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INSTRUCTIONAL LEARNING PLAN AND READING LEVEL OF PRIMARY GRADE LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the extent of instructional planning among primary grade teachers in Districts III, IV, VI, and VII of Valencia City Division (S.Y. 2025-2026) across learning objectives, content selection, teaching strategies, and assessment/evaluation; assessed learners' reading levels in phonological awareness, phonics/decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension; and established significant relationships between these variables. Specifically, it measured planning components and reading domains, evaluated qualitative levels ("Very Great Extent," "At Grade Level"), and identified correlations with overall reading proficiency. Employing a descriptive-correlational design, data from primary grade teachers were collected via validated surveys and analyzed using descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, qualitative interpretations) and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation. Instructional planning rated "Very Great Extent" across domains: learning objectives excelled in curriculum alignment and clarity (M=4.65); content selection emphasized structured sequencing and gap-closing materials (M=4.60); teaching strategies prioritized visual supports, differentiation, and active techniques (M=4.61); assessment/evaluation shone in parent communication, formative monitoring, and data-driven modifications (M=4.63). Reading levels consistently rated "At Grade Level," with phonological awareness and phonics/decoding strongest in sound recognition and blending, fluency showing smoother pronunciation but developing prosody, and vocabulary/comprehension thriving through multisensory activities. Correlation analysis revealed significant positive relationships ($p < .001$): assessment/evaluation ($r=.670$), teaching strategies ($r=.640$), overall planning ($r=.651$), learning objectives ($r=.520$), content

selection (r=.447). These affirm high-quality planning's role in literacy gains, particularly via responsive assessment and adaptive strategies, aligning with DepEd K to 12 and MTB-MLE frameworks.

KEYWORDS: *instructional learning plan, primary grade teachers, reading proficiency, phonological awareness, phonics and decoding, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension, assessment/evaluation, teaching strategies, DepEd Valencia City.*

INTRODUCTION

Reading instruction in the primary grades is a crucial foundation for pupils' academic success. Grade 1 marks the beginning of formal literacy development, where children learn to recognize sounds, decode words, read fluently, build vocabulary, and comprehend texts. However, this stage presents challenges because pupils enter with varied abilities, language exposure, and readiness levels. Some struggle with phonological awareness, phonics, and decoding, while others lack fluency and comprehension. These difficulties highlight the need for effective instructional learning plans that integrate clear objectives, appropriate content, teaching strategies, and assessment. Grounded in the science of reading, this study explores how instructional planning influences reading levels among Grade 1 learners in Valencia City.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored in several theoretical perspectives. The Theory of Formative Assessment emphasizes the importance of frequent, actionable assessment data to guide instruction and improve learning outcomes. Vygotsky's Social Constructivist Theory highlights the role of scaffolding and social interaction in supporting learners within their zone of proximal development, making guided support essential in reading acquisition. Additionally, the Input-Process-Outcome (IPO) Model conceptualizes how reading levels (input) inform instructional planning (process), which then influences literacy outcomes (output). Together, these frameworks provide a strong foundation for examining the relationship between instructional planning and reading proficiency.

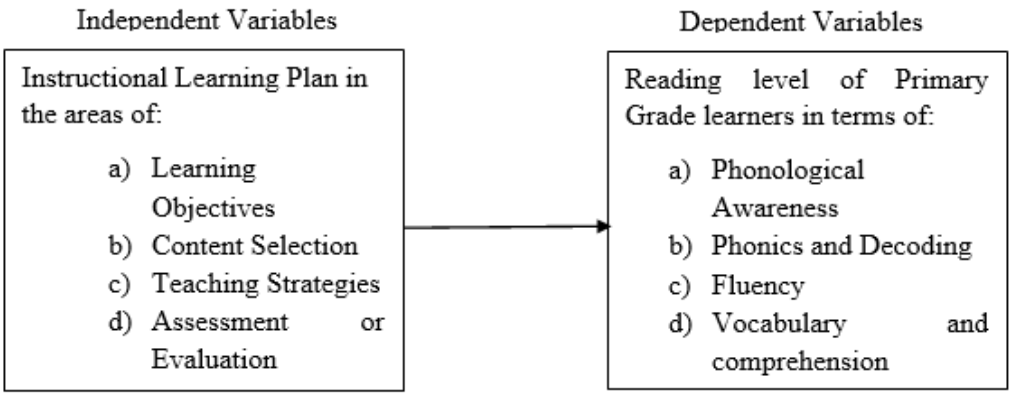

Figure 1. ***Schematic Diagram showing the Relationship of the Independent and Dependent Variables of the Study.***

