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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS SKILLS AND EARLY READING READINESS OF KINDERGARTEN LEARNERS

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Abstract

This study determined the relationship between phonological awareness skills and early reading readiness of Kindergarten learners at Perrelos Elementary School, Carcar City, Cebu. Specifically, it assessed learners' phonological awareness skills in terms of rhyming, syllable awareness, beginning sound identification, and sound blending, as well as their early reading readiness in terms of letter recognition, letter-sound correspondence, vocabulary development, and print awareness. The study employed a descriptive-correlational research design. Using complete enumeration, the study involved two Kindergarten teachers and ninety-three Kindergarten learners. Data were collected through a researcher-made assessment tool and analyzed using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, standard deviation, and Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Results revealed that the learners demonstrated high to very high levels of phonological awareness skills and early reading readiness. More importantly, a strong and statistically significant positive relationship was found between phonological awareness skills and early reading readiness, indicating that learners with stronger phonological awareness are more likely to exhibit higher readiness for reading. These findings highlight the importance of integrating phonological awareness activities into early childhood instruction to strengthen foundational literacy skills. The study concludes that phonological awareness is a key predictor of early reading readiness and recommends the implementation of structured phonological awareness intervention programs to further enhance young learners' literacy development.

Keywords: Education, phonological awareness skills and early reading readiness, descriptive-correlational research design, Perrelos Elementary School, Carcar City, Cebu

Introduction

Early reading readiness is a critical foundation of literacy development, with phonological awareness consistently identified as one of the strongest predictors of beginning reading success. Globally, research has established that skills such as rhyming, syllable segmentation, beginning sound identification, and sound blending are essential in helping children decode words and develop reading fluency. For instance, Kiss and Csapó (2025) emphasized that phonological awareness assessed during kindergarten significantly predicts early reading performance, with segmentation and synthesis identified as among the most essential yet challenging skills for young learners.

In the national context, early literacy development in the Philippines continues to face persistent challenges. Reports on early grade reading indicate that only a small proportion of learners reach independent reading levels, while a majority remain at instructional or frustration levels (Badillo, 2025). Similarly, Galvez and Marquez (2025) noted that kindergarten learners often fall below expected benchmarks in emergent literacy, particularly in phonological awareness skills. These findings are reinforced by the Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM II, 2025), which highlighted continuing literacy gaps across regions, including Cebu Province, despite ongoing reading interventions.

At the local level, Carcar City Division stands out as one of the model-performing divisions in the region, particularly in literacy initiatives as reflected in the LGU Playbook (2026) and the Turning Point Report (January 2026). The division has shown notable improvements in Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA) results, indicating strong progress in early grade reading programs. However, even within this high-performing context, early childhood classrooms still reflect variability in foundational literacy skills among kindergarten learners.

Specifically, in Perrelos Elementary School, kindergarten teachers observe that while many learners can recognize and name letters, some still struggle with essential phonological awareness skills such as identifying beginning sounds, blending phonemes, segmenting syllables, and producing rhyming words. For example, certain learners can recite the alphabet fluently but are unable to match letters with their corresponding sounds. Others find difficulty blending individual sounds to form simple words. These observations suggest that although the school operates within a strong literacy-support environment, gaps in foundational phonological awareness may still exist and may affect early reading readiness components such as letter-sound correspondence, vocabulary development, and print awareness.

Despite the recognition of Carcar City as a high-performing division in literacy, there remains limited empirical evidence examining phonological awareness as a distinct predictor of early reading readiness within this context. Most existing studies focus on general reading performance or intervention outcomes, while few isolate specific phonological awareness domains such as rhyming, syllable awareness, beginning sound identification, and sound blending in relation to early reading readiness indicators. This leaves a research gap on how these foundational skills function even in relatively successful literacy environments.

Given this gap, there is a need to investigate the relationship between phonological awareness skills and early reading readiness among kindergarten learners in Perrelos Elementary School. Understanding this relationship is important not only to identify existing instructional gaps at the foundational level but also to strengthen and sustain the literacy gains already achieved by a high-performing division like Carcar City. The findings of this study would provide empirical evidence that may guide teachers in designing targeted phonological awareness activities and support continuous improvement in early literacy instruction.

Thus, this study aimed to determine the relationship between phonological awareness skills and early reading readiness among kindergarten learners in Perrelos Elementary School, Carcar City Division during School Year 2025–2026.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

This study is anchored on three major theories that explain the development of early literacy skills and the role of phonological awareness in early reading readiness: Emergent Literacy Theory, the Alphabetic Principle, and Ehri's Four Phases of Word Reading Development. These theories collectively explain how children develop foundational literacy skills, acquire sound-symbol knowledge, and progress toward reading readiness.

Emergent literacy is founded on the idea that children begin developing knowledge and skills related to reading, writing, and language long before they receive formal education (Clay, 1966). Emergent literacy begins at birth as children naturally acquire language through everyday interactions and communication. As they grow, they develop increasingly complex speaking and listening skills that form the foundation for later reading and writing. During the preschool years, children learn to use language to express ideas, thoughts, and feelings while building essential literacy skills that prepare them for formal education (Septiani & Syaodih, 2021). Moreover, this theory refers to the foundational language and literacy skills that children develop before formal reading and writing instruction. It includes oral language, phonological awareness, print awareness, and early writing, which are acquired through meaningful interactions and everyday experiences in language-rich environments. These early skills provide the basis for later reading achievement and academic success (Lemire & Paul, 2026). This theory directly supports the early reading readiness variables of letter recognition, vocabulary development, and print awareness. Vygotsky (1978) further emphasized that learning occurs through social interaction within the Zone of Proximal Development, where guided instruction supports literacy growth.

The Alphabetic Principle explains that written language is based on systematic relationships between letters and sounds, providing the foundation for decoding and early reading acquisition. This principle supports the development

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of phonological awareness skills, including rhyming, syllable awareness, phoneme identification, segmentation, and blending. Recent evidence continues to identify phonological awareness as a key predictor of reading readiness and early literacy development.

Ehri's Four Phases of Word Reading Development describe how children progress from the pre-alphabetic and partial alphabetic phases to the full and consolidated alphabetic phases as they acquire increasingly sophisticated letter-sound knowledge and word recognition skills. This theory supports the present study by explaining how phonological awareness enables children to transition from recognizing purely visual cues to decoding words through systematic letter-sound correspondences, thereby securing early reading readiness. Recent evidence continues to affirm that phonological awareness is a critical predictor of early reading development.

Anchoring these theories and empirical findings within the Philippine educational system, three major legal bases directly mandate, support, and justify the execution of this study. First, the Republic Act No. 10157 (The Kindergarten Education Act) mandates kindergarten education as a compulsory and integral component of basic education, explicitly emphasizing that the curriculum must be designed to develop foundational literacy skills, including phonological awareness, to guarantee early reading readiness before primary schooling begins. Second, DepEd Order No. 47, s. 2016 (The Omnibus Policy Guidelines on Kindergarten Education) provides concrete operational directives for implementing developmentally appropriate instruction, explicitly targeting the systematic cultivation of emergent literacy, language development, and phonetic exploration within child-centered environments. Finally, DepEd Department Memorandum No. 064, s. 2025 strengthens contemporary national reading interventions by mandating a focused focus on foundational sub-skills, explicitly identifying phonological awareness and decoding as the primary target mechanisms for correcting reading difficulties among early grade learners. These legal frameworks collectively ensure that early childhood literacy instruction is legally prioritized in kindergarten education and that reading readiness skills are systematically developed and measured.

In synthesis, Emergent Literacy Theory explains how early social and language environments shape foundational pre-reading behaviors; the Alphabetic Principle explains how children master the systematic sound-symbol relationships necessary for decoding; and Ehri's Four Phases of Word Reading Development explain how phonological awareness allows children to progress sequentially from visual guessers to accurate, fluent decoders. Supported by an international, national, and local empirical matrix of 15 distinct studies, these theories confirm that phonological awareness is a critical, non-negotiable foundation for early reading readiness. Together with the legal mandates of Republic Act No. 10157, DepEd Order No. 47, s. 2016, and DepEd Memorandum No. 064, s. 2025, these frameworks provide a rigorous theoretical and policy-driven basis for examining the relationship between phonological awareness skills and early reading readiness among kindergarten learners, directly justifying the development of targeted instructional interventions to optimize early literacy outcomes.

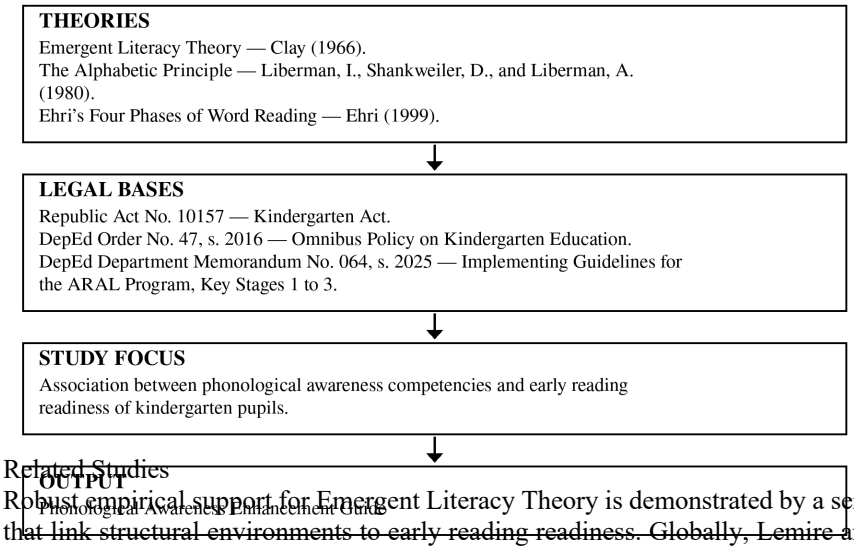


Figure 1
Theoretical Framework of the Study

Related Studies

Robust empirical support for Emergent Literacy Theory is demonstrated by a series of global and local investigations that link structural environments to early reading readiness. Globally, Lemire and Paul (2026) provided longitudinal

evidence showing that baseline phonological awareness and oral language skills in early childhood account for a major percentage of variance in formal reading achievement, acting as a critical cognitive buffer against future reading difficulties. This environmental dependency is further validated by Hsin and Wu (2021), whose experimental trials proved that interactive, dialogic storybook reading strategies, where educators deliberately emphasize word sounds and alliteration, sharply accelerate rhyme detection and phoneme isolation. Similarly, Neumann (2020) demonstrated that parent-guided exploration of environmental print coupled with deliberate letter-sounding significantly boosts both early phonetic interest and letter-sound knowledge in young learners.

