



Development of Digital Comics Integrated with Pancasila Student Profiles in The Merdeka Curriculum to Enhance Narrative Text Comprehension

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Abstract: This study investigates the development, feasibility, and effectiveness of Nafi Lala (Narasi Profil Pelajar Pancasila), a digital comic designed to enhance fourth-grade students' reading comprehension of narrative texts through the integration of Pancasila Student Profile dimensions in the Merdeka Curriculum. The research employs a research and development method, utilizing the ADDIE model, and collects data through interviews, questionnaires, pretests, posttests, and documentation. The study involves a small group of six students and a large group of 19 fourth-grade students in Semarang City, Central Java. Both qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods are applied, with qualitative data analyzed based on expert feedback and quantitative analysis involving normality tests, paired sample t-tests, and N-Gain analysis. The results show that the teaching module and content receive a score of 90%, while the media component achieves 92%, both categorized as "highly feasible". Student and teacher evaluations further support these findings, with feasibility ratings of 96.75% for the small group, 91.96% for the large group, and 92.11% for teachers. The effectiveness of the digital comic is demonstrated by posttest averages of 83.33 (small group) and 82.11 (large group), exceeding the minimum mastery threshold. The data meet the assumption of normality ($p > 0.05$), and paired t-tests confirm a significant improvement between pretest and posttest scores ($p = 0.001$ and $p = 0.000$, respectively). N-Gain scores are 63.64% (small group) and 69.28% (large group), both categorized as "moderately effective". These findings indicate that the digital comic integrated with Pancasila Student Profiles is feasible and effective in enhancing students

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Introduction

The Indonesian language holds a strategic position in the elementary school curriculum, serving not only as a subject to develop language competencies but also as a means to foster students' literacy and character (Mailida et al., 2023). Reading comprehension encompasses the perceptual, cognitive, and motor processes required to build a mental understanding of a text's content (Van Dyke, 2021). This skill is a primary means of acquiring knowledge (Escobar & Espinoza, 2024). Moreover, it is a key determinant of student learning success, as strong comprehension not only directly influences academic achievement but is also essential for educational and life success (Çam & Baştuğ, 2024). However, field observations indicate that students' reading comprehension abilities remain relatively low.

Findings from the 2022 cycle of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) indicated that Learners in Indonesia scored 359 in reading literacy, the lowest since



2000 and significantly below the international average (OECD, 2023). This condition is reflected in the fourth-grade learners an elementary school in Semarang City, Central Java, where the average reading comprehension score reached only 56, below the minimum mastery criterion (KKTP) of 70, with a student mastery rate of just 32%. Preliminary studies revealed that students had difficulties identifying text elements, concluding, and retelling narrative content. Students tended to read without truly understanding the content of the texts (Rahmawati & Umam, 2023). Students' low interest influences this issue in reading (Sur & Ünal, 2024) along with learning tools that are unengaging, lacking contextual relevance, and overly conventional (Fajrie et al., 2024; Putra, 2024). As a result, the learning process becomes less meaningful, and students struggle to connect what they read with real-life experiences or core values (Sugiri, 2024).

This issue highlights the importance of developing innovative and interactive learning media that enhance memory retention to motivate students and actively engage them in understanding narrative texts (Marliana & Subrata, 2023). One promising alternative is digital comics. Delivered through electronic devices, digital comics are visual media in the form of images that convey information tailored to learning needs (Priyadi & Kuswanto, 2023). This format fosters positive emotions, promotes independent learning, and improves comprehension by combining images and text (Rosadi & Karimah, 2021). According to Paivio's dual coding theory, information presented through both verbal and visual elements is more easily understood and retained (Wooten & Cuevas, 2024). The effectiveness of this medium is further enhanced when the narrative content reflects children's daily lives and real-life experiences, enabling students to construct meaning on a personal level (Sinamo & Herawati, 2023). This aligns with the principles of constructivism, which emphasize that learners actively construct knowledge through interaction with their experiences and environment (Wibowo et al., 2025).

