

# Improving Reading Comprehension through Summarizing Activities Using “Somebody-Wanted-But-So-Then” Strategy among Grade Vi Pupils

AQUISA LOMONDAYA<sup>1</sup>, JALIAH SAMAD<sup>2</sup>, WARDAH GUIMBA<sup>3</sup>, ADELYN A. SIALANA-NALLA<sup>4</sup>, ROSENIYA G. TAMANO<sup>5</sup>

## ABSTRACT

Reading comprehension problems are increasing in the Philippines; thus, this study was undertaken primarily 1) to improve reading comprehension through summarizing activities and 2) to observe the learning development during the implementation of the intervention. The study was carried out in a single-group pre-test and post-test design without a control group. In this model, independent variables were applied to purposive sampling. The study involved 42 respondents, specifically pupils from the last section of Grade VI at Mindanao State University-Integrated Laboratory School. Qualitative data were acquired through the observation of the teaching and learning process, while quantitative data were collected via pre-test and post-test assessments of reading comprehension. The study revealed that summarizing activities improves reading comprehension as results demonstrated a noteworthy improvement in reading comprehension, evident in the increased mean score from 12.1439 (transmuted grade of 73%, indicating failure) to 14.8333 (transmuted grade of 79%, indicating a passing performance). Furthermore, learning development was observed during summarizing activities implementation, with increased motivation and involvement among pupils. The So-Wanted-But-So-Then technique facilitated more effective summarization, fostering enthusiasm and improved interaction in the classroom. In conclusion, the incorporation of summarizing activities successfully enhances pupils' reading comprehension, fostering a positive teacher-pupil relationship and contributing to a more engaging learning environment.

**Keywords:** Reading, Reading Comprehension, Comprehension Strategies, Summarizing, Summarizing Activities, Somebody-Wanted-But-So-Then Technique

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Philippines ranked the lowest in terms of Reading Comprehension with 340, the lowest score, in all countries surveyed in the 2018 Programme for International Student Assessment (Carraig & Quimbo, 2022). Thus, the Department of Education (DepEd) supports the Every Child a Reader Program, which aims to make every Filipino a reader and a writer at their grade level. Reading comprehension provides a basis for a substantial amount of learning at the secondary level, and it is critical for both academic and lifelong learning (Zheng, 2014).

For several reasons, struggling readers tend to stagnate, finding it difficult to gain ground in reading competence (Fox, 2008). Students who are not given enough practice to apply comprehension strategies struggle to comprehend what they are reading (Onofrey & Theurer, 2007). Conversely, when children receive high-quality and explicit reading instruc-

tion with materials that match their ability level, they are likely to experience relative success in reading comprehension (McGill-Frazen, 1993; National Reading Panel, 2000).

To bridge the gap between those who have acquired effective reading techniques and those who have yet to learn them, as well as to enhance all students' reading comprehension, teachers must be willing to experiment with reading comprehension strategies in their classrooms (Ballou, 2012). Research conducted by Markman (1977) and other experts (Reutzel & Cooter, 2007; Rapp et al., 2007 as cited in Mulyani, 2011) suggest that using comprehension strategies enables students to understand the whole meaning of the text.

Good reading comprehension by using summarizing activities should be used in the teaching and learning process to enable students to understand the English text related to their social environment (Purwandani, 2015). Corbeil (2000) pointed out that the summarization process in the second language becomes a valuable assessment tool to conduct students' reading comprehension. Also, cultivating students' writing skills through reading is important (Liu, 2008). Summary writing is one of the important academic skills for students to show their reading com-

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College of Education, Mindanao State University, Marawi City, Philippines

<sup>1</sup>E-mail Address: aquisalomondaya4@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup>E-mail Address: jhallyo22@gmail.com

<sup>3</sup>E-mail Address: wardah.guimba@msumain.edu.ph

<sup>4</sup>E-mail Address: adelyn.sialana-nalla@msumain.edu.ph

<sup>5</sup>E-mail Address: roseniyatamano@msumain.edu.ph

prehension. It can be said that if students can summarize well, they improve their reading ability (Palmer, 2003).

Summarizing is a technique that includes reiterating in one's own words the key ideas from one piece (Kissner, 2006). This strategy also gives specific information to discern, which provides students with a purpose for reading. Moreover, Palmer (2003) states that summarizing is a learning process. The Somebody-Wanted-But-So strategy (MacOn, Bewell, & Vogt, 1991 in Beers, 2003) is a summarizing technique used during or after reading. It provides a framework to use in identifying the key elements of a story or historical event.

