



THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DIGITAL STORYBOOKS ON FIFTH GRADERS' VOCABULARY AND READING COMPREHENSION AT MIN 1 OGAN ILIR

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**Abstract**

*This classroom action research aimed to improve fifth-grade students' vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension through the use of digital storybooks. The study was conducted at MIN 1 Ogan Ilir and involved 20 students in the 2024/2025 academic year. The research was carried out in two cycles, each consisting of planning, action, observation, and reflection stages. Data were collected through vocabulary and reading comprehension tests, observation sheets, and interviews. The findings revealed a significant improvement in students' learning outcomes and classroom participation. In Cycle I, 55% of students achieved the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM), with an average score of 73.25. After revising the instructional strategy and implementing improvements in Cycle II, 85% of students successfully met the KKM, and the class average increased substantially. Observation results also indicated a positive shift in students' engagement, enthusiasm, and interaction during learning activities. The integration of digital storybooks created a more interactive and meaningful learning environment by combining text, audio, and visual elements. Therefore, digital storybooks proved to be an effective instructional medium for enhancing vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension among elementary school students.*

**Keywords:** *Digital Storybooks, Vocabulary Mastery, Reading Comprehension, Classroom Action Research.*

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**INTRODUCTION**

Vocabulary and reading comprehension are fundamental components of English language learning, particularly at the elementary level. Students who possess limited vocabulary often struggle to understand texts, identify main ideas, and respond accurately to comprehension questions. In many classrooms, conventional teaching methods still

dominate the learning process, resulting in low student motivation and limited engagement. In the context of the Merdeka Curriculum, students are expected to understand and produce simple spoken and written texts meaningfully. However, based on preliminary observations conducted in class V at MIN 1 Ogan Ilir, many students faced difficulties in mastering vocabulary

and comprehending English texts. The pre-cycle data showed that only 25% of students achieved the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM), while the majority performed below expectations.

To address this issue, innovative and interactive learning media are necessary. Digital storybooks, which integrate text, audio narration, animations, and visual illustrations, offer a contextual and engaging learning experience. Such multimodal features help students connect word meanings with visual and auditory cues, thereby strengthening vocabulary retention and improving comprehension.

This study aims to investigate how the implementation of digital storybooks can improve vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension among fifth-grade students at MIN 1 Ogan Ilir.

## **METHOD**

This study employed Classroom Action Research (CAR), which emphasizes reflective and cyclical improvement of teaching practices. The research was conducted in two cycles adapted from the model proposed by Kemmis and McTaggart, consisting of four stages: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. Each cycle was designed to evaluate and refine the instructional strategy based on classroom findings.

The participants were 20 fifth-grade students of MIN 1 Ogan Ilir in the 2024/2025 academic year. This study examined the effectiveness of digital storybooks as the independent variable, while vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension served as the dependent variables. The success indicator of the study was determined based on the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM) set at 75, with at least 75% of students achieving the target score. Data were collected through vocabulary mastery tests, reading comprehension tests, observation sheets, and interviews. The tests were used to measure students' improvement in vocabulary acquisition and text comprehension, while observation sheets documented students' engagement and participation during the learning process. Interviews were conducted to gain deeper insights into students' responses toward the implementation of digital storybooks.

Quantitative data were analyzed by calculating mean scores and the percentage of students achieving the KKM. Meanwhile, qualitative data were analyzed descriptively based on observation and interview results. The implementation of the treatment followed three instructional stages: pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading. During the learning process, students listened to narrated digital stories, identified unfamiliar vocabulary, discussed

meanings in context, completed comprehension tasks, and retold the stories using their own words.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that the implementation of digital storybooks significantly improved students' vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. The improvement was observed through test results, classroom observation, and reflective evaluation conducted across two cycles of classroom action research. In Cycle I, students showed a noticeable improvement compared to the pre-cycle results. The average vocabulary score reached 73.25, with 11 out of 20 students (55%) achieving the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM) of 75. Classroom observation indicated that approximately 70% of students actively participated in the learning activities. Although the results reflected positive progress, the success indicator of 75% mastery had not yet been achieved. Some students still faced difficulties in retaining new vocabulary and maintaining focus during the lesson.

**Table 1.** Comparison of Vocabulary Mastery Across Cycles

Cycle	Average Score	Students $\geq$ KKM	Percentage
Pre-cycle	66.25	5 students	25%
Cycle I	73.25	11 students	55%
Cycle II	80.00	17 students	85%

Similar improvement was also found in reading comprehension. In the pre-cycle stage, only 25% of students achieved the KKM, indicating low comprehension of English texts. After the implementation of digital storybooks in Cycle I, students showed improved understanding of story content, main ideas, and contextual meaning. However, the mastery level was still moderate.

In Cycle II, students demonstrated stronger comprehension abilities. They were able to identify key information, interpret vocabulary in context, and retell story content more confidently. The use of narrated digital stories with visual support helped students connect meaning with context, which enhanced comprehension and reduced reading anxiety.

**Table 2.** Reading Comprehension Improvement Across Cycles

Cycle	Students $\geq$ KKM	Percentage	Category
Pre-cycle	5 students	25%	Low
Cycle I	11 students	55%	Moderate
Cycle II	17 students	85%	High

The findings indicate that digital storybooks created a multisensory learning environment that combined visual, auditory, and textual elements. This approach aligns with multimodal learning theory, which suggests that learners retain information more effectively when multiple

sensory channels are involved. The integration of images, animations, and narration helped students understand vocabulary meaning more naturally and supported contextual comprehension. Furthermore, the improvement in students' participation confirms that interactive digital media can foster student centered learning. Students became more confident in identifying unfamiliar words, understanding story sequences, and expressing ideas orally and in written form. These findings are consistent with previous studies highlighting the effectiveness of digital storybooks in enhancing vocabulary acquisition and reading comprehension among young learners.

From a pedagogical perspective, this study demonstrates the novelty of integrating digital storybooks in elementary English classrooms within the Merdeka Curriculum context. The results not only show cognitive improvement but also highlight affective benefits, such as increased motivation, engagement, and classroom interaction. Therefore, digital storybooks can be considered an innovative and effective instructional medium for improving vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension in primary education

## CONCLUSION

The findings of this study confirm that the implementation of digital storybooks

significantly improves vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension among elementary school students. The improvement was reflected not only in students' test performance but also in increased participation, motivation, and confidence during the learning process. These results indicate that integrating digital storybooks into English instruction can create a more engaging and meaningful learning environment for young learners.

From a theoretical perspective, this study reinforces the role of multimodal learning in supporting language acquisition. The combination of visual, auditory, and textual elements provides contextualized input that facilitates deeper vocabulary retention and better comprehension. The findings contribute to the growing body of research emphasizing the effectiveness of digital media in enhancing literacy development in primary education.

Practically, this study offers an innovative pedagogical contribution by demonstrating how digital storybooks can be effectively implemented in elementary classrooms, particularly within the context of Indonesian schools. The results suggest that teachers should integrate interactive digital media to foster student-centered learning and improve language outcomes. Future research may explore the long-term effects of digital storybooks on broader language skills such as speaking and writing, as well

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as examine their implementation across different educational levels and learning environments.

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