



Causal Conditions of the Persian Curriculum Model Centered on Storytelling

Mahdieh. Zahir Salehi¹, Zahra. Zeinaddiny Meymand*² & Zohreh. Saadatmand³

1. PhD Student, Department of Curriculum planning, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran
2. *Corresponding Author: Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Sciences, Kerman Branch, Islamic Azad University, Kerman, Iran
3. Associate Professor, Department of Curriculum Planning, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

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Corresponding Author's Info
Email:

zeinaddiny@gmail.com

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Background and Aim: Undoubtedly, in the formal education system of any country, all levels of education are considered the most important and fundamental. The impact of this level on the academic success of students is significant throughout their lives and educational period. The purpose of the current research was to investigate the causal conditions of the Persian curriculum model centered on storytelling. **Methods:** The research method was qualitative, using content analysis. The population consisted of all pre-school teachers in the city of Kerman, totaling 1400 individuals. Sampling was done purposively until theoretical saturation of data (involving 21 participants). The research instrument in the qualitative part was deep and unstructured interviews. For data analysis in the qualitative section, open, axial, and selective coding methods were used. **Results:** Results indicated that the dimensions and components of the causal conditions of the Persian curriculum model centered on storytelling included 8 selective codes: emotional stimulation, strengthening perceptual power, enhancing critical thinking, academic effort, fluid learning, moral development, semantic perception, and identity strengthening. **Conclusion:** It is suggested that visualization techniques be used to facilitate the understanding of learning objectives in the storytelling process for children. In such a scenario, the comprehension of concepts for them becomes easier. It is recommended that educators endeavor to establish a connection with children during the storytelling process and consistently seek their opinions on the topics presented in the story.



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Introduction

Undoubtedly, in the formal education system of any country, all educational levels are considered the most important and fundamental. The impact of this level on students' academic success is significant throughout their lives and educational period. It can be confidently said that one area that needs attention in education is the perspective and desires of children. If we want to reflect these demands in the curriculum, more attention should be paid to textbooks at this level. The dynamism and effectiveness of textbooks depend on the alignment of their content with the principles of curriculum planning and new theories of curriculum design. In newly authored textbooks, particularly considering the need for preliminary reviews after pilot implementation, this issue becomes more significant (Fathi Vajargah, 2019). On the other hand, the topics of textbooks are unique and local compared to other textbooks compiled in other countries, and their educational and developmental impact necessarily requires special attention to the content of these books. Examining the content of these books is of particular importance. The method of storytelling in our country has a long and ancient history, but the influx of mass media and the specific issues of urban areas have diminished the role of storytelling in education over time. Among the activities that can fulfill the significant responsibility of nurturing students without causing sensitivity in the educational system and gather everything like a unified ring around itself, is the method of storytelling. Story, due to the innate human need, has always been one of the favorite programs. Despite rapid technological advancements, the simple language of stories still plays a significant role in conveying educational matters; this is particularly important in learning Persian (Hemati, 2013). Persian language is the mirror of our Iranian culture and identity. Over time, this language has undergone many ups and downs but remains eternal. In contemporary times, due to the expansion of communications, industrial advancements, and the influx of foreign words, this language is more endangered than ever before. One of the institutions that can most significantly influence the preservation of the Persian language is the Ministry of Education. Although in recent years, the organization

responsible for compiling textbooks has started considerable and positive efforts in this direction, these books need a thorough review (Manti, 2016).

A curriculum can be viewed as a plan to prepare a set of learning opportunities for individuals under education to bring about effective and relatively permanent changes in various aspects of personality, physically, emotionally, socially, and cognitively (Fathi Vajargah, 2019). Curriculums become attractive to students when implemented with a storytelling approach. Such curriculums can lead to a transformation in students' insights, attitudes, and abilities. It raises their awareness in such a way that it piques their interest in the subject and learning the curriculum content. In such a case, the necessary motivation for more active participation in learning processes develops. Lack of motivation in students leads to their indifference to lessons and classes, and thus, the learning outcomes defined based on learning objectives are not realized. Storytelling-based curriculums have advantages, such as fostering students' creativity, strengthening their sense of learning, involving them more in learning processes, making learning content attractive to them, teaching morals, making the learning environment enjoyable for them, facilitating their learning, basing learning on fundamental concepts, promoting brain development and thinking, broadening students' perspectives, improving their listening skills, enhancing their articulation, and leading to more interaction with the teacher in the teaching-learning process (Baldwin & Dudding, 2007). Therefore, efforts should be made to use the storytelling approach to make Persian curriculum programs more appealing and develop an interest in students. While the content of the Persian textbook includes attractive and delightful texts from Persian literature, it sometimes lacks the necessary appeal for students. Therefore, to engage students more, teachers should benefit from the storytelling approach. The content of the Persian textbook always includes advice, texts containing wisdom and ethics, which have profound effects on students' perceptions and attitudes with a storytelling approach. On the other hand, humans need education in values and norms or acculturation to continue living and communicate with their fellow humans, which they learn from birth in the family and

