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ENHANCING READING SKILLS IN NARRATIVE TEXTS THROUGH THE JIGSAW STRATEGY FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract: This study investigates the effectiveness of the Jigsaw Strategy in enhancing reading skills and engagement in narrative texts among secondary school students. Employing Classroom Action Research (CAR), the study was conducted at SMP N 17 Gresik, involving 30 Grade VIII students with varying reading proficiencies. The research followed a four-stage CAR cycle: planning, action, observation, and reflection. Data were collected using pre- and post-tests, observation sheets, student questionnaires, and field notes. Results indicate significant improvements in reading comprehension, with post-test scores increasing by 15% from pre-test scores. Specific reading skills such as inferencing, synthesizing information, and thematic interpretation also saw substantial growth, with improvements ranging from 25% to 35%. Student engagement and motivation increased, with active participation rising from 60% to 85%, and students reporting higher motivation (average score of 4.4 out of 5) and enjoyment of collaborative learning.The findings suggest that the Jigsaw Strategy effectively enhances reading comprehension and specific reading skills in narrative texts. The collaborative nature of the strategy promotes deeper engagement and understanding, fostering a supportive learning environment. The study concludes that the Jigsaw Strategy is a valuable instructional approach for improving reading outcomes and fostering a positive attitude towards reading. Future research could explore the long-term impacts of the strategy and its adaptability to different educational settings and text genres.
Keywords: Jigsaw strategy; Reading skill; Class Action Research; Narrative Texts.

INTRODUCTION

In today's increasingly globalized and interconnected world, the development of literacy skills has become essential for academic achievement and future success. Reading proficiency, especially in narrative texts, plays a pivotal role in helping students develop a deeper understanding of language, plot structures, characters, and themes. According to (Scholarworks & Caviness, 2020) reading is an essential ability to acquire knowledge from various sources of information. Through reading activities, new insight will emerge from accumulating data and information obtained (Setiawan et al., 2023). For secondary school students, reading comprehension is a consuming,

continuous, and complex activity, but one that, for good readers, is both satisfying and productive (Duke & Pearson, 2004). reading comprehension is not simply a matter of decoding words, but involves higher-level thinking skills such as inferencing, synthesizing information, and interpreting meaning (Maruf & Anjely, 2020; Arifin et al., 2022). When reading narrative, good readers attend closely to the setting and characters. Enhancing reading skills at this educational stage, therefore, becomes a priority for educators and researchers alike.

Narrative texts, which include stories, novels, and other forms of fictional prose, are an important component of the secondary school curriculum. A narrative is a piece of text that tells a story and, in doing so, entertains or informs the reader or listener (Sanam et al., 2021). A narrative always deals with some problems which lead to the climax and then turn into a solution to the problem (Marzona & Ikhsan, 2019). Thay also argue that narrative text consists of orientation, complication, or problems and resolution. These texts offer rich opportunities for students to engage with the literary world, helping them to develop empathy, moral reasoning, and cultural awareness. Despite their importance, many secondary students struggle with narrative comprehension, often finding it difficult to follow intricate plots, understand character motivations, and discern thematic messages (Maruf & Helingo, 2022; Maruf & Halyna, 2023). This struggle can be attributed in part to traditional teaching methods, which often rely heavily on teacher-cantered instruction or individual silent reading, leaving some students disengaged or unable to fully grasp the material.

To address these challenges, educators are increasingly turning to innovative instructional strategies that promote active learning and collaboration among students. One such strategy is the Jigsaw Strategy, a cooperative learning technique first introduced by Aronson in the 1970s. This method involves dividing students into small groups, where each member is responsible for mastering a specific segment of the text. Jigsaw is cooperative learning which emphasizes students to work in the form of a small group and the participant is acknowledged that they are valuable participants in the ongoing organizational tasks of finding and solving problems (Marpaung & Pandjaitan, 1970). Using a cooperative Jigsaw model can increase student activity, concentration, cooperation, and student responsibility in groups (Maison et al., 2021). Through cooperative learning model- Jigsaw, students feel responsible for formulating, analyzing, solving problems, finding concepts, and presenting the discussions in front of the class. By requiring each student to take responsibility for a portion of the text, the Jigsaw Strategy encourages deeper engagement and promotes collective learning, helping students to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the material.

