

The Utilization of Narrative Text to Quantify Elementary School Students' Reading Comprehension Ability

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Abstract. Reading comprehension ability in elementary school is crucial for students, in contrary with that low reading comprehension skills and low student learning outcomes are the main problem. This research aims to analyze the reading comprehension abilities of elementary school students using narrative text. The research method used was a mixed method (quantitative and qualitative) with a sample of 30 elementary school students. The data collection technique used tests and interviews. The research results showed that (1) students' ability to grasp the content of narrative text reading accurately obtained an average of 39%, (2) students' ability to grasp implied and explicit meanings accurately obtained an average of 24%, (3) the ability to conclude correctly obtained an average of 24 %, and (4) students' reading habits were obtained, six of seven samples interested in reading, school books and type of fiction (comics and fables) were the sample choices, five of the seven samples could fully understand all words in text and reading comprehension for two of them depending on the type of text read. Further prospect of this research to become a starting point for future research and a specific illustration for stakeholders in deciding literacy policies for elementary school students.

Keywords: reading comprehension, narrative text, elementary school

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INTRODUCTION

The vital role of elementary schools as a basis for communal education is necessary to realize their role in forming a solid foundation for the subsequent educational process. Further prospects of elementary school are expected to ensure qualified graduates with adequate basic abilities and skills. This is no exception in the learning of Indonesian as a crucial subject in elementary school, students are looked after to have Indonesian language skills. Learning Indonesian focuses on the ability to communicate, think, sharpen feelings, and appreciate literature. This is confirmed that this skill covers the oral and written domains to realize appreciation for human literary development (Mardika dkk., 2017). The cruciality of learning Indonesian aims to obtain changes in attitudes, knowledge, skills, and creativity toward better student learning outcomes.

Learning Indonesian focuses on teachers trying to improve students' communication skills accurately and carefully. Based on competency standards, Indonesian consists of speaking, listening, writing, and reading skills (Rahmi & Marnola, 2020). These four skills are usually referred to as language skills. The four are connected to each other, for example, speaking skills are correlated with listening skills, while reading skills are correlated with writing skills (Rahman dkk., 2019). Sari & Kurniaman (2019) stated that in particular reading skills occupy a vital position in language teaching and other teaching, as well as being the main basis for the continuity of students' educational process.

In particular, reading is an activity of pronouncing words from writing or forming words into other forms in verbal form. The reading process can be carried out by connecting the reader and writer of the text (Sari & Kurniaman, 2019). Especially in elementary schools, it holds a primary position as the foundation for students' success in completing subject matter at school. The learning process cannot be separated from reading material such as textbooks, newspaper or story reading materials, source material in the form of reading, or even learning media in the form of videos containing certain texts as support. Reading is not only substantial for the short term, but also sustainable for individuals because reading can gain an understanding of the reading content (Iriani, 2017).

Understanding is reflected through conformity of attitude with appropriate reading material with written symbols. It includes the conditions that students are competent in reading characterized by having an understanding of reading content so as to gain new insights and knowledge (Rahman dkk., 2021). High reading comprehension ability is directly proportional to the information obtained. Students actively receptive to reading comprehension will have a relatively quicker time acquiring various information. Tarigan (dalam Abidin, 2012, hlm. 59) states that "...reading for understanding is a type of reading to understand literary standards or norms, critical reviews, written drama, and fiction patterns in an effort to obtain understanding the text, reading using certain strategies." The aims of reading comprehension are to accommodate students in comprehensive content text, find the information and meaning contained in the reading, and answer questions related to the reading text (Febriyanto, 2016). Reading comprehension also aims to understand, respond to, assess, and respond to reading appropriately (Lestari et al., 2021).

Based on the explanation, even though various ideal conditions for reading have a fundamental role in continuing the educational process, there is a small scope for mastering learning material, but this is also one of the problems in the educational sphere that has not yet found a good solution (Rahman dkk., 2018). The survey of reading skills from Central Connecticut State University in 2017 stated that Indonesia ranked 60th out of 61 countries surveyed in literacy skills (Tahmidaten & Krismanto, 2020). The results of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) show that Indonesia ranks last in the field of Reading Performance with an average of 371 in 2018 among other countries with an average of 487 (Kholiq & Luthfiyati, 2020). These data show that Indonesia's reading ability is below average or in the low category. This phenomenon cannot be separated from the factor of students' low reading comprehension, such as a lack of awareness that more information is obtained through reading activities.

