		Critical Skills		Descriptive Rating
	n	%	n	%	n	%	
80-100	22	100.0	0	0	0	0	Independent
59-79	0	0	0	0	0	0	Instructional
58 and below	0	0	0	0	0	0	Frustration
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	

Table 1 reveals the level of reading comprehension skills of the Grade 5 learners before the utilization of the picture clues as media for developing reading skills. It can be gleaned from this result that all learners are in the independent level only in terms of literal skills; no one was able to show any of the inferential and critical skills. This finding indicates the learners' weak foundation in their reading comprehension skills. This means that the learners may not have a strong understanding of reading, which could make it difficult for them to understand the material they are studying. This factor can be the reason why the learners have low scores in comprehending the text.

The findings of Cabrera et al. (2020) stated that students' reading competence and reading engagement are affected by factors such as weak language foundation, disinterest in reading, motivation, and socioeconomic status. Moreover, Liu, et al. (2022), indicated that this could also be due to some innate factors like intelligence and gender differences, as well as external factors such as learning strategies, motivation, and teacher support.

### **Experts' Evaluation of Picture Clues**

Table 2 in the following page shows the experts' validation of the picture clues in terms of content. As gathered from the Table, all 6 indicators had been rated as very satisfactory with 4.00 as the highest weighted mean. Based on the experts' responses to the content criterion, the pictorial cues employed in the study were effective. The material was appropriate for the learners' developmental level, as they easily interacted with it, showing that it was aligned with their reading comprehension abilities. Likewise, the picture cues helped students achieve specific learning objectives for their grade level, which improved their comprehension skills. Furthermore, it encouraged the development of desirable attitudes and behaviors, such as curiosity and respect, creating a pleasant learning environment.

Based on the observation, pictorial hints successfully aroused learners' curiosity, promoting active involvement and subject investigation. Furthermore, suitable cautionary comments were provided as needed, assuring students' safety and well-being during learning activities.

**Table 2.** Experts' Evaluation of the Picture Clues in terms of Content

Indicators	Wed Mean	SD	Verbal Description	Interpretation
1. The content is suitable to the student's level of development.	4.00	.000	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
2. The material contributes to the achievement of specific objectives of the subject area and grade/year level for which it is intended.	4.00	.000	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
3. The material provides for the development of higher cognitive skills such as critical thinking, creativity, learning by doing, inquiry, problem-solving, etc.	3.08	.270	Satisfactory	Effective
4. The material is free of ideological, cultural, religious, racial, and gender biases and prejudices.	4.00	.000	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
5. The material enhances the development of desirable values and traits such as: pride in being a Filipino, Unity, Helpfulness.....	4.00	.000	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
6. The material has the potential to arouse the interest of the target reader.	4.00	.000	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
7. Adequate warning/cautionary notes are provided in topics and activities where safety and health are of concern.	4.00	.000	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.87</b>	<b>.038</b>	<b>Very Satisfactory</b>	<b>Very Effective</b>

Legend: 1.00-1.49-Satisfactory/Not Effective; 1.50-2.49-Poor/Somewhat Effective;  
 2.50-3.49-Satisfactory/Effective; 3.50-4.00-Very Satisfactory/Very Effective

On the other hand, the lowest mean rating of 3.08 or satisfactory, was given to indicator 3, which states that the material provides development of higher thinking which is effective. The experts suggested adding critical questions; thus, the suggestions were implemented. The reading material helped learners acquire higher cognitive skills like critical thinking, as seen by their ability to examine and understand visual clues. Notably, the content was free of biases and preconceptions, assuring inclusivity and impartiality in its presentation.

The overall weighted mean of 3.87 or very satisfactory and very effective, meant that the picture clues were effective in improving their reading comprehension skills and created a good and engaging learning environment. This discovery is supported by Sun and Firestone (2021), who state that visual complexity stimulates a form of “perceptual curiosity” regarding objects, which fosters greater attentional engagement. In a similar vein, Gogiashvili and Demetrashvili (2023) identified effective techniques for enhancing the learning experience for visual learners, including the incorporation of multimedia resources and opportunities for social interaction. Additionally, Pateşan et al. (2018) emphasized that teachers gain considerable benefits from employing visual aids when instructing in a foreign language. These aids can be utilized to diversify classroom activities and effectively illustrate complex content. The use of visuals in educational settings offers numerous benefits, ranging from aiding students in maintaining attention and focus to motivating them to actively engage in specific lecture topics and supporting memory retention. Both experts and educators agree that imagery plays a vital role in enhancing students' learning, especially for those from generations accustomed to using multimedia and internet technology.

