

Using Digital Stories in Reading Class: the New Literacy for Young Learners in 21st Century

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SUBMISSION TRACK

Submitted : 21 August 2023
Accepted : 20 November 2023
Published : 25 November 2023

KEYWORDS

digital stories; motivation;
reading; tool; literacy;
young learners.

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A B S T R A C T

Reading achievement and willingness to get involved in reading activities among young learners are affected by their reading motivation and the texts they select for reading. Since there is software that makes stories readable on personal devices, using digital stories in the classroom is one of the strategies to promote reading skills and students' motivation to read. The purposes of this research are to know the implementation of digital stories in teaching reading to young learners and to know the advantages and disadvantages of the use of digital stories in teaching reading to young learners. This research uses a qualitative method. To collect the data, the researcher uses observation and interviews. Meanwhile, to analyze the data, the researcher uses data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions. The results show that students can use digital stories easily. They click the link given by the teacher and choose the stories they like on the website. Some interesting features can be added to story content while they are reading the text, such as interactive exercises, quizzes, and discussions that are not available in the printed text. The strengths are that digital stories are used as an interesting learning tool, particularly for students who are accustomed to technology, and help young readers enhance their literacy skills and motivation. The weaknesses are the internet connection is sometimes unstable so the students are difficult to access the stories and no quiz menu in the website. It makes the students not challenged to read it at home.

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Introduction

One of the English abilities that students should be able to master is reading. Reading is taught to them since they are still in primary school. They are called young learners. Young learners are defined primarily as those who spend those years in primary or elementary school (Scott & Ytreberg, 1990). Young learners should be well-prepared to read for both pleasure and education. Unfortunately, the teacher's boring teaching methods can cause them to lose interest in reading class. Some students behave inattentively during reading sessions. Also, the level of interest in reading in Indonesia is quite low (Karangasem, 2023). The crucial component for actively involving students in the reading process is motivation to read (Maddin, 2012). Reading may grow to be a painful experience for students who do not develop their reading abilities early in their academic careers (Darvin & Norton, 2014). As a result, they can pass up practice opportunities, further delaying their success. All students must have the desire to read in order to succeed academically (Yang & Wu, 2012). This article demonstrates how increasing students' reading motivation and readers' reading proficiency. Children who are inspired to read and who are free from the fear of failing also frequently read at or above grade level. On the other hand, children who have trouble reading and do not read often get worse readers with each passing year. (Dunwoody, 2021)

Using engaging media that students want to see, hear, and hold, teachers can play a crucial role in encouraging children to develop and maintain a positive attitude toward reading (Rahmasari, 2021). It is not unexpected that online technologies like digital stories have been hailed as beneficial in enhancing children's language and reading abilities (Lambert, 2013). With the addition of multimedia and multisensory elements like animated illustrations, sound effects, and fully digitized audio narration with text highlighting online children's stories have taken traditional oral or print stories and transformed them into interactive digital stories that young learners and struggling readers can enjoy reading on their own (Robin, 2008). Digital stories often come with music and animations that may be engaged the child in order to encourage reading interest and participation in young readers. They also allow children to activate the reading of words, phrases, or pages in whatever sequence they choose. By clicking on an arrow that repeats the text, the young learners can also use a feature that lets them read or listen to the highlighted material again. Many of these books give students the chance to read on their own even if they are lacking in basic reading abilities.

Research Method

The research used in this study is qualitative. The participants are the fourth grade of elementary students in one of the schools in Madiun city. Twenty primary school pupils are taking part in this research. Interviews and observation are used to gather data. The researcher makes use of a participant observation checklist. The researcher records how digital stories are used in the classroom. The researcher is also asking students and teachers about their opinions on using digital stories for reading in the classroom. Three phases are used in data analysis: data reduction, data visualization, and conclusion drawing (Sugiyono, 2015). In data reduction, the researcher collects the data from the interview and observation then selects the data needed for answering the research questions. Next, the researcher displays the data in the form of brief discussion. The last, the researcher conclude the result of the research.

Finding and Discussion

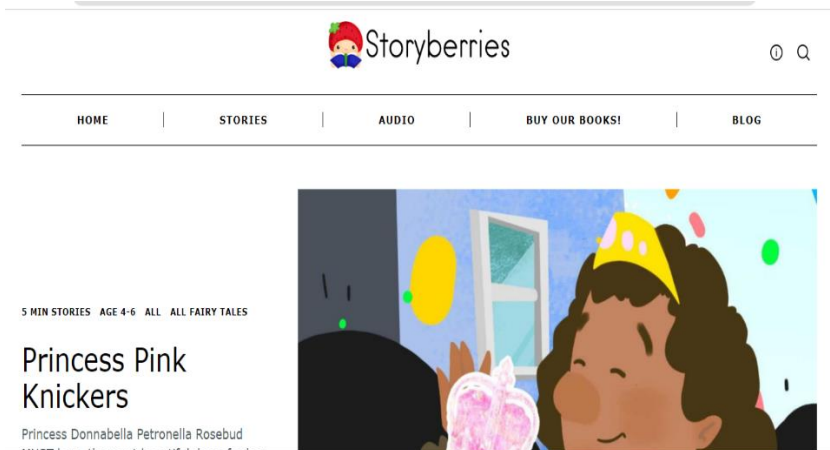
The implementation of Digital Stories in teaching reading to fifth-grade students is divided into three activities. They are pre-activities, main activities, and post-activities. They are described as follows:

Pre activities

The teacher greets the students by saying good afternoon. How are you today? The students kept silent. The students were busy with their own activities. Some of them played with their friends. Some of them were talking. Then, the teachers repeated again the greeting with loud voices. Good afternoon, students. How are you today? The students answered, "Good afternoon, I am fine. Thank you". After that, the teacher stimulated the students by saying "have you ever read short stories? If yes, What is the title?" One of them replied "Sangkuriang". "Good. Today we will read together stories by using digital stories". "Yes Maam".