Jigsaw Strategy has been praised for its ability to foster active participation, improve comprehension, and enhance social and communication skills among students. Its collaborative nature helps to build a sense of community in the classroom, while also promoting equity, as all students contribute to the learning process. Numerous studies have demonstrated the benefits of cooperative learning, with research showing that it is not only just putting the students together in groups and asking them to work on the task given, but its principles at the same time help students and teachers understand on what is involved in helping the students to succeed (Qismullah Yusuf 1et al., 2019). In this

research entitled Cooperative learning strategies to enhance writing skills among second language learners, they found that the students in this case by using STAD and Jigsaw, the elements and the effects of these methods had made it possible for the students to improve their writing skill. This improvement is due to the fact that CL provided them better opportunity to work cooperatively in comfortable situations. Despite some problems faced in its implementations, the teacher managed to overcome them by using some strategies, so that at the end, each member of the group was willing to help each other, especially those with learning weaknesses. Another study was the effectiveness of the logarithm module equipped with Jigsaw type cooperative model in improving learning outcomes (Lumbantoruan & Herman, 2025). The aim is to produce a logarithmic module equipped with an effective jigsaw cooperative model. This research concludes that the mathematics module on logarithms is practical, and effective and can increase understanding, and knowledge and improve student learning outcomes. Another research is about natural science field. This research investigated an experimental study that aimed to improve concept science test result in online learning through Jigsaw cooperative learning model and learning style (Suendarti & Virgana, 2022). The findings revealed an effect between cooperative learning on natural science learning achievement, learning interest in natural science learning achievement, and interaction between cooperative learning and learning interest in natural science learning achievement. As a result, cooperative learning type Jigsaw shows a significant impact and had a good test result on natural science learning achievement. Therefore, the research suggests that Jigsaw cooperative learning is well suited to use as a learning model among junior high school students based on effect size test results. However, much of the existing research has focused on the application of the Jigsaw Strategy in other subject areas, such as science and mathematics. Although, there was research on English class, but it's subject was about writing skill in English class. As a result, there is a need for further investigation into how this strategy can be specifically used to enhance reading skills in narrative texts.

With classrooms becoming more heterogeneous in terms of students' reading abilities and language proficiencies, traditional, one-size-fits-all approaches to reading instruction may not be effective for all students. The Jigsaw Strategy, with its focus on peer-to-peer interaction and active participation, offers a promising solution to these challenges. One main purpose of the task specialization used in Jigsaw, Group Investigation, and Finding Out/Descubrimiento is to create interdependence among group members (Slavin, 1996). By engaging students in collaborative learning, it can help them develop the necessary skills to tackle complex narrative texts, making the reading process more accessible and enjoyable for all.

Despite the promising potential of the Jigsaw Strategy, there remains a significant gap in the literature regarding its specific impact on the reading comprehension of narrative texts in secondary school settings. While several studies have explored the general benefits of cooperative learning, relatively few have examined how the Jigsaw Strategy affects the comprehension of narrative elements such as plot, character development, and theme. This gap is particularly noticeable at the secondary school level, where students are expected to engage with more sophisticated texts and develop critical thinking skills. Furthermore, little is known about how the Jigsaw Strategy influences

students' motivation and engagement with reading, which are crucial factors in fostering a lifelong love for literature.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of the Jigsaw Strategy in improving the reading skills of secondary school students in narrative texts. Specifically, the study seeks to determine whether the collaborative nature of the Jigsaw Strategy leads to measurable improvements in students' comprehension of key narrative elements such as plot structure, character motives, and thematic analysis. In addition, the study will explore how the Jigsaw Strategy affects students' overall engagement and motivation in reading, with the aim of identifying whether this approach can foster a more positive and proactive attitude toward literature.