In terms of instructional delivery mediums, Jiménez et al. (2024) established that phonetically aligned digital applications featuring real-time audio feedback loops function as a highly interactive modern environment that accelerates phonemic segmenting and blending. Conversely, the absence of these supportive settings creates severe developmental bottlenecks. In the Philippine context, Galvez and Marquez (2025) provided empirical evidence showing a high prevalence of emergent literacy delays, particularly in phoneme isolation and blending, among kindergarten learners who lacked print exposure and active language interactions in low-income home environments. Badillo (2025) reinforced these findings by comparing public and private settings, proving that children embedded in speech-saturated and highly interactive environments scored significantly higher on standardized phonological sensitivity diagnostics. Additionally, Septiani and Syaodih (2021) confirmed that a child's capacity to complexly utilize expressive language and distinctively isolate sounds within natural speech strongly dictates their subsequent success in formal decoding, indicating that early speech environments serve as the primary catalyst for early reading readiness.

Empirical evidence validating the direct relationship between this principle and early reading readiness is found in a large-scale meta-analysis by Odo (2021), which proved that structured, explicit phonological awareness combined with synthetic phonics instruction yields statistically significant, high-magnitude positive effects on both real word and pseudoword reading, accelerating a learner's transition into systematic decoding. Additionally, Míguez-Álvarez et al. (2022) provided global empirical validation through a cross-linguistic meta-analysis confirming that the strong relationship between early phonological sensitivity and subsequent reading success remains stable, positive, and invariant across various alphabetic languages, establishing it as a universal cognitive prerequisite. When children struggle to grasp this sound-symbol connection, targeted structural interventions are required. Eccles et al. (2021) provided longitudinal evidence showing that intensive, tier-2 small-group interventions focusing strictly on phonological remediation successfully altered the negative reading trajectory of over 80% of at-risk primary learners, bringing their reading readiness competencies up to age-appropriate baselines. Furthermore, Herrera et al. (2021) utilized a mixed-methods framework to demonstrate that explicit decoding and phonological training modules yielded universally positive literacy gains across culturally and linguistically diverse student demographics while significantly increasing instructional efficacy.

In the Philippine educational context, Abdon and Barrios (2022) provided empirical evidence for this developmental progression by demonstrating that kindergarten learners exposed to targeted phonological awareness instruction achieved significantly higher reading readiness and word-reading scores than those exposed to traditional unaligned reading routines, proving that direct training in sound segmenting and blending moves children efficiently along Ehri's alphabetic continuum. The execution of this framework relies heavily on classroom leadership, as Arceo-Elemento and Capinpin (2024) demonstrated a significant positive correlation between a teacher's specialized pedagogical content knowledge of phonological awareness and the corresponding word-reading phases achieved by their classes.

Furthermore, this developmental progression encounters unique challenges in marginalized spaces. Santos (2022) exposed severe deficits in syllable deletion and initial sound identification tasks among entering public school kindergarteners in rural communities, attributing these delays to a critical lack of early literacy resources necessary to push learners out of the pre-alphabetic phase. Resolving these localized reading readiness deficits requires leveraging cross-linguistic frameworks. Villanueva (2023) provided empirical support via structural equation modeling showing that phonological awareness developed in a child's mother tongue (L1) directly transfers to and predicts reading readiness in secondary languages (L2/L3), allowing multilingual Filipino learners to navigate advanced alphabetic reading phases with significantly less resistance. Collectively, these recent studies provide strong empirical support for Ehri's theory by demonstrating that strong phonological awareness facilitates children's progression toward accurate, fluent, and multi-lingual word reading.

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Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to determine the relationship between phonological awareness skills and early reading readiness among kindergarten learners. The descriptive component was used to determine the levels of phonological awareness and early reading readiness across their respective domains. The correlational component was used to examine whether a significant relationship existed between the two variables.

A descriptive-correlational design was appropriate for this study because it described the characteristics of variables and examined the degree of relationship between them without manipulating any conditions or variables (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). Since no intervention or experimental treatment was implemented, the study focused on naturally occurring literacy behaviors among kindergarten learners as observed and assessed by their teachers.

Correlational research determines the strength and direction of the relationship between variables using statistical measures such as the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) (Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun, 2019). In this study, descriptive statistics such as mean were used to determine the levels of phonological awareness skills and early reading readiness, while Pearson r was used to analyze the relationship between the two variables.
Through this design, the study determined whether higher levels of phonological awareness skills were significantly associated with higher levels of early reading readiness among kindergarten learners.

Input–Process–Output Model

This study followed the Input–Process–Output (IPO) Model as a systematic guide for examining the relationship between phonological awareness skills and early reading readiness among kindergarten learners. The model ensured that the variables were clearly defined, the research procedures were systematically organized, and the expected output was aligned with the study's purpose of developing a phonological awareness enhancement guide. The actual respondents who completed the research instrument were the kindergarten teachers, who served as evaluators of the learners' performance.
Input. The Input phase consisted of three major elements: the phonological awareness skills of kindergarten learners, their early reading readiness, and the learners' demographic and contextual information, such as age and previous literacy exposure. These inputs represented the learners' existing literacy abilities and provided baseline data reflecting their readiness for reading instruction and their capacity to perform phonological awareness tasks.
Process. The Process phase involved the systematic collection of data using the research instruments, including phonological awareness assessments and early reading readiness tests. Appropriate statistical treatments, such as descriptive analysis and correlational testing, were applied to determine the relationship between phonological awareness skills and early reading readiness. This process enabled the researcher to identify patterns and relationships among the variables, providing insights into which phonological skills were critical in supporting early literacy development.
Output. The Output of this study was the development of a Phonological Awareness Enhancement Guide for kindergarten learners. The guide was informed by the actual data gathered and analyzed, ensuring that the recommendations were context-based, relevant, and applicable to classroom practices. It was intended to serve as a practical tool for teachers, school administrators, and other educational stakeholders in designing interventions that strengthened phonological awareness and supported early reading readiness.

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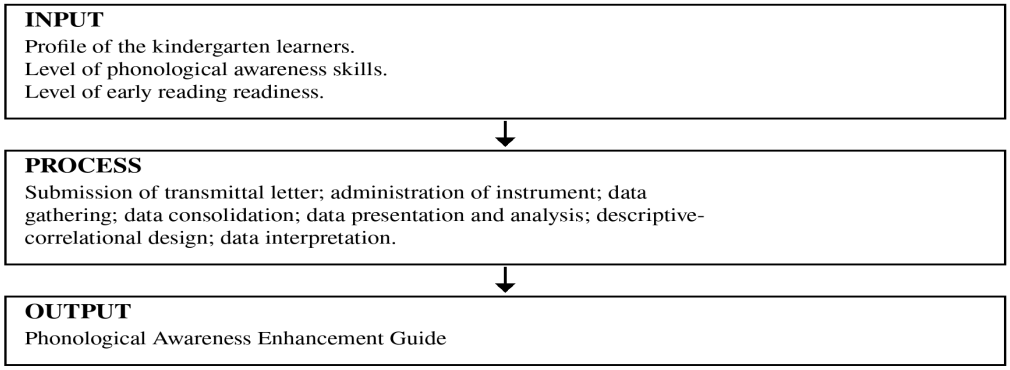


Figure 2
Flow of the Study

Research Environment
The study was conducted in Perrelos Elementary School, a public elementary institution located in Barangay Perrelos, Carcar City, Cebu, Philippines. The school operates under the Carcar I District of the Carcar City Schools Division, Department of Education (DepEd), and serves young learners from Kindergarten to the primary grade levels.

Established around 1951, the school has a long-standing history of providing foundational education to the community. Over the years, it has continued to uphold its commitment to accessible and quality basic education through learner-centered instruction and community support. It caters to early childhood and elementary learners, focusing on essential learning areas that develop foundational skills in literacy, numeracy, and character formation.
In terms of milestones and development, the school has continuously adapted to educational reforms and DepEd programs aimed at improving teaching and learning outcomes. It has also strengthened its implementation of early grade programs and literacy initiatives that support learners' academic growth and readiness for higher grade levels.
The school is strategically located in Barangay Perrelos, making it accessible via Cebu South Road. It is situated near key community establishments, contributing to its active involvement in the local educational and social environment.



Figure 3
Location Map of the Study

Respondents and Learners Evaluated
The respondents of this study were the two Kindergarten teachers of Perrelos Elementary School. They were selected as the primary respondents because they are directly responsible for handling Kindergarten classes and are in the best position to assess learners' phonological awareness skills and early reading readiness.

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The teachers served as evaluators of the 93 Kindergarten learners under their respective classes. They provided data based on systematic classroom observations and structured assessment tools designed for the study. Specifically, they assessed the learners' phonological awareness skills in terms of rhyming skills, syllable awareness, beginning sound identification, and sound blending, as well as early reading readiness in terms of letter recognition, letter-sound correspondence, vocabulary development, and print awareness.

