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## **Abstract**

Even though stories are interesting material to learn, reading them still becomes a difficult skill because students are burdened and bored with piles of words when reading texts. Multimodal text is a solution to this issue that has been widely researched. One example of multimodal texts is the storyboard, which refers to a medium like a comic combining a sequence of storyline pictures and texts such as dialogues and narration. This teaching medium is assumed to have many advantages in improving students' reading comprehension because students are engaged with the storyboarding activities. Meanwhile, research about how to utilize comics or storyboards in teaching reading comprehension is less well observed. This research aims to investigate the extent of the advantageous lesson ideas in the storyboard makers and the levels of reading comprehension skills that can be taught using the storyboard makers. Since the data is explored and collected from the websites, the design of this study is exploratory research. This study revealed that the two storyboard makers provide a large number of innovative lesson ideas that have been advantageous in teaching narrative reading comprehension. This research also implied that storyboarding can be applied to many levels of reading comprehension skills, including lexical, literal, inferential, applied, critical, and effective comprehension, as well as possibly beneficial for extensive reading.

**Keywords:** Lesson ideas, narrative, reading comprehension, storyboard

## **INTRODUCTION**

One of the English essay texts taught in Indonesian schools is narrative text or fiction. Students are expected to master narrative text in all four English skills, listening, speaking, writing, and reading. However, the most dominant skill tested in the final exam is reading, especially reading comprehension. Learning reading comprehension is not easy, because it is not only getting information from a text but also requires subskills such as determining the main idea, locating references, finding specific information, understanding words, making inferences (Saraswati et al., 2021), activating prior knowledge, and choosing comprehension strategies (Elleman & Oslund, 2019). (Riadil, 2020) added connecting the meaning of every word, understanding the different cultures in the text as the difficulties faced by the readers. For novice readers, the difficulty becomes harder because their reading comprehension level is insufficient to understand long reading texts (Eksioglu et al., 2018). Despite the length of the text, they also feel the difficulty of reading material because of unfamiliar topics, vocabulary, and grammar (Satriani, 2018).

The difficulties of learning reading comprehension make teaching it is also difficult. To overcome this problem, several factors have to be considered. (Yang, 2016) categorized the factors into individual and situational factors. Individual factors are motivation, learning style, age, personality, gender, intelligence, and reading comprehension level. In terms of reading comprehension level, teachers have to teach students based on the level ranging from literal, inferential, and critical levels (Ulum, 2016; Yussof et al., 2013). In more detailed classification, Barrett (1972) as cited by (Fridge, 2014) provided five levels; literal, reorganization, inferential, evaluation, and appreciation. Therefore, the wrong identification of students' levels automatically affects the wrong decision on choosing the appropriate teaching strategies and material. This relates to situational factors, which are classroom environment, teaching strategy, and reading text. Teachers play crucial roles in

these factors because they have to set the classroom and find effective strategies to teach students how to understand the meaning in a text, develop their thinking skills, increase their interest in reading, and so forth (Natsir & Anisati, 2016).

In terms of reading material, the definition of reading texts needs to expand. According to (Leander et al., 2017), how we construct a boundary of reading text can constrain or open up our concept of reading in general. He argued that reading is a means of making sense of affective values and corporeal experience that we need to enlarge the limit of what we call a text. One of the most discussed forms of text nowadays is multimodal text. It refers to the combination of written texts with other modes such as picture, voice, and movement (Danielsson & Selander, 2021). Many studies suggested utilizing multimodal text in reading class because it can improve students' creativity, attention, involvement, production, and it worth to be supplementary reading materials (Januarty & Nima, 2018). (Youngs & Kyser, 2021) strongly agreed with this concept because teaching students to read multimodal texts can influence the depth and creativity of their responses.