This research is guided by four primary research questions: First, how does the implementation of the Jigsaw Strategy impact the reading comprehension of secondary school students in narrative texts? Second, to what extent does the Jigsaw Strategy improve specific reading skills, such as inferencing, synthesizing information, and interpreting themes? Third, what effect does the Jigsaw Strategy have on students' engagement and motivation in reading narrative texts? By addressing these research questions, this study aims to contribute to the growing body of literature on cooperative learning and its application in reading instruction. The findings will provide valuable insights for educators looking to implement more effective, student-cantered approaches to teaching narrative texts. Ultimately, the goal is to offer practical recommendations for secondary school teachers, helping them to enhance their students' reading skills and foster a deeper appreciation for literature through the use of the Jigsaw Strategy.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed Classroom Action Research (CAR) as a methodological approach. CAR was chosen due to its cyclical nature, allowing the researcher to implement, observe, and reflect upon interventions in real classroom settings (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988). The study followed Kemmis and McTaggart's action research cycle, which consists of four stages: planning, action, observation, and reflection. This iterative process allows for continuous refinement of instructional strategies based on real-time feedback and student performance.

Participants and Setting

The research was conducted at SMP N 17 Gresik, a secondary school in Gresik. The participants included 30 students from Grade VIII, aged between 13 and 14 years old. These students were selected based on their varying levels of reading proficiency in English, ensuring a diverse range of abilities for observing the effectiveness of the Jigsaw Strategy. The classroom environment was designed to encourage collaboration and engagement, with students seated in small, cooperative groups for the duration of the study.

Research Instruments

Multiple instruments were used to collect data and measure the outcomes of the Jigsaw Strategy implementation:

1. Pre- and Post-Tests: To measure reading comprehension in narrative texts, pre- and post-tests were administered. These tests assessed students' abilities to understand plot structure, character motives, and thematic elements.
2. Observation Sheets: Throughout the study, the researcher used structured observation sheets to record students' engagement, participation, and interactions during the Jigsaw activities.
3. Student Questionnaires: A Likert-scale questionnaire was administered to assess students' perceptions of the Jigsaw Strategy and its impact on their engagement and motivation.

Field Notes: The researcher maintained reflective field notes to document observations, challenges, and emerging insights throughout the study.

Research Procedures

The implementation of the Jigsaw Strategy followed a structured process:

1. Planning Stage: In this phase, the researcher identified narrative texts suitable for the students' reading level. The texts were divided into sections, with each group responsible for a particular part of the narrative. Instructional materials and the pre-test were also prepared.
2. Action Stage: The Jigsaw Strategy was introduced over 2 weeks. Students were divided into "home groups" and "expert groups," where they first became experts on their assigned sections of the text. They then returned to their home groups to teach their peers.
3. Observation Stage: During each session, the researcher observed and documented student interactions, engagement, and their ability to articulate key narrative elements.

Reflection Stage: After each cycle, data from tests, observations, and questionnaires were analysed to reflect on the effectiveness of the intervention. Based on the findings, instructional adjustments were made for the next cycle.

Data Collection

Data were collected over a period of 1 months. Quantitative data were gathered through the pre- and post-tests, while qualitative data were collected from observations, questionnaires, and field notes. The use of multiple data sources enabled triangulation, enhancing the validity of the findings..

Data Analysis

Quantitative data from the pre- and post-tests were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The mean scores of both tests were compared to determine any significant improvements in students' reading comprehension. Additionally, t-tests were conducted to evaluate the statistical significance of the results. Qualitative data from observation sheets, questionnaires, and field notes were analyzed thematically, allowing for an in-depth understanding of student engagement, group dynamics, and perceptions of the Jigsaw Strategy.

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Validity and Reliability

To ensure validity, the study incorporated triangulation, using multiple instruments and data sources to confirm findings. Peer debriefing was also conducted with colleagues to verify the interpretation of the data. The reliability of the pre- and post-tests was established through a pilot test with a comparable group of students prior to the study. Furthermore, detailed observation protocols and consistent implementation of the Jigsaw Strategy across all cycles helped maintain the reliability of the results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The implementation of the Jigsaw Strategy yielded significant findings across various dimensions of reading comprehension, skill development, and student engagement. Data collected from pre- and post-tests, observations, and student questionnaires provided comprehensive insights into how this cooperative learning approach influenced students' reading experiences. This section presents an analysis of the results, structured according to the research questions. The findings underscore the effectiveness of the Jigsaw Strategy in fostering a collaborative learning environment that enhances both academic performance and student motivation. The following subsections detail the impact of the strategy on each research question, beginning with its effect on overall reading comprehension.