Using Kindergarten teachers as respondents was appropriate since they have direct daily interaction with the learners and are trained to observe and evaluate literacy-related behaviors in natural classroom settings. This ensured that the data gathered accurately reflected the learners' actual performance and developmental progress.
There were a total of 2 Kindergarten teachers and 93 Kindergarten learners involved in the study. Since the learners are minors, appropriate consent and ethical procedures were strictly observed throughout the conduct of the study. The distribution of learners is presented in the table below.

Table 1
Distribution of Respondents

Section	Learners Evaluated	Number of Teacher-Respondents
Section A	40	1
Section B	40	1
Total	80	2

Research Instrument
The instrument used in this study was a researcher-made Kindergarten Literacy Observation Scale designed to measure the phonological awareness skills and early reading readiness of Kindergarten learners. The tool was developed based on established early literacy theories, particularly Emergent Literacy Theory, The Alphabetic Principle, and Ehri's Four Phases of Word Reading, as well as the competencies outlined in the Kindergarten Curriculum Guide. Although it was not adapted from any standardized instrument, it was carefully constructed to ensure alignment with the developmental characteristics and literacy needs of Kindergarten learners.

The instrument consisted of three parts. Part I gathered the demographic profile of the learners in terms of age, gender, and pre-kindergarten attendance. Part II assessed phonological awareness skills in terms of rhyming skills, syllable awareness, beginning sound identification, and sound blending. Part III measured early reading readiness in terms of letter recognition, letter-sound correspondence, vocabulary development, and print awareness.

All items were rated by Kindergarten teachers using a four-point Likert scale: 4 (Always Demonstrated), 3 (Often Demonstrated), 2 (Sometimes Demonstrated), and 1 (Rarely Demonstrated). Higher scores indicated a stronger demonstration of phonological awareness and early reading readiness skills among learners.

Prior to field deployment, the structural integrity and contextual alignment of the tool were subjected to a rigorous face and content validation process. The validation panel consisted of three (3) external subject-matter experts chosen based on strict professional qualifications: one university professor specializing in early childhood education and curriculum development, one master teacher in primary grade reading instruction, and one education program supervisor in language and literacy. These validators systematically evaluated the initial item pool to ensure maximum content relevance, linguistic clarity, structural simplicity, and explicit alignment with the core research objectives. Valuable feedback regarding contextual modifications and item phrasing was incorporated into the final revision of the tool.

Following content validation, a pilot test was administered to a non-participating cohort of kindergarten pupils exhibiting identical characteristics to the actual target population. The gathered pilot data was subjected to statistical reliability testing to measure internal consistency. The analysis yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.988 for Part II (Phonological Awareness Scale) and 0.987 for Part III (Early Reading Readiness Scale). These statistical outputs fall well above the standard acceptable threshold, indicating excellent internal consistency and verifying that the researcher-made instrument was highly dependable for formal data collection.

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Data Gathering Procedure

The data for this study were collected in a systematic and ethical manner following three stages: preliminary stage, data gathering stage, and post-data gathering stage. The procedures were designed to ensure accuracy, validity, and ethical compliance in assessing kindergarten learners' phonological awareness skills and early reading readiness as evaluated by their teachers.

Preliminary Stage. Prior to data collection, the researcher secured formal approval from the Department of Education and the school head of the participating school, Perellos Elementary School in Toledo City. Since the study involved the evaluation of minors, informed consent was obtained from the parents or guardians of the kindergarten learners to ensure ethical compliance and data privacy. The consent process emphasized that the learners would not be directly tested by the researcher and that the information to be gathered would be based on teacher assessments.

An orientation was conducted with the kindergarten teacher-respondents to explain the purpose of the study, the nature of the assessment tool, and the procedures for accomplishing the rating forms. This ensured that all teachers had a clear and uniform understanding of how to evaluate learners' phonological awareness skills and early reading readiness based on classroom observations and existing learner performance. The assessment instrument was reviewed and finalized before implementation to ensure clarity, appropriateness, and alignment with kindergarten-level competencies.



Figure 4
Perrelos Elementary School Research Environment

Data Gathering Stage. After securing all necessary permissions and finalizing the instrument, the researcher distributed the assessment forms to the teacher-respondents at Perellos Elementary School. The kindergarten teachers accomplished the rating tools based on their actual classroom observations of the kindergarten learners under their care. The teachers assessed each learner's phonological awareness in terms of rhyming skills, syllable awareness, beginning sound identification, and sound blending. They also evaluated early reading readiness in terms of letter recognition, letter-sound correspondence, vocabulary development, and print awareness.

Teachers completed the assessment independently based on their professional judgment and classroom records to ensure accuracy and authenticity of data. The researcher monitored the process to ensure consistency in the completion of the instruments and to address any clarification needed regarding the rating procedure. After completion, all assessment forms were collected and checked for completeness before encoding.

Post-Data Gathering Stage. After data collection, the researcher organized and coded all responses for analysis. Each teacher-respondent's assessment data was reviewed to ensure completeness and consistency. Any incomplete entries were documented but retained as part of the dataset to preserve data integrity. The encoded data were then prepared for statistical analysis to determine the level of phonological awareness skills and early reading readiness of the kindergarten learners as assessed by their teachers, as well as the relationship between the two variables.

All data were kept confidential and were used solely for research purposes. The findings were then organized and presented in the succeeding chapters in accordance with the objectives of the study.

Ethical Considerations

The study observed strict ethical standards to ensure that all procedures were conducted with respect, integrity, and protection of the rights and welfare of all individuals involved. Since the study involved kindergarten learners as the subjects of assessment and kindergarten teachers as respondents, appropriate ethical safeguards were implemented throughout the research process.

Informed Consent. Informed consent was secured from the parents or legal guardians of the kindergarten learners prior to data collection. The consent form clearly explained the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, and the use of teacher-based assessments to evaluate learners' phonological awareness skills and early reading readiness. Parents were informed that participation was voluntary and that they could refuse or withdraw consent at any time without any negative consequences for their children.

In addition, informed consent was also obtained from the kindergarten teacher-respondents. Teachers were informed about the objectives of the study, their role as evaluators, and the voluntary nature of their participation.

Voluntary Participation. Participation in the study was strictly voluntary for both teachers and learners (through parental consent). Teachers were given the freedom to decline participation or withdraw from the study at any stage without penalty. Likewise, learners were included in the assessment only upon parental approval. No form of coercion or pressure was applied at any point in the research process.

Confidentiality and Anonymity. Confidentiality was strictly maintained throughout the study. No names of learners or teachers were used in the data collection forms, analysis, or final report. Instead, coded identifiers were assigned to ensure anonymity. All collected data were securely stored in password-protected files accessible only to the researcher. Results were presented in aggregated form to ensure that no individual participant could be identified.

Protection of Participants' Rights. The rights of all participants were fully protected throughout the study. Learners were not directly tested by the researcher and were not exposed to any stressful or inappropriate procedures. Instead, their performance was assessed through teacher observations within normal classroom activities. Teachers' professional judgment was respected, and they were not required to provide any information beyond the scope of the study. All procedures were designed to ensure that participants were treated fairly, respectfully, and in accordance with ethical research standards.

Minimization of Risk. The study involved minimal risk since no experimental treatment or intrusive procedures were conducted. Data collection relied solely on teacher-based assessments of existing classroom performance. The process did not disrupt regular instructional activities and ensured that learners remained in a safe and familiar learning environment.

Compliance with Ethical Standards. The study complied with the ethical guidelines of the Department of Education and followed institutional research approval procedures prior to implementation. All stages of the research were conducted with transparency, accountability, and strict adherence to ethical principles to ensure the protection and welfare of learners, teachers, and the school community.

Statistical Treatment

Frequency Count. Frequency count was used to determine the number of kindergarten learners based on profile variables such as age, gender, and preschool attendance. This statistical tool was used to present the actual number of respondents in each category in a clear and organized manner.

Percentage. The percentage was used to describe the distribution of kindergarten learners according to their profile variables. This helped present the proportion of learners in each category relative to the total number of respondents, making the data easier to interpret and compare.

Weighted Mean. The weighted mean was used to determine the level of phonological awareness skills and early reading readiness of kindergarten learners as assessed by their teachers. Using a four-point Likert scale, the weighted mean provided a numerical interpretation of the learners' performance in terms of rhyming skills, syllable awareness,

beginning sound identification, sound blending, letter recognition, letter-sound correspondence, vocabulary development, and print awareness.

Standard Deviation. Standard deviation was used to measure the variability of the learners' phonological awareness and early reading readiness scores. This statistical tool determined whether the learners' performances were closely similar or widely varied in terms of literacy skills as assessed by their teachers.

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson r). Pearson r was used to determine the significant relationship between phonological awareness skills and early reading readiness of kindergarten learners. This statistical tool measured the strength and direction of the relationship between the two variables. The results served as a basis for developing a phonological awareness enhancement guide to improve early reading readiness.

Scoring Procedure

The instrument for this study employed a four-point Likert-type scale to assess the frequency of observable phonological awareness behaviors and early reading readiness skills among kindergarten learners. The scale ranged from 1 (Rarely Demonstrated) to 4 (Always Demonstrated), with higher scores indicating stronger manifestation of the targeted skills. Each indicator under phonological awareness skills and early reading readiness was rated by the kindergarten teachers based on classroom observation.