Scope of the Study

The study focuses on Grade 1 learners in Districts 3, 4, 6, and 7 of Valencia City during School Year 2025–2026. It investigates the extent of instructional planning in the areas of learning objectives, content selection, teaching strategies, and assessment, and how these relate to learners' reading levels in phonological awareness, phonics and decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The respondents are educators from schools in the Division of Valencia City, and the study is limited to analyzing their instructional practices and learners' reading outcomes within the specified school year.

Review of the Literature

Research consistently emphasizes the importance of instructional learning plans in guiding teachers to organize lessons, select appropriate content, and establish objectives that optimize classroom outcomes. Studies highlight that effective planning involves aligning goals with curriculum standards, anticipating misconceptions, and integrating formative assessment. Learning objectives, when clearly articulated, improve student engagement and self-regulation, while content selection that reflects learners' interests and cultural context fosters motivation and inclusivity. Teaching strategies such as differentiated instruction, guided reading, and multisensory approaches enhance fluency and comprehension. Finally, assessment embedded in instructional planning provides critical feedback for instructional adjustments, with digital tools expanding evaluation methods in blended learning contexts. Collectively, these findings underscore the dynamic and reflective nature of instructional planning in improving literacy outcomes.

Research Methodology

This study employed a descriptive-correlational design to examine the relationship between instructional planning and reading levels. The respondents were educators from schools in the Division of Valencia City. Data were collected using an adapted survey questionnaire that measured instructional planning practices and learners' reading levels. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, percentages, mean, and standard deviation, as well as inferential statistics including t-tests and Pearson correlation coefficients to determine significant relationships between variables.

Findings

The findings revealed that teachers implement instructional learning plans with varying degrees of effectiveness across objectives, content, strategies, and assessment. Learners' reading levels also varied, with some achieving grade-level proficiency while others remained in developing or emerging stages. Statistical analysis indicated a significant relationship between instructional planning and reading proficiency, particularly in phonological awareness, decoding, and comprehension. These results suggest that systematic and well-aligned instructional planning positively influences literacy development among primary grade learners.

Table 2 Instructional planning in the areas of Learning objectives.

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
The **objective** aligns with the **curriculum standards, lesson content, and assessment tools.**	4.78	0.445	Very Great Extent
What students are taught and tested on directly connects to the objective.	4.75	0.449	Very Great Extent
It supports overall learning goals or competencies.	4.74	0.453	Very Great Extent
The objective is stated in clear, specific, and understandable language.	4.71	0.492	Very Great Extent
The objective specifies what learners will do, how they will do it, and sometimes to what degree.	4.71	0.482	Very Great Extent
The objective focuses on what learners will achieve, not what the teacher will do.	4.67	0.496	Very Great Extent
The objective is **meaningful** to the learners' needs, interests, and real-life applications.	4.66	0.523	Very Great Extent
The objective is **realistic** given the time, resources, and learner's level.	4.65	0.526	Very Great Extent
The learning outcome can be **observed and assessed** using evidence of student performance.	4.63	0.520	Very Great Extent
In some cases, objectives include a time frame for completion.	4.61	0.567	Very Great Extent

It sets expectations that are challenging but attainable.	4.54	0.556	Very Great Extent
Learners and teachers can easily interpret what is expected	4.51	0.588	Very Great Extent
Action verbs (from Bloom's Taxonomy) are used instead of vague terms like *know* or *learn*.	4.47	0.598	Very Great Extent
Overall	4.65	0.373	Very Great Extent

Scale	**Range**	**Description**	**Qualitative Interpretation**
5	4.20-5.00	Always (A)	Very Great Extent
4	3.40-4.19	Often (O)	Great Extent
3	2.60-3.39	Sometimes (S)	Moderately Extent
2	1.80-2.59	Rarely (R)	Low Extent
1	1.00-1.79	Never (N)	Very Low Extent

Table 2 presents the level of teachers' instructional planning in the area of learning objectives. Overall, the results show a very great extent of effectiveness, indicating that teachers are highly skilled in creating objectives that guide meaningful and focused learning. The overall mean is (Mean = 4.65, SD = 0.373).

