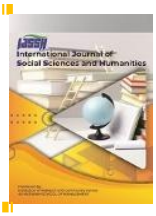

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Development of a Deep Learning-Based Picture Storybook for Grade II Elementary School Students

Retna Ayu Rachmawati[1] *, Sudirman[2], Sukri[3]
Corresponding Author: retnarachmawati39681@gmail.com

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Abstract

The limited availability of picture storybooks that align with students' characteristics, along with the lack of integration of deep learning principles in Grade II Indonesian language instruction, indicates the need to develop relevant and contextual learning media that meet students' learning needs. This study aims to develop a deep learning-based picture storybook that is feasible for use in Grade II elementary school learning. This research employed a Research and Development (R&D) method using the ADDIE model, which consists of five stages: analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation. The research subjects were Grade II teachers and students at MI Integral Buah Hati Insani Mataram. Data were collected through interviews, observations, expert validation questionnaires (material and media), and teacher and student response questionnaires. The results showed that the developed picture storybook obtained a validity score of 95% from material experts and 97% from media experts, both categorized as highly feasible. In the development class trial (n = 12), teacher responses reached 96% and student responses 85%. Meanwhile, in the extended trial (n = 14), teacher responses reached 96% and student responses 89%, both categorized as highly practical. Therefore, the developed deep learning-based picture storybook is considered feasible to be used as a supporting instructional material for Indonesian language learning in elementary schools.

Contents

[1] Master of Elementary Education, Universitas Mataram, Indonesia
[2] Master of Elementary Education, Universitas Mataram, Indonesia
[3] Master of Elementary Education, Universitas Mataram, Indonesia

Introduction

Literacy is one of the fundamental competencies that need to be developed from the elementary school level (Arafik et al., 2020; Nugraha et al., 2022; Pamuji, 2022; Yasa et al., 2022). In the Kurikulum Merdeka, Indonesian language learning in Phase A (Grades I–II) does not only focus on technical reading skills, but also on the ability to understand information, interpret the meaning of texts, and communicate the obtained information. Students are expected to understand simple narrative texts and retell the story content in a sequential manner (Aprelianingrum et al., 2024; Nurhaswinda et al., 2025; Seran et al., 2023). Therefore, instructional materials are needed to support the development of students' literacy skills in accordance with their characteristics and developmental stages (Al-Qoyyim, Nabila, Affan, et al., 2024). One of the appropriate instructional materials to support literacy learning in lower grades is the picture storybook (Santi, 2023). Picture storybooks combine text and illustrations, which help students understand the story more concretely (Aisyah et al., 2023; Sayangan, 2024). Illustrations not only function as visual attraction but also assist students in following the storyline, recognizing characters, and understanding events presented in the story. These characteristics make picture storybooks a potential medium to support Indonesian language learning for elementary school students (Nurrizal & Purnomo, 2025; Nurasyifa et al., 2025).

However, the results of a preliminary study conducted at MI Integral Buah Hati Insani Mataram indicate that the use of picture storybooks in Indonesian language learning has not been optimal. Learning activities are still dominated by the use of textbooks as the main learning resource, while the availability of picture storybooks remains limited. Observations show that most students are able to read simple paragraphs, but they still experience difficulties in comprehensively understanding the story content and retelling it in a coherent sequence. In addition, students tend to be more interested in reading materials with colored illustrations compared to text-dominated materials. These conditions indicate a gap between actual classroom practices and the demands of the Kurikulum Merdeka, which emphasizes the ability to understand text content and communicate acquired information. Classroom teachers also stated that the available storybooks have not been systematically designed to help students understand the story, derive meaning from texts, and connect the story content with their prior experiences. Therefore, instructional materials are needed that are not only visually engaging but also capable of supporting deeper comprehension and meaning-making processes.

