

Improving Reading and Writing Literacy of Elementary School Students Through the Reading Corner Program in Tanjung Riau

Qanita Az Zahra¹, Juwita Boneka Sinaga², Eti Murni Halawa³, Madu Novia Putri⁴, Herlina⁵, Arneza Syafiqah⁵, Ahmad Azhari⁶, Revaldo⁶

¹Management, Economics and Business, University of Riau Kepulauan, Indonesia

²English Language Education, Teacher Training and Education, University of Riau Kepulauan, Indonesia

³Management, Economics and Business, University of Riau Kepulauan, Indonesia

⁴Digital Business, Economics and Business, University of Riau Kepulauan, Indonesia

⁵Government Sciences, Social and Political Sciences, University of Riau Kepulauan, Indonesia

⁶Management, Economics and Business, University of Riau Kepulauan, Indonesia

Corresponding Author: qanitaazhra@gmail.com

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Abstract. This community service program aimed to enhance the reading and writing literacy skills of first-and second-grade elementary school students through the Reading Corner program at Graha Namarina Housing, Tanjung Riau, Batam City. The background of this activity lies in the low interest in reading, limited access to reading materials, excessive use of gadgets, and monotonous teaching methods that hinder children's literacy development. The implementation method employed a learning-through-play approach to increase students' motivation and reduce boredom. The program was conducted over the course of one month, every Sunday, with stages consisting of preparation, strengthening of basic reading literacy, reading comprehension, and evaluation and reflection. The results indicated improvements in reading ability, writing skills, reading comprehension, and students' confidence in speaking in front of their peers. Furthermore, students became more enthusiastic, self-assured, and began to perceive reading and writing as enjoyable activities in improving basic literacy while also fostering learning motivation and character development among students. This activity is expected to serve as a simple, low-cost yet impactful model for cultivating a culture of literacy from an early age within the community.

Keyword: Reading literacy, writing literacy, reading corner, learning through play, community service

Abstrak. Program pengabdian masyarakat ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan keterampilan literasi membaca dan menulis siswa kelas satu dan dua sekolah dasar melalui program Reading Corner di Perumahan Graha Namarina, Tanjung Riau, Kota Batam. Latar belakang kegiatan ini adalah rendahnya minat baca, keterbatasan akses terhadap bahan bacaan, penggunaan gawai yang berlebihan, serta metode pengajaran yang monoton sehingga menghambat perkembangan literasi anak. Metode pelaksanaan menggunakan pendekatan belajar sambil bermain untuk meningkatkan motivasi siswa dan mengurangi rasa jenuh. Program ini dilaksanakan selama satu bulan, setiap hari Minggu, dengan tahapan persiapan, penguatan literasi membaca dasar, pemahaman bacaan, serta evaluasi dan refleksi. Hasil kegiatan menunjukkan adanya peningkatan kemampuan membaca, keterampilan menulis, pemahaman bacaan, serta kepercayaan diri siswa dalam berbicara di depan teman sebaya. Selain itu, siswa menjadi lebih antusias, percaya diri, dan mulai memandang membaca serta menulis sebagai aktivitas yang menyenangkan dalam meningkatkan literasi dasar sekaligus menumbuhkan motivasi belajar dan pengembangan karakter. Kegiatan ini diharapkan dapat menjadi model sederhana, berbiaya rendah namun berdampak besar dalam menumbuhkan budaya literasi sejak dini di lingkungan masyarakat.

Kata kunci: Literasi membaca, literasi menulis, reading corner, belajar sambil bermain, pengabdian masyarakat

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Introduction

Reading and writing literacy is a basic skill that every child must have. This skill is not only important in understanding the subject matter, but also the foundation for developing a mindset, building creativity, and supporting adaptability in daily life. Children with good literacy will more easily receive information, solve problems, and adjust to social changes. According to UNESCO (2023), literacy level is the main indicator of the quality of a country's education and a benchmark for the progress of the nation's civilization (Kartini et al., 2025). However, the condition of literacy in Indonesia still faces major challenges, including in Graha Namarina Housing, Tanjung Riau Village. Research shows that children's interest in reading is still relatively low. Rahayu et al. (2023) emphasized that elementary school students prefer gadgets to reading books. Excessive use of gadgets encourages addiction to instant and visual activities so that learning time is reduced. Another factor is the limitation of reading materials that are appropriate for the child's age and monotonous learning methods (Setyana, 2020). The UNESCO (2023) report noted that the reading interest index of the Indonesian people is only 0.0001%, meaning that out of a thousand people only one really has a high interest in reading (Hasbi et al., 2025).