then in school and various communication centers (Heidarpour, 2013). Sociologists believe that schools play a significant role in transferring culture from the previous generation to the new one and, as the most important educational institution, are interconnected and mutually influenced by society and its culture. While storytelling is one of the important strategies for transferring values and cultural heritage to students. This is realized when more attention is paid to the prevailing social philosophy in education, which leads to better adaptation to society (Shariatmadari, 2014). According to In (2015), cultural transmission by schools is of great importance, and education, more than anything, is a social phenomenon that transfers the life experiences and culture of the adult generation to children to create social cohesion among them (Safi, 2014). Storytelling is one of the best methods to enter the world of children, teaching them how to creatively deal with and solve problems. A story is a readable or audible narrative in which the interaction and actions of a character with a subject are expressed based on the author's or storyteller's objective, analysis, perspective, and intended outcome. Stories organize and strengthen people's thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and behaviors. Storytelling increases the level of interest and consequently the participation of learners in group activities and creates a learning environment and intellectual development for children, moving away from a dry, authoritarian, teacher-centered approach to producing creative thinking (McAdam, 2012). Research has shown that storytelling can create significant changes in the areas of learning, literacy, and creativity in children (Radbakhsh et al., 2013).

Furthermore, by examining research both domestically and internationally regarding the topic, it was determined that to date, no comprehensive research has been conducted specifically on the causal conditions of the Persian curriculum model centered on storytelling. Only relatively similar topics in this field have been addressed, including those by Rooein Tan (2022), Khalilpour (2021), Safipour (2021), Bagherian (2020), Alikhani (2019), Ahmadi (2019), Soheili (2018), Besharpour (2018), Ghabadian (2018), Eftekhari (2018), Karimi (2017), Alavi Langroudi (2016), Saffarieh (2015), Sogheh al-

Islami (2013), Goodarzi (2014), Chubb (2022), Killick (2021), Kim (2021), Rahiem (2021), Dietz et al. (2021), Haji Matamit (2020), Catherine (2019), Lisenbee (2018), Alkaaf & Lu (2017), and Stewart and Gachago (2016). They emphasized that a curriculum of stories and storytelling can play a significant role in the curriculum and make students more motivated and enthusiastic about studying in formal and higher education periods.

Regarding the importance and necessity of the research, it should be stated that in the centralized educational system of Iran, where a unified textbook is considered for the whole country, and all students of different ethnicities have to learn the same content, the fundamental and directive role of textbooks in content selection and organization, teaching methods, the extent of students' activities in the learning process, and the alignment of teachings with students' needs is of high importance. Considering the severe environmental, technological, and social changes in the world, it seems that the next generation must have enough creativity to solve problems and bring about changes in themselves and society. Therefore, there seems to be an urgent need for a change in a story-based curriculum. The artistic approach of storytelling on one side and the cultural and civilizational connection of storytelling and education on the other, as well as recognizing the shortcomings and needs of today's society, emphasize the importance and necessity of examining the place of storytelling in the desired curriculum. Hence, the main issue of the current research is: What are the causal conditions of the Persian curriculum model centered on storytelling?

Method

The research method was qualitative, using content analysis. The population included all pre-school teachers in the city of Kerman, totaling 1400 individuals. The sampling method was purposive until theoretical saturation of data (involving 21 participants). The research tool in the qualitative part was deep and unstructured interviews.