The three (3) experts rated the picture clues as a medium for developing reading comprehension as very satisfactory. This rating is interpreted as very effective. This implies that the content and the picture clues conformed to the quality standards set by the Department of Education (DepEd), which, in one way or another, adhered to one of the

empirical studies that indeed ‘visualizations can represent a processing benefit in addition to being interesting and engaging (Castro-Alonso et al. 2019).

Further, Table 3 in the following page presents the experts' evaluation of the picture clues in terms of format. Format is one technical aspect that can be highly beneficial, especially for those who are beginning to learn how to read or who may struggle with traditional text-based comprehension. The format of the picture clues adds to the pleasantness and orderliness of the material itself.

**Table 3.** Experts’ Evaluation of the Picture Clues in terms of Format

Indicators	Wtd mean	SD	Verbal Description	Interpretation
<b>1. Prints</b>				
1.1 Size of letters is appropriate to the intended user	4.00	.000	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
1.2 Spaces between letters and words facilitate reading	4.00	.000	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
1.3 Font is easy to read.	4.00	.000	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
1.4 Printing is of good quality (i.e., no broken letters, even density, correct alignment, properly placed screen registration).	4.00	.000	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
Overall Weighted mean	4.00	.000	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
<b>2. Illustrations</b>				
2.1 Simple and easily recognizable.	4.00	.000	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
2.2 Clarify and supplement the text.	4.00	.000	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
2.3 Properly labelled or captioned (if applicable).	4.00	.000	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
2.4 Realistic / appropriate colors.	3.97	.160	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
2.5 Attractive and appealing.	4.00	.000	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
2.6 Culturally relevant.	4.00	.000	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
Overall Weighted mean	4.00	.027	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
<b>3. Design and Layout</b>				
3.1 Attractive and pleasing to look at.	4.00	.000	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
3.2 Simple (i.e., does not distract the attention of the reader).	4.00	.000	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
3.3 Adequate illustration in relation to text.	4.00	.000	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
3.4 Harmonious blending of elements (e.g., illustrations and text).	4.00	.000	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
Overall Weighted mean	4.00	.000	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
<b>4. Paper and Binding</b>				
4.1 Paper used contributes to easy reading.	4.00	.000	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
4.2 Durable binding to withstand frequent use.	3.69	.468	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
Overall Weighted mean	3.85	.234	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
<b>5. Size and Weight of Resource</b>				
5.1 Easy to handle.	00	.000	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
5.2 Relatively light.	4.00	.000	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
Overall Weighted mean	3.91	.140	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective

Legend: 1.00-1.49-Satisfactory/Not Effective; 1.50-2.49-Poor/Somewhat Effective; 2.50-3.49-Satisfactory/Effective; 3.50-4.00-Very Satisfactory/Very Effective

As viewed from Table 3, among the indicators under the format criterion, the highest weighted mean is 4.00, or very satisfactory, which is given to indicators 1, 2, and 5 and which is interpreted as very effective. This shows that the prints were favorably welcomed, as seen by the suitable letter size, the spacing between letters and words was found to be ideal for reading, facilitating easy comprehension of the content.

On the other hand, the lowest indicator rating is 3.69, or very satisfactory, which states the durable binding of the materials withstand that the reading material used is poorly bound and more susceptible to damage from wear and tear, such as torn pages. This can lead to a decrease in the overall quality of material over time and affect the effectiveness as a learning

resource. This corresponds to Vidal's (2022) findings that the following factors play a significant role in the development of students reading comprehension skills: (1) the quality of teachers' language teaching strategies and practices; (2) the amount of effort expended in the material preparation of instructional aid, and (3) appropriateness and practicality of the strategies used in carrying out instructions to a specific reading comprehension component skill. Experts' advice on color and binding enhancement were implemented to optimize the effectiveness of reading materials with picture clues.

Based on the observed learners' reactions to the format criterion, it is clear that the picture clues used in the study were very well received among Grade 5 learners. The prints were favorably welcomed, as seen by the suitable letter size, which improved reading for the intended audience. The spacing between letters and words was found to be ideal for reading, facilitating easy comprehension of the content. Furthermore, learners indicated that the font selected was easy to read, which improved their overall knowledge of the topic. The printing quality was also lauded, with no broken letters and an even density, indicating appropriate text alignment and registration.