Main activities

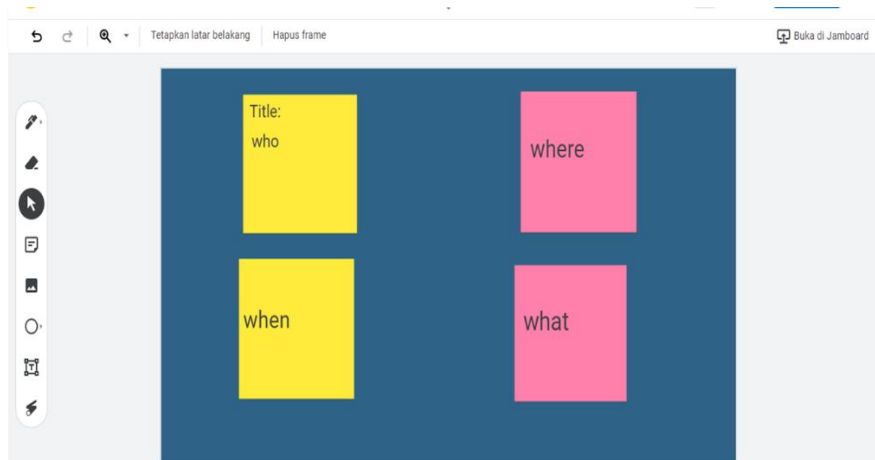
The teacher showed how to use digital stories by displaying using LCD. First, the teacher and students clicked the web <https://www.storyberries.com/>



1. The students clicked the stories menu and chose the stories they like



2. The students also could play the audio to listen to the stories
3. After the students finished reading and listening to the stories, the teacher asked some of them what the story was about, how many characters and why they like the story
4. The teacher played one of the stories based on the voting result.
5. The teacher discussed the story by giving the students some questions.
6. The teacher wrote the title of the story and the questions on Jam Board



Post Activities

The teachers asked the students whether they are happy with the activities or not. Some of them said that they were happy and enjoyed it because they could choose the story they like. One of them also said that they are so excited. Then, the teacher closed the meeting and said goodbye.

The Strengths of the implementation of Digital Stories in teaching reading to fifth-grade students are

The utilization of Digital Stories is much simpler. It is available for usage at any time by younger students. Students will feel engaged and like reading the story in the e-book during reading class because of the features' vibrant colors, plenty of animations, 3D, and variety of options. Students can improve their technical and learning skills in addition to their reading comprehension. Student interest for digital stories is evident

Alexander (2017) outlined several advantages of using digital storytelling in the classroom, such as: (1) providing more variety than currently used conventional techniques; (2) individualizing the learning experience; (3) making the description or practice of certain topics more attractive; (4) simply and inexpensively creating actual events scenarios; and (5) enhancing student participation in the learning process.

According to research Bandi-Rao & Sepp (2014), incorporating digital storytelling into language instruction can improve students' reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills

Additionally, according to Quah & Ng (2022), integrating storytelling into the social studies curriculum is also said to aid students in comprehending democratic values, cultural diversity, and active participation in society. Additionally, it improves students' communication abilities, motivates them to study the past and present, and creates links between classmates via shared experiences. Those statements support the research findings. The results show that by using the digital stories, the students become active in the class, they could understand the content of the reading well, and they could work together to complete the task together and they are very enthusiastic to join the reading class.

The weakness of the implementation of Digital Stories in teaching reading to fifth-grade students is that the internet connection is sometimes unstable so the students are challenged to access the stories. One of the students said: "lemot bu" It means that the signal was unstable when accessing the web. Besides, no features of quizzes. Student AK said "ga lengkap bu.gu ada menu kuis. Kurang ada tantangan bu kalau belajar sendiri dirumah" It means that the website did not provide the menu quizzes so that the students are less challenged if they read it at home.

Conclusion

This article has demonstrated how constructivist teaching strategies, stimulating factors, and online reading software can encourage young students to read. This study has demonstrated that using digital stories as a teaching approach for young learners can be advantageous because it can inspire them to read. If teachers follow the guidelines for storybook use in the classroom, digital stories may benefit young learners more. These guidelines should outline page switching techniques, completion deadlines, and peer engagement opportunities. By taking on a role and giving instructions while the students read, educators can also help the students. Teachers can also think about which digital aspects, such as decoding, phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, and oral language, best assist a child's emerging literacy demands. The teachers are recommended

to use digital stories because it has so many advantages for the students. It is effective to foster students' literacy skills.

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