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# Enhancing Narrative Writing Skills through Digital Storytelling: An Experimental Study on High School Students

Atika Puspitarini<sup>\*1</sup>, Rafiqa<sup>2</sup>, Ahmad Junaedi<sup>3</sup>

1,2,3 Universitas Sulawesi Barat, Indonesia

puspitariniatika717@gmail.com1, rafika@unsulbar.ac.id2, ahmad4future@gmail.com3

\*Corresponding Author: puspitariniatika717@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<b>Keywords:</b> Digital Storytelling;	This research aims to find out the improvement of the 1st-grade students' narrative writing by using digital storytelling and how they perceive that. The researchers
Narrative Writing;	used a quasi-experimental design to conduct this research. The population was 93
Perception	students and the sample elected was 15 students for both experiment and control classes. Test and questionnaire were employed to address the research questions.
Received: 05 Apr 2024	The data analysis was conducted using SPSS 25. The findings revealed that
Revised: 20 May 2024	students' narrative writing improved after digital storytelling was integrated into
Accepted: 24 May 2024	the lessons. The independent sample test showed that sig. 2 tailed < 0.05. Consequently, the alternative hypothesis was accepted, indicating a significant difference in narrative writing between students taught with digital storytelling and those taught without using digital storytelling. Moreover, the n-gain score result showed that the mean score of the experiment class was 62.09 included in the effective enough category. Therefore, it can be concluded that the use of digital storytelling is effective enough in enhancing the narrative writing of the 1st-grade students of MAN 2 Polman. Furthermore, the data from the questionnaire showed that the students had positive perceptions of using digital storytelling in classroom activities.
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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Writing is a way to put ideas or opinions into written form. It is a productive ability that holds significant importance realm of English language teaching and learning (Rafiqa et al., 2023). Writing is one of the essential English skills that is crucial across various educational fields, including language arts, social studies, science, and math (Isma, Hermansyah, et al., 2023; Isma, Rasmin, Hutauruk, et al., 2023). In addition, writing is considered a challenging skill for learners that must be learned to convey their ideas effectively (Isma, Rasmin, & Samsudin, 2023; Rashid et al., 2021). This highlights that writing is not easy to master. Students must be able to express their ideas or opinions, organize them into sentences, put them on paper, and then revise them. Rashid et al. (2021) explains that writing involves a process of thinking, drafting, and revising requiring specialized skills that not all speakers develop naturally. Therefore, teaching writing is crucial as students need a lot of practices to master this skill and produce engaging text composition.

Since writing is important to be taught, there are several types of text introduced in the first grade of senior high school, including Narrative text. According to Meer (2016), one of the four kinds of writing is narrative. Narrative text tells a chronological story from the past. Carroll et al. (2018) describe narrative text as a type of writing that tells a story by describing a series of events in a logical and chronological order, intended to to engage readers by providing either real or imagined experiences.





Additionally, Zakaria & Aziz (2019) identify five elements of narrative writing: plot, setting, characters, theme, and point of view. Typically, the characters, the setting, and the problem of the narrative are introduced at the beginning, the problem reaches its climax in the middle and the ending resolves the problem (Defrioka, 2014).

When learning English as a foreign language, certain problem arises for students, particularly in the context of writing. According to findings from an interview with an English teacher at MAN 2 Polman when the researchers did teaching assistance in that school, the primary issue encountered by students while the teacher taught the 1st grade students, revolves around difficulties in writing narrative texts. These problems stem from various factors. First, students lack knowledge about grammar and vocabulary. The lack of vocabulary limits the students in creating a good writing composition and it will affect them to use the same vocabulary frequently (Isma, Rasmin, & Samsudin, 2023; Lestari & Isma, 2019). Hence, it will make their writing monotonous. Second, Students could not organize the development of their ideas and the purpose of the text. As people know, when writing narrative text, ideas play an important role in producing an interesting story that has a broad meaning. As stated by Silvia (2018) building an idea is an essential thing to start writing. If the students have found an idea, they will know what they are going to write. It means that, if the narrative text lack of ideas, it is certain that the result of the writing will not be optimal. The Third problem is most of the students feel lazy and lack interest in writing narrative text. Therefore, they have lack of practice writing in the learning process because they think that writing is difficult. Kellogg & Whiteford (2009) highlight the importance of extensive practice for writers to enhance their skills. It means that the more students practice writing, the better their writing results will become. In addition, the feeling of boredom experienced by students may also be due to unattractive learning.