Materials

1. Semi-structured interview: The research tool in this study consisted of deep and unstructured interviews. Deep interviews are used to collect qualitative data with more depth and detail. Also, unstructured interviews are used to gather opinions and perspectives of

individuals without specific structural limitations.

Implementation

For data analysis in the qualitative section, open, axial, and selective coding methods were used.

Results

Table 1 presents the dimensions and components of the causal conditions of the Persian curriculum model centered on storytelling, including 8 selective codes and 19 axial codes as follows:

Table 1. Dimensions and components of the causal conditions of the Persian curriculum model centered on storytelling

	Open codes	Axial codes	Selective codes
Causal Conditions	Attracting students' attention to the lesson (Code 1), student responsiveness to the lesson through storytelling (Code 1), activating students in learning processes through storytelling (Code 1), softening lesson content for students (Code 1), making the lesson attractive with storytelling (Code 1), facilitating the understanding and comprehension of concepts for students (Code 1), attracting students towards the storytelling teacher (Code 3), attracting students towards the storytelling class (Code 3), inspiring enthusiasm in students during storytelling (Code 3), developing an aesthetic appreciation for animals (Code 9), cognitive structure development (Code 8), developing an aesthetic appreciation for the universe (Code 9), developing an aesthetic appreciation for plants (Code 9), developing an aesthetic appreciation for knowledge (Code 9), developing an aesthetic appreciation for social aspects (Code 9), developing an aesthetic appreciation for human aspects (Code 9). Simplifying lesson content for students (Code 2), creating conditions for greater mastery over learning concepts (Code 2), smoother and simpler analysis of lesson content for students (Code 2).	Excitement for learning Softening learning	Emotional stimulation
	Critiquing learning objectives (Code 4), analyzing the implications of learning lesson content through storytelling (Code 4), examining learning conditions through storytelling (Code 4), analyzing learning tools through storytelling (Code 4), evaluating learning values through storytelling (Code 4), critiquing learning elements through storytelling (Code 4), examining learning methods through storytelling (Code 4), auditory engagement with concepts (Code 5), verbal engagement with concepts (Code 5), emotional engagement with concepts (Code 5), skill engagement with concepts (Code 5), mental engagement with concepts (Code 5). Efforts for activation, developing responsiveness (Code 6), stimulating cognitive reactions in students (Code 6), stimulating emotional reactions in students (Code 6), stimulating psychomotor reactions in students (Code 6), integrating students' cognition with storytelling (Code 6).	Improved understanding of lesson content Mastery-level learning	Strengthening perceptive power
	Expressing horizontal relationships of learning content elements (Code 7), expressing vertical relationships of learning content elements (Code 7), working to remove past barriers (Code 7), working to remove future barriers (Code 7), developing perception of the scientific philosophy of concepts (Code 8), developing perception of the social philosophy of concepts (Code 8), developing perception of the psychological philosophy of concepts (Code 8), developing perception of the educational philosophy of concepts (Code 8), developing perception of the cultural philosophy of concepts (Code 8), developing perception of the historical philosophy of concepts (Code 8), perceiving the	Analysis and examination of content Engagement in learning content	Enhancing critical thinking