Widespread efforts have been directed toward addressing the reading achievement needs of the nation's youngest readers. However, problems related to the students' reading skills such as poor reading comprehension and low vocabulary skills are still an issue experienced by adolescent readers. Hence, this study focuses on making an effort by implementing summarizing activities as a pedagogical tool to improve reading comprehension.

### Statement of the Problem

The study aimed to determine the effects of summarizing activities on the reading comprehension of Grade VI pupils enrolled at MSU- Integrated Laboratory School for AY 2017-2018. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the performance of the respondents in the pretest?
2. What is the performance of the respondents in the posttest?
3. Is there a significant difference between the pretest and posttest performance of the respondents?
4. What learning development can be observed from the respondents during the implementation of the summarizing activities?
5. What summarizing activities may be employed based on the findings of the study?

**Null Hypothesis:** There is no significant difference between summarizing activities and reading comprehension.

### Significance of the Study

This study has both theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically, it can support the current theory about the significance of implementing summarizing activities in language teaching and learning, especially in reading.

Practically, this study could be useful for school administrators, English teachers, learners, and future researchers. The results of the study could be useful to school administrators who are in leadership positions to create programs that help students who are at risk of failing in reading comprehension using summarizing activities. Moreover, this study could motivate English teachers to apply various activities that can enhance students' learning motivation and involvement during the English teaching and learning process. The output of the study could be used as a powerful innovative tool to foster learning experiences for learners to grow and strengthen their reading comprehension. Future researchers could conduct other studies related to the problems by applying summarizing activities and also develop problem-solving processes and contribute to a valuable experience related to their knowledge in research education.

### Scope and Limitations

The study is focused on the use of summarizing activities (SWBST Strategy) as reading comprehension strategies in understanding narrative texts in the readings of Grade-VI pupils enrolled at MSU-Integrated Laboratory School.

## II. METHODS AND MATERIALS

### Respondents of the Study

The study used a one-group pretest-posttest design, a quasi-experimental research design in which the same dependent variable is measured in one group of participants before (pretest) and after (posttest) treatment is administered. The respondents were 42 Grade VI pupils of MSU-Integrated Laboratory School. The researchers chose Grade VI pupils as respondents of the study as they were believed to have better comprehension of texts such as narrative texts. Grade VI pupils have to be equipped with the required skills in reading comprehension to be able to cope with academic reading to succeed in high school.

### Instrumentation

In this study, two instruments were utilized. Pilot testing was conducted first to establish the reliability coefficient of the test instrument, with which it gained a 0.776 reliability rating. After establishing instrument reliability, the researchers then proceeded to the next phase of the study. First was the pre-test/post-test in the form of a reading test which consisted of nine different passages. The researchers adapted texts that

suiting the respondents' proficiency. As shown in Table 1 the internal consistency of the instrument is above 70%, therefore it is valid.

**Table 1- Internal Consistency Estimates of Questionnaires**

	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
<b>Pilot Testing</b>	22	0.776	Accepted
<b>Pre-test</b>	22	0.773	Accepted
<b>Post-test</b>	22	0.779	Accepted

Second was the summarizing activities. To enable students to summarize a passage, The Somebody-Wanted-But-So-Then (SWBST) strategy (MacOn, Bewell & Vogt 1991 in Beers, 2003) was used during or after reading. This technique used lesson plans, handouts, pictures, and interesting reading tasks. Somebody-Wanted But-So Then stands for 'Somebody' (main character), 'Wanted' (plot), 'But' (conflict or challenge), 'So' (solution), and 'Then' (outcome or ending).

**Data Gathering Procedure**

The necessary data for the study were gathered after gaining approval from the pool of research panelists. The researchers implemented summarizing activities with the assistance of the English Teacher and following the English schedule of the pupils. Along with the implementation of summarizing activities was the use of various reading tasks with themes, giving interesting media and handouts. Researcher A demonstrated at each session and Researcher B observed the learning progress of the respondents. Observations were noted through a journal accomplished by the researchers and were done as a monitoring sequence of the study. Table 2 presents the timetable in which the intervention was conducted.