Considering the issues discussed, teachers need to facilitate students with effective techniques and tools (Isma, Lestari, Rohimajaya, et al., 2024). One of the tools is using media to present a text. Media can support teachers by offering engaging learning materials, making it easier for students to understand the material easily (Isma, Lestari, Halim, et al., 2024). Therefore, the use of learning media is significant. Digital storytelling is a form of narrative writing activity that incorporates technology (Balaman, 2018; Zakaria & Aziz, 2019). This multimedia approach is expected to make the material more interesting, enjoyable, and fun for the readers or audience. Nowadays, almost all activities involve technology since it adapts to the time and is considered to be faster, efficient, and interesting (Handayani et al., 2023; Isma, Basri, Abduh, et al., 2024; Isma, Lestari, Halim, et al., 2024; Isma, Sudewi, & Amrang, 2024; Sudewi & Isma, 2023). Therefore, digital storytelling is the best solution to facilitate writing narrative texts because as mentioned before, most students have difficulty focusing and finding writing ideas. Hence, the utilization of digital storytelling within the educational process is anticipated to be well-suited for teaching narrative writing, enabling students to maintain excellent focus and enjoy their lessons in a favorable environment.

Digital storytelling has been widely adopted in education around the world (Robin, 2008). Digital storytelling is considered the art of telling stories using digital elements such as text, graphics, sound, and video (Robin, 2006). Yamac & Ulusoy (2016) noted that modern storytelling begins with digital storytelling, incorporating visuals, music, and audio through computer technology. This suggests that digital storytelling can serve as an educational technology as today, the widespread use of technology in daily life allows for the creation of educational products. Additionally, relying on audio-visual elements can capture students' interest and engage them in the narrative writing process with captivating animations. It also enhances students' imagination, enabling them to create their own narrative texts. Digital storytelling provides subtitles which help students to understand the story better. Considering the restriction of the problem, the researchers define the research formulation as: (1) Can digital storytelling improve narrative writing of the 1st grade students of MAN 2 Polman? (2) What are students' perceptions of the use of digital storytelling in improving the 1st-grade students' narrative writing ability?





# 2. METHODS

The quantitative method was used to conduct this research. As stated by Sugiyono (2011) cited in Suminih (2017) the experimental research method is used to determine the effects of specific treatments on other variables under controlled conditions. This research employed a Quasi-Experimental method with Non-equivalent Control Group Design. In this research, there were two classes; experiment and control class. Both classes were given pre-tests and post-tests. The experiment class used digital storytelling to teach narrative writing while the control class was not given a treatment, they only learned conventionally.

This research was conducted from August 2022 until September 2022, in the first semester of the academic year 2022/2023 at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Polman. The research's population was all the 1st-grade students of MAN 2 Polman, totaling 93 students. The sample for this research comprised 15 students from X IPA 1 as the control group and 15 students from X IPA 2 as the experimental group. The participants were chosen through random sampling. To collect the data, the researchers utilized a test and questionnaire. Pre-test and post-test adapted from Nurlisa (2021) were administered to both experimental and control classes to evaluate students' narrative writing. The assessment covered five aspects of writing: grammar/language use, mechanics, vocabulary, content, and organization. Additionally, a questionnaire adapted from Hariadi (2016) was used to measure students' perception of the use of digital storytelling to improve their narrative writing ability.

The researchers implemented a three-stage digital storytelling strategy as a treatment for the experimental class. In the first stage, the researchers introduced digital storytelling to the students by asking them about their favorite movies and what they liked about them, serving as a warmup before the main activity. In the next stage, the researchers provided short digital storytelling videos related to class activities, sharing YouTube links for the students to access on their devices and watch together in the class. After watching the digital storytelling, the researchers asked simple questions to elicit vocabularies from the digital storytelling. Besides that, the researchers also explained the structure and language features of narrative text in that storytelling. In the final stage, students were asked to write a narrative writing based on the story that they had watched, with about 30 minutes given to them to finish the task.