In the context of developing the Nafi Lala (*Narasi Profil Pelajar Pancasila*) digital comic media, the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile are organically reflected in the storyline and character development, allowing students not only to comprehend the text but also to reflectively internalize positive character values aligned with the Merdeka Curriculum (Fauzan et al., 2023). This integration process aligns with the goals of character education, which emphasizes contextual learning based on experience and reflection, encouraging students to understand values through concrete events in stories relatable to their own lives, thereby fostering more profound and more relevant comprehension (Fatimah et al., 2024). However, most previous studies have primarily emphasized the effectiveness of digital comics in improving elementary students' reading comprehension, thereby reinforcing the role of visual media in enhancing literacy (Daulay & Nurmalina, 2021; Ghazalah et al., 2023). On the other hand, there are also studies that discuss the integration of the Pancasila Student Profile in fictional texts found in student textbooks, particularly in the Grade IV Indonesian language subject (Atikasari et al., 2023). Thus, there is a lack of studies developing digital comics that simultaneously integrate the Pancasila Student Profile within the Merdeka Curriculum and enhance narrative text comprehension through a unified, contextualized character-based visual literacy approach.

This presents a significant gap in the development of media that supports both literacy skills and character formation in accordance with the Merdeka Curriculum. To address this gap, this study introduces a novel approach through the development of the Nafi Lala digital comic, which not only enhances students' narrative reading comprehension but also systematically embeds all six dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile: (1) faith in God and noble character, (2) global diversity, (3) mutual cooperation, (4) independence, (5)



critical thinking, and (6) creativity (Yulia et al., 2023). By combining cognitive and affective elements, the comic fosters holistic learning, not only enhancing students' reading comprehension skills but also shaping their character. This digital comic also encourages the growth of students' imagination, creativity, critical thinking, and respect for diversity, making it a learning innovation relevant to the challenges of 21st-century education (Rohmah et al., 2023). This study aims to explain the development process, feasibility, and effectiveness of the Nafi Lala digital comic media containing the Pancasila Student Profile, primarily focusing on improving fourth-grade students' narrative text reading comprehension skills. This research seeks to fill a gap identified in the existing literature and offer a practical solution to strengthen narrative text comprehension among elementary school learners.

Research Method

This study utilized the Development and Research (D&R) method, employing the ADDIE framework as its generative framework. Branch (2010) explains that the ADDIE model comprises five phases: Analyze, Design, Develop, Implement, and Evaluate. In the analyze stage, a needs analysis, problem identification, and task analysis were conducted to determine the material students need to learn. The design stage included the development of concepts, visual appearance, flowchart, storyboard, as well as assessment instruments and teaching modules for the Nafi Lala digital comic. The develop stage produced the final product, which was authenticated by content, platform, and pedagogical specialists using evaluation questionnaires grounded on the Likert scale comprising four response levels, as this scale is considered effective in measuring individual or group perceptions and opinions toward the developed product (Sugiyono, 2022). The authentication outcomes were used to improve the media. The interpretation of media feasibility percentages refers to Table 1.

Table 1. Media Feasibility Criteria

Percentage	Criteria
81% - 100%	Highly Feasible
61% - 80%	Feasible
41% - 60%	Moderately Feasible
21% -40%	Less Feasible
<20%	Not Feasible

Source: (Miftah, 2022)

In the implementation stage, the comic was tested in a Bahasa Indonesia lesson on narrative texts at the fourth-grade level at a primary school located in Semarang City, Central Java, involving 6 learners in a focused cohort assessment and 19 learners in a broader cohort assessment. Initial and final tests were administered to evaluate the media's impact. The final evaluation phase intended to assess the efficacy and impact of the outcome using tests and feedback questionnaires completed by students and teachers, which were evaluated via the Likert scale.