religious philosophy of concepts (Code 8), developing perception of the pedagogical philosophy of concepts (Code 8). Developing religious ethics (Code 10), developing social ethics (Code 10), developing personal ethics (Code 10), developing psychological ethics (Code 10), developing cognitive ethics (Code 10), developing learning ethics (Code 10), developing cultural ethics (Code 10), developing scientific ethics (Code 10).		
Semantic perception of learning concepts within the context of social culture (Code 11), semantic perception of learning concepts within the context of technological culture (Code 11), semantic perception of learning concepts within the context of Quranic culture (Code 11), semantic perception of learning concepts within the context of moral culture (Code 11), semantic perception of learning concepts within the context of scientific culture (Code 11), semantic perception of learning concepts within the context of value culture (Code 11), semantic perception of learning concepts within the context of economic culture (Code 11), perceiving the heritage of handicraft achievements (Code 12), perceiving cultural heritage (Code 12), perceiving social heritage (Code 12), perceiving linguistic heritage (Code 12), perceiving climatic-geographical heritage (Code 12), perceiving ethnic-national heritage (Code 12), perceiving cognitive heritage (Code 12), perceiving scientific heritage (Code 12), perceiving civilizational heritage (Code 12), perceiving the achievements of visual arts (Code 12).	Cognitive effort Emotional effort	Academic effort
Attracting students' attention to the lesson (Code 1), student responsiveness to the lesson through storytelling (Code 1), activating students in learning processes through storytelling (Code 1), softening lesson content for students (Code 1), making the lesson attractive with storytelling (Code 1), facilitating the understanding and comprehension of concepts for students (Code 1), attracting students towards the storytelling teacher (Code 3), attracting students towards the storytelling class (Code 3), inspiring enthusiasm in students during storytelling (Code 3), developing an aesthetic appreciation for animals (Code 9), cognitive structure development (Code 8), developing an aesthetic appreciation for the universe (Code 9), developing an aesthetic appreciation for plants (Code 9), developing an aesthetic appreciation for knowledge (Code 9), developing an aesthetic appreciation for social aspects (Code 9), developing an aesthetic appreciation for human aspects (Code 9). Simplifying lesson content for students (Code 2), creating conditions for greater mastery over learning concepts (Code 2), smoother and simpler analysis of lesson content for students (Code 2).	Perception of horizontal and vertical relationships of content elements Philosophical perception of content	Fluid learning
Critiquing learning objectives (Code 4), analyzing the implications of learning lesson content through storytelling (Code 4), examining learning conditions through storytelling (Code 4), analyzing learning tools through storytelling (Code 4), evaluating learning values through storytelling (Code 4), critiquing learning elements through storytelling (Code 4), examining learning methods through storytelling (Code 4), auditory engagement with concepts (Code 5), verbal engagement with concepts (Code 5), emotional engagement with concepts (Code 5), skill engagement with concepts (Code 5), mental engagement with concepts (Code 5). Efforts for activation, developing responsiveness (Code 6),	Development of Epistemic Ethics Development of Learning Ethics	Ethical growth

stimulating cognitive reactions in students (Code 6), stimulating emotional reactions in students (Code 6), stimulating psychomotor reactions in students (Code 6), integrating students' cognition with storytelling (Code 6).	
Expressing horizontal relationships of learning content elements (Code 7), expressing vertical relationships of learning content elements (Code 7), working to remove past barriers (Code 7), working to remove future barriers (Code 7), developing perception of the scientific philosophy of concepts (Code 8), developing perception of the social philosophy of concepts (Code 8), developing perception of the psychological philosophy of concepts (Code 8), developing perception of the educational philosophy of concepts (Code 8), developing perception of the cultural philosophy of concepts (Code 8), developing perception of the historical philosophy of concepts (Code 8), perceiving the religious philosophy of concepts (Code 8), developing perception of the pedagogical philosophy of concepts (Code 8). Developing religious ethics (Code 10), developing social ethics (Code 10), developing personal ethics (Code 10), developing psychological ethics (Code 10), developing cognitive ethics (Code 10), developing learning ethics (Code 10), developing cultural ethics (Code 10), developing scientific ethics (Code 10). Semantic perception of learning concepts within the context of social culture (Code 11), semantic perception of learning concepts within the context of technological culture (Code 11), semantic perception of learning concepts within the context of Quranic culture (Code 11), semantic perception of learning concepts within the context of moral culture (Code 11), semantic perception of learning concepts within the context of scientific culture (Code 11), semantic perception of learning concepts within the context of value culture (Code 11), semantic perception of learning concepts within the context of economic culture (Code 11), perceiving the heritage of handicraft achievements (Code 12), perceiving cultural heritage (Code 12), perceiving social heritage (Code 12), perceiving linguistic heritage (Code 12), perceiving climatic-geographical heritage (Code 12), perceiving ethnic-national heritage (Code 12), perceiving cognitive heritage (Code 12), perceiving scientific heritage (Code 12), perceiving civilizational heritage (Code 12), perceiving the achievements of visual arts (Code 12).	<p>Perception of Semantic Civilizational perception Heritage</p> <p>Perception of Cultural Heritage</p> <p>Perception of Social Heritage</p>
Strengthening personal identity (Code 13), strengthening social identity (Code 13), strengthening political identity (Code 13), strengthening ethical identity (Code 13), strengthening religious identity (Code 13), strengthening historical identity (Code 13), strengthening scientific identity (Code 13), strengthening cultural identity (Code 13).	<p>Strengthening social identity</p> <p>Strengthening religious identity</p> <p>Strengthening political identity</p> <p>Strengthening historical identity</p> <p>Identity reinforcement</p>