The indicator with the highest mean is "The objective aligns with the curriculum standards, lesson content, and assessment tools" (Mean = 4.78, SD = 0.445). Other notable indicators include "What students are taught and tested on directly connects to the objective" (Mean = 4.75, SD = 0.449) and "It supports overall learning goals or competencies" (Mean = 4.74, SD = 0.453). The indicator with the lowest mean, although still very high, is "Action verbs (from Bloom's Taxonomy) are used instead of vague terms like know or learn" (Mean = 4.47, SD = 0.598).

Table 3 Instructional planning in the areas of Content selection.

Indicator	**Mean**	**SD**	**Interpretation**
The instructional scope aligns with the required range of skill development.	4.67	0.508	Very Great Extent
Instructional materials are carefully chosen to address identified learning gaps.	4.61	0.524	Very Great Extent
Instruction follows a structured sequence that reflects developmental progression.	4.61	0.547	Very Great Extent
Content choices include both remediation and enrichment as needed	4.60	0.569	Very Great Extent
Instructional content is selected to target and close specific learning gaps.	4.56	0.554	Very Great Extent
Culturally relevant texts are selected to support learning gaps.	4.56	0.543	Very Great Extent
Overall	4.60	0.430	Very Great

					Extent
Scale	**Range**	**Description**	**Qualitative Interpretation**		
5	4.20-5.00	Always (A)	Very Great Extent		
4	3.40-4.19	Often (O)	Great Extent		
3	2.60-3.39	Sometimes (S)	Moderately Extent		
2	1.80-2.59	Rarely (R)	Low Extent		
1	1.00-1.79	Never (N)	Very Low Extent		

Table 3 presents the level of teachers' instructional planning in the area of content selection. Overall, the results indicate a very great extent of effectiveness, suggesting that teachers carefully choose and organize content to meet learning needs and support skill development. The overall mean is (Mean = 4.60, SD = 0.430).

The indicator with the highest mean is "The instructional scope aligns with the required range of skill development" (Mean = 4.67, SD = 0.508). Other notable indicators include "Instructional materials are carefully chosen to address identified learning gaps" (Mean = 4.61, SD = 0.524) and "Instruction follows a structured sequence that reflects developmental progression" (Mean = 4.61, SD = 0.547). The indicator with the lowest mean, although still very high, is "Culturally relevant texts are selected to support learning gaps" (Mean = 4.56, SD = 0.543)..

Table 4 Instructional planning in the areas of a Teaching Strategies.

Indicator	**Mean**	**SD**	**Interpretation**
Visual and auditory supports are used to **enhance understanding, retention, and accessibility** of information for all learners, especially those with diverse learning needs.	4.66	0.566	Very Great Extent
Small group or individualized instruction is implemented to eencourage more active participation	4.65	0.513	Very Great Extent
Instructional strategies are adjusted in response to monitor progress.	4.64	0.517	Very Great Extent
Active learning techniques are prioritized to retain information longer	4.60	0.580	Very Great Extent
A range of teaching approaches is used to address diverse learners.	4.59	0.504	Very Great Extent
Personalized learning that allow teachers to tailor support and enrichment for individual students or groups.	4.51	0.598	Very Great Extent
Overall	4.61	0.433	Very Great Extent

Scale	**Range**	**Description**	**Qualitative Interpretation**
5	4.20-5.00	Always (A)	Very Great Extent
4	3.40-4.19	Often (O)	Great Extent

3	2.60-3.39	Sometimes (S)	Moderately Extent
2	1.80-2.59	Rarely (R)	Low Extent
1	1.00-1.79	Never (N)	Very Low Extent

Table 4 presents the level of teachers' instructional planning in the area of teaching strategies. Overall, the results show a very great extent of effectiveness, indicating that teachers employ a variety of strategies to engage students, support diverse learning needs, and enhance understanding. The overall mean is (Mean = 4.61, SD = 0.433).