As mentioned above, one of the modes embedded in the multimodal text is a picture. Before the emerge of multimodal text concepts, there have been many studies about the implementation of pictures in reading text. For example, (Roslina, 2017) conducted a study on the effect of picture storybooks on students' reading comprehension and she revealed that this is considered very useful, especially for students who experience reading demotivation because of the difficulty of reading a full text. (Novita & Kristiawan, 2017) who studied about picture series found pictures could enhance students' ability in understanding coherence, vocabulary, and activating background knowledge. These studies imply that multimodal text including text-picture combination is worthy of being an alternative material for teaching reading comprehension.

One of the text-picture modalities is Storyboard. It is a graphic organizer in the form of a picture series that is used to visualize scenes or storylines in the process of recording a movie, TV program, video, or digital storytelling (Gutierrez, 2014). It is combined with texts such as dialogues and narration. In L2 learning, this medium is often used in teaching writing, especially for outlining a story, because it can enhance coherence and creativity (Bruce, 2011; Hasan & Wijaya, 2016; Taylor et al., 2021). Recently, the application of storyboards to reading skills has also begun to be investigated, as they are also assumed useful for other skills.

Many studies found the advantages of storyboarding in reading class. (Foulsham et al., 2016) observed that eye attention and focus of readers when reading comics is the same as when reading a full text. It proves that the process of using comics as reading material also applies a top-down reading strategy that automatically improves comprehension. Additionally, besides findings of the effectiveness of improving reading comprehension (Abuzaid & Al Kayed, 2020; Foulsham et al., 2016; Maulida et al., 2017), a storyboard can also increase students' reading motivation, especially for novice readers who are still struggling to understand the meaning in a reading text (Naar, 2013). (Bruce,

2011) investigated the result of assigning storyboarding to interpret a reading text. The results showed that when the students' storyboards is compared among students, it inspired them that the interpretation of a text can be different, subjective, and affective. He also concluded that this activity suits visual learners because showing their mastery of visualizing a text. The storyboard also relates to language acquisition because some students who used to do storyboarding tend to use the languages they get from the activity. Thus, students' memory of vocabulary is also strengthened. Therefore, applying storyboard is beneficial as reading material as well as storyboarding assignment in interpreting a reading text.

Unfortunately, applying this media in reading class is not a simple work. The teacher has to prepare the lesson by making a storyboard for reading comprehension material. Not all teachers have the competence to draw manually, while using a cartoon maker program is a hard workload. Learning the templates, components, and the review process are the three hard works in making a storyboard (Yusoff & Salim, 2012). Furthermore, only teachers who have designing competence can make and present storyboards in their class, while teaching students to make storyboard is difficult because of the complexity of the tutorials and time-consuming. Whereas, involving or assigning students in making multimodal texts can improve students' cognitive and metacognitive skills (Hung, 2019), and stimulate their creativity (Taylor et al., 2021). Therefore, it needs a user-friendly application or e-learning media that can ease this process so that storyboarding can still be beneficial in reading classes.

Currently, as technology develops, several storyboard websites can be used to create comic strips for educational purposes. Several platforms appear and the most popular ones are Storyboard and Pixton. These two platforms have some strengths in comparison to their counterparts. They provide features that allow users enable to create storyboards without having to start from scratch because they enrich it with a library of various characters, styles, backgrounds, and layouts (Purnomo, 2017). These websites also allow the teacher to track and grade the students' works (Cabrera et al., 2018).

The advantages of Pixton and Storyboard that have not been discussed in the previous studies are the lesson idea features. The teachers who have used this website leave their lessons traces on this website, which is accessible as lesson ideas for other users or teachers. Teachers can read the lesson ideas and choose one to adopt or copy in their classes. Among the lesson ideas, it turns out that there are many related to reading comprehension.

Therefore, the researcher decided to conduct research to explore the lesson ideas recorded on these two websites and present them in this research as alternative forms of using this media in reading comprehension classes. Furthermore, to find out the extent benefits of storyboard makers in reading comprehension, this study also investigates the levels of reading comprehension skills that can be taught using the storyboard makers. The research problem addressed in this research is "what are the advantages of lessons ideas



related to narrative reading in storyboard makers?" and "what levels of reading comprehension skill can be taught using the storyboard makers?"