1. Emotional Stimulation (Motivation for learning, and making learning more appealing): Attracting students' attention to the lesson, student responsiveness to the lesson through storytelling, activating students in learning processes through storytelling, making the lesson content more appealing to students, making the lesson interesting through

storytelling, facilitating understanding and comprehension of concepts for students, attracting students to the storytelling teacher, attracting students to the story class, making students enjoy the storytelling process, developing aesthetic appreciation of animals, cognitive construction development, developing aesthetic appreciation of the universe,

developing aesthetic appreciation of plants, developing cognitive aesthetic appreciation, developing social aesthetic appreciation, developing human aesthetic appreciation.

2. Cognitive Perception Enhancement (Improving comprehension of lesson content, mastering learning): Simplifying explanation of lesson content for students, creating conditions for greater mastery of learning concepts, easier and simpler analysis of lesson content for students.

3. Critical Thinking Enhancement (Analyzing and engaging with content, involvement in learning content): Critiquing and reviewing learning objectives, learning implications of lesson content through storytelling, examining learning conditions through storytelling, analyzing learning tools through storytelling, evaluating learning values through storytelling, scrutinizing learning elements through storytelling, reviewing learning methods through storytelling, auditory engagement with concepts, verbal involvement with concepts, emotional involvement with concepts, skill-based involvement with concepts, mental engagement with concepts.

4. Academic Effort (Cognitive and emotional effort): Efforts to activate, enhance response development, stimulate cognitive reactions in students, evoke emotional reactions in students, stimulate psychomotor responses in students, unify students' cognition with storytelling.

5. Fluid Learning (Perceiving horizontal and vertical connections of content elements, philosophical perception of content): Articulating horizontal relationships of learning content elements, expressing vertical relationships of learning content elements, striving to remove past barriers, working to eliminate future obstacles, developing perception of scientific philosophy of concept emergence, understanding social philosophy of concept emergence, enhancing psychological philosophy of concept emergence, cultivating educational philosophy of concept emergence, broadening cultural philosophy of concept emergence, advancing historical philosophy of concept emergence, grasping religious philosophy of concept emergence, expanding educational philosophy of concept emergence.

6. Moral Development (Development of epistemological ethics, learning ethics): Developing religious ethics, social ethics growth, personal ethics development,

psychological ethics advancement, epistemological ethics cultivation, ethics of learning enhancement, cultural ethics growth, scientific ethics progression.

7. Semantic Perception (Perceiving civilizational, social, and cultural heritage): Semantic perception of learning concepts in social-cultural context, technological context, Quranic cultural context, ethical cultural context, scientific cultural context, value-based cultural context, economic cultural context, perceiving the heritage of handicraft achievements, understanding cultural heritage, social heritage, linguistic heritage, climatic-geographical heritage, national-ethnic heritage, epistemological heritage, scientific heritage, civilizational heritage, visual arts achievements heritage.

8. Identity Strengthening (Social identity, religious identity, political identity, historical identity): Enhancing personal identity, strengthening social identity, political identity enhancement, ethical identity strengthening, religious identity development, historical identity fortification, scientific identity advancement, cultural identity enhancement.

Conclusion

The current research aimed to explore the causal conditions of the Persian curriculum model centered on storytelling. Overall, the results indicated that the dimensions and components of these causal conditions included eight selective codes: emotional stimulation, enhancement of cognitive power, strengthening of critical thinking, academic effort, fluid learning, moral development, semantic perception, and identity reinforcement.

These findings are in relative agreement and alignment with the research of Ruyein Tan (2022), Khalilpour (2021), Safipour (2021), Bagherian (2020), Alikhani (2019), Ahmadi (2019), Soheili (2018), Besharpour (2018), Qobadian (2018), Karimi (2017), Alavi Langroudi (2016), Saffarieh (2015), Saghe al-Islami (2013), Goodarzi (2014), Chubb (2022), Killick (2021), Kim (2021), Rahiem (2021), Dietz et al. (2021), Haji Matamit (2020), Catherine (2019), Lisenbee (2018), Alkaaf & Lu (2017), and Stewart (2016). They emphasized the significant role that storytelling in the curriculum can play in motivating students and inspiring eagerness for learning in formal and higher education levels.