This is also related to the teacher's position as a manager or class manager. Class conditions often show that teachers are more active than students, students are used to being given information and are fully dependent on the teacher, not looking for information themselves through reading activities. The dominance of teacher teaching in the classroom is less aligned with teaching reading comprehension. This does not deny that students tend to be less comfortable because learning is less interesting and boring. This situation creates less than optimal student acceptance, especially for continued understanding of learning material (Syaripudin & Heryanto, 2019).

The facts in the field are that some of the students overall are able to understand a piece of reading. This is in accordance with the results of research conducted by Tufiana & Tryanasari (2020) stated that in the data on reading difficulties, understanding of reading texts is partly in accordance with the theory put forward by several figures that students experience. difficulty in forming concepts and developing them into semantic units, difficulty in semantic relations, difficulty in recalling reading content, and difficulty in establishing the meaning of a new word. Students have not been able to answer questions that touch on this completely. Results regarding reading comprehension are a topic that always occurs and is experienced by elementary school students, especially for high-class students. For example, increasing students' reading comprehension, students' reading comprehension difficulties, and analysis of descriptive text comprehension. However, for reading comprehension, fourth-grade elementary school students experience four problems, namely: First, students' lack of understanding regarding questions containing the 5W+1H elements; Second, students' difficulty in determining the correct main sentence or main idea; Third, students' lack of understanding in making conclusions using their own language; Fourth, the minimum level of student concentration when reading a reading text (Murfiana & Widiensyah, 2022). Based on this explanation, it motivated researchers to conduct research related to the use of narrative texts to measure students' reading comprehension abilities.

METHOD

This research used mixed methods. It combined quantitative and qualitative in collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data. This research aims to find comprehensive data, and the results

obtained will be more accurate. The method's consideration is to identify students' reading comprehension abilities through tests, then identify students in-depth to find out in detail about the interview process. To explore research questions using a sequential explanation strategy, first starting with quantitative analysis, then using qualitative research with interviews to acquire a proper understanding of the meaning and emergence of solutions (Venkatesh dkk, 2013).

Sampling in this research used a purposive sampling technique. It is namely a technique for determining samples with particular considerations. It aims to avoid errors in sample determination (Creswell, 2021). The population in this study was grade 5 students in one of the districts in West Java province. The students in the sample were 30 students. Data collection in this study used reading comprehension tests and interviews. Before distributing the test to samples, the content validity will be judged by expert judgment.

An instrument trial is required in this research to find the validity and reliability of the test, with the result strong enough to be used as a reference in determining conclusions. In line with this, Gronlund (in Suharyono, 2014) generally defines validity as the extent to which test results can be used for the intended purpose. In other words, validity is the suitability of interpretations regarding test results. The reliability of a measuring instrument shows the extent to the measurement results using that reliable and valid instrument. The reliability of measuring instruments also points that the degree of measurement mistakes cannot be determined with particularity, but can only be estimated. The validity test results showed that ten questions from the three indicators of reading comprehension were valid.

Table 1. Instruments' Validity

Question	R Count	R Table	Result
Q1	0,711	0,361	Valid
Q2	0,721	0,361	Valid
Q3	0,390	0,361	Valid
Q4	0,720	0,361	Valid
Q5	0,618	0,361	Valid
Q6	0,814	0,361	Valid
Q7	0,472	0,361	Valid
Q8	0,866	0,361	Valid
Q9	0,393	0,361	Valid
Q10	0,392	0,361	Valid

The basis for selecting the Pearson validity test is comparing the r count value with the r table. If the value of r count > r table means valid, in contrary with that if r count < r table means invalid. In this study, the r table value with N=10 at 5% significance in the statistical distribution obtained the r table value of 0.361. After the validity test, the instrument's reliability was tested with the following results.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
,815	10

Figure 1. Reliabilitas Instrumen

Decision-making on instrument reliability refers to Sugiyono (2016) stating that an reliable instrument is the Cronbach's Alpha value is > 0.6. These results revealed that the instrumen is reliable. It is able to distribute to the sample. The core of this research design is a sequential explanatory design. At first, the data was quantitative, then the organization of data analysis and identification of findings that required further explanation were identified using qualitative. Here's the visualization below.