The researcher applied a one-group pretest-posttest design to evaluate the efficacy of the Nafi Lala digital comic media in advancing the capacity to comprehend narrative readings. The evaluations comprised 20 multiple-choice questions that had undergone validity, reliability, difficulty level, and discrimination index testing. The pretest and posttest data underwent normality analysis, N-Gain analysis, and paired sample t-test. Normality tests, using the Shapiro-Wilk method due to the small sample size (Quraissy, 2020), examined whether the data were normally distributed (Hajaroh & Raehanah, 2021). The N-gain analysis evaluated the improvement and effectiveness of the media, while the paired samples t-test



determined whether a notable disparity existed between the initial and final assessments mean scores (Sukarelawa et al., 2024).

Table 2. N-Gain Criteria

N-Gain Value	Interpretation
$0,70 \leq g \leq 1,00$	High
$0,30 \leq g < 0,70$	Moderate
$0,00 < g < 0,30$	Low
$g = 0,00$	No Improvement
$-1,00 \leq g < 0,00$	Decline

Source: (Sukarelawa et al., 2024)

Table 3. Effectiveness Level Criteria

Percentage (%)	Interpretation
< 40	Not Effective
40 – 55	Less Effective
56 – 75	Moderately Effective
> 76	Effective

Source: (Sukarelawa et al., 2024)

Results and Discussion

The development of the Nafi Lala digital comic media, which integrates the Pancasila Student Profile, demonstrated carried out employing the ADDIE model, as detailed below.

Analyze Stage

The needs analysis conducted through interviews with the homeroom teacher revealed that fourth-grade students have difficulty understanding narrative texts, particularly in identifying intrinsic and extrinsic elements, drawing conclusions, and retelling. This is reflected in students' daily test results, which show that several students have not reached the designated mastery benchmark (KKTP). Many students also reported feeling bored due to lengthy texts and conventional teaching methods. This supports constructivist theory, which emphasizes that learning must be relevant and engaging to students' experiences (Wibowo et al., 2025). Additionally, the needs questionnaires completed by students and teachers indicated a strong preference for visually-based interactive media and character-building content. These preferences align with the principles embedded in the Pancasila Student Profile, reinforcing the importance of integrating these dimensions, particularly in Indonesian language learning, which plays a key role in character education (Mailida et al., 2023).

To ensure curriculum alignment, the "reading and viewing" element from the Phase B Merdeka Curriculum for Grade IV was selected, which focuses on the ability to comprehend messages and information in narrative texts. Therefore, the development of the Nafi Lala digital comic was purposefully designed to address students' needs, align with the characteristics of the instructional content, and meet the learning objectives outlined in the Merdeka Curriculum.

Design Stage

During the design phase, the Nafi Lala digital comic media was developed by integrating the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile with the characteristics of fourth-grade learners and targeted learning objectives. The storyline, centered on ecological issues in schools, features characters Nafi and Lala who represent values such as environmental care, global awareness, independence, creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration. This contextually relevant narrative promotes student engagement and character internalization, aligning with constructivist theory (Wibowo et al., 2025) and the contextual principles of the



Pancasila Student Profile, which emphasize that learning should be relevant to students' experiences and environments in order to encourage active engagement and internalization of character values (Hamzah et al., 2022).

The visuals were created using IbisPaint X and arranged with Canva, integrating both verbal and visual content. This use of multimedia supports Paivio's dual coding theory, which emphasizes that the combination of text and images can enhance comprehension and memory retention (Wooten & Cuevas, 2024). The media structure was also designed to be interactive, beginning with a cover page featuring a "Play" button that leads to the main menu, which includes seven features: (1) user guide, (2) learning outcomes, (3) learning objectives, (4) narrative text material, (5) the Nafi Lala comic, (6) quiz cards, and (7) developer profile. Features such as sound effects, the regional song "Apuse" from West Papua, and interactive quiz cards were added to enhance engagement. The quiz cards contain reflective questions that encourage students to think information critically and immerse further in the text (Fitriani & Attalina, 2024). The sound effects and background music create emotional resonance, reinforcing student engagement with the story and the conveyed values (Febri & Purwacandra, 2024). A companion teaching module for educators was also developed and validated to ensure that the media is pedagogically integrated.