In response to the above question, it's noteworthy that storytelling enhances children's skills and plays a fundamental role in shaping their personalities. Storytelling is a tradition that has existed since ancient times, with parents and ancestors always narrating stories to their children. Stories are the best way to communicate with children about their misbehavior, not in the form of direct reprimand or admonition. They act like a sweet syrup that makes the bitterness of a lesson more bearable. The behaviors of a timid or aggressive child can be addressed through stories, provided the behaviors are identified early and action is taken. Storytelling education for children is an excellent skill, helping them to improve their language skills, appreciate reading, and enhance their imaginations. The main goals of telling good stories to children are to cultivate their aesthetic sense, make them aware of the world around them, develop useful habits, and encourage a sense of independence and creativity.

On the other hand, storytelling is an art or profession of narrative in poetry or prose performed by the storyteller in front of a live audience. The stories narrated can involve dialogue, song, music, imagery, and other accompanying tools, deriving from oral, printed, or recorded sources, primarily for entertainment. In ancient times, history, traditions, religion, heroics, and ethnic pride were transmitted from generation to generation by storytellers. Preparedness for storytelling and utilizing this art form involves sincerity, taste, and attention to quality in presenting this oral literature. Perhaps emphasis should be placed on attributes essential for a storyteller (Hensy, 2011). Storytelling is not yet seen as a technique, and it lacks a proper place in the education system. Activities like storytelling can fulfill the significant responsibility of nurturing children without causing sensitivity in the education system. Historically, despite technological advancements, simple storytelling has played a crucial role in educational matters. However, due to technological changes, the use of stories has undergone fundamental changes, and traditional approaches to storytelling are hard to implement. Still, coordination among various educational systems can fill the existing gap. In this context, it seems essential to note that children's literature, especially stories,

nurtures them at all times of life, bringing joy, expanding imagination, enhancing creativity, and preparing them for social interactions and understanding life's challenges. Storytelling plays a vital role in children's personality development, introducing them to moral values like perseverance, courage, kindness, and hope. Storytelling education, particularly in enhancing creativity and social skills in children, plays a decisive role (Briko, 2011). Sociologists believe that schools play an essential role in cultural transmission from one generation to the next, having a reciprocal relationship with society and its culture. Storytelling is a significant strategy for transferring cultural values and heritage to students. This becomes possible when more attention is paid to the social philosophy governing education, leading to improved societal adaptability. Cultural transmission by schools is of great importance, and education is predominantly a social phenomenon that transfers life experiences and adult culture to children and young people to create social cohesion. During this period, children are provided with opportunities for proper communication training, contributing to their value development, social growth, and rational development. Students learn through storytelling how to deal with and solve problems they encounter. Story narration is a creative form of interaction and a significant educational resource, prevalent in all societies since the evolution of human language, playing an effective role in educating young children. Young children enjoy reading, writing, and listening to stories, understanding more about society and life in general. Storytelling and narration hold a relatively extensive role in the preschool curriculum. Over time, storytelling has evolved and developed a dynamic and contemporary presence through settings and functions. Emerging digital technologies are changing the complexity of storytelling, opening new ways for collaborative approaches. Simple storytelling is the easiest way for a storyteller to present a story, where the storyteller reads the text from a book or paper to the audience. Storytelling at home is excellent when the audience is fewer than five people. Storytelling, familiar to all humans in all times and societies, has been a constant companion in travel, sorrow, joy, solitude, groups, and even

during wars and life crises. Therefore, storytelling is considered coeval with humanity, with the origins of the first stories dating back to the early days of human life on earth. Storytelling is not only captivating for children but also adults, who become involved and regain a childlike purity and sincerity when listening to or reading stories (Ansari, 2014).

In terms of research suggestions, it is recommended to use visualization techniques to facilitate understanding of learning objectives in the storytelling process for children. This approach simplifies concept comprehension for them. It is also advised that instructors strive to establish a connection with children during the storytelling process, engaging them by inquiring about their opinions on topics discussed in the story.

Conflict of Interest

According to the authors, this article has no financial sponsor or conflict of interest.

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