Low interest in reading has an impact on academic achievement as well as the quality of human resources in the future. Rahayu et al. (2023) stated that weak basic literacy reduces the nation's competitiveness in the era of globalization. This condition is exacerbated by the development of digital technology that makes children more interested in playing games or watching videos than reading. On the other hand, elementary school children's writing skills are also low due to lack of practice, limited creativity, and lack of environmental support (Nurrahmania et al., 2024). Based on observations at Graha Namarina Housing, there are five main problems: (1) many students are able to read but find it difficult to understand the content of reading. (2) Reading interest decreases due to excessive use of gadgets. (3) limited access to reading materials. (4) monotonous learning methods so that children get bored quickly, and (5) family support for literacy culture that is still low. This condition, if left unchecked, will have a bad impact on children's academic quality and become an obstacle in building a superior generation (Setyana, 2020).

To answer these problems, the community service team offered solutions through Reading Corner activities at Graha Namarina Housing. This activity is designed to be a fun, participatory, and interactive literacy activity. The concept combines learning to read and write with educational games, so that children are not only fluent in reading and writing, but also able to understand the content of reading in a more exciting way. The purpose of this activity is to improve the basic literacy skills of elementary school students in grades 1-2, foster interest in reading, build motivation to learn, and strengthen character such as confidence and courage to express. That way, the Reading Corner is expected to make a real contribution to improving the quality of children's literacy while forming a fun reading culture from an early age.

Methodology

The Reading Corner activity is carried out using the learning method while playing so that students do not get bored easily. In addition to reading and writing, students are also invited to participate in exciting educational games. This method has been shown to be effective in increasing the reading interest of elementary school students (Sajidah et al., 2023).

1. Form of Activity

The Reading Corner Program is designed in the form of interactive literacy activities. Children not only read and write, but are also involved in various supporting activities such as storytelling and educational games. This activity aims to make students feel that reading and writing are not just schoolwork, but a fun and useful activity.

2. Implementation Techniques

The Reading Corner activity was carried out for one month, starting from August 10-September 7, 2025. Each activity is carried out on Sunday. The location of the activity was at TPQ Perumahan Graha Namarina with participants of elementary school students in grades 1-2.

3. Stages of Activity

a. First Week: Preparation and Observation

On the first Sunday. The service team conducted an initial survey to find out the literacy skills of students.

b. Week Two: Strengthening Basic Reading Literacy

On the second Sunday, the devotional team focused on building basic reading skills. Students are taught to read simple texts in turn accompanied by the service team. After that, students are asked to copy a short word or sentence from the text read.

c. Week Three: Strengthening Literacy and Reading Comprehension

In the third week, students are given the challenge of reading a text that is longer than before. Then, students also answer simple questions according to the content of the reading.

d. Week Four: Evaluation and Reflection

In the last week, the service team focused on evaluation. Students are asked to read new texts to assess reading fluency and understanding the content of the reading. In addition, students were also asked to write down their experiences while participating in the Reading Corner activities.

4. Evaluation Stage

The evaluation focuses on students' reading, writing, and also activeness during the activity. During the activity, the service team observed each student, from the courage to read in front, answering questions, and being active during educational games. The survey results show that there is a positive development in most students, from reading fluency, courage to perform, or enthusiasm in writing. This shows that the Reading Corner activity is effective in improving children's basic literacy and is worthy of being continued.