**Table 2 - Data Collection Timetable**

Date/Time	Tasks/Activities
09:00-10:00am (10/16 2017)	Pilot test at Ibn Siena Integrated School
01:00-02:00pm (11/9/2017)	Pilot test at Philippine Integrated School
11/22/2017	Pre-Test
10:45am-11:20am (11/24/2017)	1 <sup>st</sup> Session Narrative texts: The Story of Snow White
10:45am-11:20am (11/27/2017)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Session Narrative texts: The Story of Cinderella

**Table 2 (Continued)**

Date/Time	Tasks/Activities
10:45am-11:20am (11/28/2017)	3 <sup>rd</sup> Session Narrative texts: The Story of Bantugan
10:45am-11:20am (12/01/2017)	4 <sup>th</sup> Session Narrative texts: The Legend of Guava
10:45am-11:20am (12/04/2017)	5 <sup>th</sup> Session Narrative texts: Biag ni Lam-ang
10:45am-11:20am (12/05/2017)	6 <sup>th</sup> Session Narrative texts: The Legend of Mangoes
10:45am-11:20am (12/06/2017)	7 <sup>th</sup> Session Narrative texts: The Legend of Pineapple
10:45am-11:20am (12/07/2017)	8 <sup>th</sup> Session Narrative texts: The Turtle and the Monkey
10:45am-11:20am (12/08/2017)	9 <sup>th</sup> Session Narrative texts: The Legend of Makahiya
(12/11/2017)	Post-Test

**Data Analysis**

The quantitative data collected from the pre-test and post-test were analyzed through a transmutation table as per DepEd Order No. 8, s. 2015 (Policy Guidelines on Classroom Assessment for the K to 12) and finalized using statistical tools, i.e., frequency and percentage distribution, mean, and standard deviation. T-test for the paired sample was used to compare the mean scores of the respondents in the pre-test and post-test and to determine the significant difference between the two mean scores. Meanwhile, the qualitative data collected from observing the pupils during the intervention phase using SWBST as a comprehension strategy were analyzed.

**III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Table 3 shows the pre-test performance of the respondents in reading comprehension. As gleaned from the table, the overall mean score of the respondents which is 12.1439 with the transmuted score of 73 implies a failing performance in the test. This result indicates the respondents had poor reading comprehension.

**Table 3 - Pre-test Performance of the Respondents**

Raw Score	f	%	Mean Score	Transmuted Grade	Qualitative Rating
3	1	2.4	12.1439	<b>63</b>	Did not meet expectation
5	3	7.1		<b>65</b>	Did not meet expectation
6	1	2.4		<b>66</b>	Did not meet expectation
7	2	4.8		<b>67</b>	Did not meet expectation
8	1	2.4		<b>69</b>	Did not meet expectation

Table 3 (Continued)

Raw Score	f	%	Mean Score	Transmuted Grade	Qualitative Rating
9	3	7.1	12.14 39	70	Did not meet expectation
10	6	14.3		71	Did not meet expectation
11	2	4.8		72	Did not meet expectation
13	3	7.1		74	Did not meet expectation
14	4	9.5		77	Fairly satisfactory
15	5	11.9		80	Satisfactory
16	5	11.9		82	Satisfactory
17	2	4.8		86	Very satisfactory
18	1	2.4		88	Very satisfactory
19	3	7.1		91	Outstanding
Total	42	100			

Scaling:  
90-100 - Outstanding  
80-84 - Satisfactory  
85-89 - Very Satisfactory

75-79 - Fairly Satisfactory  
Below 75 - Expectation did not meet

The majority of the respondents' reading comprehension scores were very low which is indicative of the prevailing challenge of improving it. Also, there is a need for some effective strategies or a lesson plan/model which may help develop student's higher comprehension skills (Tizon, 2013). Many researchers in the field of summary writing found that students' summary writing showed many problems such as distortion of the contents of the texts, copying the same words as the original text, identifying the key points of a text, lack of coherence, and lack of ability to paraphrase (Liu, 2008).

Table 4 shows the post-test performance of the respondents in reading comprehension. As seen in the table, after the intervention, 62% of the respondents passed the reading test. In general, the overall mean score which is 14.8333 with a transmuted score of 79 implies a passing performance in the test. This result indicates that the reading comprehension of the respondents improved after implementing the intervention.

Table 4 - Post-test Performance of the Respondents

Raw Score	f	%	Mean Score	Transmuted Grade	Qualitative Rating
7	2	4.8		68	Did not meet expectation
8	3	7.1		69	Did not meet expectation
9	3	7.1		70	Did not meet expectation

Table 4 (Continued)

Raw Score	f	%	Mean Score	Transmuted Grade	Qualitative Rating
10	2	4.8	14.83 33	71	Did not meet expectation
11	5	11.9		72	Did not meet expectation
12	1	2.4		73	Did not meet expectation
15	5	11.9		80	Satisfactory
16	3	7.1		82	Satisfactory
17	3	7.1		86	Very satisfactory
18	2	4.8		89	Very satisfactory
19	4	9.5		91	Outstanding
20	2	4.8		94	Outstanding
21	3	7.1		97	Outstanding
22	4	9.5	100	Outstanding	
Total	42	100			

Scaling:  
90-100 - Outstanding  
80-84 - Satisfactory  
85-89 - Very Satisfactory

75-79 - Fairly Satisfactory  
Below 75 - Expectation did not meet

The display of an increase in the mean score indicates that the reading comprehension of the respondents significantly improved after the implementation of summarizing activities. The summarizing activities, through the use of the Somebody-Wanted-But-So-Then technique, helped the respondents understand various plot elements of conflict and resolution of the texts presented. Moreover, the activity helped the respondents generalize, recognize cause-and-effect relationships, and find the main ideas of the texts (Purwandani, 2015).