Table 2

Scoring of Phonological Awareness Skills

Scale	Numerical Rating	Descriptive Rating	Verbal Interpretation
4	3.25–4.00	Expert	The learner consistently demonstrates phonological awareness skills, including rhyming, syllable awareness, beginning sound identification, and sound blending, with a very high level of proficiency and independence.
3	2.50–3.24	Advanced	The learner frequently demonstrates phonological awareness skills with only minimal assistance or prompting.
2	1.75–2.49	Intermediate	The learner inconsistently demonstrates phonological awareness skills and requires regular guidance and practice.
1	1.00–1.74	Beginner	The learner rarely demonstrates phonological awareness skills and requires intensive support to develop foundational abilities.

Table 3

Scoring of Early Reading Readiness

Scale	Numerical Rating	Descriptive Rating	Verbal Interpretation
4	3.25–4.00	Very High	The learner consistently demonstrates a very high level of early reading readiness, including letter recognition, letter-sound correspondence, vocabulary development, and print awareness.
3	2.50–3.24	High	The learner demonstrates a high level of early reading readiness with occasional need for prompts or assistance.
2	1.75–2.49	Low	The learner demonstrates emerging early reading readiness skills but requires regular guidance and practice to strengthen literacy foundations.
1	1.00–1.74	Very Low	The learner demonstrates very limited early reading readiness skills and requires intensive intervention to develop basic literacy competencies.

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Results and Discussion

Learner Profile
Age of the Learners

Table 4
Age of the Learners

Age (in years)	f	%
7 and above	2	2.15
6	41	44.09
5	50	53.76
Total	93	100.00

The findings show that the majority of the Kindergarten learners were 5 years old (53.76%), followed by 6 years old (44.09%), while only 2.15% were aged 7 years and above. These results indicate that most of the participants were within the age range prescribed for Kindergarten under the Philippine K to 12 curriculum. This suggests that the learners are developmentally prepared to engage in activities that develop phonological awareness and other foundational literacy skills. Being within the appropriate age level is important because early childhood is recognized as a critical period for language acquisition, cognitive growth, and literacy development.

The predominance of learners within the recommended Kindergarten age may have contributed to the generally high levels of phonological awareness skills and early reading readiness observed in this study. At this developmental stage, children experience rapid growth in their ability to recognize sounds, acquire vocabulary, and understand print concepts through structured and play-based learning experiences. According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (2020), developmentally appropriate instruction during the preschool years provides children with opportunities to strengthen language, cognitive, and literacy competencies that serve as foundations for later academic achievement. Similarly, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2021) emphasized that children who begin formal schooling at the appropriate age demonstrate greater readiness to benefit from literacy instruction because their cognitive and socio-emotional development is aligned with classroom expectations. These findings underscore the importance of providing age-appropriate literacy experiences that match children's developmental capabilities to maximize learning outcomes.

Gender of the Learners
Table 5
Gender of the Learners

Gender	f	%
Female	49	52.69
Male	44	47.31
Total	93	100.00

Table 5 reveals that 49 (52.69%) of the learners were female, while 44 (47.31%) were male, indicating a relatively balanced distribution of participants according to gender. The minimal difference between the number of male and female learners suggests that both groups were adequately represented in the study, thereby minimizing gender-related bias in describing the learners' phonological awareness skills and early reading readiness. Because of this balanced distribution, the overall findings are more likely to reflect the literacy abilities of the entire Kindergarten population rather than a single gender.

Although some studies have reported slight differences in early language and literacy development between boys and girls, these differences are often attributed to variations in learning experiences and language exposure rather than biological factors alone. Mullis et al. (2021) noted that female learners tend to demonstrate slightly stronger early literacy performance in some contexts; however, the gap becomes less pronounced when both sexes receive equitable access to high-quality literacy instruction. Likewise, UNESCO (2021) emphasized that gender has limited influence on literacy achievement when learners participate in inclusive and developmentally appropriate classroom

environments that provide equal opportunities for language interaction and reading experiences. The findings therefore suggest that instructional quality, classroom experiences, and learner engagement are more influential determinants of phonological awareness and early reading readiness than gender itself. This highlights the importance of implementing literacy programs that provide equal opportunities for all learners regardless of sex.

Pre-Kindergarten Attendance

Table 6

Pre-Kindergarten Attendance

Attendance	f	%
Yes	68	73.12
No	25	26.88
Total	93	100.00

The findings indicate that 68 learners (73.12%) attended Pre-Kindergarten before enrolling in Kindergarten, while 25 learners (26.88%) had no prior Pre-Kindergarten experience. This suggests that most of the learners had already been exposed to structured early childhood education before entering formal Kindergarten. Such early educational experiences likely provided opportunities to develop foundational skills in oral language, letter recognition, sound awareness, and classroom routines that support later literacy learning.

The high percentage of learners with Pre-Kindergarten experience may explain the generally high levels of phonological awareness skills and early reading readiness observed in the present study. Early childhood education exposes children to interactive literacy activities such as storytelling, singing, rhyming games, alphabet recognition, and language-rich classroom experiences, all of which strengthen the foundational skills necessary for reading acquisition. According to UNESCO (2021), participation in quality early childhood education significantly enhances children's cognitive, linguistic, and socio-emotional development, thereby improving their readiness for formal schooling. Similarly, Duncan et al. (2022) found that children who attended preschool programs consistently demonstrated stronger emergent literacy skills than those without prior early childhood education because they entered Kindergarten with more developed language abilities and greater familiarity with print concepts. Nevertheless, the presence of learners without Pre-Kindergarten experience suggests the need for differentiated instruction and targeted interventions to ensure that all learners, regardless of their educational background, acquire the foundational literacy skills necessary for successful reading development.

Phonological Awareness Skills

Rhyming Skills

Table 7

Rhyming Skills

S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	Identifies rhyming words when heard orally	3.16	0.94	Advanced
2	Selects a rhyming word from given choices	3.13	0.96	Advanced
3	Produces a rhyming word independently	2.77	0.85	Advanced
4	Completes a rhyme in familiar patterns	2.77	0.85	Advanced
5	Distinguishes rhyming from non-rhyming words	3.05	1.00	Advanced
6	Participates actively in rhyming games	3.14	0.95	Advanced
7	Generates more than one rhyming word	2.77	0.85	Advanced
8	Responds accurately during rhyming activities	3.12	0.97	Advanced
	Aggregate Mean	2.99		Advanced
	Aggregate Standard Deviation		0.92	Advanced

Legend: 3.25-4.00-Expert; 2.50-3.24-Advanced; 1.75-2.49-Intermediate; 1.00-1.74- Beginner

The findings reveal that the Kindergarten learners demonstrated an Advanced level of rhyming skills, with an aggregate mean of 2.99. Among the indicators, "Identifies rhyming words when heard orally" obtained the highest mean (3.16), followed closely by "Participates actively in rhyming games" (3.14) and "Selects a rhyming word from

given choices" (3.13). Meanwhile, the indicators related to independently producing rhyming words, completing rhymes, and generating multiple rhyming words received comparatively lower but still advanced ratings. These findings indicate that the learners are more proficient in recognizing rhyming patterns than in independently generating rhyming words, suggesting that productive rhyming skills are more challenging than receptive rhyming skills.

The results imply that the learners have already developed a strong awareness of sound similarities in spoken language, an essential component of phonological awareness. Their ability to identify rhyming words reflects growing sensitivity to sound patterns, which supports later decoding and word recognition. However, the relatively lower performance in generating rhyming words independently suggests that learners may still benefit from additional opportunities to practice expressive language activities that encourage creative manipulation of sounds. Activities such as rhyming games, songs, poems, and shared reading experiences may further strengthen these higher-order phonological skills.

These findings are consistent with the study of Castles, Rastle, and Nation (2021), who emphasized that rhyming ability is an early manifestation of phonological sensitivity and contributes significantly to later reading acquisition. Likewise, Gillon (2023) explained that children who engage regularly in rhyme-based activities develop stronger phonological representations that facilitate decoding and reading comprehension. The advanced level observed in this study may be attributed to the regular integration of nursery rhymes, songs, storytelling, and oral language activities in Kindergarten classrooms, which naturally expose learners to recurring sound patterns and enhance their awareness of spoken language.

Syllable Awareness

Table 8

Syllable Awareness

S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	Claps syllables correctly in familiar words	3.42	0.84	Expert
2	Identifies syllables in own name	3.42	0.84	Expert
3	Differentiates short and long words by syllables	3.31	0.87	Expert
4	Segments unfamiliar simple words	3.31	0.87	Expert
	Aggregate Mean	3.37		Expert
	Aggregate Standard Deviation		0.86	Expert

The results indicate that the Kindergarten learners achieved an Expert level of syllable awareness, with an aggregate mean of 3.37. The indicators "Claps syllables correctly in familiar words" and "Identifies syllables in own name" obtained the highest mean scores (3.42), while "Differentiates short and long words by syllables" and "Segments unfamiliar simple words" likewise received expert ratings. These findings demonstrate that the learners possess a well-developed ability to recognize and segment spoken words into syllables, indicating mastery of one of the fundamental components of phonological awareness.

The learners' strong performance suggests that they have acquired an understanding of word structure that supports the development of decoding skills and word recognition. Since syllable awareness enables children to break longer words into manageable sound units, it serves as an important bridge between oral language and reading. The consistently high ratings across all indicators further imply that classroom instruction effectively reinforces syllable segmentation through interactive activities such as clapping, chanting, and oral word games.

The findings support Ehri (2020), who emphasized the role of phonological awareness in helping children understand the sound structure of spoken words, which supports the development of early reading skills. Similarly, Wolff and Gustafsson (2022) highlighted the importance of early phonological training in developing children's reading and spelling abilities. The expert level attained by the learners may therefore reflect the value of developmentally appropriate literacy instruction that integrates meaningful oral language experiences and phonological awareness activities into daily classroom instruction.