One relevant approach to address this need is deep learning (Hasanah & Pujiati, 2025; Saqjuddin et al., 2025). Deep learning emphasizes learning experiences that are mindful, meaningful, and joyful. Through mindful learning, students are encouraged to actively engage in the learning process and understand what they learn (Rahayu et al., 2025; Slamet et al., 2025). Meaningful learning helps students connect knowledge with their prior experiences, while joyful learning creates positive emotional engagement that increases learning motivation. From a constructivist perspective, learning is viewed as an active process of constructing understanding through experience and interaction with the environment (Olusegun, 2015). Several previous studies have shown that the development of picture storybooks can improve students' reading interest and literacy skills in elementary schools (Aisyah et al., 2023; Santi, 2023; Sayangan, 2024). However, most studies still focus on visual aspects, readability, basic reading skills improvement, or character education. The integration of deep learning principles into picture storybook development—especially those accommodating mindful, meaningful, and joyful learning aspects—remains relatively limited. This condition indicates an opportunity to develop instructional materials that are not only visually appealing but also support students' thinking processes and meaning-making during reading activities.

Based on these conditions, the research problem is the unavailability of deep learning–based picture storybooks designed according to the characteristics of Grade II elementary school students to support Indonesian literacy learning. The novelty of this study lies in the development of a picture storybook that integrates deep learning principles through mindful, meaningful, and joyful aspects into a single instructional product. The integration of these three aspects is expected to support students' active engagement in understanding story content, connecting information with their prior experiences, and gaining more meaningful and enjoyable reading experiences (Al-Qoyyim, Nabila, Muhaini, et al., 2024). Based on this problem, one alternative solution is to develop a deep learning–based picture storybook tailored to the characteristics of Grade II elementary school students. The developed book is designed by integrating story elements, illustrations, and activities that support students in understanding, interpreting, and reflecting on the reading content. Thus, the picture storybook functions not only as reading material but also as a learning medium that supports mindful, meaningful, and joyful learning experiences. Based on the above explanation, this study aims to develop a deep learning–based picture storybook for Grade II elementary school students and to determine the validity and practicality levels of the developed product in Indonesian language learning.

Methods

This study is a Research and Development (R&D) study aimed at producing a deep learning–based picture storybook for Grade II elementary school students. The development model used is ADDIE, which consists of five stages: Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation (Branch, 2009). The selection of the ADDIE model is based on its systematic, flexible, and suitable characteristics for instructional material development. The study was conducted in the second semester of the 2025/2026 academic year at MI Integral Buah Hati Insani Mataram. The research subjects consisted of 26 Grade II students and 2 Grade II teachers. The developed product is a deep learning–based picture storybook integrating the principles of mindful, meaningful, and joyful learning.

The data were collected through observation, interviews, and questionnaires. Observation and interviews were conducted in the analysis stage to identify learning needs, student characteristics, the condition of available instructional materials, and curriculum alignment. Questionnaires were used to obtain data on product validity and practicality. Validation questionnaires were administered to material experts and media experts, while response questionnaires were given to teachers and students after the product was implemented in the learning process. The analysis stage included needs analysis, curriculum analysis, student characteristics analysis, and content analysis. The design stage involved developing the storyline, storyboard, illustrations, book layout, and research instruments. In the development stage, the product was validated by material and media experts and then revised based on their feedback. The implementation stage was carried out through a development class trial involving 12 Grade II A students and an extended trial involving 14 Grade II B students. The evaluation stage was conducted to refine the product based on validation results and user responses.

The data were analyzed using descriptive quantitative analysis. Validity and practicality data were obtained from questionnaire scores using a five-point Likert scale. The percentage of feasibility and practicality was calculated using the formula: $P = (f/N) \times 100\%$.

Where P is the percentage, f is the obtained score, and N is the maximum score. The results were then converted into assessment categories. The product is categorized as highly valid or highly practical if it achieves 81–100%, valid or practical if 61–80%, moderately valid or moderately practical if 41–60%, less valid or less practical if 21–40%, and invalid or impractical if 0–20%.

Results and Discussions

1. Analysis

The analysis phase was conducted to identify needs, curriculum alignment, learner characteristics, and content requirements as the basis for developing picture storybooks based on deep learning for second-grade elementary school students.

a. Needs Analysis

The results of the needs analysis show that Indonesian language learning in Grade II is still dominated by the use of textbooks as the main learning resource. The availability of picture storybooks as supporting literacy teaching materials is still limited, and some books are in an unsuitable condition for use. In addition, the available library collection has not fully matched the characteristics of Grade II students. This condition limits students' opportunities to engage in reading activities. Observation results show that students are able to answer questions related to explicit information in stories, but they still experience difficulties when asked to retell the content of the reading in a coherent sequence. This indicates that their ability to understand and construct meaning from texts still needs to be developed.

