




The teacher's role to increase students' reading interest using picture word card media in grade I Penggilingan 01 elementary school

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ARTICLE INFORMATION		ABSTRACT
History:		Reading interest is an important factor that encourages children to be more interested and enjoy reading activities. Amid scientific development, fostering interest in reading from an early age is very important, especially for low-grade students who are still weak in reading culture. Reading provides excellent benefits, such as increasing knowledge, curiosity, and improving students' language skills. Early strategies to develop interest in reading can be done by introducing letters using interesting learning media. This study aims to understand how teachers can engage students in reading activities using picture word cards. The research was conducted at SDN Penggilingan 01 Pagi through a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collected through interviews and observations of the principal, early grade teachers, and students. The results showed that the Sambel Terasi Movement (While Learning Literacy) and other teacher initiatives increased students' interest in reading. Thematic picture word cards accompanied by charades effectively enriched students' vocabulary, improving memory and reading comprehension. This media also makes learning activities more fun. However, challenges arise from the different learning abilities of each child. However, with teachers' creativity and skill in using learning aids such as picture word cards, students can be more inspired to love reading from an early age and make it a lifelong habit.
Received	25 August 2024	
Revised	20 February 2025	
Published	18 May 2025	
Keywords:		
<i>Reading Interest, Picture Word Cards, Primary School Students</i>		
		

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How to cite: Farahdiba, T., & Amaliyah, N. (2025). The teacher's role to increase students' reading interest using picture word card media in grade I Penggilingan 01 elementary school. *Jurnal Pemikiran dan Pengembangan Sekolah Dasar (JP2SD)*, 13(1). Doi: <https://doi.org/10.22219/jp2sd.v13i1.35502>

INTRODUCTION

In this era of rapid scientific advancement, fostering a love of reading is more important than ever. Reading activities are an appropriate choice among the ongoing efforts to improve the learning process. According to (Pahrurrazi et al., 2018), proficient

readers have mastered reading methods tailored to the texts they encounter. Acquiring letter recognition skills is a fundamental reading method. So, if you want to know more about children's basic attitudes and language abilities, reading is the right approach as it will provide you with new information and insights. Cultivating children's enthusiasm for reading, especially in lower-grade primary school students, wanes during the current learning process (Gustaf & Ama, 2020). Reading has not yet become a culture, especially for the younger generation, whose enthusiasm for books is waning. One of the most valuable abilities to have is reading and writing. Reading is one of the most basic life skills (Mirnawati & Fabriya, 2022). An interest in reading nurtured with a foundation of basic skills is a driving force that encourages young people to focus, show curiosity, and enjoy reading activities, all of which contribute to developing independent reading ability.

Teachers should pay particular attention to this because they are highly respected members of the school community and because of their important role as guides and mentors who shape students' learning experiences in the classroom. Teachers strive to ensure that their students develop a lifelong love of reading as an integral part of their educational experience. If they want their students to learn, teachers must be able to do so in various ways (Sholihah & Amaliyah, 2022).

Since reading skills affect every aspect of a student's education, it is ideal for primary school students to quickly become proficient readers, especially in the first few years of school (Ritonga et al., 2022). Therefore, teachers must foster an atmosphere that motivates children to read and increases their interest in reading. Students in low-level special education classes take their first steps towards reading early in the reading process.

Observations of class I at SDN Penggilingan 01 showed that students' low interest in reading could be observed through their difficulties in reading fluently and understanding texts. The causes vary, ranging from a lack of reading stimulation to unvaried teaching methods. However, teachers have a significant role in bridging this gap with creative innovations that are engaging and age-appropriate for students' development. Improving reading interest is about teaching how to read and creating a fun and meaningful reading experience. Several factors can lead to a lack of reading interest or culture, one is that some students do not have the intrinsic drive or social support to see reading as an important life skill. This is where the teacher's role is needed by providing interesting learning materials, such as picture word cards. The media encourages children to learn to recognize and distinguish letters. The picture word card media used in this study is a picture word card media with animal names. So, this media is characterized by words attached to photos of animals as information to build visual ideas with the appropriate letters.