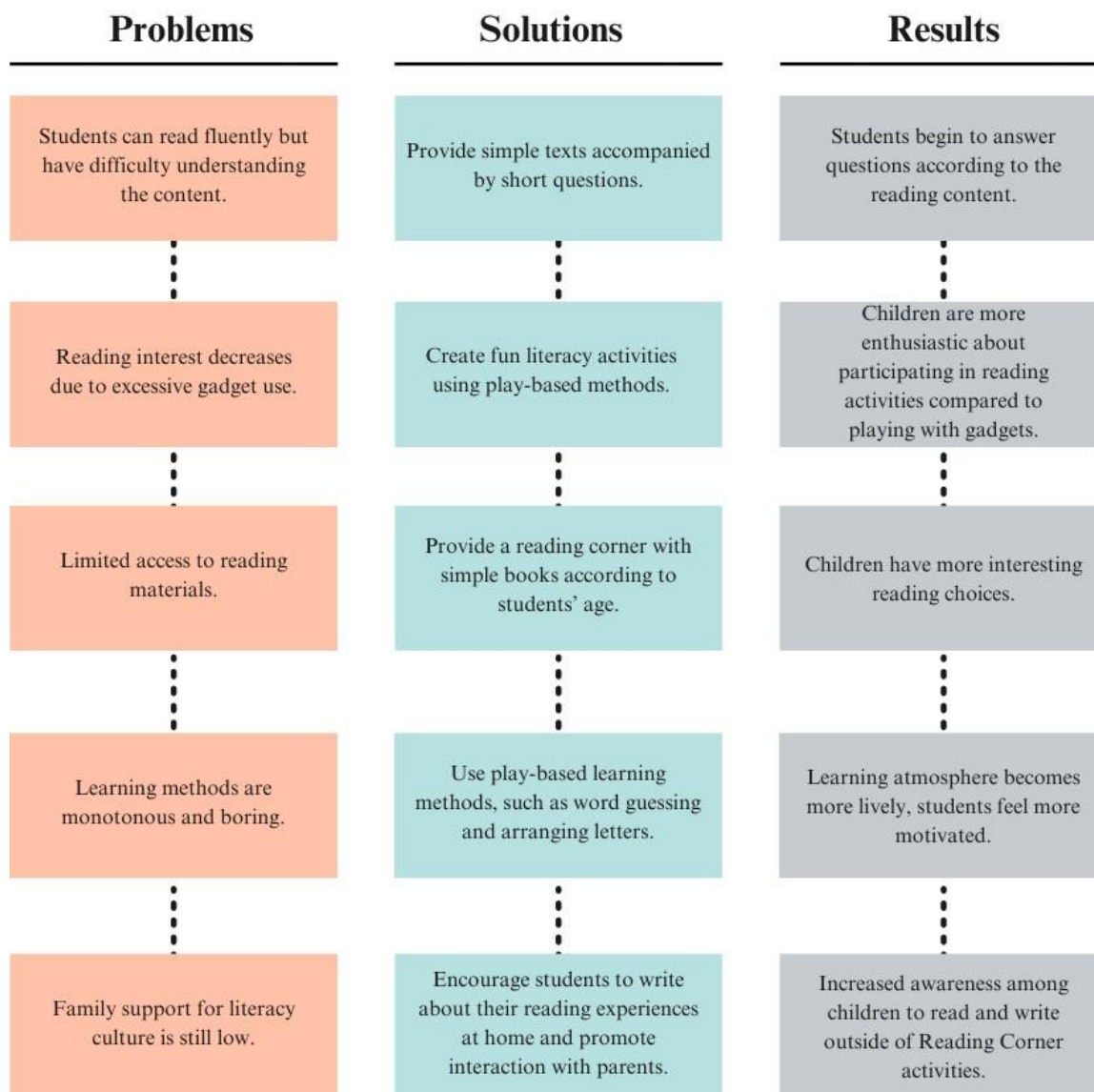


Figure 1. Plans and Solutions

Results and Discussion

The Reading Corner activity which was carried out at the Graha Namarina Housing TPQ ran smoothly. Each meeting is filled with fun reading, writing, and educational games. The atmosphere of the activity was very conducive, students were very enthusiastic in participating in each series of activities and did not feel bored or asked to go home. In the first week, observations showed that students were fluent in reading but still lacked confidence, so when asked to read in front, students looked shy. However, after participating in a series of Reading Corner activities, students became more confident so that they could perform well. Students also begin to be fluent in reading, writing and most importantly begin to understand the content of reading.