## **METHOD**

In this study, the writer uses exploratory research which is adopting from the research methodology written by Stebbins (Stebbins, 2001). The design was chosen because, in this research, the data collected are in form of websites related to teaching reading narrative text using storyboard makers. Since the data does not come directly from the subject but is gathered by reviewing sources, it can be categorized as secondary research (Largan & Morris, 2019). The data gathered by the researchers is in the form of online documents from Storyboard and Pixton. Both websites provide teaching materials and lesson plans recorded in a feature called "lesson ideas". The lessons are written by the teacher users and are open-accessed for all users.

There are five steps in this research procedure. First, identifying the topic and research problem. The topic is about teaching narrative reading using storyboard makers; Pixton and Storyboard. The second step is identifying research sources. This step aimed to determine some key terms to use for searching or filtering the websites' search engines in order to obtain the most relevant data for this research. The key terms are "reading" and "narrative text". However, it can be changed according to the relevant filters available on the websites. Third, collecting the data by exploring and synthesizing the websites' lesson ideas using key terms. Fourth, combining and comparing any duplication and assembling data into some categories of subskills. The possible subskills predicted to emerge are identifying main ideas, inferencing the text, learning about the plot and characters, and so forth. The researcher does not limit the variations of subskills so that the exploration will be maximum in finding any innovative and updated ideas.

Moreover, the data collection is conducted by exploring and synthesizing the lesson ideas provided in Pixton and Storyboard. On storyboard website, the data is obtained by clicking "All Teacher Resources", then selecting the "ELA" (English Language Acquisition) category. While at app.pixton.com, it is in "Lesson Ideas", especially in "narration" category.

Since this study is exploratory qualitative research without any hypothesis, it uses inductive analysis, which proceeds the resources into a theory or a conclusion. Finally, the collected data is analyzed and presented to answer the research problems. This process can be repeated during data collection if it is necessary to explore further into actionable results.

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

### **Lessons ideas related to narrative reading in storyboard makers?**

There are a great number of lesson ideas in Storyboard and Pixton because these two websites are not only for teaching English but also other subjects for elementary school, secondary school, and university. As previously explained, the sources of this

research are limited by the key term "reading narrative text". Therefore, the search engine must be filtered using the related features or categories available on the websites. At storyboardthat.com, scroll down and click "All Teacher Resources" then select the "ELA" (English Language Acquisition) category. While at app.pixton.com, select "Lesson Ideas" then find the filter objective "narration". After doing the procedure above, the lesson ideas emerged are narrative materials in form of storyboards completed with the lesson plans (Figures 1 and 2).

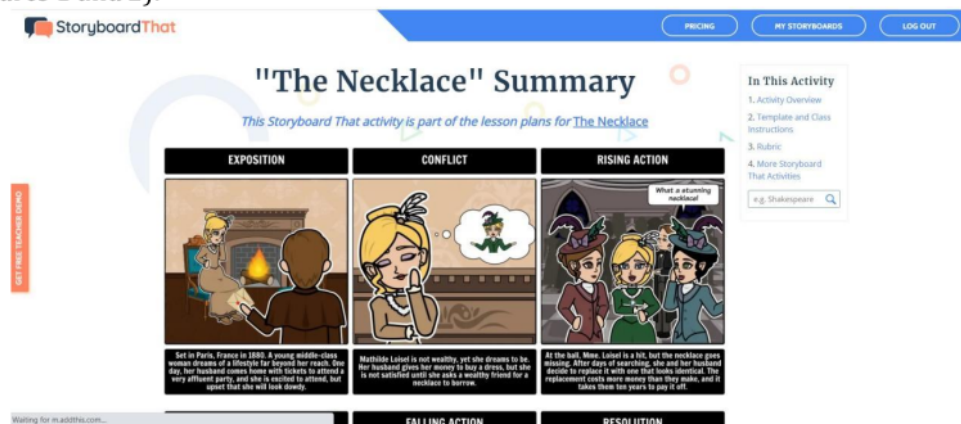


Figure 1. Lesson idea in storyboard



Figure 2. Lesson ideas in Pixton

Tables 1 and 2 present the collected data organized in three columns; Titles, Descriptions, and Categories. Titles refer to the names of the lessons on the website, Descriptions explain students' activities, and Categories explain in which reading subskill the lessons can be categorized.