Furthermore, the graphics accompanying the text were well received. Learners found them to be essential and easily identifiable, successfully clarifying and augmenting the written information. The illustrations were appropriately labeled or captioned, which increased their instructional value. The colors chosen were regarded as authentic and acceptable, making the pictures appealing to the learners. Notably, the pictures were culturally meaningful, reflecting the trainees' origins and experiences.

In terms of design and layout, learners were pleased with the general attractiveness and simplicity of the materials. The design was judged as visually appealing while remaining focused on the key content. Adequate illustration of the content was observed, ensuring that the visuals complimented and enhanced the reading experience. There was also a harmonious merging of elements, such as images and text, which added to the materials' coherence and effectiveness.

Regarding paper and binding, learners liked the use of paper that allowed for simple reading, while the sturdy binding was acknowledged to be able to survive continuous usage, ensuring the materials' lifespan. The resource's size and weight were found to be optimal, with materials that were easy to handle and relatively light, allowing Grade 5 students to use it comfortably. The students' positive reactions to the format criterion indicate that the picture clues effectively supported their reading comprehension skills and contributed to an engaging and accessible learning experience.

This implies that the format conformed to the quality standards set by the DepEd. Indeed, the format of picture clues plays a crucial role in developing reading comprehension, especially for emerging readers. Picture clues are a valuable tool to help students understand the meaning of a story, guess unfamiliar words, and engage with the text effectively. Similarly, Rathnayake and Sachith (2023) found that teaching reading through stories with picture clues is a key element in developing comprehension and building up the conceptualizations in the students' minds and according to Kim et al. (2021), using pictures is an effective way to teach reading on report texts, and might help kids become more proficient readers. Teachers can use it as a teaching tool for reading. Additionally, it can provide readers with information and serve as a resource for other researchers.

Another criterion used for validation is the presentation and organization of the picture clues. This criterion ensures that the picture clues effectively support reading comprehension by enhancing clarity, relevance, consistency, accessibility, engagement, and alignment with instructional objectives.

**Table 4.** Experts' Evaluation of the Picture Clues in terms of Presentation and Organization

Indicators	Wtd Mean	SD	Verbal Description	Interpretation
1. Presentation is engaging, interesting, and understandable.	4.00	.000	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
2. There is a logical and smooth flow of ideas.	4.00	.000	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
3. Vocabulary level is adapted to target the reader' likely experience and level of understanding.	4.00	.000	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
4. Length of sentences is suited to the comprehension level of the target reader.	4.00	.000	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
5. Sentences and paragraph structures are varied and interesting to the target reader.	4.00	.000	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective
Overall Weighted Mean	4.00	.000	Very Satisfactory	Very Effective

Legend: 1.00-1.49-Satisfactory/Not Effective; 1.50-2.49-Poor/Somewhat Effective; 2.50-3.49-Satisfactory/Effective; 3.50-4.00-Very Satisfactory/Very Effective

Table 4 reflects the result of the experts' evaluation in the presentation and organization of the picture clues, which was rated as very satisfactory and was interpreted as very effective.

As presented in Table 4, all the indicators under presentation and organization are rated 4.00 or very satisfactory which states that the presentation of the reading material is engaging, understandable, in logical and there is a smooth flow of ideas. The vocabulary level and length of sentences was adapted to the target reader.

Based on the observed learners to the presentation and organization criterion, it is clear that using picture hints increased their engagement and comprehension of the subject. To begin, in the reading activities learners responded in a way that was interesting, captivating, and clear. The use of visual images and graphics piqued their interest in the reading materials, making the learning process more entertaining and lively. The learners also noticed the text's logical and seamless flow of ideas, indicating that it was well-organized and easy to follow. This arrangement aided their comprehension of the material and enabled students to create meaningful connections between concepts.

Furthermore, learners enjoyed the language modification to their expected experience and level of comprehension. The choice of proper vocabulary meant that students understood the concepts provided in the text without becoming overwhelmed or confused. Similarly, sentence length was adjusted to the learners' comprehension level, allowing them to assimilate information at a comfortable rate. Diverse and engaging sentence and paragraph structures were also seen, keeping students engaged and motivated throughout the reading process. This variety in structure avoided boredom and fostered active engagement in reading activities.