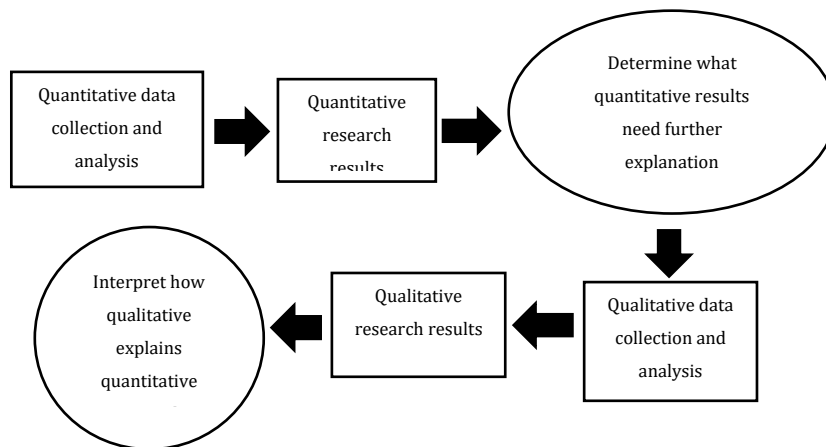


Figure 2. Sequential Explanatory Design Data Analysis Procedure
Source: Creswell (2021)

RESULTS

Grasp The Content of Narrative Text Reading

The following data was obtained through test instruments distributed to the research sample. In order to facilitate data analysis, students' answers were divided into categories of correct answers, less precise answers, incorrect answers, and not answering. Three of the 15 test questions were asked of the sample to explore students' ability to grasp the content of the reading. This type of question is in the form of an essay with the characteristics of exploring definitions, writing examples, and writing a part of the story topic.

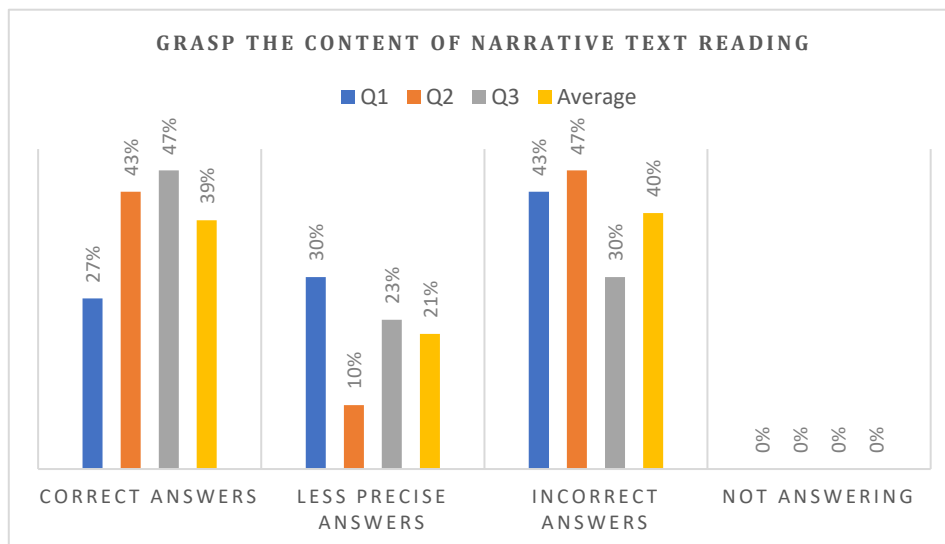


Figure 3. The Result of Sampels' Ability to Grasp the Reading Content
Source: Processed in 2023

The image above shows the findings of the sample's ability to grasp the content of text reading. The first graph is the correct answer group, in more detail, the first question by eight people (27%), the second question by 13 people (43%), and the third question by 14 people (47%) with an average of 39%. The second graph is a less precise answer group, in more detail, the first question by nine people (30%), the second question by three people (10%), and the third question by seven people (23%) with an average of 21%. Meanwhile, the third graph illustrates the sample categories that were answered incorrectly. The first question was by 13 people (43%), the second question was by 14 people (47%), and the third question was by nine people (30%)

with an average of 40%. All of the first-finding questions were answered by students. The first category achieved a score of 3, the second category got a score of 2, and the third category got a score of 1.