The data collected in this research were analyzed in two ways. First, by examining the data obtained from the pre-test and post-test. Second, by evaluating the data gathered from the questionnaire.

1. In assessing students' narrative writing, the researchers used an analytic scoring rubric followed by Brown (2007) cited in Isnaini et al. (2019). The researchers used SPSS to analyze the data. In addition, the improvement of students' narrative writing by using digital storytelling was analyzed using the n-gain score. Then the researchers interpreted the result of the n-gain mean score using the n-gain effectiveness interpretation category as follows:

Percentage (%)	Interpretation		
< 40	Ineffective		
40-55	Less Effective		
56-75	Effective Enough		
>70	Effective		

Table 1. N-Gain effectiveness

2. The data related to students' perception of the use of digital storytelling to improve their narrative writing was obtained by conducting a questionnaire. The researchers used the Likert Scale. Wijayanti (2019) stated that the Likert scale is utilized to assess various aspects, including attitudes, opinions,



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and perceptions held by individuals or groups regarding phenomena in research. After collecting the data, the researchers evaluated the questionnaire's categories using interval scores as follows:

Table 2 Interval Score

Interval Score	Category
0-2	Strong Disagree
2,1-2,5	Disagree
2,6-3	Undecided
3,1-3,5	Agree
3,6-5	Strong Agree

(Gay, 1981 cited in Wijayanti, 2019)

# 3. FINDINGS

In this section, the researchers addressed the research problem presented in this research. The research problem focused on the effectiveness of digital storytelling in improving narrative writing of 1st-grade students of MAN 2 Polman and the students' perceptions of the use of digital storytelling for this purpose.

# 3.1 The Effectiveness of Digital Storytelling to Improve Narrative Writing

Before implementing digital storytelling into lessons in the experiment class, the mean score of the pre-test was presented below:

Class	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experiment class	15	65.0000	6.22973	1.60851
Control class	15	64.0000	5.62731	1.45297

After incorporating digital storytelling into the lesson in the experimental class, the mean score of the post-test is presented below:

Class	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experiment class	15	87.6667	6.22973	1.60851
Control class	15	75.6667	5.62731	1.45297

#### Table 4. Mean Score of Post-test

Based on Tables 3 and 4, it was evident that the students' mean scores in the experimental class improved in the post-test. The mean score increased from 65.00 in the pre-test to 86.67 in the post-test. Additionally, this score was higher than the control class's post-test mean score of 75.67. Therefore, it can be concluded that digital storytelling had a significant impact on students' narrative writing.

The researchers also aimed to test the hypothesis regarding whether there was a significant difference in average learning outcomes between the experimental class and the control class. However, it was necessary to check if the data collected were distributed normally or not and if the sample variances were homogeneous.

Finally, the t-test calculation was done to measure the effectiveness of digital storytelling in improving students' narrative writing. All data analysis and calculations were done using IBM SPSS Statistics 25.



Post-Test Control

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Normal Data

Table 5. Normality Testing							
Data	Kolmogorov-Smirnov	Sig.	Information				
Pre-Test Experiment	.147	.200	Normal Data				
Post-Test Experiment	.158	.200	Normal Data				
Pre-Test Control	.179	.200	Normal Data				

.214

Table 5 indicates that the normality significance is greater than 0.05. Hence, it can be inferred that all data exhibit a normal distribution.

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.414	1	28	.525

#### Table 6. Homogeneity Testing

.063

Table 6 revealed that the homogeneity significance is greater than 0.05. Thus, it can be concluded that all data have homogenous variances.

Following the examination of the normality and homogeneity test, the data was analyzed to investigate the research hypothesis using a t-test. In this case, the researchers employed an independent sample test for hypothesis testing.