The learners' favorable reactions to the presentation and organization criterion suggest that the usage of image hints helped them improve their reading comprehension skills. The engaging presentation, logical organization, adaptive vocabulary, and diverse sentence structures made for a rich and immersive learning experience for Grade 5 students. Picture clues shown to be an effective aid for improving kids' reading competence by increasing interest and understanding.

This may be associated with the assertion of Efendi (2021) that the ability to read is crucial for mastering a second language. The key to learning a second language well is to use reading comprehension. Numerous strategies will be used with pupils in the classroom with the hope that they would grasp the material easily. To solve issues and remember to inspire pupils, educators must seek out innovative instructional resources. In theory, picture

clues can be an effective medium for helping pupils improve their comprehension of what they read. Thus, this point of view justifies the hypothetical conclusion that improving pupils' visual perception through the use of pictures can aid in their comprehension of texts.

There are only five (5) statement indicators for the criterion for presentation and organization of picture clues, and all are rated the same. This implies that the criterion in terms of presentation and organization conformed to the quality standards set by the DepEd.

On the other hand, accuracy and uptodate information are the other evaluation criteria of the picture clues. These criteria are crucial criteria for picture clues because they directly impact the effectiveness and relevance of the clues in conveying the intended message or information. Furthermore, it conveys credibility as an instructional guide, as well as clarity and understanding as it ensures that the message conveyed through the picture is clear and easily understood by the audience.

**Table 5.** Experts' Evaluation of the Picture Clues in terms of Accuracy and Updatedness of Information

Indicators	Wtd Mean	SD	Verbal Description	Interpretation
1. Conceptual errors.	4.0000	.00000	Not present	Very Effective
2. Factual errors.	4.0000	.00000	Not present	Very Effective
3. Grammatical errors.	3.7692	.42683	Not present	Very Effective
4. Computational errors.	4.0000	.00000	Not present	Very Effective
5. Obsolete information.	4.0000	.00000	Not present	Very Effective
6. Typographical and other minor errors (e.g., inappropriate or unclear illustrations, missing labels, wrong captions, etc)	3.5641	.50236	Not present	
Overall Weighted Mean	3.8882	.12254	Not present	Very Effective

Legend: 1.00-1.49-Poor/Not Effective; 1.50-2.49-Present and requires major redevelopment/Somewhat Effective; 2.50-3.49-Present but very minor and must be fixed/Effective; 3.50-4.00-Not present/Very Effective

The results as gleaned in Table 5 reveal the highest weighted mean of 4.00 which falls in 4 domains. The findings state that the reading material is free from conceptual errors, factual errors, computational errors and Obsolete information thus, it is possible to regard the reading material as accurate and current.

The lowest mean rating is 3.56 which falls on the typographical and other minor errors. This means that there are mistakes in typing or printing, and other minor errors could include things like grammatical mistakes, formatting issues, or other small mistakes that can detract from the overall quality of a document. Therefore, the statement implies that the document or work has a lot of small mistakes. To ensure the efficacy of materials all the errors have been corrected.

Based on the learners' reactions and observations about the correctness and updateness of information criterion, it was discovered that the picture hints offered were free of various sorts of errors but needed updates and clarity in some places. No conceptual errors were found in the picture hints, showing that the material accurately conveyed the desired concepts and ideas. Similarly, factual errors were absent, indicating that the material supplied was accurate and free of inaccuracies.

Furthermore, no grammatical errors were found in the picture clues, indicating that the text accompanying the visuals was grammatically sound and consistent. In addition, computational errors, such as improper calculations or mathematical representations, were not found in the context of the pictorial hints tested.

In accordance with Balcazar (2019), for students who are just beginning to read, picture books are incredibly beneficial. When used in conjunction with text, illustrations provide students with vital tools for developing comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, and other fundamental reading abilities. A picture book's imagery makes the pages come to life and acts as a visual plot summary.

Likewise, Oxford University Press. (2024) states that pictures accompanying text offer instrumental tools to help children build foundational literacy skills. Illustrations in a storybook can aid with the initial development of reading comprehension strategies, such as making predictions and inferences. Children can combine the words they read with the character expressions and actions shown through the illustrations to guess or predict what will happen next in the story.