Table 1. All Teacher Resources in Storyboard.

No	Titles	Descriptions	Categories
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1	Characters	Students are asked to describe characters using a storyboard. The characters can be described based on their traits, interests, beliefs, strength, weaknesses, quotes representing personality, and so forth.	Analyzing and describing characters
2	Vocabulary	Asking the students to define some key vocabularies using storyboards	Comprehending Vocabularies meaning
3	Themes, symbols, and motives	A story's main ideas, topic, subject, and messages are called themes. A symbol is an object that represents something deeper, more important, and intangible. In an artistic or literary production, a motif is a distinguishing trait or recurring theme. In this lesson, students are ordered to identify themes, symbols, and motives.	Identifying Themes, symbols, and motives
4	Plot summary	Students create visual plot storyboards of the main events in the story	Learning about plot
5	Poster	Students make a poster of the story. They can put the title, taglines, and a visual representing the story.	Learning settings, inferencing a story, critical reading
6	Cause and effect	Students have to connect events in a story or storyboards to find cause and effect.	Text analysis: cause and effect
7	Literary conflict	Identifying the conflicts of a story and presenting them in form of a storyboard	Generic structure
8	Prediction	Before reading a paragraph, students have to predict the story by seeing a picture.	activating prior knowledge, making a prediction
9	Point of view	Identifying the author's point of view	Learning point of view
10	Support with evidence	Students have to answer a question and make a storyboard as evidence that the answer is relevant to some parts of the story	Inferencing a text by answering implicit questions
11	Figurative language	Students demonstrate their understanding of figurative language by recognizing instances and constructing a literal or figurative representation visualized using storyboards	Text analysis: Figurative meaning
12	Favorite quotes	Students make one picture on storyboard to describe their favorite quotes/dialogues	Responsive reading and learning moral value
13	Before and after	Students describe a character or a symbol and tell the condition at the beginning and the end of the story	Text analysis: before and after
14	Compare and contrast	Students compare and contrast stories	Text analysis: compare and

15	Text connection	The students identify the connection between a story to another story, to themselves, and the world.	contrast Text analysis: text connection
16	Sequence of events	Students are asked to arrange some pictures of comics based on a story they read	Sequence of events
17	Scene Analysis	Students make storyboards based on scenes in a story	The sequence of events, reading integrated with writing
18	OSCAR	Describing a character using OSCAR which means O: Other characters' comments, S: Speech of the character, C: physical characteristics, A: narrator's attitude, and R: reader's reaction.	Analyzing and describing characters
19	5 WS	WS means question words; What, Who, Where, When, and Why. The teacher makes questions using the question words and students answer by making pictures	Understanding explicit or specific information
20	Clay's next step	Students have to continue the story by creating a scene after the last scene.	Reading integrated with writing

Table 2. Lesson Ideas in Pixton.

No	Titles	Descriptions	Categories
1	Super summary	Students determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.	Main idea and summary
2	My reading log	Students read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.	Extensive reading/reflective reading
3	Visible connection	Students will make connections between fictional texts by creating a visual presentation.	Identify characters and events
4	Details, details	Students will demonstrate their understanding of the main idea and details of a story by creating a comic.	Main idea
5	What's the point of view	Students will analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of characters in a text.	Characters' points of view
6	Analyzing authors' work	Students will create a comic to demonstrate how two authors present different information about the same topic. Compare and contrast the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, and	Identify the structure of events, ideas, concepts, or information