Levene's Test for Equality of Variance											
			S				t-test f	or Equal	ity of Me	eans	
								Std.	95% (	Confidence Interval of the	
						Sig.	Mean	Error	Difference		
						(2-	Differe	Differ			
		F	Sig.	Т	df	tailed)	nce	ence	Lower	Upper	
Hasil	Equal	.57	.45	5.5	28	.000	12.000	2.167	7.559	16.44009	
	variances assumed	1	6	36			00	58	91		
	Equal variances			5.5 36	27.7 15	.000	12.000 00	2.167 58	7.557 85	16.44215	
	not assumed										

#### Table 7. Independent Sample test

Based on Table 7, the independent sample test revealed that sig. (2 tailed) of the post-test score was lower than  $\alpha$  (0,05). This result leads to the conclusion that the alternative hypothesis was accepted, and the null hypothesis was rejected. It means that there was a significant difference in students' narrative writing between those taught with digital storytelling and those without using digital storytelling among the 1st-grade students of MAN 2 Polman.

Furthermore, the improvement in students' narrative writing in both experimental and control classes was assessed based on the N-gain score derived from the pre-test and post-test results.



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No	Catagory	Score	Experim	Control class		
	Category	Score	Freq	%	Freq	%
1	High	0.70-1.00	7	46.7	0	0
2	Medium	0.30-0.70	7	46.7	7	46.7
3	Low	0.00-0.30	1	6.6	5	33.3
4	No Increase	0.00	0	0	3	20
5	Decrease	-1.00-0.00	0	0	0	0
<b>Mean</b> 62.0895 28.2684				4		
Min. S	core		20.00 00.00			
Max. S	core		87.5	87.5 66.67		

Table 8. N-Gain Score

Based on the N-gain score results in Table 8, the mean score of the experimental class was 62.0895 (62.09%) categorized as an effective enough category with a range from a minimum score of 20% to a maximum score of 87.50%. On the other hand, the mean score for the control class was 28.2684 (28.26%) categorized as not effective category with a minimum score was 00% and a maximum score was 66.67%. Therefore, it can be concluded that the utilization of digital storytelling is effective enough in enhancing the narrative writing of the first-grade students of MAN 2 Polman. In contrast, the conventional learning in the control class did not prove to be effective in improving the narrative writing of the first-grade students of MAN 2 Polman.

# 3.2 Students' Perception of Using Digital Storytelling in Narrative Writing

Table 9. Descriptive Statistic of Questionnaire Result

	Ν	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Overall	15	3.90	4.50	4.3300	.16235
Valis N (Listwise)	15				

Table 9 revealed that the mean score for the overall statement was 4,3. This indicated that the students strongly agreed with the use of digital storytelling in learning narrative writing based on the interval scale. Therefore, it can be inferred that the majority of students had a positive perception of integrating digital storytelling into their narrative writing lessons.

### 4. **DISCUSSION**

The research findings indicated a significant effect of using digital storytelling on students' narrative writing at first grade MAN 2 Polman. The experimental class had a greater mean score than the control class. Data analysis revealed that the test experimental class had a pre-test mean score of 65.00 and a post-test mean score of 86.67, while the control class had a pre-test mean score of 64.00 and a post-test mean score of 75.67. This increase in the experimental class's scores demonstrates that digital storytelling positively affects students' narrative writing. Furthermore, the independent t-test showed p-value or Sig. (2-tailed) of the post-test score was lower than  $\alpha$  (0,05); 0,000 < 0,05. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis is accepted, and the null hypothesis is rejected. In the experimental class, narrative writing without this tool. Both classes improved because they were learning new material. However, the experimental class gained additional benefits from digital storytelling, leading to a greater post-test mean score compared to the control class.





This research aligns with previous studies, such as Nurrahmah (2019) which found that digital storytelling significantly improves students' narrative writing skills with the progress evident in the experimental class. Nurlisa (2021) also demonstrated that digital storytelling successfully enhances students' narrative writing ability, especially in terms of organization. Hanifah (2019) found digital storytelling media to be effective in improving students' narrative writing skills, as seen in increased students' engagement, interest, and achievement results, with writing abilities improving through each cycle. Additionally, digital storytelling made the learning process more enjoyable due to its captivating and engaging presentation. Novi (2016) similarly found that digital storytelling enhances students' narrative writing abilities and overall comprehension of narrative text, with achievement scores rising by the final cycle.