Develop Stage

At this stage, the preliminary version of the product was subjected to validation by both subject matter experts and media specialists. The content expert validated both the material presented in the media and the accompanying teaching module.

Table 4. Expert Validation Results

No	Type of Validation	Maximum Score	Score Obtained	Percentage	Category
1.	Teaching Module Validation	64	58	90%	Highly Feasible
2.	Content Validation	64	58	90%	Highly Feasible
3.	Media Validation	96	89	92%	Highly Feasible

The validation percentages indicate that the Nafi Lala digital comic media is classified as "highly feasible" for instructional use. A score of 90% in the teaching module validation shows that aspects such as clarity of learning objectives, content appropriateness, learning strategies, selection of media and learning resources, as well as evaluation planning, enrichment, and remedial activities have been optimally fulfilled. This aligns with the opinion of Ananda & Albina (2025), who state that an effective teaching module must systematically integrate all instructional components. In the content validation, a score of 90% indicates that the material was assessed as highly accurate, clearly presented, and used language appropriately. This suggests that learning objectives were effectively achieved through clear, understandable content aligned with students' cognitive levels (Fitri & Ardipal, 2021). The media validation received the highest score of 92%, indicating that aspects such as visual design, character development, sound/music effects, and graphic feasibility were highly supportive of student engagement and appeal. This is consistent with Paivio's dual coding theory, which emphasizes that the integration of aligned visual and textual elements can enhance students' attention and comprehension of material (Wooten & Cuevas, 2024).

Although deemed highly feasible, experts suggested improvements, including adjustments to the logo, class info, developer profile, and addition of the developer's email address. The final version of the media incorporated these revisions.



Figure 1. Cover



Figure 2. Main Menu



Figure 3. Narrative text Material

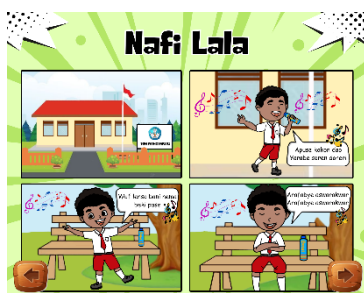


Figure 4. Quiz Card



Figure 5. Nafi Lala Comic



Figure 6. Nafi Lala Comic

Implementation Stage

In the implementation stage, the Nafi Lala digital comic media, which incorporates the Pancasila Student Profile, was tested directly within instructional activities. This stage involved trials with both small and large groups of participants. The small-group trial involved six students to evaluate whether the media was fully prepared and optimized before being implemented on a larger scale. The large-group trial was conducted with 19 students and the classroom teacher simulated the practical execution of learning in a real classroom setting. The learning activities were guided by a validated teaching module and included a pretest-posttest as well as reflection activities through quiz cards. The sequence of activities in the media included an introduction to narrative texts, reading the digital comic, and answering the quiz cards, ensuring that students experienced a meaningful learning process. This instructional design supports the principles of active learning, with activities that promote reflection and critical thinking, aligned with the essential ethical and personal development goals promoted in the Pancasila Student Profile (Juraidah & Hartoyo, 2022).

Evaluation Stage

The effectiveness of the Nafi Lala digital comic media was evaluated through two stages of trials: a small group (6 students) and a large group (19 students).

Table 5. Results of Pretest and Posttest for the Small Group

Test	Average	Highest Score	Lowest Score	Average Difference
Pretest	55	75	35	28.33
Posttest	83.33	95	75	

Table 6. Results of Pretest and Posttest for the Large Group

Test	Average	Highest Score	Lowest Score	Average Difference
Pretest	44.21	80	20	37.9
Posttest	82.11	95	60	

The analysis of pretest and posttest results indicates a rise in the mean results for both small and large groups. In the small group, the average score increased from 55 to 83.33 (a gain of 28.33 points), while in the large group, the score rose from 44.21 to 82.11 (a gain of 37.9 points).