In learning to read in primary school, students practice reading letters, words, and short sentences individually, emphasizing phonetic accuracy. These skills are essential for reading comprehension and later academic success. Reading development requires a series of sequential steps. Reading is a skill that develops in children not only by accident, but also through deliberate learning and practice of meaningful word strings, as stated in the work (Wayan & Suartini, 2022). It is common for children to make various mistakes when they first start reading. For children to grow as readers and critical thinkers, they must overcome barriers such as these, which are inherent to the learning process. Teachers can utilize learning media as teaching aids to implement reading and learning in the classroom. As an alternative to traditional reading instruction, graphic word cards can be helpful for educators. According to (Putri & Damri, 2023), students can improve their reading comprehension by using this media, which also makes it more fun by including

accompanying graphics. Picture word card media has the potential to attract people's attention due to its visually appealing and child-friendly nature. Picture cards, as one of the visual aids and teaching aids, can help students learn new words and phrases by dividing students into small groups and having them solve problems based on the pictures on the cards. This teaching method also has the added benefit of engaging students' interest in the material, resulting in better comprehension and retention.

Numerous studies have shown that picture books, which are appropriate for primary education, are an effective way to attract children's interest in reading (Nurjanah & Hakim, 2018). Primary school children are in the concrete operational stage, when they prefer concrete objects. (Nurseto, 2012). Therefore, students can be provided with visual media as learning materials through thematic learning. This study aims to examine whether the use of animal picture card media can be an effective way to increase students' interest in reading in Indonesian language learning. Since learning media is very important for schools, this research is necessary, especially for first graders whose reading skills are still maturing. Picture word cards are thought to not only save teachers' time, but they can also help first graders become better readers.

METHODS

Research as the main instrument, data collection through triangulation or combination, inductive data analysis, and emphasis on meaning in qualitative research results are characteristics of descriptive qualitative methods that researchers want to use in this study (Hardani, Helmina Andriani, Jumari Ustiawaty, Evi Fatmi Utami, Ria Rahmatul Istiqomah, 2022). The purpose of this study is to describe how first-year teachers at SDN Penggilingan 01 can use graphic word cards to arouse their students' interest in reading.

Rather than numerical data, descriptive data is presented as words or pictures. The author of this study will discuss how first-grade instructors at SDN Penggilingan 01 can arouse their children's interest in reading through picture word cards. Methods such as document examination, interviews, and observation were used to collect data for this study. Sugiyono argues that, since information collection is the core of research, data collection procedures take precedence. The data analysis method in this study begins with carefully documenting the information obtained from various sources related to the instructor's function in attracting children's interest in reading through the use of picture cards in the first grade of SDN Penggilingan 01. The second step is to find and record the data well before reducing it.

Data reduction in this study is based on the results of interviews, observations, and documentation about the instructor's role in utilizing picture cards as a medium to attract children's interest in reading in the first grade of SDN Penggilingan 01. Data reduction analysis was carried out to summarize and focus on data relevant to the research problem: children's interest in reading and the instructor's role in attracting interest in reading through picture cards in the first grade of SDN Penggilingan 01. Third, data collection includes presenting statistical data from interviews and participant observation. The purpose of presenting the data is to make it easier to understand by organizing it in a relational pattern. The fourth step is conclusion drawing. This part of the research process involves making conclusions based on the facts that have been reduced and presented. This conclusion provides a straightforward solution to the formulation of the research problem.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the results of research through observation, it was found that low interest in reading in early childhood students can be caused by a lack of interesting stimulation, monotonous teaching methods, and a lack of learning media by the child's developmental stage. Teachers have a strategic role in bridging this problem. One of the strategies applied is the use of picture word card media, which combines letters and pictures (such as pictures of animals) to help students recognize letters and words in a more fun way.

Using picture word cards with clear and attractive visuals facilitates student engagement. It helps students associate letter sounds with pictures, facilitates word recognition, and improves memory. Teachers select pictures that match the learning theme and creatively modify the cards to align with students' interests and abilities.

Teachers meet this challenge by providing differentiated learning, adjusting tasks and approaches according to students' abilities. Using word cards allows teachers to provide more personalized practice while keeping the learning atmosphere inclusive. Proficient students are challenged through word games, while beginning students receive intensive support.

The Role of Teachers to Increase Reading Interest of Grade I Students at SDN Penggilingan 01

The field study investigating the function of educators in arousing first-year students' interest in reading at SDN Penggilingan 01 has led to several conclusions:

a. Teacher's Role as Motivator

Inspiration can come from the teacher. Motivating oneself to learn new things is the primary key to improving the memory of the material learned (Utami & Amaliyah, 2022). To optimize the guided learning process, teachers must have sufficient information and understanding to inspire and motivate students to learn (Zagoto Hemat, 2023). Therefore, educators need to master the skills in motivating students to achieve maximum academic potential through intensive learning, actively participating in class, and enjoying reading activities. Teachers must be able to provide positive inspiration to encourage students to want to learn and develop, especially in the aspect of reading.