The results of the Reading Corner activity show that the learning while playing method can increase the motivation and literacy ability of elementary school students. A fun learning atmosphere makes students not feel bored. This is in line with the findings of Khusaini &

Muslimin (2023) who stated that game-based learning is able to foster reading interest in elementary school-age children.

The increase in students' courage to read in front of their peers shows that there is a development in the non-academic aspect, namely confidence. This is important because literacy is not only about technical reading and writing skills, but also the ability to communicate and convey ideas (Kartini et al., 2025). That way, the Reading Corner activity not only succeeds in improving skills in basic literacy, but can also foster students' interest, motivation and confidence. This program can be a real example that strengthening literacy can be done simply, cheaply, but fun.

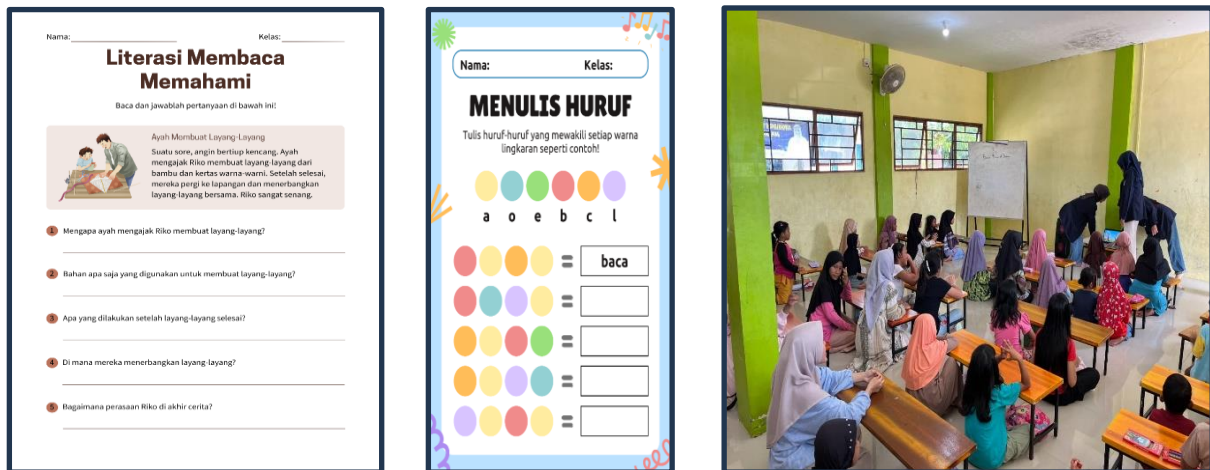


Figure 2. Examples of literacy exercises

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

The implementation of the Reading Corner program at Graha Namarina Housing, Tanjung Riau Village, Batam City, successfully met its primary objectives of improving the reading and writing literacy skills of first- and second-grade elementary school students. Throughout one month of structured, play-based literacy sessions, students demonstrated notable improvements in reading fluency, comprehension, and writing ability. Beyond technical literacy, the program also enhanced students' confidence, communication skills, and enthusiasm for learning. The integration of fun and interactive activities, such as storytelling and educational games, made reading and writing enjoyable, thereby fostering a positive literacy culture among young learners. The Reading Corner initiative proved that with creative methods and community involvement, significant educational outcomes can be achieved through simple and low-cost interventions.

Recommendations

To ensure the sustainability and broader impact of this literacy program, several recommendations are proposed. First, collaboration with local schools, teachers, and parents should be strengthened to provide continuous literacy stimulation at home and in the school environment. Second, expanding the Reading Corner activities to include higher-grade students and more diverse literacy materials can maintain long-term engagement. Third, regular monitoring and evaluation should be conducted to measure students' literacy progress and program effectiveness. Finally, local governments and educational institutions are encouraged

to support similar community-based literacy initiatives through funding, materials, or training programs to promote a culture of reading across different communities.

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