37.9 points). The post-intervention scores, after using the Nafi Lala digital comic media, exceeded the minimum mastery criteria. These results indicate an improvement in students' learning outcomes in narrative text comprehension, particularly in identifying intrinsic elements, drawing conclusions from the content, and retelling the narrative. This increase in performance reflects the effective achievement of learning objectives (Maghfiroh & Mulyani, 2024). Subsequently, the pretest and posttest data were analyzed through several steps, including a normality test, t-test, and N-Gain calculation. As a prerequisite for the paired sample t-test analysis, the Shapiro-Wilk method was employed to test for normality.

Table 7. Normality Test – Small Group

Test	Sig	Criteria
Pretest	0.798	Normally Distributed
Posttest	0.554	Normally Distributed

Table 8. Normality Test – Large Group

Test	Sig	Criteria
Pretest	0.360	Normally Distributed
Posttest	0.136	Normally Distributed

Based on the Shapiro-Wilk normality test, the initial and final assessment data for both the small and large groups were found to be exhibited a normal distribution. This indicates indicated by the notability values of 0.798 (small group pretest) and 0.360 (large group pretest), as well as 0.554 (small group posttest) and 0.136 (large group posttest). Since all significance values are above the threshold of 0.05, the data meet the assumption of normality (Sukarelawa et al., 2024). Following confirmation of normality, a paired independent samples t-test was performed to ascertain whether a statistically notable difference existed between the initial and posttest results.

Table 9. Paired Sample T-Test Results – Small and Large Groups

Trial Group	Sig. (2-tailed)	Criteria
Small Group	0.001	Significant Difference
Large Group	0.000	Significant Difference

Table 5 presents the significance values (Sig. 2-tailed), which are 0.001 for the small group and 0.000 for the large group. Given that both values are below the standard significance level of 0.05, it can be deduced that a statistically notable difference exists between the initial and final assessment results in both groups (Sukarelawa et al., 2024). This indicates that students' learning outcomes showed a significant improvement in narrative text reading comprehension before and after the use of the digital comic media (Wafa & Wiranti, 2024).

Table 10. N-Gain Test Results – Small and Large Groups

Trial Group	Average N-Gain Percentage	Category
Small Group	63.64%	Moderately Effective
Large Group	69.28%	Moderately Effective

After implementing the learning process using the Nafi Lala digital comic media, an effectiveness analysis was conducted through the N-Gain test to evaluate enhancement in learners' comprehension of narrative texts. The average N-Gain percentage was 63.64% for the small group and 69.28% for the large group. According to the N-Gain classification, both scores fall into the category of “moderately effective” (Sukarelawa et al., 2024). These findings reinforce the evidence that the media consistently facilitated students' reading comprehension development (Daulay & Nurmnalina, 2021; Marlina & Subrata, 2023). As part of the evaluation, user response questionnaires were administered to fourth-grade teachers and students after using the Nafi Lala digital comic, and the results confirmed its feasibility and suitability as a learning medium.



Table 11. Questionnaire Response Results

Respondent	Average Score	Category
Students (Small Group)	96.75%	Highly Feasible
Students (Large Group)	91.96%	Highly Feasible
Teacher	92.11%	Highly Feasible

The response questionnaire results revealed a very high level of feasibility. The small group of students gave a score of 96.75%, the large group 91.96%, and teachers 92.11%, all of which fell into the "highly feasible" category. Prominent indicators from students' responses included the appealing visual design, easy-to-understand language, and interactive presentation. This supported Paivio's dual coding theory, which posits that the combination of text and visuals, such as in comics, enhances both motivation and comprehension (Nursolehah et al., 2024).

