TRACING HISTORICAL HURDLES IN SOCIAL STUDIES 8: THE EFFECT OF PROJECT E.V.E.N.T.S (*Exploring Visual Experience Navigating Timelines And Story Maps*) IN MASTERING HISTORY CONCEPTS

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***Abstract*— Project EVENTS, which stands for Exploring Visual Experiences Navigating Timelines and Story Map, is a customized pedagogical intervention program for history classes to address the learning gaps in mastering and unpacking historical concepts. In this quasi-experimental research design, the Grade 8 Science Curriculum participated and answered the 20-item pre-test and post-test to determine the effectiveness of the intervention program. Frequency and percentage were used to interpret the pre-test and post-test scores of the participants. The data was analyzed using the Paired sample t-test to determine if there was a significant difference in the pre-test and post-test scores of the participants. Results have revealed that in the pre-test, the mean score of both the control and experimental groups was 12.05, which connotes the same level of skills in mastering and unpacking historical concepts. In the post-test, the control group maintained a qualitative description of satisfactory with a mean score of 12.30. In contrast, the experimental group exhibited a qualitative description of excellence, with a mean score of 17.53. Based on the findings, the utilization of Project EVENTS in teaching history aided students in mastering and unpacking essential historical concepts.**

Keywords— *historical concepts, timelines, and story maps, social studies, SDG 4, SDG 10, SDG 16*

I. INTRODUCTION

Storytelling has been an essential tool for shaping moral and cultural identities since the earliest human civilizations began inscribing words and symbols on stone. Across societies and historical periods, narratives—whether conveyed through myths, fables, or epic sagas—have played a central role in transmitting values and preserving cultural memory. With the advancement of modern scholarship, figures such as Joseph Campbell (1949) analyzed the structural patterns of stories across cultures, most notably through the concept of the "Monomyth" or "Hero's Journey." This framework has since influenced diverse fields, including literature, media, and pedagogy, demonstrating the enduring role of narrative in knowledge-making and meaning-making.

Cartography has long intersected with narrative traditions, as maps historically functioned not only as tools of geographic precision but also as cultural texts grounded in oral traditions and symbolic storytelling (Roth, 2020). Early maps were often valued more for the cultural and emotional resonance they evoked than for their spatial accuracy, embodying both factual and mythical accounts of place. Contemporary scholarship emphasizes that cartographic narratives enrich map design by embedding cultural, historical, and experiential elements that foster deeper user engagement (Caquard & Dimitrovas, 2017). Through spatial visualization, narratives become more than records of events; they offer new perspectives, foster recognition of collective history, and generate a sense of identification with place (Carter, 2022). These insights have been advanced by digital innovations such as interactive story maps, which combine text, images, videos, and spatial data into dynamic visual narratives. Studies such as Cyvin et al. (2022) show that these tools can significantly enhance active learning in geography and related disciplines.

In the context of history education, story maps provide an opportunity to address one of the persistent challenges in teaching: the reliance on rote memorization. Traditional approaches often emphasize dates, names, and events at the expense of critical analysis and contextual understanding (Klemm, 2007). As a result, students may struggle to grasp the complexity of global events such as World War I and World War II, limiting their ability to connect historical knowledge with present-day realities. Furthermore, reliance on lecture-based methods alone can narrow student engagement and reduce opportunities for critical and reflective learning (Fielding, 2005). Innovative strategies such as visual storytelling and interactive mapping can transform history lessons into active, inquiry-based experiences, making abstract concepts more tangible and accessible.

This challenge is compounded by broader systemic and cognitive barriers. Historical inequities in educational policy—such as segregation, uneven resource distribution, and biased assessments—have perpetuated learning gaps and limited opportunities for marginalized groups. Cognitive obstacles, including the abstract and complex nature of historical causation, also hinder students' ability to engage deeply with the subject. Such barriers underscore the importance of designing inclusive pedagogical strategies that account for diverse learning needs and promote equitable access to meaningful history education.