Beginning Sound Identification

Table 9

Beginning Sound Identification

S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	Names objects that begin with given sound	3.46	0.80	Expert
2	Recognizes beginning sounds in classroom objects	3.53	0.80	Expert
3	Demonstrates consistency in identifying initial sounds	3.45	0.80	Expert
	Aggregate Mean	3.48		Expert
	Aggregate Standard Deviation		0.80	Expert

Table 9 shows that the Kindergarten learners demonstrated an Expert level of beginning sound identification, with an aggregate mean of 3.48. Among the indicators, "Recognizes beginning sounds in classroom objects" obtained the highest mean (3.53), followed closely by "Names objects that begin with a given sound" (3.46) and "Demonstrates consistency in identifying initial sounds" (3.45). These consistently high ratings indicate that the learners have developed a strong ability to recognize the initial sounds of spoken words, reflecting advanced phonemic awareness skills appropriate for their developmental level.

The findings suggest that the learners are becoming proficient in connecting spoken sounds with printed letters, an essential prerequisite for understanding the alphabetic principle. Beginning sound identification enables learners to distinguish similarities and differences among words, making it easier to recognize letter-sound relationships and decode unfamiliar words during reading. The high performance across all indicators also implies that the learners have benefited from repeated exposure to phonics instruction, vocabulary development activities, and oral language experiences within the Kindergarten curriculum.

The findings corroborate the work of Ehri (2020), who identified beginning sound identification as one of the strongest predictors of successful decoding and early word recognition. Likewise, the National Center on Improving Literacy (2022) emphasized that explicit instruction in identifying initial phonemes significantly enhances children's ability to establish letter-sound correspondences and accelerates early reading development. The expert level observed in this study may therefore be attributed to consistent classroom practices that integrate alphabet instruction, picture naming, and phonics-based learning experiences, allowing learners to strengthen their phonemic awareness while preparing for formal reading instruction.

Sound Blending

Table 10

Sound Blending

S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	Blends two phonemes correctly	3.44	0.80	Expert
2	Blends sounds without visual prompts	3.44	0.80	Expert
3	Blends sounds with minimal assistance	3.44	0.80	Expert
4	Shows improvement in blending tasks	3.44	0.80	Expert
	Aggregate Mean	3.44		Expert
	Aggregate Standard Deviation		0.80	Expert

The results reveal that the Kindergarten learners attained an Expert level of sound blending, with an aggregate mean of 3.44. All four indicators obtained identical mean scores, indicating that learners consistently demonstrated the ability to blend phonemes correctly, blend sounds independently, perform blending tasks with minimal assistance, and show improvement in blending activities. The uniformity of the ratings suggests that sound blending has been developed consistently across different learning situations and instructional activities.

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These findings imply that the learners have acquired one of the most essential phonological awareness skills required for early reading. Sound blending enables children to combine individual phonemes into complete words, making it a critical skill for decoding unfamiliar vocabulary. The learners' consistent expert performance indicates that they have progressed beyond recognizing isolated sounds and are capable of integrating these sounds into meaningful spoken words, thereby demonstrating readiness for more advanced reading tasks.

The findings agree with Castles, Rastle, and Nation (2021), who emphasized that sound blending is fundamental to successful decoding because it allows children to convert individual speech sounds into recognizable words. Similarly, Hulme and Snowling (2021) reported that learners with well-developed blending skills generally demonstrate greater reading fluency and more accurate word recognition than learners with limited blending abilities. The consistently high performance found in this study may be explained by the systematic implementation of phonics instruction and repeated opportunities for learners to engage in oral blending activities during classroom instruction.

Summary of Phonological Awareness

Table 11
Summary of Phonological Awareness

Components	WM	SD	Verbal Description
Rhyming Skills	2.99	0.92	Advanced
Syllable Awareness	3.37	0.86	Expert
Beginning Sound Identification	3.48	0.80	Expert
Sound Blending	3.44	0.80	Expert
Grand Mean	3.32		Expert
Grand Standard Deviation		0.85	Expert

The summary presented in Table 11 indicates that the Kindergarten learners demonstrated an overall Expert level of phonological awareness skills, as reflected by the grand mean of 3.32. Among the four components, beginning sound identification obtained the highest mean (3.48), followed by sound blending (3.44) and syllable awareness (3.37), while rhyming skills received the lowest mean (2.99), although still described as Advanced. These findings suggest that the learners possess well-developed foundational phonological skills necessary for successful early reading, with slight variation across specific skill areas.

The results further indicate that while learners excel in phonemic awareness tasks requiring identification and manipulation of individual sounds, they experience comparatively greater difficulty in generating rhyming words independently. This difference may be attributed to the increasing cognitive and linguistic demands associated with productive language tasks, which require learners not only to recognize sound patterns but also to retrieve and produce appropriate vocabulary. Nevertheless, the advanced rating in rhyming skills demonstrates that learners have already established the necessary foundation upon which more complex phonological competencies can be further developed.

The overall findings reinforce the importance of phonological awareness as a cornerstone of early literacy development. According to the National Center on Improving Literacy (2022), phonological awareness provides the foundation upon which decoding, spelling, and fluent reading are built. Likewise, Castles, Rastle, and Nation (2021) concluded that children who demonstrate strong phonological awareness during the preschool and Kindergarten years are significantly more likely to become successful readers in the elementary grades. The expert overall performance observed in this study suggests that the literacy practices implemented in Perrelos Elementary School effectively support the development of foundational reading skills, thereby preparing learners for the increasing literacy demands of formal education.

Early Reading Readiness
Letter Recognition
Table 12
Letter Recognition

S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	Identifies letters in random order	3.52	0.79	Very High

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S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
2	Identifies letters in environmental print	3.52	0.79	Very High
3	Identifies letters in own name	3.52	0.79	Very High
4	Participates in letter recognition activities	3.52	0.79	Very High
	Aggregate Mean	3.52		Very High
	Aggregate Standard Deviation		0.79	Very High

Legend: 3.25-4.00-Very High; 2.50-3.24-High; 1.75-2.49-Low; 1.00-1.74- Very Low

The findings reveal that the Kindergarten learners demonstrated a Very High level of letter recognition, with an aggregate mean of 3.52. All four indicators obtained identical mean scores, indicating that the learners consistently recognized letters in random order, identified letters found in environmental print, recognized the letters in their own names, and actively participated in letter recognition activities. The uniformity of the ratings suggests that learners have developed a strong familiarity with the alphabet regardless of the context in which letters are presented.

The results imply that the learners have acquired one of the most fundamental skills required for beginning reading. Letter recognition serves as the foundation upon which learners develop letter-sound correspondence, decoding, and word identification. Their ability to recognize letters in various contexts also indicates that they have been exposed to print-rich environments both inside and outside the classroom. Activities such as alphabet games, classroom displays, storybooks, and name recognition exercises likely contributed to strengthening this essential literacy skill.

The findings support Graham, Hebert, and Harris (2021), who emphasized that mastery of letter recognition is among the strongest predictors of early reading success because it enables children to establish meaningful connections between print and spoken language. Similarly, Acha et al. (2023) found that the rate at which children acquired letter knowledge predicted their decoding and word identification accuracy, highlighting the importance of letter-sound associations in reading development. The very high level observed in this study suggests that the literacy instruction provided to the learners effectively promotes alphabet knowledge, preparing them for more advanced reading tasks.

Letter-Sound Correspondence

Table 13

Letter-Sound Correspondence

S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	Differentiates letter names and sounds	3.52	0.79	Very High
2	Uses letter sounds in word formation	3.52	0.79	Very High
3	Identifies vowel sounds accurately	3.65	0.78	Very High
4	Applies letter sounds when blending	3.52	0.79	Very High
	Aggregate Mean	3.55		Very High
	Aggregate Standard Deviation		0.79	Very High

The results indicate that the Kindergarten learners attained a Very High level of letter-sound correspondence, with an aggregate mean of 3.55. Among the indicators, "Identifies vowel sounds accurately" obtained the highest mean (3.65), while the remaining indicators, including differentiating letter names and sounds, using letter sounds in word formation, and applying letter sounds during blending activities, all received equally high ratings. These findings demonstrate that learners have developed a solid understanding of the relationship between printed letters and their corresponding sounds.

The learners' strong performance indicates that they have begun to master the alphabetic principle, which enables children to decode unfamiliar words during beginning reading. Their high competence in identifying vowel sounds further suggests that they possess the foundational phonics skills needed to recognize simple words and build reading fluency. Such competence reflects effective classroom instruction that emphasizes phonics, oral language development, and repeated opportunities to practice sound-letter associations through meaningful literacy activities.

These findings are consistent with Ehri (2020), who explained that letter-sound correspondence is central to the acquisition of decoding skills because children learn to translate printed symbols into spoken language. Similarly, the

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National Center on Improving Literacy (2022) reported that explicit phonics instruction significantly strengthens children's ability to recognize words accurately and efficiently during early reading. The very high level found in this study may therefore be attributed to systematic phonics instruction and continuous exposure to alphabet-based learning activities that support children's understanding of the alphabetic system.

Vocabulary Development

Table 14

Vocabulary Development

S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	Names common objects correctly	3.38	0.81	Very High
2	Uses age-appropriate vocabulary	3.37	0.80	Very High
3	Understands simple story words	3.38	0.81	Very High
4	Answers “what” and “who” questions	3.38	0.81	Very High
5	Uses newly learned words	3.37	0.80	Very High
6	Follows simple verbal instructions	3.37	0.80	Very High
7	Identifies objects from descriptions	3.37	0.80	Very High
8	Demonstrates vocabulary growth	3.37	0.80	Very High
	Aggregate Mean	3.37		Very High
	Aggregate Standard Deviation		0.81	Very High

Table 14 shows that the Kindergarten learners demonstrated a Very High level of vocabulary development, with an aggregate mean of 3.37. The highest-rated indicators included naming common objects correctly, understanding simple story words, and answering "what" and "who" questions, while the remaining indicators likewise obtained very high ratings. These findings indicate that the learners possess age-appropriate vocabulary knowledge and are capable of understanding and using words effectively during classroom interactions.