Encouraging children to read for pleasure is very important, as it improves their ability to remember the information they have read. Students with a high interest in reading still need guidance to choose reading materials appropriate to their developmental stage and skills. In this context, teachers play an important role in shaping reading habits. If teachers can design reading lessons that are interesting and relevant to students' interests, then it will be a significant achievement in the teaching and learning process.

One of these is the *Sambel Terasi* (Sambil Belajar Literasi) movement, a series of motivational habituation exercises that teachers at SDN Penggilingan 01 can implement to generate students' interest in reading. Teachers are encouraged to use these habituation activities to inspire students to understand the story's theme, whether they are actors or spectators. Using engaging stories is a good way for teachers to arouse students' interest in reading, which in turn will encourage them to read more often.



Figure 1. Sambel Terasi (While Learning Literacy) activity

b. Teacher's Role as Inspirer

Teachers must play two important roles to inspire students and set a good example. The first role relates to the delivery of learning materials, while the second emphasizes the teacher's function as a source of student motivation. According to the statement (Nurul et al., 2024), teachers as inspirers should be able to provide positive encouragement that supports student learning progress. By linking learning materials with real experiences, telling inspiring stories, and appreciating students' efforts, teachers can foster enthusiasm for learning, curiosity, and interest in various things in students. This role is vital to create a positive learning environment and encourage students' active participation in the learning process.

c. Teacher's Role as Initiator

Instructors act as leaders in the learning process. Educators, in particular, are responsible for keeping up with social and technological developments to design innovative strategies that can improve the quality of student learning. (Jember & Jember, 2021) For the learning process to run smoothly, teachers must be able to lead and create creative and different approaches to applying knowledge. Teachers who understand students' backgrounds, interests, strengths, weaknesses, environments, parental conditions, subjects, achievements, and obstacles are vital in supporting learning success. In this context, three things cannot be ignored: learning objectives should be the basis for teachers' selection and development of teaching materials.



Figure 2. Read Aloud Activity or Reading Together Out Loud

Educators are strongly advised to have the ability to implement effective teaching programs when interacting with students. Managing classroom resources should be done by considering each student's unique strengths and interests. At SDN 01 Penggilingan, some teachers have taken the initiative to use the read-aloud method. Reading aloud is a routine activity where teachers or students read stories to other students. This method includes an interactive approach that can help students get used to listening to and reading, become interested in reading, and ultimately be able to read independently.

d. Teacher's Role as Facilitator

The instructor acts as a guide in the learning process. To create an effective learning atmosphere, teachers need to plan and prepare themselves well in carrying out their role as facilitators in the classroom (Amaliyah, 2023). Providing a reading corner in the classroom and the existence of a complete school library are two ways teachers can carry out this role while arousing students' interest in reading.



Figure 3. Classroom reading corner

The reading corner, which is equipped with various types of readings, ranging from textbooks to comics and fairy tales, allows students to choose readings according to their interests. This encourages the formation of a reading habit. In addition, setting a special time for reading in class supports the formation of a positive reading routine.



Figure 4. Mobile Library Activity (Perpusling)

In addition, school libraries that actively organize programs such as reading together, reading aloud, and mobile libraries can enrich students' reading experience. Complete facilities and interesting library programs can motivate students to read more and love science, thus supporting learning.

Teacher's Role in Learning by Using Picture Word Card Media for First Grade Students of SDN Penggilingan 01

Achieving good and fluent reading skills in grade one students is a goal that requires hard work and support from parents, teachers, and the students themselves. Teachers need to play an active role in helping students, especially in grade one, to become better readers. Here are some ways in which picture word cards can help first graders improve their reading skills:

a. Selection of Clear and Attractive Imagery

Students' interest in reading can be increased through visually appealing learning media. Teachers need to utilize visually appealing media so students are more involved in learning and motivated to read. The media can also encourage students to try to understand the text around them and associate the meaning of the text with the images displayed (Rahma, 2019).



Figure 5. Word Card Media Form

At SDN 01 Penggilingan, teachers create learning materials such as picture word cards to present clear and engaging images. Using these images can arouse students' interest in learning and encourage their involvement in learning.

b. Use of Picture Word Card Media Customized with Learning Themes

Teachers at SDN Penggilingan 01 use picture cards to customize the subject matter with the desired content. For example, in grade I Bahasa Indonesia lessons, students learn the basics of reading through picture cards featuring different types of animals and other topics.