		4 problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in two or more texts.	
7	Cause and effect	Students will make cause and effect connections between World War I and World War II.	Cause and effect
8	Genres	This lesson is intended to reinforce the language and vocabulary needed to discuss the genre of a text. Use this lesson as an informal assessment to determine the knowledge and features of genres.	Genres
9	Determining the author's purpose	In this lesson, students will be able to determine the author's purpose for a text.	author's purpose
10	Comparing characters	2 Students will compare and contrast two characters in a story.	Characters
11	The plot chicken	Students will examine a story to determine how the plot unfolds and how the characters change based on the plot.	Plot
12	Handling conflict	Students will read a conflict comic and discuss conflict resolution.	Conflict resolution

### Levels of reading comprehension skills that can be taught using the storyboard makers

After presenting the data in the two tables above, the next step is comparing and combining similar categories then reducing them into several levels of reading comprehension skills. The levels are lexical (McAndrews, 2020), literal, reorganization, inferential, evaluation, and appreciation (Barrett's taxonomy, 1987 cited by (Fridge, 2014)). As the result, lesson ideas for teaching narrative reading on Storyboard and Pixton can be categorized into reading subskills as mentioned in Table 3 as follow:

Table 3. Reducing data from Reading Subskills into Levels of Reading Comprehension

No	Reading Subskill categories	Levels of Reading Comprehension
1	Vocabularies meaning	Lexical comprehension
2	Identify characters	
3	Identify settings	Literal comprehension
4	Understanding explicit or specific information	
5	Making a sequence of events	Reorganization
6	Identifying generic structure	
7	Classifying	
8	Outlining	

9	Summarizing	
10	Identifying before and after	
11	Identifying compare and contrast	
12	Identifying cause and effect	
13	Understanding implicit information	
14	Making summary or conclusions	
15	Identifying main ideas	
16	Describing characters	
17	Defining the author's purpose	
18	Identifying plot	Interpretive or Inferential comprehension
19	Identifying the author's point of view	
20	Identifying Themes, symbols, and motives	
21	The identifying genre of text	
22	Identifying Figurative language	
23	Predicting outcomes	
24	Activating prior knowledge	
25	Learning text connection to the world	Applied comprehension
26	Reflective reading	
27	Critical reading	
28	Extensive reading	
29	Text analysis: artistic features	
30	Stating opinion of a text, character, or a scene	Critical comprehension
31	Reading integrated with writing	
32	Understanding moral value	
33	Responsive reading	Affective comprehension

From Table 3, it can be inferred that storyboard makers can be utilized to teach all levels of reading comprehension skills. In lexical comprehension, a storyboard can be used to identify key vocabularies and present them using storyboards. For literal comprehension, the students can identify explicit and specific information both on storyboard and in the reading text. Summarizing, arranging events, identifying cause-effect, and compare-contrast are the functions of a storyboard, especially in reorganization. The findings are associated with (Riedel & Thomas, 2013) who revealed that storyboards can improve vocabularies acquisition and reading comprehension.

The dominant skill is interpretive comprehension which consists of 11 subskills, which are technically about how to answer inferential questions. Instead of assessing students to answer by the open-ended or multiple-choice questions, asking students to answer using a storyboard is a new alternative way of reading tests. This activity is

interesting because it can avoid students' boredom with monotone and repetitive activities (Pawlak et al., 2020). (Freed & Cain, 2021) who researched the effect of multimodal text on children also found that this activity not only benefits for adult learners but also for children in stimulating their brains to develop inferential comprehension.

As explained in the research results, there are 31 lesson ideas that can be adopted to teach the reading narrative text. Compared to the number of previous studies on storyboards and pixtons which were only 5 studies (Cabrera-Solano et al., 2021; Foulsham et al., 2016; Hung, 2019; Naar, 2013; Purnomo, 2017). Thereby, the decision to conduct exploratory research sourced from these two websites turned out to be very precise. Readers or teachers who read this research will get a lot of inspiration and will be motivated to use this media. In addition, this research is also useful as a reference for further research.