Based on the result of the validation of picture clues as media for developing reading comprehension from the three (3) experts in terms of accuracy and updatedness of information, it was rated very satisfactory. This implies that the format conformed to the quality standards set by the DepEd. This result is affirmed by the study of Guo et al. (2020) on *Do You Get the Picture? A Meta-Analysis of the Effect of Graphics on Reading Comprehension* posited that the use of pictures as a tool for improving reading comprehension, particularly in terms of accuracy and updatedness of information, highlighted the positive impact of graphics on reading comprehension, emphasizing that graphics can significantly enhance students' understanding of textual information. Additionally, research has shown that the inclusion of pictures in reading materials can lead to improved comprehension, especially when compared to text-only formats. Furthermore, the importance of visual aids, such as pictures, in supporting comprehension has been underscored, suggesting that focusing on the visual channel can be a powerful tool for enhancing comprehension.

### ***Level of Reading Comprehension Skills After the Utilization of Picture Clues***

Table 6 shows the level of reading comprehension skills of the learners after the utilization of picture clues. The majority of the learners are progressing to the instructional level with 54.5 % of them having scores ranging from 59-79 after using the picture clues.

**Table 6.** The Level of Reading Comprehension Skills of the Learners after the Utilization of the Picture Clues

Score Ranges	Literal Skills		Inferential Skills		Critical Skills		Descriptive Rating
	n	%	N	%	n	%	
80-100	22	100.0	22	100	6	27.3	Independent
59-79	0	0	0	0	12	54.5	Instructional
58 and below	0	0	0	0	4	18.2	Frustration
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100</b>	

Based on the learners' observations during the utilization of picture clues incorporated with different activities. On the first day, an individual oral reading activity was given, and it was observed that most of the learners didn't show focus and spent less time analyzing the picture and connecting it to the text. Most of the learners are still at a frustration level. On the second and third days of utilizing the picture clues incorporated with the picture prediction activity, some of the learners show curiosity and attentiveness. They have the strategy to connect the picture to the text by looking closely at symbols and colors. There are 40% learners who can answer the inferential level questions of reading comprehension skills. In the fourth, fifth and sixth days, think-pair-share and puzzle sequencing activities

were played by the learners. It was observed that learners showed interest in reading as they collaborated and shared their thoughts in the class. They pay attention to the character, setting, and objects that are depicted in the reading material. It is noticeable that there is a growth in their scores of the learners in answering the comprehension questions of the story with picture clues with 43% in inferential and 14% in critical correct answers. In the seventh, eighth, and ninth days, the learners exhibit consistency, showing their interest in reading. They are actively engaging in individual reading activities, making predictions by examining the setting, characters, and objects in the picture of the story. The number of learners who can answer all the literal and inferential questions correctly increases, and there are also learners who can answer critical questions perfectly by 18%. During the last day of utilizing picture clues, it was noticed that learners could effectively interpret and analyze the connection between text and picture; they remained actively attentive in analyzing the connection between picture and text; and there was also progress in the number of learners who could correctly answer all the inferential and critical questions.

These findings align with the research conducted by Mantiri, Hapsari & Palengkahu et al. (2021), which demonstrates that using pictures as a technique in teaching reading comprehension is effective. It is recommended to implement the picture and picture technique in classrooms, tailored to the specific situations and material being taught, to enhance students' skills both collaboratively and individually. Teachers are encouraged to focus more on improving students' reading comprehension. Additionally, Carantes (2021) indicates that language instructors should incorporate visuals and a diverse range of activities that involve authentic content when teaching reading comprehension skills. Images can be an effective resource for enhancing comprehension during reading instruction. Consequently, visual aids, such as images, should be integrated into lesson objectives or activities that aim to develop comprehension strategies, particularly when utilizing print media and other graphic materials. By employing images as genuine resources that foster meaningful interactions between students and texts, this study offers educators improved materials for actively teaching reading comprehension.

The result shows that all learners (22 out of 22) who mastered literal skills have progressed to the inferential skills after exposure to the picture clues indicating that they can understand and interpret the text effectively and they can make inferences and draw conclusions from the text. While all of them have made to inferential skills it can be noted that only 27.3 % or 6 out of 22 learners have mastered the critical skills and identified as independent readers, these were the same learners who showed progress and achievement during the implementation. meaning they can understand the text without needing to rely on external resources, 54.5 % or 12 out of 22 learners at the instructional level means they can make inferences and draw conclusions from the text, and the same learners who show progress during days 6 to 10 of the implementation, and 18.2% or 4 out of 22 learners in frustration level which suggests that they are struggling to understand the material. This could be due to a weak foundation in reading comprehension. This means that the learners may not have a strong understanding of reading, which could be making it difficult for them to understand the material they are studying. It can be gleaned from the result that there is progress in the comprehension skills of the learners. Therefore, it is important to provide additional support to these learners to help them improve their comprehension skills. This development is one good indicator of the effectiveness of picture clues as instructional visual media for developing reading skills.