In response to these challenges, this study introduces Project E.V.E.N.T.S. (Exploring Visual Experience Navigating Timelines and Story Maps), a strategy designed to integrate cartographic narratives and visual storytelling into history instruction. By leveraging story maps, the project seeks to move beyond rote memorization, cultivating students' critical thinking, historical contextualization, and emotional engagement with the past. This approach aligns directly with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4 (Quality Education) by fostering inclusive and transformative learning environments, SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) by addressing systemic barriers in education, and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) by promoting historical awareness, ethical reflection, and responsible citizenship. Ultimately, this research aims to demonstrate how integrating storytelling, spatial narratives, and technology can strengthen historical education and contribute to more equitable and sustainable learning outcomes.

II. METHODS

This study employed a quasi-experimental design utilizing pre-tests and post-tests to evaluate the effectiveness of Project E.V.E.N.T.S. (Exploring Visual Experience Navigating Timelines and Story Maps) in enhancing students' mastery of historical concepts. The true experimental approach was used to compare the pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental and control groups, with the experimental group receiving the intervention and the control group continuing with traditional instruction.

The participants of the study were 86 Grade 8 students from the Science Curriculum strand of the University of Saint Louis Tuguegarao. Two sections were purposively selected to participate, and both sections were further divided into control and experimental groups based on their pre-test results. The basis for group assignment was the comparability of skills, as there was no statistically significant difference in the initial performance of the two groups. This ensured that both the control and experimental groups had a similar baseline prior to the implementation of the intervention.

The research instrument consisted of a 20-item multiple-choice test used both as a pre-test and post-test. The assessment focused on Fourth Quarter topics in World History, particularly World War I and World War II, emphasizing key historical concepts necessary for understanding these lessons. The test was designed to evaluate not only factual recall but also comprehension of significant events and themes.

The data gathering procedure followed three phases. In the pre-treatment phase, permission to conduct the study was secured from the Office of the Vice President for Academics through the Basic Education School Principal. A pre-test was then administered to both groups to identify obstacles in students' understanding of World War I and World War II. During the treatment phase, the experimental group was introduced to Project E.V.E.N.T.S. across a six-week period, where story maps and visual narratives were consistently integrated into lessons on the specified topics. The control group, by contrast, received instruction through conventional methods without modification. In the post-treatment phase, a post-test was administered to both groups one week after the completion of the intervention. Scores from both groups were analyzed and compared to determine whether the intervention significantly improved students' mastery of historical concepts.

For data analysis, descriptive statistics, including frequency and percentage, were used to categorize the pre-test and post-test scores of students according to the following ranges: 17–20 (Excellent), 13–16 (Very Satisfactory), 9–12 (Satisfactory), 5–8 (Fair), and 4 and below (Failed). To test for significant differences, paired-sample t-tests were employed to examine changes within groups, while independent-sample t-tests were used to compare the performance of the experimental and control groups.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Pre-Test Scores of Students in the Control and Experimental Groups

Scores	Control Group		Experimental Group	
	n	%	n	%
17 – 20	1	2.33	4	9.30
13 – 16	20	46.51	15	34.88
9 – 12	19	44.19	17	39.54
5 – 8	3	6.97	7	16.28
0 – 4	0	7.10	0	0
Mean Score	12.05	Satisfactory	12.05	Satisfactory

Table 1 presents the pre-test scores of the control and experimental groups, assessing the prior ability of the students to master historical content. The results show that both groups achieved satisfactory ratings, and both exhibited a mean score of 12.05. This indicates that control and experimental groups have the same prior knowledge and skill in mastering historical concepts in World War 2 topic. The idea of having equal skills and knowledge between control and experimental groups during the pre-test is rooted in the principles of experimental design and control group methodology. By ensuring similar skill levels between the control and experimental groups at the start of the study, any differences observed in the post-test can be more confidently attributed to the experimental treatment rather than pre-existing variations in skill levels. Hence, this allows for a more accurate assessment of the impact of the experimental intervention. On the other hand, most scores for both groups clustered around the 9-to-12-point range, representing the mode of the scores.