The results of this study also revealed that the storyboard makers can be utilized for teaching various kinds of reading skills. The reference of the skills is based on (McAndrews, 2020) who classified reading comprehension into six levels of skills; lexical, literal, inferential, applied, critical, and effective. The most basic skill of reading is lexical comprehension skill. This skill is defined as a skill to comprehend and construct the meaning of words and sentences in text. For beginners, understanding words is sometimes not enough because they still have to construct the meaning of words into sentences that can be understood (Roslina, 2017). Judging from some of the descriptions of lesson ideas, some use storyboards to understand and interpret texts, but can also use storyboards themselves as reading material. This is strongly supported by theory in multimodal text, which is useful in terms of motivating readers who are saturated with full text (Danielsson & Selander, 2016).

Looking at the list of lesson ideas found in this study, there are some new and innovative ideas that are never studied in previous researches. First, students are not only asked to name and describe in general the characters in the story, but are also asked to describe based on the traits, interests, and dialogues spoken in the story. Even more complete, it is formulated into the term OSCAR, which means O: Other characters' comments, S: Speech of the character, C: physical characteristics, A: narrator's attitude, and R: reader's reaction (Baudinet, 2021). This finding is in line with those (Cohn, 2020) who that found processes establish meaning in a mental model of a visual discourse is constantly growing.

Second, in the "finding evidence" lesson, students are not only asked to answer questions but are also asked to look for evidence that the answers are correct and illustrated in the form of storyboards. According to the researcher's view, this is very innovative and can make students try to comprehend the text gradually and in detail. This method is appropriate for narrative text and can improve students' abilities terms of cognitive and metacognitive, analytical abilities (Cohn, 2020; Hung, 2019). This is in line with the research conducted (Cabrera et al., 2018) on using Pixton to teach writing skills by

which also obtained evidence that this media is effective for improving higher-order thinking skills (HOTS).

A higher skill that can be taught using this media is critical reading, where students can convey their opinions and assessments of literature. This result is in line with those (Kusumaningputri, 2019) who studied the use of cartoons to express critics such as in social life and politic. Therefore, training students to read and criticize text using a storyboard is a great idea. Indeed, this activity is not for novice readers. However, this finding also means that this media is not only for elementary schools and secondary schools, but also for universities. Based on research conducted by (Wahyuni, 2021), the minimum level of a university student is applied comprehension, in which they already understand the context and the organization of a text. Thus, critical comprehension can be taught to those who have reached the standard. In addition, students can also analyze text from many sides, such as cause-effect, compare-contrast, figurative language, plots, and so forth, which in the last year will be their inspirations in the form of final research outcomes.

This media can also be used for extensive reading, both in terms of reading for pleasure (Ng et al., 2019), as well as thoroughly reading long texts for academic purposes (Brown, 2004). Thus, students will have scaffolding with interesting instructions, such as a resume of literature and presented in the form of a storyboard. In the researcher's opinion, this activity is more attractive and fun for students than making a full-text summary.

The last skill covered in this media is affective comprehension skill. Although it only includes one sub-skill, namely identifying moral values, this skill is still very important and cannot be separated from literature learning. This is in line with the opinion that studying and teaching literary works fictions and poems has great potential in teaching moral values and building students' positive characters (Mawaddah et al., 2021).

## **CONCLUSION**

There is a great number of lesson ideas on the websites, some of them are innovative and updated ideas. The ideas are beneficial for teaching narrative text at all levels of reading comprehension skills; lexical, literal, inferential, applied, critical, and effective comprehension. The storyboard is also useful for extensive reading for pleasure and academic purposes.

This study suggests further research to investigate every lesson idea found in the storyboard maker websites in classroom action research or experimental design. Since this media can be used to teach extensive reading for academic purposes. This media is recommended not only for English teachers at schools but also for lecturers at universities.



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