Grasp Implicit and Explicit Meaning

The following findings were obtained through test instruments and interviews. The following statistical data was processed using MS Excel and visualized in graphic form. The test assessment is divided into three categories and each category gets a score of 0 to 3. A score of 0 is for students who do not answer, a score of 1 is for students who answer incorrectly, a score of 2 is for students who answer incorrectly, and a score of 3 is for students who answer correctly. Test questions include how, two questions explaining a reason (why), and explaining a role. The following image is the result of the calculation

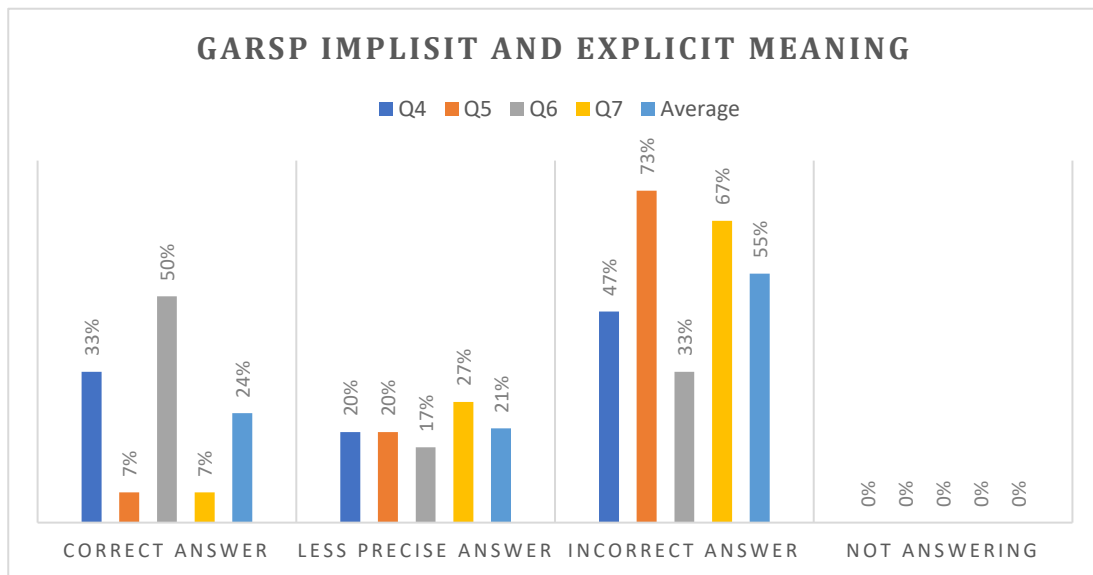


Figure 4. Results' Sample's Ability to Garsp Implisit and Explicit Meaning
 Source: Processed in 2023

The second finding showed that all students answered the test questions. The absence of an increasing graph in the not answering category, in contrast to the correct answering category, the fourth question was answered by ten students (33%), the fifth question was answered by two students (7%), the sixth question answered by 15 people (50%), and the seventh question was answered by 2 people (7%), and the average for this category reached 24%. In the incorrect answer category, the fourth and fifth questions were each done by six people (20%), the sixth question by five people (17%), and the seventh question by eight people (27%), with an average of 21%. Furthermore, the category of answering incorrectly, in the fourth question by 14 people (47%), the fifth question by 22 people (73%), the sixth question by ten people (33%), and the seventh question by 20 people (67%) with an average of 55%.

Further data mining was through interviews with the sample and supporting and explanatory questions from the test. As follows.

- Q1 : Do you find new vocabularies after reading text?
 S1 : Yes, I do.
 S2 : Yes, I do. Those are relating to food, plant, animals, and kinds of drinks
 S3 : Yes, I do. For examples we must write and study diligently
 S4 : No, I do not.
 S5 : Yes, I do. For examples study, eat, write, and pray.
 S6 : Yes, I do. It relates to respiratory system.
 S7 : Yes, I do. For examples food, drinks, study, and read a book.

Based on the sample answers, the question could be answered well by six of the seven samples. Meanwhile, there was one sample who stated that he did not find new vocabulary from the reading text.