Summarizing is a technique that should be used much more than it is. Summarizing information engages one in actively processing text. The result is significantly higher comprehension and recall of the information. (Elder, 2008).

**Paired Samples Test**

This study reveals the difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the respondents in reading comprehension. The mean difference (pre-test minus post-test) is -2.69048 with a standard deviation of 2.21401. Analysis shows that the computed t value,  $t = -7.875$  is less than the critical/tabular value  $t_{0.01} = -2.326$ . Since the t value is less than the critical value, it indicates a highly significant difference, that is, the summarizing strategy has a significant effect on the reading comprehension of the respondents. This means that there is a significant difference between the pre-

test and post-test scores of the respondents. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

The study reveals that summarizing activities could improve students' reading comprehension (Purwandani, 2015, Khathayut & Karavi, 2011; Cahyanti, 2016). Summarization is probably the most significant and encompassing of all reading strategies available to the learner for effective studying and comprehension (Corder-Ponce, 2000). Effective summarizing leads to an increase in student learning. Helping students recognize how information is structured will help them summarize what they read or hear. Summarization is a real-world skill (Wormeli, 2003; Purwandani, 2015).

Table 5 shows that there is learning development observed during the implementation of summarizing activities.

Table 5 - Learning Development Observed

Activities	Observations
<b>Session 1 (Theme: Fairy tale)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loud reading</li> <li>Giving handouts</li> <li>Summarizing a story by using the SWBST technique</li> </ul>	<p>a. The learners were;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>not interested in the lesson, more passive and bored</li> <li>attention to the activity was still low</li> <li>felt difficulty in summarizing a passage</li> <li>more passive</li> <li>bored</li> <li>confused about the SWBST technique</li> </ul>
<b>Session 2 (Theme: Fairy tale)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pair reading</li> <li>Giving handouts</li> <li>Showing pictures</li> <li>Oral recitation</li> <li>Summarizing a story by using the SWBST technique</li> </ul>	<p>a. The learners were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>asking about the technique.</li> <li>still confused.</li> </ul> <p>b. Some learners could not finish the task on time:</p> <p>c. Some of them were bored</p>
<b>Session 3 (Theme: Legend)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group reading</li> <li>Using visual aids</li> <li>Group presentation of the text summary</li> </ul>	<p>a. The learners;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>worked cooperatively</li> <li>shared their opinion with the members of the group</li> <li>made the class crowded</li> <li>became active in participating in the activity</li> <li>seemed interested in the technique</li> </ul>
<b>Session 4 (Theme: Legend)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Storytelling by the teacher</li> <li>Picture showing to identify the SWBST in the story</li> <li>Summarization of the story using the SWBST technique</li> </ul>	<p>a. The learners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>summarized the story easier than before</li> <li>were enthusiastic during the discussion</li> <li>were motivated as the teachers showed the pictures</li> <li>Some passive students participated well in the activity.</li> <li>Most of the students finished the task on time.</li> </ul>

Table 5 (Continued)

Activities	Observations
<b>Session 5 (Theme: Legend)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>individual reading</li> <li>giving handouts</li> <li>Summarizing a story by using the SWBST technique</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Their summary of the story was better than the meeting before.</li> <li>Their comprehension had increased.</li> <li>They had few mistakes and many right answers.</li> <li>Comprehension about the activity had increased</li> <li>The researchers quickly built a good rapport with the respondents.</li> </ul>
<b>Session 6 (Theme: Legend)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Storytelling by researcher A</li> <li>individual presentation of the text summary</li> <li>Summarizing a story by using the SWBST technique</li> </ul>	<p>a. The learners were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>motivated as researcher A showed pictures</li> <li>willingly participated in the discussion</li> <li>They were able to determine the parts of SWBST as researcher A was showing pictures</li> </ul>
<b>Session 7 (Theme: Legend)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Storytelling by researcher B</li> <li>group presentation of the text summary</li> <li>Summarizing a story by using the SWBST technique</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They could answer the questions well.</li> <li>Easily summarized a passage.</li> <li>Most of them were motivated to do the task.</li> </ul>
<b>Session 8 (Theme: Fable)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Giving handouts</li> <li>Silent reading</li> <li>Summarizing a story by using the SWBST technique</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most of them were excited about the task of the day.</li> <li>Understood well the SWBST technique without the aid of the teacher</li> <li>Most of them had a better summary of the story</li> </ul>
<b>Session 9 (Theme: Fable)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Storytelling by the teacher</li> <li>individual presentation of the text summary</li> <li>Summarizing a story by using the SWBST technique</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They could mentally summarize the story by using the SWBST technique.</li> <li>They were listening attentively.</li> <li>They showed enthusiasm during the discussion and in summarizing a story.</li> </ul>