RQ1: Impact of the Jigsaw Strategy on Reading Comprehension

The analysis of pre- and post-test scores provides evidence of the Jigsaw Strategy's positive impact on reading comprehension among secondary school students. On average, the post-test scores increased by 15% from the pre-test scores, rising from a mean score of 62 to 77 ($t = 4.56$, $p < 0.05$). This significant improvement suggests that the Jigsaw Strategy contributed to a better understanding of narrative structures and key elements.

This data highlights the effectiveness of the Jigsaw Strategy in enhancing specific comprehension skills and suggests its potential as a viable method for improving narrative reading comprehension.

Table 1.
Impact of Jigsaw Strategy on Reading Comprehension

Comprehension Aspect	Pre-Test Score (%)	Post-Test Score (%)	Improvement (%)
Plot Structure	55%	80%	+25%
Character Development	45%	75%	+30%
Thematic Understanding	50%	85%	+35%
Overall Mean Score	62	77	+15%
Statistical Significance (p-value)			$p < 0.05$

The results in Table 1 highlight a clear improvement in reading comprehension skills across three main areas: plot structure, character development, and thematic

understanding. Initially, in the pre-test phase, only 55% of students accurately identified the plot structure, including sequence and causal relationships within the narrative. However, after the Jigsaw Strategy intervention, this figure rose significantly to 80%, representing a 25% improvement. This increase indicates that students were better able to grasp the chronological flow and logic of events within the text.

Character development understanding also saw substantial growth. Before the intervention, only 45% of students could explain character motivations and their impact on the story, but this improved to 75% in the post-test results, marking a 30% increase. The collaborative nature of the Jigsaw Strategy appears to have helped students discuss and analyse character motives in greater depth, enriching their comprehension in this area.

The most notable improvement was observed in thematic understanding. In the pre-test, only half of the students (50%) were able to infer the central themes of the narrative. After the Jigsaw sessions, this rose to 85%, a 35% increase, suggesting that group discussions facilitated a deeper engagement with and interpretation of the story's broader messages. Overall, the mean score increased from 62 in the pre-test to 77 in the post-test, with statistical analysis confirming the significance of this improvement ($p < 0.05$). These results demonstrate the effectiveness of the Jigsaw Strategy in enhancing students' comprehensive understanding of narrative elements.

RQ2: Enhancement of Specific Reading Skills through the Jigsaw Strategy

Observations and field notes gathered during the study reveal that the Jigsaw Strategy facilitated the development of essential reading skills: inferencing, synthesizing information, and thematic interpretation. Analysis of qualitative data from observation sessions indicates that students consistently displayed enhanced capabilities in these areas as they worked within their "expert" and "home" groups. These findings underscore the Jigsaw Strategy's role in enhancing complex reading skills, equipping students with the tools to tackle narrative texts comprehensively.

Table 2.
Enhancement of Specific Reading Skills

Reading Skill	Proficiency Level Pre-Intervention (%)	Proficiency Level Post-Intervention (%)	Improvement (%)
Inferencing	40%	70%	+30%
Synthesizing Information	50%	80%	+30%
Interpreting Themes	55%	85%	+30%

Table 2 illustrates the marked improvement in students' reading skills following the use of the Jigsaw Strategy. Specifically, the data show substantial growth in

inferencing, synthesizing information, and interpreting themes. Prior to the intervention, only 40% of students demonstrated proficiency in making inferences based on textual clues. This percentage increased to 70% post-intervention, indicating a 30% enhancement. This growth suggests that the collaborative, peer-led discussions in the Jigsaw groups effectively supported students in developing the ability to draw conclusions and understand implied meanings within the text.

The skill of synthesizing information, which involves integrating details from different parts of a narrative to form a cohesive understanding, also saw a significant boost. The pre-intervention proficiency level was 50%, but this rose to 80% after the Jigsaw activities, representing another 30% improvement. Observational data supported this finding, with students engaging in more dynamic discussions that highlighted their ability to combine various aspects of the narrative to better understand plot and character relationships.