- Q2 : How do you stay focused when reading narrative text?
- S1 : Sit quietly
- S2 : Just be quiet and focus on the narrative text
- S3 : Read seriously
- S4 : Stay calm and focus on reading
- S5 : Don't chat and stay focused
- S6 : Close your ears
- S7 : Read the prayer first before reading

Based on the sample answers above, there are various ways or methods used to stay focused on reading. For example, sitting quietly, quietly - not chatting, to avoid outside noise, you can close your ears and read seriously.

- Q3 : Do you understand the content of the text you have read?
- S1 : Yes
- S2 : Yes, because the reading text was exhilarating
- S3 : Yes, it's easy for me
- S4 : Yes
- S5 : Yes, very understanding
- S6 : Yes
- S7 : Yes, quite understanding

The sample answers above agree that they understand the content of the reading text they have read. Some of them gave reasons related to the text containing an exciting story and the text being very easy for readers to understand.

Draw Conclusion

The ability to draw conclusions is a vital part of this research, especially when discussing reading comprehension. These findings used test and interview instruments to obtain in-depth data. Here is a visualization of quantitative data.

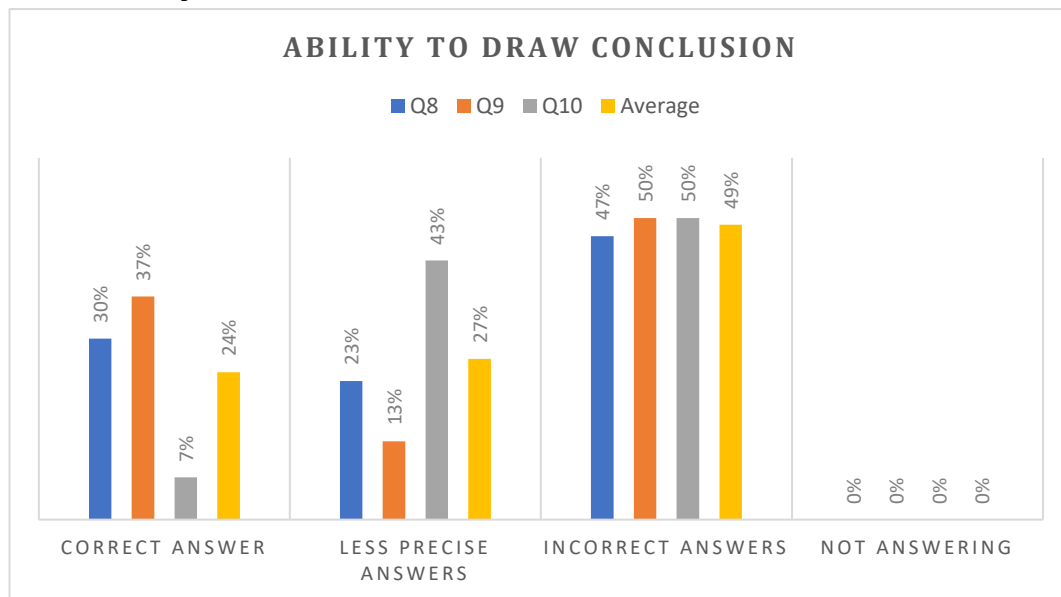


Figure 5. Result of Sample's Ability to Draw Conclusion
Source: Processed in 2023

The results of these answers show that nine students answered question 8 correctly (30%), 11 students answered question 9 correctly (37%), and two students answered question 10 correctly (7%). Meanwhile, seven students answered question 8 incorrectly (23%), four students answered question 9 incorrectly (13%), and 13 students answered question 10 incorrectly (43%). The significant contrast results obtained were dominant in the wrong answer category. In more

detail, the 8th question by 14 students (47%), the 9th question, and the 10th question by 15 students (50%) with an average of almost half (49%).

Further data mining was done through interviews. As follows.

Q4 : What can you understand about ecosystems?

S1 : Ecosystems consist of individuals, populations, and communities

S2 : Yes. Texts about ecosystems are easy to understand.

S3 : An ecosystem is a clean environment

S4 : Quite understandable (doubtful)

S5 : Yes, I understand

S6 : Interaction between living things and objects in an environment

S7 : Quite understandable (doubtful)

Q5 : Can you explain the conclusion from the reading text?

S1 : Yes, you can.

S2 : Yes, because you already understand the text you read.

S3 : Yes, you can.

S4 : Yes, you can.