In the beginning, the respondents thought that this strategy was too difficult because the activities asked them to work individually. Their attention to the lesson was also still low. As the teacher introduced the technique, the respondents remained silent and only wrote some words about the explanations on their handouts. Moreover, the teacher's explanation of the strategy was too long and made the students bored and not motivated to learn. Research has shown that in early adolescence, from age 10-14 declines in school motivation and performance (Eccles & Midgley, 1989) as cited by Littlefield (2011).

As the teacher showed pictures to identify the

SWBST in the story, they were enthusiastic and motivated. The National Reading Panel Report (2000) discussed how strategy instruction can actively involve readers and how to motivate readers to read more texts. The report looked at instructional practices for both individual and multiple strategies, endorsing the effectiveness of combining motivational support and strategy instruction.

Their summary of the story using the Somebody-Wanted-But-So-Then technique was better than the previous meetings. Rinehart et al. (1986) as cited by Wallace et. al. (2007) found that teaching students to write summaries helps them remember important text information, attend more closely to the material being read, and improve study skills.

At the end of nine sessions, the learners became motivated and enthusiastic in making sense of the text. They actively participated in reading comprehension activities. Thus, the application of various task activities can enhance pupils' learning motivation and involvement during the English teaching and learning process. Students who demonstrate success in reading comprehension are likely to be intrinsically motivated to read (Wigfield et al. 1996 as cited in Fox 2008). In a general way, positive reading experiences are associated with the development of intrinsic motivation to read (Guthrie et al., 2006; Sonnenschein & Munsterman, 2002).

Furthermore, the researchers have quickly built a good rapport with the respondents. Therefore, the implementation of summarizing activities has successfully increased their reading comprehension. Summarizing is a powerful technique by which an entire story can be condensed into a single paragraph. It helps the reader record and remember the most important information. Creating summaries is a way to prepare for essay tests. Writing a summary can help a reader recall the key events in a story (Elder, 2008).

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

##### Conclusions

The purpose of the study is to identify significant improvements in students' reading comprehension after the implementation of summarizing activities. Based on the findings of the study, the Somebody-Wanted-But-So-Then strategy was found to have significant effects as justified by the following results:

In terms of quantitative data, the result of the scores indicates an improvement in reading comprehension. The scores were gained from the pre-test and

the post-test scores. The mean score increased from 12.1439 in the pre-test with a transmuted grade of 73% to 14.8333 in the post-test with a transmuted grade of 79%. This indicates that the summarizing strategy has a significant effect on the reading comprehension of the respondents.

Meanwhile, in terms of qualitative data, a learning development was observed during the implementation of SWBST as a reading comprehension strategy. Most of the respondents were motivated to summarize the narrative text by using SWBST techniques. Various interesting media and handouts enabled them to determine the parts of SWBST. Thus, the application of various task activities can enhance pupils' learning motivation and involvement during the English teaching and learning process. In conclusion, the implementation of summarizing activities helped improve the reading comprehension of the respondents.

##### Recommendations

After presenting the findings and conclusion of this study, the researchers recommend the following:

**English Teachers.** In the process of teaching and learning English, especially reading, teachers can create activities that help students access prior knowledge and connect it with new information extracted from new materials. Such activities can help students understand the text since a text does not bring its meanings by itself. Accessing prior knowledge and connecting it with new information has a big role in the process of understanding a text. In addition, media, such as pictures may be used to attract the students' attention and interest. Using handouts can also enable students to understand the teacher's explanation. As a result, the process of teaching and learning reading becomes more interesting and meaningful.

**School Administrators.** Training and seminars may be required by administrators to create a program for students who are at risk of failure in reading. SWBST techniques can be used as a powerful, innovative tool to foster positive learning experiences for students to grow and strengthen their reading comprehension.

**Future Researchers.** Future researchers may explore and test the effectiveness of SWBST techniques with varied demographics of study participants and involve more variables not covered within the premise of the current study.

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