Figure 6. Teacher and Students Learning using Picture Word Card Media

After introducing the letters a, y, and m, the teacher shows the students the picture of the letter A on the card. Next, students learn the sound of the letter and its vocabulary. This step is important because topics that match the learning objectives can simplify the teacher's task, help students understand the material more deeply, and facilitate their ability to identify various concepts.

c. Provide Motivation and Reward

Teachers convey knowledge to students during learning activities and provide rewards. Every day, students receive rewards, such as praise, when they can read fluently without spelling mistakes. When students' complete tasks well or achieve learning objectives, teachers can show appreciation through rewards. Rewards can include praise, star stickers, or even some money.

The use of rewards can foster students' happiness and motivation to learn. After receiving some prizes, students show greater interest in reading activities. Teachers hope that, with prizes or other rewards, students will be more motivated to learn to read (Marta, 2016). Children who are enthusiastic about learning will be more eager to read, while less motivated children will begin to develop a strong desire to read. In general, rewards play an important role in regulating and increasing students' motivation levels in learning.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Using Picture Word Card Media to Increase Reading Interest in First Grade Students of SDN Penggilingan 01

Using picture word cards to arouse students' interest in reading has positive and negative aspects.

a. Advantages of Using Picture Word Cards

1) High Student Reading Interest

Especially in learning to read, picture word cards can potentially arouse students' interest. According to Tarigan (2018), using picture media in the classroom can help children become better readers while improving their understanding of reading. Using picture word cards as learning media is proven to attract first-grade students' interest in reading, because interesting pictures help them learn to read. Therefore, selecting media with attractive images is very important to arouse students' interest and motivate them in learning activities.

2) The teacher creates a fun learning atmosphere.

Teachers with basic education skills can help students learn more effectively and enjoyably (Jaya & Kendari, 2017). In addition to educating and teaching, teachers are responsible for creating a classroom atmosphere that is friendly and supportive of the learning process, especially for first-grade students. Teachers must be able to condition students and choose the right learning strategies and media.

First graders are still transitioning from kindergarten, where play activities dominate. Therefore, they tend to be more active in class. Some students even run around in the classroom, hide under the table, or play alone while other students learn. In this situation, the teacher must be able to condition the class so that the learning process continues to run well.

The teacher's task is limited to conditioning students and creating an engaging learning environment. One of the efforts that can be made is to integrate learning media. Using picture word cards, for example, can help first-grade students learn to read more easily. Therefore, many teachers choose this medium to improve students' reading skills.

b. Disadvantages of Using Picture Word Cards

1) Students' Different Ability to Accept Learning

As students' background knowledge varies greatly, their ability becomes one of the limiting factors in the learning process. Equalizing students' comprehension levels is a challenge, as some students learn quickly, while others take longer. Some students can respond quickly and read the visual words on the cards, while others must spell the words first. Some students are not able to read at all.

In this situation, students who cannot read often receive the same material repeatedly, so the teacher has to deliver it again. As a result, students who can pay attention well will understand the material faster than less focused students. This is in line with Rahim's opinion, as cited in (Nurul et al., 2024), which states that some children have difficulty learning to read because their visual processing abilities have not developed optimally. As a result, they cannot distinguish letters, numbers, and words appropriately.

2) Students' Disturbed Health Condition

Students' health issues can hinder their learning ability and reduce the effectiveness of the learning received (Ratna et al., 2020). In picture card learning, student health is one of the limiting factors. First-grade students are still in the early stages of development, so health problems such as fever, dizziness, or body weakness can make them lose focus while learning.

When a child is not in good health, the use of picture cards in learning to read may not be effective. The child will have difficulty focusing on the task and may feel left out of the group when their peers can read fluently. Therefore, students' health has a significant influence on the learning process. Therefore, teachers must communicate openly with parents to jointly maintain children's health conditions.

CONCLUSION

Using picture cards in grade 1 of SDN Penggilingan 01 aims to increase students' interest and reading ability through engaging and fun methods. Teachers play an important role in inspiring, motivating, and facilitating reading learning by creating a supportive learning environment. Although effective, using picture cards also has some disadvantages that must be considered. Teachers should choose picture cards that are relevant, interesting, and appropriate to the students' ability level, and pay attention to the duration of their use so as not to interfere with health. The use of cards can be varied with other activities involving students.

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