The greatest development was noted in the ability to interpret themes. Initially, only 55% of students were capable of identifying and discussing the underlying themes in narrative texts. Post-intervention, this number climbed to 85%, showing a 30% increase in proficiency. This notable improvement indicates that the Jigsaw Strategy's collaborative format, where students teach and learn from one another, facilitated deeper exploration and understanding of thematic elements. The structured peer teaching approach appeared to encourage students to engage more critically with the text, resulting in improved thematic analysis skills.

RQ3: Effect on Student Engagement and Motivation

Data from observations and student questionnaires indicate a marked increase in both engagement and motivation for reading. Observational records show that students were visibly more enthusiastic and interactive in Jigsaw sessions compared to traditional reading exercises. Additionally, students reported feeling more motivated to participate in reading activities, as reflected in the post-intervention questionnaire results.

Overall, these findings indicate that the Jigsaw Strategy positively influenced both student motivation and engagement, making reading a more interactive and enjoyable experience.

Table 3.
Student Engagement and Motivation

Engagement/Motivation Aspect	Pre-Intervention (%)	Post-Intervention (%)	Average Questionnaire Score (1-5)
Active Participation	60%	85%	-
Motivation (self-reported)	-	-	4.4
Enjoyment of Collaborative Learning	-	-	90% agreed or strongly agreed

Table 3 outlines the significant positive effects of the Jigsaw Strategy on student engagement and motivation during reading activities. Before the intervention, classroom observations indicated that only 60% of students actively participated in reading sessions. This participation rate increased to 85% following the implementation of the Jigsaw Strategy, illustrating a notable shift toward greater involvement. The increase in active

participation was evident in the heightened energy and enthusiasm during group discussions, where students were more willing to contribute insights and engage with peers.

In addition to observed engagement, the results from the post-intervention student questionnaires reflected an increase in self-reported motivation. On a Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree), students reported an average score of 4.4 when asked whether they felt more motivated to read narrative texts after experiencing the Jigsaw Strategy. This high average indicates that the strategy fostered a positive shift in students' attitudes towards reading, promoting a more engaging and participatory environment.

Moreover, the enjoyment of collaborative learning was highlighted in the questionnaire responses, where 90% of students agreed or strongly agreed that working in groups made reading more interesting. Qualitative feedback included remarks such as "I felt more confident discussing the text with my group" and "Collaborating with classmates helped me understand the story better." These responses suggest that the Jigsaw Strategy not only improved comprehension and skill development but also created a more supportive and enjoyable learning atmosphere. This enhanced motivation and engagement are crucial for sustaining long-term interest in reading and learning.

DISCUSSION

The results of this Classroom Action Research study underscore the effectiveness of the Jigsaw Strategy in enhancing secondary school students' reading comprehension and engagement in narrative texts. This discussion interprets the findings, elaborates on their educational implications, and relates them to the existing literature.

The implementation of the Jigsaw Strategy led to a significant improvement in students' comprehension of narrative texts, as indicated by the increase in post-test scores. Students demonstrated enhanced abilities to identify plot structure, character motives, and themes, with overall comprehension scores increasing by 15% (from 62 to 77) after the intervention. This improvement aligns with previous findings from Duke and Pearson (2004), who argued that reading comprehension involves higher-level thinking skills that go beyond simple decoding of words and involve skills such as inferencing and synthesizing information. Moreover, the study highlighted substantial gains in specific reading skills, particularly inferencing, synthesizing information, and thematic interpretation. Before the Jigsaw intervention, fewer than half of the students exhibited proficiency in these areas, while post-intervention, 70–85% of students demonstrated skill enhancement. These findings support prior studies suggesting that collaborative learning fosters the development of critical skills by creating an environment in which students discuss and analyze content more deeply (Maison et al., 2021). Furthermore, the positive impact of the Jigsaw Strategy on students' comprehension of complex narrative elements adds to the evidence base indicating the suitability of this method in enhancing students' literary understanding (Marpaung & Pandjaitan, 1970).

This study also observed a marked increase in student engagement and motivation, with 85% of students actively participating in reading sessions post-intervention, compared to 60% prior to the Jigsaw Strategy's implementation. The high level of motivation reported in student questionnaires (average score of 4.4 out of 5) further supports the strategy's capacity to foster a more enjoyable and inclusive learning environment. This finding resonates with previous studies that demonstrate how cooperative learning models, particularly the Jigsaw Strategy, can foster a sense of community and active involvement (Suendarti & Virgana, 2022). Through the structured collaboration in "home" and "expert" groups, students felt supported and motivated, allowing them to engage more confidently with the text and each other.