The results suggest that the learners have developed a sufficient language foundation to support reading comprehension and oral communication. Vocabulary knowledge enables children to understand stories, follow classroom instructions, and express ideas more effectively. Since comprehension depends largely on word knowledge, learners with broader vocabularies are more capable of constructing meaning from spoken and written language. The consistently high ratings across all indicators also reflect frequent opportunities for learners to participate in conversations, storytelling, shared reading, and language-rich classroom experiences.

The findings support Quinn, Wagner, Petscher, and Lopez (2020), who concluded that vocabulary knowledge is an important predictor of later reading comprehension because children understand texts more effectively when they possess adequate word knowledge. Similarly, Hadley et al. (2022) found that teacher language practices, including interactive talk, responsive communication, and conceptual discussions, support children's oral language development. The very high level observed in this study suggests that the learners may have benefited from classroom practices that promote vocabulary acquisition, oral language development, and meaningful interactions with teachers and peers.

Print Awareness

Table 15

Print Awareness

S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	Holds book correctly	3.33	0.78	Very High
2	Identifies front and back of book	3.33	0.78	Very High
3	Tracks print left to right	3.17	0.88	High
4	Recognizes that print carries meaning	3.17	0.88	High
5	Recognizes familiar environmental print	3.17	0.88	High
6	Understands top-to-bottom reading direction	3.17	0.88	High
7	Participates in shared reading sessions	3.17	0.88	High

S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
	Aggregate Mean	3.22		High
	Aggregate Standard Deviation		0.85	High

The findings reveal that the Kindergarten learners attained a High level of print awareness, with an aggregate mean of 3.22. The indicators related to holding a book correctly and identifying the front and back cover obtained very high ratings, whereas indicators involving print directionality, recognition of print as carrying meaning, environmental print, and participation in shared reading activities were rated high. These findings suggest that while learners demonstrate competence in basic book-handling skills, they require additional reinforcement in understanding how print functions during reading.

The comparatively lower performance in print awareness, although still classified as high, indicates that learners may have had fewer opportunities to engage in activities that explicitly teach concepts about print, such as tracking text from left to right, recognizing the purpose of written language, and understanding reading direction. These concepts require repeated exposure to shared reading experiences and explicit teacher modeling. Strengthening these skills is important because print awareness helps learners understand how written language is organized and prepares them for independent reading.

The findings agree with Galeza and Rasinski (2023), who reported that repeated singing of shared texts helped improve preschool learners' understanding of print concepts, including distinguishing pictures from written words and recognizing the direction of print. Likewise, the National Center on Improving Literacy (2022) emphasized that shared reading and print-focused instructional practices support children's understanding of print concepts and foundational literacy skills. The findings therefore suggest that although learners already possess a good understanding of print concepts, incorporating more print-rich activities, interactive read-aloud sessions, and repeated shared-text activities may further strengthen this aspect of early literacy development.

Summary of Early Reading Readiness

Table 16

Summary of Early Reading Readiness

Components	WM	SD	Verbal Description
Letter Recognition	3.52	0.79	Very High
Letter-Sound Correspondence	3.55	0.79	Very High
Vocabulary Development	3.37	0.81	Very High
Print Awareness	3.22	0.85	High
Grand Mean	3.42		Very High
Grand Standard Deviation		0.81	Very High

The summary presented in Table 16 indicates that the Kindergarten learners demonstrated an overall Very High level of early reading readiness, with a grand mean of 3.42. Letter-sound correspondence obtained the highest mean (3.55), followed closely by letter recognition (3.52) and vocabulary development (3.37), while print awareness obtained the lowest mean (3.22), although it remained within the high descriptive level. These findings indicate that the learners possess well-developed foundational literacy skills necessary for successful participation in formal reading instruction.

The results further suggest that the learners have already acquired the essential competencies needed to begin reading, particularly in recognizing letters, connecting letters with sounds, and understanding age-appropriate vocabulary. The relatively lower rating in print awareness indicates that learners may still benefit from additional classroom experiences involving shared reading, environmental print exploration, and explicit instruction on print conventions. Addressing this area may help learners achieve a more balanced development across all dimensions of early reading readiness.

The findings are consistent with Snow and Matthews (2020), who emphasized that early reading readiness is influenced by the combined development of alphabet knowledge, phonological awareness, vocabulary, and print concepts. Similarly, the National Institute for Early Education Research (2023) reported that children who enter

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elementary school with strong foundational literacy skills are more likely to experience long-term academic success because they possess the necessary competencies for reading acquisition. The very high overall level observed in this study indicates that the Kindergarten literacy program at Perrelos Elementary School effectively prepares learners for the demands of formal reading instruction while highlighting the need to further strengthen print awareness through enriched literacy experiences.

Relationship Between Phonological Awareness and Early Reading Readiness

Table 17

Test of Relationship Between Phonological Awareness Skills and Early Reading Readiness

Variables	r-value	Strength of Correlation	p - value	Decision	Remarks
Rhyming Skills and Early Reading Readiness	0.828*	Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Syllable Awareness and Early Reading Readiness	0.916*	Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Beginning Sound Identification and Early Reading Readiness	0.916*	Positive Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Sound Blending and Early Reading Readiness	0.896*	Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant

*significant at $p<0.05$ (two-tailed)

The findings revealed a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between rhyming skills and early reading readiness ($r = 0.828$, $p = 0.000$), indicating that learners who demonstrated higher proficiency in recognizing and producing rhyming words also exhibited higher levels of readiness for reading. This suggests that sensitivity to sound patterns contributes substantially to children's ability to recognize words and acquire foundational literacy skills.

The findings are consistent with recent research emphasizing the importance of phonological awareness in early literacy development. Gijbels et al. (2024) highlighted the role of phonological awareness in reading development before formal reading instruction. Similarly, Prabhu et al. (2024) examined phonological awareness and alphabetic knowledge among young English language learners, underscoring the development of early literacy skills during the preschool and Kindergarten years. These findings suggest that recognizing rhyming words helps Kindergarten learners develop sensitivity to sound patterns, which supports their readiness for decoding and word recognition.

The strong relationship observed in this study may be attributed to the frequent use of rhyming songs, poems, nursery rhymes, and oral language activities in Kindergarten classrooms. Such experiences help learners recognize similarities in word endings and develop auditory discrimination, which are essential for successful beginning reading. Since the respondents already demonstrated advanced rhyming skills, these competencies likely contributed to their very high level of early reading readiness.

The findings showed a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between syllable awareness and early reading readiness ($r = 0.916$, $p = 0.000$). This indicates that learners who effectively segmented and manipulated syllables tended to demonstrate higher levels of reading readiness. The result implies that syllable awareness contributes significantly to children's understanding of word structure, which supports decoding and word recognition.

The findings are consistent with Li et al. (2025), who found that syllable awareness significantly predicted subsequent phoneme awareness among young children. Their findings suggest that recognizing and manipulating larger sound units, such as syllables, supports the development of more advanced phonological skills. This implies that syllable awareness may help Kindergarten learners develop the foundational sound-processing abilities needed for early reading and word recognition.

One possible explanation for this strong relationship is that Kindergarten instruction commonly incorporates clapping syllables, word segmentation, and oral language games, allowing learners to develop these skills through repeated practice. Such instructional experiences may have strengthened learners' phonological processing abilities, thereby enhancing their readiness for formal reading instruction.

The results indicated a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between beginning sound identification and early reading readiness ($r = 0.916$, $p = 0.000$). This finding demonstrates that learners who accurately recognized initial sounds were also more prepared for reading activities. Since identifying beginning sounds is closely associated with phonemic awareness, it serves as a critical foundation for connecting spoken sounds with printed letters.

The findings are consistent with Ehri (2022), who explained that phonemic awareness, grapheme-phoneme knowledge, and decoding are essential foundational skills in learning to read. Similarly, Yang et al. (2021) found that phonological awareness and other language-related skills contributed to differences in early print knowledge among Filipino children. These findings suggest that identifying initial phonemes helps Kindergarten learners develop awareness of speech sounds and establish connections between spoken sounds and written letters, thereby supporting early reading readiness.

The very strong association found in this study may be explained by the learners' expert performance in beginning sound identification. Kindergarten learners are frequently exposed to alphabet activities, picture naming exercises, and phonics instruction, enabling them to associate sounds with letters effectively. Consequently, learners who developed this skill were more capable of recognizing printed words and demonstrated higher levels of early reading readiness.

The findings revealed a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between sound blending and early reading readiness ($r = 0.896$, $p = 0.000$). This indicates that learners who successfully blended individual sounds to form words were more prepared to engage in beginning reading activities. Sound blending enables learners to decode unfamiliar words, making it one of the most important components of early literacy.

This finding supports the study of Castles, Rastle, and Nation (2021), who concluded that blending phonemes plays a fundamental role in word recognition and decoding development. Likewise, Hulme and Snowling (2021) emphasized that children with well-developed blending skills generally exhibit higher levels of reading readiness because they can efficiently combine speech sounds into meaningful words.

The strong relationship observed in this study may be attributed to learners' frequent participation in phonics-based classroom activities that emphasize blending sounds during reading instruction. Such experiences likely enhanced their decoding ability, enabling them to transition more effectively from oral language skills to formal reading.

Summary of Findings

The study revealed that the majority of the Kindergarten learners were within the expected age for Kindergarten, with a relatively balanced distribution of male and female learners. Most of the learners had attended Pre-Kindergarten, indicating that they had prior exposure to early childhood education before entering formal Kindergarten.