These findings are in line with Ausubel's meaningful learning theory, which explains that learning becomes more effective when new information is linked to students' prior knowledge and experiences (Bryce & Blown, 2024). Therefore, teaching materials should not only support reading activities but also help students understand, connect, and interpret story content. Research by Ardita and Sueca (2025) also shows that story-based teaching materials can increase students' engagement in literacy activities. Based on these findings, the development of picture storybooks based on deep learning is needed as learning materials that are engaging, contextual, and support deeper comprehension of stories.

b. Curriculum Analysis

The curriculum analysis shows that Indonesian language learning in Grade II is part of Phase A of the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes the ability to understand information from texts and retell narrative texts. The analysis indicates alignment between students' needs and curriculum demands, particularly in understanding story content and retelling information in a coherent sequence. However, observation results show that these abilities have not developed optimally, as some students still struggle to reconstruct storylines. This condition indicates the need for learning materials that can help students understand the relationships between events in a story. This is consistent with the concept of deep learning, which emphasizes learning through understanding, connecting information, and reflecting on learning experiences. Research by Putri et al. (2026) also shows that systematically designed story-based teaching materials can improve students' comprehension and retelling abilities.

c. Learner Characteristics Analysis

The analysis of learner characteristics shows that reading abilities among Grade II students vary. Some students are able to read simple texts fluently, while others still require assistance in reading. In addition, students are more interested in reading materials that include illustrations because they help them understand the story content. These findings are consistent with Piaget's cognitive development theory, which explains that elementary school students are in the concrete operational stage and therefore understand information more easily through visual support and concrete experiences (Noviyanto et al., 2022). Therefore, the use of illustrations in picture storybooks can help students build comprehension of reading content. Research by Emila and Fajri (2025) also shows that picture storybooks can increase students' reading interest and engagement in learning. Thus, the developed

product should consider the use of simple language, supportive illustrations, and themes that are close to students' daily lives.

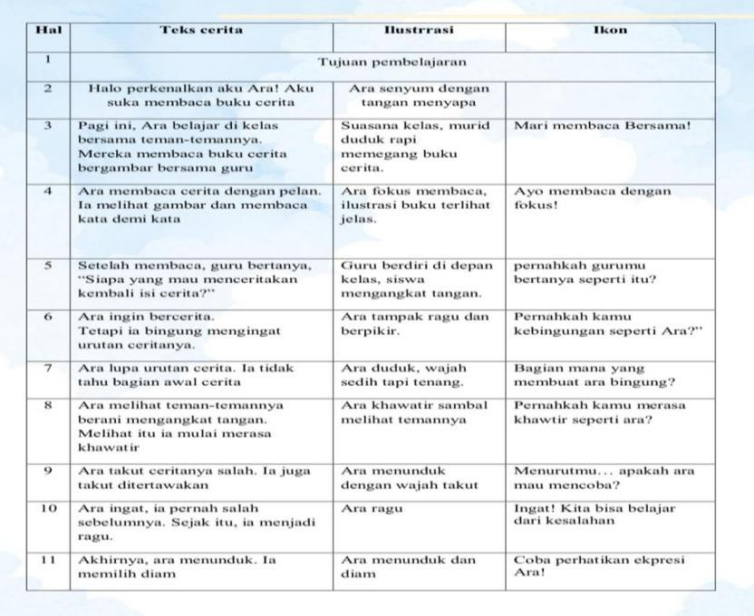
d. Content Analysis

The content analysis shows that picture storybooks need to be designed by considering material relevance, language use, presentation, and visual design. The story content is arranged in a simple, coherent, and contextual storyline so that students can more easily understand the information and relate it to their daily experiences. The implementation of deep learning principles in the book is carried out through story presentations that support mindful, meaningful, and joyful learning. The illustrations used do not only function as decoration but also support students' understanding of the story content. This is in line with research by Nasution and Hasibuan (2026), which states that contextual picture storybooks can improve students' comprehension and engagement in reading activities. Therefore, the results of this analysis serve as the foundation for developing picture storybooks based on deep learning that are aligned with the needs of Grade II elementary school students.