The indicator with the highest mean is "Visual and auditory supports are used to enhance understanding, retention, and accessibility of information for all learners, especially those with diverse learning needs" (Mean = 4.66, SD = 0.566). Other notable indicators include "Small group or individualized instruction is implemented to encourage more active participation" (Mean = 4.65, SD = 0.513) and "Instructional strategies are adjusted in response to monitor progress" (Mean = 4.64, SD = 0.517).

The indicator with the lowest mean, although still very high, is "Personalized learning that allows teachers to tailor support and enrichment for individual students or groups" (Mean = 4.51, SD = 0.598).

Table 5 Instructional planning in the areas of Assessment or Evaluation.

Indicator	**Mean**	**SD**	**Interpretation**
Parent communication is conducted to inform learner's progress	4.66	0.534	Very Great Extent
Assessment data is used to modify instructional plans regularly.	4.64	0.528	Very Great Extent
Students' responses to interventions are tracked and documented using monthly progress report.	4.64	0.550	Very Great Extent
Regular formative assessments are conducted to monitor progress.	4.62	0.565	Very Great Extent
Evaluation tools are selected to assess improvement in targeted skills.	4.61	0.578	Very Great Extent
Teacher reflection on assessment results informs future based planning.	4.60	0.548	Very Great Extent
Overall	4.63	0.438	Very Great Extent

Scale	**Range**	**Description**	**Qualitative Interpretation**
5	4.20-5.00	Always (A)	Very Great Extent
4	3.40-4.19	Often (O)	Great Extent
3	2.60-3.39	Sometimes (S)	Moderately Extent

2	1.80-2.59	Rarely (R)	Low Extent
1	1.00-1.79	Never (N)	Very Low Extent

Table 5 presents the level of teachers' instructional planning in the area of assessment or evaluation. Overall, the results indicate a very great extent of effectiveness, showing that teachers consistently use assessment data to guide instruction, monitor student progress, and improve learning outcomes. The overall mean is (Mean = 4.63, SD = 0.438).

The indicator with the highest mean is "Parent communication is conducted to inform learner's progress" (Mean = 4.66, SD = 0.534). Other notable indicators include "Assessment data is used to modify instructional plans regularly" (Mean = 4.64, SD = 0.528) and "Students' responses to interventions are tracked and documented using monthly progress report" (Mean = 4.64, SD = 0.550). The indicator with the lowest mean, although still very high, is "Teacher reflection on assessment results informs future based planning" (Mean = 4.60, SD = 0.548).

Table 6 Reading level of learners in terms of Phonological Awareness.

Indicator	**Mean**	**SD**	**Interpretation**
Identifies initial sounds (onset) in spoken words.	4.59	0.592	At Grade Level
Recognizes and identifies rhyming words in a spoken list.	4.57	0.594	At Grade Level
Segments spoken words into syllables (e.g., clapping out beats in words).	4.57	0.594	At Grade Level
Distinguishes and manipulates individual sounds in a word (e.g., replacing the first sound).	4.56	0.565	At Grade Level
Recognizes and identifies rhyming words in a spoken list.	4.54	0.577	At Grade Level
Blends separate syllables or sounds into whole words when heard aloud.	4.52	0.608	At Grade Level
Overall	4.56	0.507	At Grade Level

Scale	**Range**	**Description**	**Qualitative Interpretation**
5	4.20-5.00	At Grade Level	Very Stongly Agree
4	3.40-4.19	Transitioning	Stongly Agree
3	2.60-3.39	Developing	Agree
2	1.80-2.59	High Emerging	Disagree
1	1.00-1.79	Low Emerging	Stongly Disagree

Table 6 presents the reading level of learners in terms of Phonological Awareness. Overall, the results show that learners are performing at grade level. The overall mean is (Mean = 4.56, SD = 0.507).