Based on the interval scale of the questionnaire, students expressed positive perceptions regarding the integration of digital storytelling into their narrative writing activities in the classroom pro, as evidenced by the percentage of questionnaire responses. This is because Digital storytelling provides numerous aids for students in narrative lessons. Firstly, it offers a dynamic and interactive medium through which students can actively engage with the narrative content, fostering their comprehension and retention of the story's elements. By watching and analyzing digital stories, students can observe first-hand how plots are developed, characters are portrayed, and settings are described, which can significantly enhance their understanding of the story. This situation arises when students are exposed to videos alongside the storytelling. This video served as a scaffold for students, enhancing their comprehension by allowing them to watch the story rather than just listen, which aids in making sense of unfamiliar vocabulary (Sudewi & Isma, 2023). Students also reported that this approach improved their classroom engagement. Additionally, digital storytelling helped students organize their ideas and assist in constructing sentences coherently, enabling the transformation of disorganized thoughts into cohesive expressions. This finding aligns with the earlier researchers Yamac & Ulusoy (2016) supported the advantages of digital storytelling in improving the quality of students' writing, highlighting enhancement in their creativity, word choice, organization, sentence fluency, and writing conventions.

Moreover, students exhibit a preference for learning through digital storytelling over conventional narrative methods due to an engaging and imaginative approach to storytelling. This method captivates students, drawing them into the narrative and enabling them to remain attentive and engaged throughout the learning experience. This supports the thoughts provided by (Ahmad & Yamat, 2020; Qumairi, 2022) which stated students were thrilled to learn with digital storytelling. It made content easier to grasp and created an engaging learning environment. Students also found digital storytelling preferable as it improved their understanding of the story. In Qumairi's (2022) research, students were happy and enthusiastic about learning using digital storytelling. They found it easy to understand the content and enjoy the engaging learning environment. In Ahmad & Yamat's (2020) research, introducing digital storytelling in lessons makes learning more fun, attractive, and enjoyable, capturing students' attention and making it a preferred approach over others. Students also find it helpful in enhancing their understanding of the story. From the result and discussion, the outcome and analysis have addressed two research questions: the use of digital storytelling to improve the 1st-grade students of MAN 2 Polman. Their progress is evident across five aspects: content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. Additionally, the 1st-grade students of MAN 2 Polman held positive perceptions regarding the use of digital storytelling in improving their narrative writing.

# 5. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of the findings and discussions in the previous chapter, the research questions have been answered. The first research question aimed to determine whether digital storytelling could improve students' narrative writing. The research findings demonstrated a significant positive effect of



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digital storytelling on students' narrative writing at first grade MAN 2 Polman. The mean score of the experimental class was greater than the control class. Additionally, the independent t-test showed pvalue or Sig. (2-tailed) of the post-test score was lower than  $\alpha$  (0.05); 0.000 < 0.05. From the result, it indicated that the alternative hypothesis is accepted, and the null hypothesis is rejected. Furthermore, the n-gain result in the experiment class was 62.08 categorized as effective enough. Therefore, it can be concluded that the use of digital storytelling is effective enough to improve the narrative writing of the 1st-grade students of MAN 2 Polman. The second research question focused on the students' perception regarding the use of digital storytelling in improving their narrative writing. The analysis of the mean score of questionnaire responses revealed that the students held positive perceptions regarding the integration of digital storytelling into their narrative writing activity in the classroom. It was proven by the mean score of the questionnaire results. This is because Digital storytelling provides numerous aids for students in narrative lessons. Firstly, it offers a dynamic and interactive medium through which students can actively engage with the narrative content, fostering their comprehension and retention of the story's elements. By watching and analyzing digital stories, students can observe first-hand how plots are developed, characters are portrayed, and settings are described, which can significantly enhance their understanding of the story.

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