The Kindergarten learners demonstrated a high level of phonological awareness skills. They showed the strongest performance in syllable awareness, beginning sound identification, and sound blending, while rhyming skills, although developed, emerged as the area that requires further enhancement.

The learners also exhibited a very high level of early reading readiness. They performed particularly well in letter recognition, letter-sound correspondence, and vocabulary development. Print awareness, while evident, was comparatively less developed, indicating the need for continued emphasis on concepts about print during early literacy instruction.

The study further established a significant strong positive relationship between phonological awareness skills and early reading readiness. This finding affirms that learners with stronger phonological awareness are more likely to demonstrate greater readiness for beginning reading, highlighting the essential role of phonological awareness in early literacy development.

Based on the findings, a Phonological Awareness Enhancement Guide was developed to strengthen learners' phonological awareness skills, particularly rhyming, while reinforcing other key phonological competencies and their

connection to early reading readiness. The guide is intended to support Kindergarten teachers in providing developmentally appropriate and engaging literacy activities that foster learners' readiness for formal reading instruction.

Output of the Study

Building Early Readers: A Phonological Awareness Development Guide for Kindergarten Learners was developed from the study's findings. The reported results showed an Expert overall level of phonological awareness and Very High overall early reading readiness, with strong positive correlations between each phonological domain and reading readiness. Rhyming was the comparatively weaker phonological component, while print awareness had the lowest readiness rating. The guide therefore strengthens rhyming while reinforcing syllables, beginning sounds, blending, and their connections to broader literacy skills.

The guide proposes eight weeks of structured, play-based literacy activities, with three sessions per week lasting 30–40 minutes each. Songs, rhyming games, syllable activities, sound identification, blending, alphabet work, vocabulary experiences, and shared reading support classroom instruction and home reinforcement. Weekly monitoring, teacher reflection, remediation, and a proposed program evaluation are included. Appendix A retains the source's weekly guide, monitoring checklist, implementation provisions, budgets, and expected outcomes. These are proposed activities and targets; the study did not implement an experimental intervention or measure its effects.
Building Early Readers
A Phonological Awareness Development Guide for Kindergarten Learners

Rationale
"Building Early Readers" is a school-based phonological awareness enhancement guide designed for Kindergarten learners. It provides structured, play-based, and developmentally appropriate activities that strengthen learners' ability to recognize and manipulate sounds in spoken language. The guide serves as an instructional support tool for teachers and a reinforcement resource for parents to improve early reading readiness.

Early literacy provides the foundation for children's lifelong learning and academic success. Among the essential skills that support beginning reading, phonological awareness plays a vital role because it enables young learners to recognize, discriminate, and manipulate the sounds of spoken language before they learn to read printed words. Well-developed phonological awareness facilitates the acquisition of letter-sound relationships, decoding, and other foundational reading skills necessary for successful literacy development.

The present study examined the relationship between the phonological awareness skills and early reading readiness of Kindergarten learners at Perrelos Elementary School. Specifically, it assessed learners' phonological awareness in terms of rhyming skills, syllable awareness, beginning sound identification, and sound blending, as well as their early reading readiness in terms of letter recognition, letter-sound correspondence, vocabulary development, and print awareness.

The findings revealed that the learners demonstrated high to very high levels of phonological awareness skills and early reading readiness. They showed the strongest performance in syllable awareness, beginning sound identification, and sound blending, while rhyming skills emerged as the area that requires further strengthening. Likewise, the learners exhibited very high levels of letter recognition, letter-sound correspondence, and vocabulary development, whereas print awareness remained comparatively lower. More importantly, the study established a significant strong positive relationship between phonological awareness skills and early reading readiness, affirming that strengthening learners' phonological awareness contributes substantially to their preparedness for formal reading instruction.

In response to these findings, Building Early Readers: A Phonological Awareness Development Guide for Kindergarten Learners was developed as the primary output of the study. The guide provides Kindergarten teachers with a structured, play-based, and developmentally appropriate instructional resource that systematically develops rhyming skills, syllable awareness, beginning sound identification, sound blending, and other early literacy competencies. Through meaningful and engaging learning experiences, the guide seeks to strengthen learners'

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foundational literacy skills, support classroom instruction, and prepare Kindergarten learners for successful reading in the primary grades.

General Objective

To strengthen the phonological awareness skills and early reading readiness of Kindergarten learners through structured, engaging, and developmentally appropriate literacy activities that prepare them for formal reading instruction.

Specific Objectives

At the end of the intervention, the learners should be able to:
Identify and produce rhyming words in oral language activities.
Recognize, count, and segment syllables in familiar spoken words.
Identify the beginning sounds of familiar words accurately.
Blend individual speech sounds to form meaningful words.
Recognize uppercase and lowercase letters correctly.
Demonstrate accurate letter-sound correspondence during phonics activities.
Expand vocabulary through meaningful oral language and shared reading experiences.
Demonstrate appropriate print awareness by recognizing book concepts and print conventions.

Target Learners and Duration

Target Learners: Kindergarten Learners
Duration: 8 Weeks, 30–40 minutes per session, 3 sessions per week

Scheme of Implementation

The guide would be implemented through daily classroom integration of phonological awareness activities during circle time and literacy sessions. Teachers would use play-based strategies such as songs, rhyming games, sound drills, and storytelling to engage learners. Weekly monitoring would be conducted to track learner progress, while remedial activities would be provided for learners needing additional support. Parent involvement would also be encouraged through take-home activities that reinforce classroom lessons.

Table 18

Components of the Guide

Week	Skill Focus	Objective
Week 1	Rhyming Skills	Identify, recognize, and produce rhyming words through engaging oral language activities.
Week 2	Syllable Awareness	Count, clap, segment, and blend syllables in familiar spoken words.
Week 3	Beginning Sound Identification	Recognize and identify the initial sounds of familiar words and objects.
Week 4	Sound Blending	Blend individual phonemes to form meaningful words accurately.
Week 5	Letter Recognition	Recognize and distinguish uppercase and lowercase letters in different contexts.
Week 6	Letter-Sound Correspondence	Match letters with their corresponding sounds and apply them in simple word reading activities.
Week 7	Vocabulary Development	Develop expressive and receptive vocabulary through oral language and shared reading experiences.
Week 8	Print Awareness	Demonstrate understanding of print concepts, book handling, and reading directionality.

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Assessment and Monitoring

Table 19

Literacy Skills Monitoring Checklist

Literacy Skill	Beginning	Developing	Advanced	Expert	Teacher's Remarks
Rhyming Skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Syllable Awareness	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Beginning Sound Identification	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Sound Blending	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Letter Recognition	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Letter-Sound Correspondence	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Vocabulary Development	☐	☐	☐	☐	
Print Awareness	☐	☐	☐	☐	

Teacher Reflection

After each session, the teacher may reflect on the implementation of the activities to identify learners' progress and improve future instruction.

Which learning activity was most effective in helping the learners achieve the lesson objective? Why?

Which learners need additional support, and what specific phonological awareness or early reading skill should be reinforced?

What adjustments or improvements should be made in the next session to enhance learners' participation and achievement?

Comprehensive Weekly Guide and Program Implementation Matrix

The following weekly records reproduce the complete source weekly guide and implementation matrix in a vertical layout. Blank Actual Accomplishment and Remarks fields are retained for future implementation records.

Week 1 Rhyming Skills

Table 20

Weekly Guide and Implementation Provisions for Week 1

Field	Content
Learning Objective and Instructional Materials	Learning Objective Identify, recognize, and produce rhyming words through oral language activities. Instructional Materials Picture cards Rhyming word cards Pocket chart Nursery rhyme charts • Audio recordings of rhyming songs
Learning Activities and Assessment	Learning Activities Rhyming Basket – The teacher presents a target word (e.g., cat). Learners select picture cards that rhyme with the target word (e.g., hat, bat, and rat). Finish the Rhyme – The teacher reads a simple rhyme and pauses before the last word. Learners complete the rhyme using an appropriate rhyming word. Rhyming Circle – Learners take turns giving another word that rhymes with the teacher's target word. Assessment Identifies rhyming words correctly. Produces rhyming words independently.
Areas of Concern	1. Rhyming Skills
Objectives	Strengthen learners' rhyming skills through structured and engaging oral language activities.
Strategies / Activities	Implement rhyming games, nursery rhymes, picture matching, "Finish the Rhyme," and Rhyming Circle activities.
Persons Involved	Kindergarten Teacher
Budget	₱300.00
Source of Budget	School MOOE / Local Funds
Time Frame	Week 1
Expected Outcome	Learners accurately identify and produce rhyming words during classroom activities. At least 80% demonstrate improvement.
Actual Accomplishment	

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Field	Content
Remarks	

Week 2 Syllable Awareness

Table 21

Weekly Guide and Implementation Provisions for Week 2

Field	Content
Learning Objective and Instructional Materials	Learning Objective Count, identify, and segment syllables in familiar spoken words. Instructional Materials Picture cards Name cards Drum or tambourine Syllable mats
Learning Activities and Assessment	Learning Activities Clap My Name – Learners clap the syllables in their own names and classmates' names. Syllable Hop – Learners jump once for every syllable they hear in a spoken word. Beat the Drum – Learners beat the drum while pronouncing each syllable of familiar words. Assessment Counts syllables accurately. Segments familiar words into correct syllables.
Areas of Concern	2. Syllable Awareness
Objectives	Develop learners' syllable awareness through multisensory learning experiences.
Strategies / Activities	Conduct syllable clapping, syllable hop, drum-the-syllables, and word segmentation activities.
Persons Involved	Kindergarten Teacher
Budget	₱300.00
Source of Budget	School MOOE / Local Funds
Time Frame	Week 2
Expected Outcome	Learners correctly identify, count, and segment syllables in familiar words. At least 80% segment correctly.
Actual Accomplishment	
Remarks	