The indicator with the highest mean is “Identifies initial sounds (onset) in spoken words” (Mean = 4.59, SD = 0.592). Other notable indicators include “Recognizes and identifies rhyming words in a spoken list” (Mean = 4.57, SD = 0.594) and “Segments spoken words into syllables (e.g., clapping out beats in words)” (Mean = 4.57, SD = 0.594). The indicator with the lowest mean, although still at grade level, is “Blends separate syllables or sounds into whole words when heard aloud” (Mean = 4.52, SD = 0.608).

Table 7 Reading level of learners in terms of phonics and decoding.

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Produces corresponding letter sounds accurately.	4.58	0.613	At Grade Level
Reads simple consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words by blending sounds (e.g., “cat”).	4.56	0.634	At Grade Level
Recognizes and reads common high-frequency sight words (“the,” “and,” “said”).	4.54	0.636	At Grade Level
Names all uppercase and lowercase letters correctly.	4.54	0.645	At Grade Level
Names all uppercase and lowercase letters correctly.	4.53	0.645	At Grade Level
Decodes unfamiliar one-syllable words using phonics skills.	4.45	0.689	At Grade Level
Overall	4.53	0.554	At Grade Level

Scale	Range	Description	Qualitative Interpretation
5	4.20-5.00	At Grade Level	Very Stongly Agree
4	3.40-4.19	Transitioning	Stongly Agree
3	2.60-3.39	Developing	Agree
2	1.80-2.59	High Emerging	Disagree
1	1.00-1.79	Low Emerging	Stongly Disagree

Table 7 presents the reading level of learners in terms of phonics and decoding. Overall, the results show that learners are performing at grade level, indicating they can effectively connect letters to sounds, blend sounds to read words, and decode unfamiliar words. The overall mean is (Mean = 4.53, SD = 0.554).

The indicator with the highest mean is “Produces corresponding letter sounds accurately” (Mean = 4.58, SD = 0.613). Other notable indicators include “Reads simple consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words by blending sounds” (Mean = 4.56, SD = 0.634) and “Recognizes and reads common high-frequency sight words” (Mean = 4.54, SD = 0.636). The indicator with the lowest mean, although still at grade level, is “Decodes unfamiliar one-syllable words using phonics skills” (Mean = 4.45, SD = 0.689).

Table 8 Reading level of learners in terms of fluency.

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Reads aloud with accurate pronunciation of most words.	4.38	0.624	At Grade Level
Self-corrects errors and repeats sentences as needed to clarify meaning.	4.36	0.703	At Grade Level
Reads grade-appropriate text smoothly and with minimal hesitation.	4.33	0.651	At Grade Level
Reads grade-appropriate text smoothly and with minimal hesitation.	4.33	0.695	At Grade Level
Demonstrates phrasing and intonation during oral reading.	4.30	0.760	At Grade Level
Uses appropriate pacing while reading full sentences.	4.28	0.755	At Grade Level
Overall	4.33	0.612	At Grade Level

Scale	Range	Description	Qualitative Interpretation
5	4.20-5.00	At Grade Level	Very Stongly Agree
4	3.40-4.19	Transitioning	Stongly Agree
3	2.60-3.39	Developing	Agree
2	1.80-2.59	High Emerging	Disagree
1	1.00-1.79	Low Emerging	Stongly Disagree

Table 8 presents the reading level of learners in terms of fluency. Overall, the results show that learners are performing at grade level, indicating they can read aloud smoothly, accurately, and with appropriate expression. The overall mean is (Mean = 4.33, SD = 0.612). The indicator with the highest mean is “Reads aloud with accurate pronunciation of most words” (Mean = 4.38, SD = 0.624). Other notable indicators include “Self-corrects errors and repeats sentences as needed to clarify meaning” (Mean = 4.36, SD = 0.703) and “Reads grade-appropriate text smoothly and with minimal hesitation” (Mean = 4.33, SD = 0.651). The indicator with the lowest mean, although still at grade level, is “Uses appropriate pacing while reading full sentences” (Mean = 4.28, SD = 0.755).

Table 9 Reading level of learners in terms of vocabulary and comprehension.