S5 : Yes, you can

S6 : Yes, you can

S7 : I am hesitant because I don't understand the content of the reading text

Based on these sample answers, the sample answers are related to the ability to make conclusions, such as discovering new vocabulary. Six of the seven samples stated that they could explain conclusions from the text they had read. Meanwhile, they were doubtful because they did not understand the content of the reading text.

Students' Reading Habits

The following findings were through interviews. Five questions were asked to the sample to explore students' reading habits.

Q6 : Do you like reading?

S1 : Yes

S2 : Yes, because reading gives knowledge

S3 : Yes, because I like reading so I can find out a lot of things

S4 : Not really

S5 : Yes, because you can achieve your goals and increase your intelligence

S6 : Yes, I really like reading

S7 : Yes

Based on the sample answers above, six of the seven samples stated that they liked reading. Meanwhile, one sample stated that he did not really like reading.

Q7 : If you use the tenses always, often, ever, sometimes, and never, which one do you use when reading a book?

S1 : Often

S2 : Always because reading makes me happy

S3 : Sometimes. Reading is done when you are relaxing

S4 : Often. When at school

S5 : Often

S6 : Sometimes

S7 : Often

Based on the sample answers, the results obtained were the intensity of the sample's time in reading books (in various types). Categories are always performed by one sample, often performed by four samples, and sometimes performed by two samples.

Q8 : What is the time period for reading narrative text?

S1 : Once, twice

S2 : Often. Three times a day

- S3 : Sometimes, one to two texts per day
- S4 : Never
- S5 : Often
- S6 : Sometimes. Once in six days
- S7 : Sometimes

These answers show that reading narrative texts is done frequently by the two samples. Sometimes it is done with three samples. This was done by two samples.

Q9 : What type of book did you last read?

S1 : Comics

S2 : Theme books are used in schools because there are many stories about sharing experiences

S3 : The Mouse Deer and the Crocodile

S4 : Reading books at school

S5 : Cartoon type (fiction)

S6 : The theme book at school is about the human respiratory system

S7 : School textbooks

Based on these answers, the sample used school books as a means of reading. Apart from that, the type of fiction (comics and fables) is a sample choice for reading.

Q10 : Can you understand all the words in the text?

S1 : Yes.

S2 : Yes, because those words make me understand the topic being read

S3 : Yes, you can.

S4 : Not entirely

S5 : Yes, you can

S6 : Yes, you can

S7 : Depends on the type of reading text

These sample answers show that five of the seven samples stated that they could fully understand all the words in the text. Meanwhile, reading comprehension in two of them depends on the type of text read.

DISCUSSION

This research develops on analyzing students' reading comprehension of a text. As the research results show, grasp the reading content is one of the emphasis of reading comprehension skills (Resmini & Juanda, 2007). Further data mining is to measure the extent to which these abilities are achieved by students. There is literal, interpretive, critical and creative understanding (Rubin, 1993). Based on the research results, students' dominant abilities are in literal understanding. This measure is based on Burns et al., (1996) that literal comprehension is also known as explicit reading comprehension, demands memory of a context, and aims to understand words, sentences and paragraphs. Meanwhile, reviewing students' charts requires further instruction to achieve higher reading comprehension. This can be done through interpretative, critical and creative reading activities. Students' interpretive understanding to make inferences or conclusions correctly was achieved by 24%, incorrectly by 27%, and incorrectly by 49%. Furthermore, the question of identifying the reason or cause for something to happen was done correctly 24% of the time, 21% inaccurately, and 55% wrongly. Reading is not only crucial in the short term, but has an impact in the long term because reading can gain understanding of the content of the reading (Iriani, 2017). High reading comprehension ability is directly proportional to the information obtained.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, students' reading comprehension abilities are at the literal reading level. Students' ability to grasp the content of narrative text reading, grasp implied and explicit meaning, and create conclusions were dominated by the category of incorrect answers. This is

supported by the distance between the correct and less correct categories quite significant. However, without rejecting this finding, all students put forth effort to answer the question as evidenced by the absence of a graph showing significant statistics in the not answering category. With reading activities, students discover new vocabulary and find ways to focus on reading and the reasons why reading is important. This research is limited by the use of one type of text and sample in a particular location. With the results of this research, in order to improve students' reading comprehension skills, certain treatments are needed as a solution.

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