This can be correlated with the findings of Hafidz Zaid (2020) that using pictures while teaching helps students to get rid of boredom, reduce language anxiety, provide more fun, helps them develop more confidence, and increase their motivation to speak. In parallel vein

Kim et al. (2021) states that using pictures as a teaching tool for reading could be valuable for teachers and researchers and could contribute to the development of students' domain knowledge and reading comprehension skills.

**Significant Difference Between the Levels of Reading Comprehension Skills Before and After the Utilization of Picture Clues**

Table 7 shows the result of the paired t-test which was employed to determine if there exists a significant difference in the reading comprehension levels of the learners before and after their utilization of the validated picture clues. Results show that there is a very significant difference in the literal skills ( $t=4.161$ ;  $p=.000$ ); inferential skills ( $t=47.732$ ;  $p=.000$ ); and critical skills ( $t=14.343$ ;  $p=.000$ ). Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected, that is, there is a significant difference between the levels of reading comprehension skills before and after the utilization of picture clues. This means that the utilization of the validated picture clues had been effective in improving the reading comprehension skills of the learners.

**Table 7.** Paired t-test between the Levels of Reading Comprehension Skills Before and After Utilization of the Picture Clues

	Mean Difference	SD	t	Df	p-value	Decision on H <sub>0</sub>	Interpretation
Literal Skills	.591	.666	4.161**	21	.000	Reject H <sub>0</sub>	Significant
Inferential Skills	6.227	.612	47.732**	21	.000	Reject H <sub>0</sub>	Significant
Critical Skills	2.091	.684	14.343**	21	.000	Reject H <sub>0</sub>	Significant

\*\* significant @  $p<.01$

Furthermore, this implies that the significant improvements in literal, inferential, and critical reading skills following the use of validated picture clues suggest that integrating visual aids enhances overall reading comprehension levels among learners. When teaching with visuals, it helps learners become more engaged, less bored, less anxious when speaking the language, more fun, more confident, and more motivated to talk. Including visuals in reading captured learners' interest, help them use their imaginations, and make the classroom more engaging. This highlights the effectiveness of incorporating visual support to bolster learners' understanding and engagement with textual material.

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. Before introducing picture clues, the Grade 5 learners demonstrated literal reading skills and lacked inferential or critical comprehension skills. The learners could understand basic reading text but needed help critically in synthesizing, evaluating, and analyzing the text.
2. Based on the evaluation, the picture clues conformed with DepEd standards in content, format, presentation, organization, and accuracy and updatedness of information. Therefore, the picture clues can be used as an instructional material.
3. After using picture clues, the Grade 5 learners successfully mastered literal and inferential skills, and some advanced their critical skills. Moreover, the learners could critically analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information from reading texts more effectively.
4. Using picture clues significantly improved the Grade 5 learners' reading comprehension levels. Picture clues successfully fostered not only the basic reading comprehension

skills of the Grade 5 learners but also developed their higher-order abilities, such as inferential and critical thinking skills in reading comprehension.

### **Recommendations**

In the light of the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are offered:

1. Teachers should provide extra attention to learners struggling with reading comprehension, especially those learners with only literal reading skills. By offering additional support through small group work and tailored lessons, struggling readers will receive the focused assistance they need to achieve higher reading comprehension levels.
2. Teachers may use the experts' validated picture clues as supplementary instructional materials in teaching the reading comprehension skills of the learners during regular classroom teaching. Teachers may also use the experts' validated picture clues during school reading intervention activities to provide struggling readers with additional support that may improve overall reading comprehension abilities.
3. The teachers should consider using picture clues in classroom instruction, targeting the learners' inferential and critical reading comprehension skills by providing learners with ample opportunities to practice and improve their abilities in critically analyzing, evaluating, and synthesizing information from reading texts.
4. Future researchers may conduct a comprehensive study to verify the effectiveness of picture clues. Future researchers should examine picture clues' practical application and effect in different educational settings.