Table 2. Post-Test Scores of Students in the Control and Experimental Groups

Scores	Control Group		Experimental Group	
	n	%	n	%
17 – 20	1	2.33	30	69.77
13 – 16	26	60.47	13	30.23
9 – 12	12	27.90	0	0
5 – 8	4	9.30	0	0
0 – 4	0	0	0	0
Mean Score	12.30	Satisfactory	17.53	Excellent

The table shows that the post-test scores for the control group and experimental group show a prominent difference in their performances. The control group obtained a mean score of 12.30, which can be described as satisfactory, while the experimental group obtained a higher mean score of 17.5, which we can classify as excellent. In this study, the spreading of scores provides understanding. In the control group, the majority of scores clustered within the range of 13 to 16, demonstrating a relatively wide spread of performance. At the same time, the experimental group showed a more concentrated spreading, with scores primarily falling between 17 and 20. This is a shred of evidence that the experimental group outperformed the control group, as the scores were generally higher in the experimental group. The findings show that the experimental group performed better than the control group in the post-test assessment. This suggests that Project E.V.E.N.T.S (Exploring Visual Experience Navigating Timelines and Story Maps) improves the learning skills in analyzing historical concepts and visualizing information through timelines and story maps. This claim was supported by Egibor (2017), who said that using story maps in history classes aided students in visualizing information and mastering historical concepts.

Table 3. Significant Difference in the Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores of Students in the Control and Experimental Groups

Groups	Test	Mean Scores	Mean Difference	P-value
Control Group	Pre-Test	12.05	0.00	1.00
	Post-Test	12.05		
Experimental Group	Pre-Test	12.30	-5.65	<.00*
	Post-Test	17.53		

**significant at .05*

The table presents the results of a study comparing the mean scores of a control group and an experimental group before and after an intervention known as Project E.V.E.N.T.S (Exploring Visual Experience Navigating Timelines and Story Maps). The control group showed a stable mean score of 12.05 in both pre-test and post-test. Meanwhile, the experimental group displayed a more substantial improvement, with the mean score rising from 12.30 in the pre-test to 17.53 in the post-test. Based on the results of this study, it can be gleaned that the intervention significantly impacted the participants' test scores, as evidenced by the higher mean scores in the post-test compared to the pre-test. These findings suggest that the intervention positively affected the participant's performance, as reflected in the significant increase in test scores. The experimental group, which received the intervention, experienced a more considerable improvement compared to the control group, indicating the effectiveness of the intervention in enhancing the desired outcome. In the study of Saladin and Crosson (2021), the utilization of story maps in the different facets of learning elevated their participation in class and how students interacted with historical concepts. This claim was also supported by Cyvin et al. (2022) and Egiebor's (2017) study, which showed that students visualized historical information, which led to active and engaging learning.

The control group, with a pre-test mean and post-test mean score of 12.05, likely did not receive the intervention or received a different treatment than the experimental group. On the other hand, the experimental group, with a higher post-test

mean score of 16.06, likely experienced the effects of the intervention. The difference in mean scores suggests that the intervention had a positive effect on the participants' outcomes, leading to higher scores in the experimental group. Overall, these findings indicate that the intervention or treatment implemented for the experimental group had a statistically significant impact on the participants' outcomes compared to the control group.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

History classes are filled with a plethora of concepts that students need to understand. With this, the utilization and integration of Project E.V.E.N.T.S (Exploring Visual Experience Navigating Timelines and Story Maps) pave the way for the Grade 8 students to master and unpack historical concepts easily. Additionally, the use of timelines and story maps to study World War 1 and 2 marked an immense improvement in the skills of the students in comprehending essential concepts and ideas. Based on the overall result, it can be deduced that the utilization of timelines and story maps through Project EVENTS provided an avenue for the Grade 8 students in their history class to learn historical concepts in a better way. In the study of Egiebor (2017), story maps aided students in visualizing information and engaging them in interactive learning of various historical concepts. Cyvin et al. (2022) also reported that story maps in geography class promoted an increase in participation, which led to active learning. Therefore, the utilization of Project EVENTS improves students' skills in mastering historical concepts. With this, teachers must take this intervention program into their teaching-learning pedagogy to improve their history classes. With the effectiveness of the mentioned intervention program, Social Studies teachers should integrate it into teaching other history classes or other subjects that focus on teaching stories and literature. Teachers should adopt this program as their teaching style and practice to improve the skills of the students in mastering historical concepts. However, customization of the strategy, Project E.V.E.N.T.S (Exploring Visual Experience Navigating Timelines and Story Maps), is highly recommended to improve and enhance the program. It can also be flexible depending on the nature and resources of the school and teachers. Thus, while teachers implement this program, they must be knowledgeable and improve their ability to be creative in presenting historical concepts through the use of timelines and story maps to make it interactive.

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