2. Design

The design stage produced an initial draft of a picture storybook based on deep learning titled *Ara Belajar Bercerita*. The product design was developed based on the results of needs analysis, curriculum analysis, and learner characteristics of Grade II elementary school students. The product was designed to help students understand story content and retell stories in a coherent sequence through meaningful reading activities. The story theme was selected based on the needs analysis results, which indicated that some students still experience difficulties in understanding and retelling reading content. Therefore, the story was developed using contexts that are close to students' daily lives, such as reading activities together and classroom discussions. The use of familiar contexts is expected to help students connect the story content with their own experiences. This finding is in line with Susanto (2025), who states that a contextual approach can improve the meaningfulness of student learning.

The storyline was structured in a simple, coherent manner and used language appropriate to the reading ability of Grade II students. Adjustments in vocabulary and sentence length were made to ensure that the story content is easier to understand. Structuring the storyline according to student characteristics is important because it influences students' ability to comprehend reading content and retell stories in a coherent sequence. Furthermore, a storyboard was developed as the initial design of the picture storybook, consisting of the sequence of the story, placement of text, illustrations, and activities on each page. The storyboard was used to ensure integration between visual elements and story content so that the storyline could be understood more clearly by students. This finding is supported by Janawati and Ananda (2025), who state that the integration of text and visuals plays an important role in helping elementary school students understand reading materials.



Hal	Teks cerita	Ilustrrasi	Ikon
1	Tujuan pembelajaran		
2	Halo perkenalkan aku Ara! Aku suka membaca buku cerita	Ara senyum dengan tangan menyapa	
3	Pagi ini, Ara belajar di kelas bersama teman-temannya. Mereka membaca buku cerita bergambar bersama guru	Suasana kelas, murid duduk rapi memegang buku cerita.	Mari membaca Bersama!
4	Ara membaca cerita dengan pelan. Ia melihat gambar dan membaca kata demi kata	Ara fokus membaca, ilustrasi buku terlihat jelas.	Ayo membaca dengan fokus!
5	Setelah membaca, guru bertanya, "Siapa yang mau menceritakan kembali isi cerita?"	Guru berdiri di depan kelas, siswa mengangkat tangan.	pernahkah gurumu bertanya seperti itu?
6	Ara ingin bercerita. Tetapi ia bingung mengingat urutan ceritanya.	Ara tampak ragu dan berpikir.	Pernahkah kamu kebingungan seperti Ara?"
7	Ara lupa urutan cerita. Ia tidak tahu bagian awal cerita	Ara duduk, wajah sedih tapi tenang.	Bagian mana yang membuat ara bingung?
8	Ara melihat teman-temannya berani mengangkat tangan. Melihat itu ia mulai merasa khawatir	Ara khawatir sambal melihat temannya	Pernahkah kamu merasa khawtir seperti ara?
9	Ara takut ceritanya salah. Ia juga takut ditertawakan	Ara menunduk dengan wajah takut	Menurutmu... apakah ara mau mencoba?
10	Ara ingat, ia pernah salah sebelumnya. Sejak itu, ia menjadi ragu.	Ara ragu	Ingat! Kita bisa belajar dari kesalahan
11	Akhirnya, ara menunduk. Ia memilih diam	Ara menunduk dan diam	Coba perhatikan ekpresi Ara!

Figure 1. Storyboard of the Storybook

Illustrations were developed using Canva and adjusted to the storyline and character design. The use of colored illustrations aims to increase students' interest in the storybook while also supporting their understanding of the story content. This finding is consistent with research by Rachmadiyah (2026) as well as Putri and Suriani (2024), which shows that illustrations play a role in increasing reading interest and comprehension among elementary school students. In addition to product design, this stage also involved the development of research instruments, including expert validation sheets for content and media experts, teacher response questionnaires, and student response questionnaires. The instruments were developed based on aspects of content, language, presentation, and graphics to obtain data on product validity and practicality. The development of instruments supports product quality assessment as stated by Plomp and Nieveen (2013).

3. Development

The development stage produced a picture storybook based on deep learning, developed based on the storyboard prepared in the previous stage. The product integrates story elements, illustrations, and simple literacy activities that incorporate the principles of mindful learning, meaningful learning, and joyful learning. Furthermore, the product was validated by content experts and media experts to determine its feasibility before being tested.