### **REFERENCES**

- Balcazar, S. (2019). How picture books help kids develop literacy skills. Reading Partners. Available from: <https://readingpartners.org/blog/picture-books-develop-literacy-skills/>
- Cabrera, Lino & Budao, Denard & Canas, Eva Mae. (2020). Between the lines: the case of Teaching Reading in the Philippine k to 12 Classrooms. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.17168.99843>
- Carantes, S. J., & Delos Reyes, R. J. (2021, March). The Use of Images in Reading Comprehension. *Puissant*, 2, 121-132. Retrieved from <https://puissant.stepacademic.net/puissant/article/view/44>
- Castro-Alonso, J. C., Ayres, P., & Sweller, J. (2019). Instructional visualizations, cognitive load theory, and visuospatial processing. In J. C. Castro-Alonso (Ed.), *Visuospatial processing for education in health and natural sciences* (pp. 111-143). Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20969-8\\_5](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20969-8_5)
- Castro-Alonso, J. C., de Koning, B. B., Fiorella, L., & Paas, F. (2021). Five strategies for optimizing instructional materials: Instructor-and learner-managed cognitive load. *Educational Psychology Review*, 33(4), 1379-1407. <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1007/s10648-021-09606-9>
- Efendi, M. A. (2021). The Use of Pictures as Media to Improve Students' Reading Comprehension. *Journal of English Teaching, Literature, and Applied Linguistics*, 2(2), 84-86. <http://dx.doi.org/10.30587/jetlal.v2i2.2467>
- Gogiashvili, S., & Demetrashvili, A. (2023). Visual learners and online learning impact on their academic performance. *Applied Linguistics-3d: Language, IT, ELT*, 13.



- Guo, D., Zhang, S., Wright, K. L., & McTigue, E. M. (2020). Do You Get the Picture? A Meta-Analysis of the Effect of Graphics on Reading Comprehension. *AERA Open*, 6(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/2332858420901696>
- Hafidz Zaid, A. (2020). The Efficiency of Using Pictures in Teaching Speaking Skills of Non-native Arabic Beginner Students. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 8(03), 872-878.
- Herwiana, S. (2021). Strengths and Weaknesses of Collaborative Writing and Peer Feedback in an EFL Intensive Reading and Writing Coursework. *Pioneer: Journal of Language and Literature*, 13(1). <https://doi.org/10.36841/pioneer.v13i1.944>
- Kim, J. S., Burkhauser, M. A., Mesite, L. M., Asher, C. A., Relyea, J. E., Fitzgerald, J., & Elmore, J. (2021). Improving reading comprehension, science domain knowledge, and reading engagement through a first-grade content literacy intervention. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 113(1), 3.
- Liu, H., Chen, X., & Liu, X. (2022). Factors influencing secondary school students' reading literacy: An analysis based on XGBoost and SHAP methods. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.948612>
- Mantiri, Hapsari & Palengkahu, Noldy & Tuerah, Dr. (2021). Improving Students' Reading Comprehension Through Picture And Picture. *Journal of English Language and Literature Teaching*. 4. <https://doi.org/10.36412/jellt.v4i2.2397>
- Oxford University Press. (2024, March). Why the use of pictures in storybooks and readers is important. Oxford Resource Hub. <https://resourcehub.oxford.co.za/road-to-literacy/why-the-use-of-pictures-in-storybooks-and-readers-is-important/>
- Pateşan, M., Balagiu, A., & Alibec, C. (2018, June). Visual aids in language education. In *International conference Knowledge-based Organization*, 24(2), 356-361.
- Rathnayake, A. J. D., & Yehan Sachith, E. M. (2023, November). ABSTRACT Effect of stories with picture clues on the development of second language reading competence. Conference: 2nd International Conference on Advances in English Language Studies (ICAELS -2023)
- Requiso-Jimenez, J. D., & Rema Bascos-Ocampo, R. (2022). "Improving the Reading Comprehension Skills of Grade 5 Pupils Using Localized Reading Selections". *Asian Journal of Language, Literature and Culture Studies* 5(3), 209-18. <https://journalajl2c.com/index.php/AJL2C/article/view/111>
- Sun, Z., & Firestone, C. (2021), Curious Objects: How Visual Complexity Guides Attention and Engagement. *Cogn Sci*, 45: e12933. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cogs.12933>
- Vidal, M. P. (2022). Effectiveness of Multimedia and Text-Based Reading Approaches to Grade 10 Students' Reading Comprehension Skills. *AsiaCALL Online Journal*, 13(4), 55-79. <https://doi.org/10.54855/acoj.221345>