The positive feedback from students regarding their enjoyment of collaborative learning illustrates the role of peer interactions in fostering a supportive environment that enhances engagement with challenging materials. These findings echo Marzona and Ikhsan's (2019) study on the impact of collaborative learning in narrative reading comprehension, where students who engaged in group discussions reported a better understanding of the material and a more positive attitude toward reading.

The results of this study offer several implications for classroom practice. First, the significant improvement in reading comprehension suggests that the Jigsaw Strategy is an effective instructional approach for enhancing students' understanding of complex narrative elements. Teachers can leverage this strategy to encourage active learning and to help students take responsibility for their own learning, as well as to support peers in their academic growth. Moreover, the increased engagement and motivation observed in this study highlight the importance of creating a classroom environment where students feel valued and included.

Another implication is the need for educators to incorporate cooperative learning structures like the Jigsaw Strategy more regularly in the classroom. The observed benefits of the Jigsaw approach on engagement and motivation are particularly relevant for heterogeneous classrooms, where students' reading abilities may vary widely. Implementing such strategies can help bridge these gaps, as students learn from each other in a supportive, student-centered setting.

This study adds to the growing body of research that supports the effectiveness of cooperative learning in enhancing reading outcomes. The improvement in reading comprehension through the Jigsaw Strategy supports findings from Marpaung and Pandjaitan (1970) and Lumbantoruan and Herman (2025), who demonstrated that cooperative learning strategies, including Jigsaw, contribute to academic improvement across different subjects. Additionally, the observed increases in specific skills—such as inferencing and synthesizing—are consistent with Slavin's (1996) work on cooperative learning, which emphasizes that student interdependence promotes mastery of complex material.

This study's findings also address a gap in the literature concerning the application of the Jigsaw Strategy specifically for narrative texts in English language learning. While

previous research has focused on its use in science and mathematics, this study extends the application of the strategy to literary comprehension, demonstrating that it is highly effective in helping students interpret and analyse narrative components, such as plot, character, and theme.

While the study yielded significant insights, it was limited by its small sample size and short duration. Future research should explore the long-term impact of the Jigsaw Strategy on reading comprehension and investigate its effectiveness with a larger, more diverse population. Additionally, examining the strategy's adaptability to various text genres and different educational settings could provide further insights into its applicability and versatility.

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that the Jigsaw Strategy is a valuable tool for enhancing reading comprehension, specific reading skills, and student engagement in narrative texts. Its collaborative, student-centered approach enables a deeper understanding of narrative elements, while also fostering a positive and inclusive classroom environment. As educators continue to seek effective strategies to promote literacy and comprehension, this study provides robust evidence supporting the integration of cooperative learning methods into reading instruction for secondary students**.**

CONCLUSION

The findings from this research demonstrate that the Jigsaw Strategy is an effective instructional approach for enhancing reading comprehension, developing specific reading skills, and increasing student engagement and motivation in narrative texts. The significant improvements in students' understanding of plot structure, character development, and thematic interpretation, as evidenced by the pre- and post-test scores, highlight the strategy's ability to foster deeper cognitive processing and comprehension.

Moreover, the observed growth in students' inferencing, synthesizing information, and interpreting themes suggests that the collaborative nature of the Jigsaw Strategy provides a supportive platform for students to practice and develop critical reading skills. The active group interactions not only allowed students to teach and learn from their peers but also promoted a deeper engagement with the text.

In terms of student motivation and engagement, the results show that the Jigsaw Strategy effectively transformed the classroom environment into one where students felt more involved and motivated to participate. The significant increase in participation rates and positive feedback from students indicate that the strategy cultivated a more enjoyable and inclusive learning experience.

Overall, this research contributes to the growing body of literature supporting the use of cooperative learning strategies in education. It provides practical evidence that the Jigsaw Strategy can be a powerful tool for educators aiming to improve reading outcomes and foster a positive reading culture. Future studies could explore the long-term impacts of this strategy and its adaptability to different types of texts and educational settings. The findings encourage educators to adopt student-centered, cooperative approaches to maximize learning and engagement.

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