Table 1. Results of Content Expert Validation

Aspect	Number of Items	Obtained Score	Maximum Score	Percentage (%)	Category
Content Standards	17	79	85	92.94	Highly Valid
Presentation Standards	9	45	45	100.00	Highly Valid

Total	26	124	130	95.38	Highly Valid

The results of content expert validation show that the picture storybook based on deep learning obtained a percentage of 95% and is categorized as highly valid. This result indicates that the content of the book is aligned with the learning outcomes of Grade II Indonesian language and supports students' ability to understand and retell reading content. The validity of the content is also reflected in the suitability of the story with students' characteristics, the use of simple language, and the presentation of contexts that are close to students' daily lives. This finding is in line with Putri and Suriani (2024), who state that picture story-based teaching materials are considered feasible when they strongly align with learning objectives and students' learning needs.

In addition to content alignment, the validation results also show that the principles of deep learning have been integrated into the book through story presentation that encourages students to understand reading consciously, connect story content with daily experiences, and gain enjoyable reading experiences. These findings reinforce that the developed book functions not only as a reading resource but also as a means to support active student engagement in learning. However, the validator suggested placing learning objectives at the beginning of the book and ensuring greater consistency in aligning the content with the theoretical framework used. These suggestions were used as the basis for product revision before the trial phase.

Table 2. Results of Media Expert Validation

Aspect	Number of Items	Obtained Score	Maximum Score	Percentage (%)	Category
Design Standards	12	58	60	96.67	Highly Valid
Graphic Standards	8	39	40	97.50	Highly Valid
Total	20	97	100	97.00	Highly Valid

The results of media expert validation show that the picture storybook obtained a percentage of 97% and is categorized as highly valid. This indicates that the design and graphic aspects meet the established criteria, including illustration appropriateness, font readability, color usage, and page layout. The alignment between visual elements and story content helps students understand the storyline and meaning more easily. This finding is consistent with Hadi et al. (2026), who state that illustrations in picture storybooks play an important role in supporting reading comprehension by providing visual information that strengthens textual content.

In addition to supporting comprehension, the visual quality of the book also creates an engaging and enjoyable reading experience. The use of colored illustrations, systematic layout, and design tailored to student characteristics shows that the product accommodates the joyful learning aspect of deep learning. Although categorized as highly feasible, the validator provided several suggestions for improvement, including adding character expressions, simplifying some illustrations, and adding book cover identity elements. These suggestions were used to refine the visual quality of the product before implementation in learning.

4. Implementation

The implementation stage was conducted to determine the practicality level of the picture storybook based on deep learning after it was validated by content and media experts. The trial was carried out with Grade II students at MI Integral Buah Hati Insani Mataram through two stages, namely a development class trial and an extended trial. Product practicality was measured using student and teacher response questionnaires after learning activities using the picture storybook.

Table 3. Product Practicality Results

Trial Stage	n	Student Response (%)	Teacher Response (%)	Category
Development Class	12	85.00	96.00	Highly Practical
Extended Trial	14	89.00	96.00	Highly Practical

The implementation results show that the picture storybook received positive responses from both students and teachers in both trial stages. In the development class, student responses reached 85% with a highly practical category, while teacher responses reached 96%, also categorized as highly practical. These results indicate that the book is easy to use in learning and is able to attract students' attention during reading activities. Students reported that the book had attractive illustrations, appropriate colors, and readable text. These findings indicate that visual elements in the book play an important role in supporting student engagement during learning. These results are in line with Suwanti et al. (2026), who state that picture storybooks can increase reading interest and student engagement by presenting information through an easily understandable combination of text and visuals. Similar results were also found in the extended trial stage. Student responses increased to 89% and remained in the highly practical category, while teacher responses remained at 96%, also categorized as highly practical. The increase in student responses indicates that the product has a consistent level of practicality when used with different groups of students. In general, students stated that the book was easy to understand, interesting to read, and helpful in understanding the story content. Teachers also assessed that the book was easy to use in learning and presented situations close to students' daily lives.