Week 3 Beginning Sound Identification

Table 22

Weekly Guide and Implementation Provisions for Week 3

Field	Content
Learning Objective and Instructional Materials	Learning Objective Recognize and identify the beginning sounds of familiar words. Instructional Materials Alphabet cards Picture cards Mystery bag • Classroom objects
Learning Activities and Assessment	Learning Activities Mystery Bag – Learners pick an object from the bag and identify its beginning sound. Sound Hunt – Learners search the classroom for objects that begin with a target sound. Sound Sorting – Learners classify picture cards according to their beginning sounds. Assessment Identifies beginning sounds correctly. • Matches objects with their corresponding initial sounds.
Areas of Concern	3. Beginning Sound Identification
Objectives	Enhance beginning sound identification through interactive phonics activities.
Strategies / Activities	Facilitate Mystery Bag, Sound Hunt, Sound Sorting, and alphabet-picture matching activities.
Persons Involved	Kindergarten Teacher
Budget	₱400.00
Source of Budget	School MOOE / Local Funds
Time Frame	Week 3
Expected Outcome	Learners accurately identify the beginning sounds of familiar words and objects. At least 85% score proficiently.
Actual Accomplishment	
Remarks	

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Week 4 Sound Blending

Table 23

Weekly Guide and Implementation Provisions for Week 4

Field	Content
Learning Objective and Instructional Materials	Learning Objective Blend individual speech sounds to form meaningful words. Instructional Materials Phoneme cards Picture cards • Magnetic letters
Learning Activities and Assessment	Learning Activities Robot Talk – The teacher pronounces segmented sounds (e.g., /d/ /o/ /g/), and learners blend them to form the complete word. Blend and Build – Learners arrange letter cards after blending spoken phonemes. Say the Word – Learners listen to segmented sounds and pronounce the complete word. Assessment Blends phonemes correctly. • Reads blended words accurately.
Areas of Concern	4. Sound Blending Skills
Objectives	Improve learners' sound blending skills to support early decoding.
Strategies / Activities	Conduct Robot Talk, Blend and Build, Say the Word, and phoneme blending games using picture and letter cards.
Persons Involved	Kindergarten Teacher
Budget	₱350.00
Source of Budget	School MOOE / Local Funds
Time Frame	Week 4
Expected Outcome	Learners successfully blend individual speech sounds to form meaningful words. At least 85% blend correctly.
Actual Accomplishment	
Remarks	

Week 5 Letter Recognition

Table 24

Weekly Guide and Implementation Provisions for Week 5

Field	Content
Learning Objective and Instructional Materials	Learning Objective Recognize and distinguish uppercase and lowercase letters. Instructional Materials Alphabet cards Magnetic letters Alphabet puzzles • Letter Bingo cards
Learning Activities and Assessment	Learning Activities Alphabet Bingo – Learners identify letters called by the teacher on their bingo cards. Letter Fishing – Learners "fish" for target letters using magnetic fishing rods. Find My Letter – Learners locate and identify target letters displayed around the classroom. Assessment Recognizes uppercase letters. Recognizes lowercase letters. • Matches identical letters correctly.
Areas of Concern	5. Letter Recognition
Objectives	Strengthen letter recognition through meaningful alphabet activities.
Strategies / Activities	Implement Alphabet Bingo, Letter Fishing, Find My Letter, and alphabet puzzle activities.
Persons Involved	Kindergarten Teacher
Budget	₱500.00
Source of Budget	School MOOE / Local Funds
Time Frame	Week 5
Expected Outcome	Learners recognize and distinguish uppercase and lowercase letters accurately. At least 85% recognize accurately.
Actual Accomplishment	
Remarks	

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Week 6 Letter-Sound Correspondence

Table 25

Weekly Guide and Implementation Provisions for Week 6

Field	Content
Learning Objective and Instructional Materials	Learning Objective Match letters with their corresponding sounds. Instructional Materials Alphabet flashcards Picture cards Pocket chart • Sound cubes
Learning Activities and Assessment	Learning Activities Sound Match – Learners match letters with pictures representing their initial sounds. Letter Detective – Learners identify letters and produce their corresponding sounds. Alphabet Treasure Hunt – Learners search for classroom objects that begin with target letter sounds. Assessment Matches letters with corresponding sounds accurately. • Applies letter sounds during simple word-reading activities.
Areas of Concern	6. Letter-Sound Correspondence
Objectives	Reinforce letter-sound correspondence using explicit phonics instruction.
Strategies / Activities	Conduct Sound Match, Letter Detective, Alphabet Treasure Hunt, and word-building activities.
Persons Involved	Kindergarten Teacher
Budget	₱300.00
Source of Budget	School MOOE / Local Funds
Time Frame	Week 6
Expected Outcome	Learners correctly associate letters with their corresponding sounds. At least 85% demonstrate accuracy.
Actual Accomplishment	
Remarks	

Week 7 Vocabulary Development

Table 26

Weekly Guide and Implementation Provisions for Week 7

Field	Content
Learning Objective and Instructional Materials	Learning Objective Develop expressive and receptive vocabulary through oral language activities. Instructional Materials Storybooks Picture cards Vocabulary charts • Real objects (realia)
Learning Activities and Assessment	Learning Activities Picture Talk – Learners describe pictures using newly learned vocabulary words. Story Circle – Learners participate in guided storytelling and discussion activities. Name That Object – Learners identify and describe familiar objects using appropriate vocabulary. Assessment Uses newly learned vocabulary appropriately. • Answers oral comprehension questions accurately.
Areas of Concern	7. Oral Vocabulary Expansion
Objectives	Expand learners' vocabulary through oral language and shared reading activities.
Strategies / Activities	Facilitate Picture Talk, Story Circle, Name That Object, and guided vocabulary games.
Persons Involved	Kindergarten Teacher
Budget	₱400.00
Source of Budget	School MOOE / Local Funds
Time Frame	Week 7
Expected Outcome	Learners use newly learned vocabulary appropriately during oral communication. At least 80% apply new words.
Actual Accomplishment	
Remarks	

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Week 8 Print Awareness

Table 27

Weekly Guide and Implementation Provisions for Week 8

Field	Content
Learning Objective and Instructional Materials	Learning Objective Demonstrate understanding of print concepts and proper book handling. Instructional Materials Big books Storybooks Environmental print samples Classroom labels
Learning Activities and Assessment	Learning Activities Book Walk – Learners identify the front cover, back cover, title, and author of a book. Point and Read – Learners track print from left to right and top to bottom during shared reading. Environmental Print Hunt – Learners identify familiar print found in labels, signs, and classroom displays. Assessment Demonstrates proper book handling. Identifies basic book parts. Follows the correct directionality of print. • Recognizes that print carries meaning.
Areas of Concern	8. Print Awareness
Objectives	Develop learners' print awareness through shared reading and print-rich experiences.
Strategies / Activities	Conduct Book Walk, Point and Read, Environmental Print Hunt, and shared reading sessions.
Persons Involved	Kindergarten Teacher
Budget	₱300.00
Source of Budget	School MOOE / Local Funds
Time Frame	Week 8
Expected Outcome	Learners demonstrate correct book handling, print directionality, and print awareness. At least 80% demonstrate skills.
Actual Accomplishment	
Remarks	

Program Evaluation

Table 28

Program Evaluation Provisions

Field	Content
Areas of Concern	9. Program Evaluation
Objectives	Evaluate the effectiveness of the Building Early Readers: A Phonological Awareness Development Guide for Kindergarten Learners.
Strategies / Activities	Administer post-intervention assessment, review learners' progress records, and conduct teacher reflection after implementation.
Persons Involved	Kindergarten Teacher, School Head
Budget	₱200.00
Source of Budget	School MOOE / Local Funds
Time Frame	End of Week 8
Expected Outcome	Improved phonological awareness skills and early reading readiness; majority show growth over baseline.
Actual Accomplishment	
Remarks	

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that the Kindergarten learners demonstrated well-developed phonological awareness skills and a high level of early reading readiness, indicating that they possess the foundational competencies necessary for successful engagement in formal reading instruction. Among the components of phonological awareness, rhyming skills emerged as the area requiring further enhancement, while the other phonological skills were more highly developed, suggesting the need for balanced and continuous literacy instruction across all domains.

The study further concludes that phonological awareness is a significant determinant of early reading readiness. The significant strong positive relationship between phonological awareness skills and early reading readiness confirms that learners who possess stronger abilities in rhyming, syllable awareness, beginning sound identification, and sound blending are more likely to demonstrate greater preparedness for beginning reading. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected, affirming that phonological awareness plays a vital role in the development of early literacy.

These conclusions emphasize that strengthening phonological awareness should be a priority in Kindergarten instruction, as it provides the essential foundation upon which formal reading skills are built. For teachers, the findings highlight the importance of systematically integrating explicit and developmentally appropriate phonological awareness activities into daily classroom instruction to enhance learners' literacy outcomes. For schools and curriculum planners, the results provide empirical support for the development and implementation of phonological awareness intervention programs and enrichment guides that reinforce sound-based literacy instruction. Likewise, education leaders and policymakers may use these findings to strengthen early literacy initiatives, allocate resources for instructional materials and teacher capacity-building, and promote evidence-based instructional practices that will better prepare young learners for formal reading and improve long-term literacy achievement.

Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study, the Phonological Awareness Enhancement Guide is recommended for implementation in Kindergarten classrooms to strengthen learners' phonological awareness skills and enhance their early reading readiness. The guide may be adopted by schools as a supplementary instructional resource and integrated into existing early literacy programs to provide systematic, developmentally appropriate, and engaging phonological awareness activities. Continuous monitoring and evaluation of its implementation are likewise recommended to ensure its effectiveness and to support ongoing improvement of early literacy instruction.

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