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
My pupils understand stories better when I use pictures, examples, and varied activities during reading instruction	4.56	0.585	At Grade Level
My pupils become aware of their understanding of the lesson because I regularly check their work and provide feedback.	4.42	0.623	At Grade Level
My pupils enjoy reading and participate actively because I use engaging activities and clear instructions.	4.42	0.613	At Grade Level
My pupils are able to answer comprehension questions after guided reading activities.	4.40	0.638	At Grade Level
My pupils understand new words because learning objectives are clear and vocabulary is explained explicitly during reading lessons.	4.36	0.659	At Grade Level
My pupils can use newly learned words correctly during class activities because they are given enough practice opportunities.	4.35	0.637	At Grade Level
Overall	4.42	0.520	At Grade Level

Scale	Range	Description	Qualitative Interpretation
5	4.20-5.00	At Grade Level	Very Strongly Agree
4	3.40-4.19	Transitioning	Strongly Agree
3	2.60-3.39	Developing	Agree
2	1.80-2.59	High Emerging	Disagree
1	1.00-1.79	Low Emerging	Strongly Disagree

Table 9 presents the reading level of learners in terms of vocabulary and comprehension. Overall, the results show that learners are performing at grade level, indicating they can understand new words, follow lessons, and answer comprehension questions effectively. The overall mean is (Mean = 4.42, SD = 0.520).

The indicator with the highest mean is “My pupils understand stories better when I use pictures, examples, and varied activities during reading instruction” (Mean = 4.56, SD = 0.585). Other notable indicators include “My pupils become aware of their understanding of the lesson because I regularly check their work and provide feedback” (Mean = 4.42, SD = 0.623) and “My pupils enjoy reading and participate actively because I use engaging activities and clear instructions” (Mean = 4.42, SD = 0.613). The indicator with the lowest mean, although still at grade level, is “My pupils can use newly learned words correctly

during class activities because they are given enough practice opportunities" (Mean = 4.35, SD = 0.637).

Table 10: Test of significant relationship between the instructional learning plan and the reading level of primary grade learners.

Variable	r	p-value	Interpretation
Learning objectives	.520	.000	Significant
Content selection	.447	.000	Significant
Teaching Strategies	.640	.000	Significant
Assessment or Evaluation	.670	.000	Significant
Overall	.651	.000	Significant

Table 10 presents the test of significant relationship between the instructional learning plan and the reading level of primary grade learners. The results show that all aspects of instructional planning are significantly related to learners' reading performance, as indicated by p-values of 0.000 for all variables. This means that better planning in these areas is strongly associated with higher reading levels among learners.

Among the specific components, Assessment or Evaluation has the strongest relationship with reading level (r = 0.670). This means that when teachers regularly assess learners, track progress, and adjust instruction based on results, it has the greatest impact on improving reading skills. Teaching Strategies also show a strong relationship (r = 0.640), indicating that using effective, interactive, and differentiated teaching methods supports learners' reading development. Other components, such as Learning Objectives (r = 0.520) and Content Selection (r = 0.447), also show significant relationships, that highlights that clear objectives and well-chosen content contribute meaningfully to reading achievement.

The overall correlation is very strong (r = 0.651, p = 0.000), emphasizing that when teachers plan their lessons effectively by setting clear objectives, selecting appropriate content, using strong teaching strategies, and conducting regular assessments learners' reading levels improve. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concludes that instructional learning plans play a vital role in shaping reading development in primary grade learners. Clear objectives, appropriate content, varied teaching strategies, and continuous assessment contribute to improved literacy outcomes. Teachers' reflective practice and data-driven planning are essential in addressing diverse learner needs. The findings affirm that effective instructional planning, grounded in the science of reading,

enhances pupils' decoding skills, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, thereby strengthening their overall literacy foundation.

Based on the findings, several recommendations are proposed. Teachers should adopt systematic, explicit, and differentiated strategies aligned with the science of reading to meet diverse learner needs. School administrators are encouraged to implement school-wide literacy assessments to guide resource allocation, curriculum adjustments, and teacher training. Curriculum developers should integrate assessment-driven planning into curriculum design to ensure alignment with learners' actual reading abilities. Parents and communities should support home reading practices and collaborate with schools to reinforce literacy development. Finally, future research should explore the role of technology-enhanced instructional planning in improving reading outcomes, particularly in diverse and multilingual contexts.

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