The high responses from both students and teachers indicate that the developed picture storybook has fulfilled the principles of deep learning. The aspect of meaningful learning is reflected in the presentation of stories that are closely related to students' daily experiences, making it easier for them to understand the content. The aspect of joyful learning is reflected in the use of colorful illustrations and attractive design, creating an enjoyable reading experience. This condition shows that the book functions not only as reading material but also as a medium that enhances student engagement in learning. Overall, the implementation results show that the picture storybook based on deep learning has a very high level of practicality. The consistency of results across both trial stages indicates that the product is easy to use for both teachers and students in Grade II Indonesian language learning. This finding is in line with Saflitha et al. (2023), who found that picture storybooks can improve student engagement, reading interest, and comprehension when presented with appropriate language and attractive illustrations.

5. Evaluation

The evaluation stage was conducted to refine the picture storybook based on deep learning according to expert validation results and user responses during the trial phase. The evaluation in this study was formative in nature, as it was conducted at each stage of development to ensure that the

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resulting product met learning needs and student characteristics. This is consistent with Branch (2009), who states that evaluation in the ADDIE model functions as a continuous improvement process during product development.

The first evaluation was based on the results of content and media expert validation. Although the product was categorized as highly feasible, the validators provided several improvement suggestions. The content expert suggested adding learning objectives at the beginning of the book and improving consistency in the presentation of deep learning elements. Meanwhile, the media expert suggested refining the illustrations by adding character expressions, simplifying the brain figure, and adding identity elements on the book cover. All of these suggestions were used as the basis for revision to improve both content and visual quality.

Figure 2. Revisions Based on Content Expert Feedback

The revisions based on media expert feedback are presented in the following table:

Table 4. Revisions Based on Media Expert Feedback

Revised Section	Expert Suggestion	Follow-up Action
Front cover	Add more complete product identity	Added Kampus Berdampak logo, Universitas Mataram logo, author identity, supervisor, study program, and year of publication
Page 2	Improve character expression	Added waving hand illustration and opened mouth expression
Page 5	Make teacher expression more friendly	Revised teacher illustration to appear warmer
Page 6	Strengthen confused expression	Added "!?" symbol and simplified brain illustration
Page 8	Improve expression of emotions	Added worried expression symbol
Page 9	Adjust character expression to narrative	Revised mouth shape to show fear

Page 18	Improve character gesture	Added illustration of hand on chest
Back cover	Complete author identity	Added author photo and biography

The next evaluation was conducted during the development class trial. Teacher and student responses indicated that the storybook was easy to use and engaging for learning. However, some students stated that the brain figure appearing on certain pages was somewhat distracting during reading. Based on this feedback, revisions were made by reducing the size of the brain figure and lowering its color contrast to avoid distracting students' reading focus. This improvement shows that user feedback plays an important role in refining the product to better meet student needs.

Table 5. Revisions Based on Student Feedback

Before	After
	

During the extended trial, teachers and students again provided positive responses to the use of the picture storybook. No feedback requiring substantial revision was identified, indicating that the product had met learning needs. The consistency of positive responses at this stage suggests that the product has achieved an adequate level of feasibility and practicality for use in Grade II Indonesian language learning. Overall, the evaluation results show that the picture storybook based on deep learning has undergone revision based on feedback from experts, teachers, and students. This process resulted in a product that is not only theoretically valid but also practical for classroom use. Therefore, the developed storybook is considered the final product that is feasible for supporting Indonesian literacy learning for Grade II elementary school students.

Conclusion

This study produced a picture storybook based on deep learning for Grade II elementary school students, developed using the ADDIE model, which consists of the analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation stages. The results show that the developed product has a very high level of validity based on the assessment of content experts (95%) and media experts (97%). In addition, the implementation results indicate that the product has a very high level of practicality based on student responses (87%) and teacher responses (96%). These findings show that the picture storybook based on deep learning is suitable to be used as a supporting teaching material for Indonesian language

learning because it facilitates learning experiences that are mindful, meaningful, and joyful in accordance with the characteristics of Grade II elementary school students.

Based on the results of the study, teachers are recommended to use the picture storybook based on deep learning as an alternative teaching material to support literacy activities and increase student engagement in Indonesian language learning. Schools are encouraged to support the use and development of similar teaching materials to enrich learning resources that are appropriate to elementary school students' characteristics. Future researchers are recommended to examine the effectiveness of picture storybooks based on deep learning on students' literacy skills, reading comprehension, or critical thinking skills across broader educational levels and contexts.

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