Teacher assessed the media as highly aligned with the learning objectives and curriculum goals and relevant to the traits of primary school learners. They also considered it effective in fostering character traits using the contextual integration of Pancasila Student Profile values. These findings are in line with character education approaches based on experiential learning and reflection (Fatimah et al., 2024), and also supported the constructivist reading theory, which highlights the idea that text comprehension is shaped through the interaction between the reader's prior experience and the content being read (Sabilla et al., 2023).

Overall, the results and discussion confirmed that the creation of the Nafi Lala digital comic media was not only feasible and well-received but also effective in enhancing students' narrative reading comprehension and reinforcing Pancasila character values within the Merdeka Curriculum framework. These findings were consistent with previous studies that showed digital comic-based media could improve reading interest and narrative comprehension among elementary school students (Ghazalah et al., 2023; Pangriptaningrum et al., 2024).

The successful integration of the Pancasila Student Profile dimensions into the Nafi Lala digital comic, presented through narratives that align with students' everyday lives, supports the constructivist learning theory. This theory asserts that meaningful learning occurs when new information is connected to learners' real-life experiences (Wibowo et al., 2025). This study reinforces the notion that character education can be effectively internalized through contextual learning media that actively engage students (Fatimah et al., 2024). It also affirms Paivio's dual coding theory, which suggests that the combination of visual and verbal stimuli, such as those found in comics, can enhance reading comprehension and memory retention, as students are more likely to visualize real-life situations, especially among upper elementary school students (Wooten & Cuevas, 2024). In addition, the use of digital comics can facilitate the achievement of learning objectives by promoting active student involvement in the learning process (Apostolou & Linardatos, 2023). Furthermore, the integration of digital communication and information systems has been proven to strengthen students' competencies in understanding academic content (Winarni et al., 2020).

The development of the Nafi Lala digital comic provides a practical learning tool, particularly for teaching narrative texts while simultaneously integrating character education. This medium can be easily implemented in classrooms equipped with basic technology, such as projectors, smartphones, or laptops, and does not require advanced technical skills. Teachers can immediately apply the Nafi Lala digital comic along with its teaching module to support student engagement, improve reading comprehension, and reinforce Pancasila values in a contextual manner. Its interactive features, including visual storytelling, relatable



characters, and quizzes, make the study experience more enjoyable and meaningful for students. These findings align with previous research indicating that educational media designed based on student needs and curriculum goals tend to be highly practical and effective in classroom settings (Purwati et al., 2022).

Conclusion

The Nafi Lala digital comic, which integrates the dimensions of the Pancasila Student Profile, was found to be highly feasible and effectively enhanced the reading comprehension abilities of narrative texts. Feasibility was validated through expert reviews and user feedback. The teaching module achieved a score of 90%, indicating well-defined objectives, relevant content, practical instructional strategies, appropriate media and resource selection, valid assessments, and the inclusion of enrichment and remedial plans. The media component received a score of 92%, reflecting strong visual design, character development, effective use of sound and music, and high graphic quality, each rated as "highly feasible." Student feedback yielded scores of 96.75% (small group) and 91.96% (large group), emphasizing the clarity of content, engaging presentation, accessible language, and appealing visuals. Teacher feedback averaged 92.11%, citing alignment with learning objectives, content accuracy, supportive presentation, and age-appropriate language. In terms of effectiveness, the comic demonstrated positive results, as students' posttest scores exceeded the minimum mastery criteria, reaching 83.33 in the small group and 82.11 in the large group. The normality test results indicated that the data distribution met the assumption of normality. Additionally, paired-sample t-tests showed significant improvements between pretest and posttest scores, with p-values of 0.001 and 0.000, respectively. Based on the Normalized Gain (N-Gain) analysis, the average improvement was 63.64% for the small group and 69.28% for the large group, both categorized as "moderately effective."

Recommendation

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that teachers adopt and implement digital comic media incorporating the values of the Pancasila Student Profile in various grade levels and subject areas to support literacy improvement and character education. Future research may consider integrating more interactive technological features such as animations, narrated audio, and adaptive responses to students' answers to enhance engagement and the overall learning experience further.

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