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Improving the Basic Writing Skills of Second-Grade Students in Class II C at SDN 30 Mattirowalie Through a Picture-Based Learning Method Using Canva

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Abstract

This study aims to determine whether a picture-based learning method using Canva can improve the basic writing skills of second-grade students in Class II-C at SDN 30 Mattirowalie. This study employed a quantitative approach with a pre-experimental one-group pretest-posttest design. The population and sample consisted of all 27 students in Class II-C at SDN 30 Mattirowalie, selected using total sampling. Data were collected using a basic writing skills test and analyzed using descriptive statistics, the Shapiro–Wilk normality test, a paired-samples t-test, and the N-Gain test. The results indicate that the picture-based learning method using Canva significantly improved students' basic writing skills. This is evidenced by an increase in the mean score from 52.81 on the pretest to 76.52 on the posttest, an increase of 23.71 points. The percentage of students achieving the learning mastery criterion increased from 22.22% to 92.60%, while the standard deviation decreased from 14.51 to 8.62, indicating greater consistency in students' writing performance. Furthermore, the paired-samples t-test yielded a significance value of 0.000 (Sig. (2-tailed) < 0.05), leading to the rejection of H_0 and the acceptance of H_a. In addition, the N-Gain test produced an average score of 0.50, categorized as moderate.

Keywords Basic writing skills; Canva; Picture-based learning method

INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the essential language skills that plays a significant role in developing elementary school students' literacy skills. Basic writing ability serves as the foundation for lower-grade students to develop more advanced writing skills at

higher educational levels (Pilu, Indah, & Suhardi, 2018). Through writing activities, students learn to express their ideas, organize their thoughts, and understand the relationship between spoken and written language. Therefore, instruction in basic writing should be designed to be engaging, contextual, and appropriate to students' cognitive development so that they are able to write clear, coherent, and meaningful simple sentences (Hoerudin, 2023).

However, teaching basic writing to elementary school students remains a challenge because they are at a stage of language development that requires concrete visual support (Nurul, Sidik, & Chandra, 2025). Many lower-grade students still struggle to generate ideas from pictures, construct simple sentences, and apply basic writing conventions (Wihana, Kanzunnudin, & Kuryanto, 2024). Therefore, students need engaging visual media that can help clarify context, enrich their vocabulary, and guide them in constructing sentences based on pictures (Sanusi, Nurani, & Mahendra, 2025).

This situation was also observed at SDN 30 Mattirowalie, where this study was conducted. Instruction in basic writing was still predominantly focused on copying texts from textbooks or the whiteboard. Students were rarely introduced to engaging visual learning media, including pictures that could stimulate their ideas for writing. As a result, most students appeared less enthusiastic, became easily bored, and experienced difficulties in producing simple written sentences that met the intended learning objectives.

Based on the results of the preliminary observation conducted in class II C at SDN 30 Mattirowalie, it was found that the students' basic writing skills were still relatively low. Most students experienced difficulties in expressing their ideas in written form, constructing simple sentences coherently, and using appropriate vocabulary. The learning process was still predominantly based on textbooks and conventional writing exercises, providing limited visual stimulation to support students in developing their ideas. In addition, the integration of educational technology to enhance writing skills remained limited. Therefore, an instructional method is needed to help students generate ideas more easily and engage them through visual media that are closely related to their learning experiences.

Basic writing ability is one of the fundamental skills that elementary school students must master, as it serves as the foundation for developing language skills at subsequent levels of education. If writing ability is not developed effectively from an early age, students may encounter difficulties in expressing ideas, organizing information in written form, and completing various learning tasks that require

writing skills (Niswati, Witono, & Setiawan, 2025). Therefore, innovative and engaging instructional approaches are needed to foster the development of students' basic writing ability. Previous studies consistently reported that picture-based media improve elementary students' writing skills. However, most studies utilized printed picture cards or serial images, while only limited research has explored Canva as a digital picture-based learning medium for second-grade students. Therefore, this study addresses this research gap.

A solution is needed to bridge this gap through the use of more engaging and relevant visual media. One alternative is the implementation of a picture-based learning method integrated with Canva. Canva provides a variety of templates, illustrations, and visual designs that teachers can use to present writing materials in a creative, interactive, and contextually appropriate manner (Ilahy, Subali, & Widiarti, 2025). Through this medium, students are expected to generate ideas more easily, construct simple sentences, apply basic grammar correctly, choose appropriate vocabulary, and demonstrate better writing mechanics. Therefore, the use of the picture-based learning method using Canva can serve as an effective solution to improve the basic writing skills of class II C students at SDN 30 Mattirowalie.

Based on the aforementioned background, the research problem of this study is: Can the use of a picture-based learning method through Canva improve the basic writing skills of class II C students at SDN 30 Mattirowalie? Based on the research problem, this study aims to determine whether the use of a picture-based learning method using Canva can improve the basic writing skills of second-grade students in class II C at SDN 30 Mattirowalie.

Based on the theoretical framework and previous studies, the research hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H0: The use of a picture-based learning method using Canva does not significantly improves students' basic writing skills.

Ha: The use of a picture-based learning method using Canva significantly improves students' basic writing skills.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative approach using a pre-experimental research design with a one-group pretest–posttest design. The research was conducted at SDN 30 Mattirowalie with a population and sample consisting of 27 students from class II C, selected through total sampling due to the relatively small population size. Data were collected using a basic writing skills test administered during the pretest and posttest phases, featuring three essay prompts that required students to describe

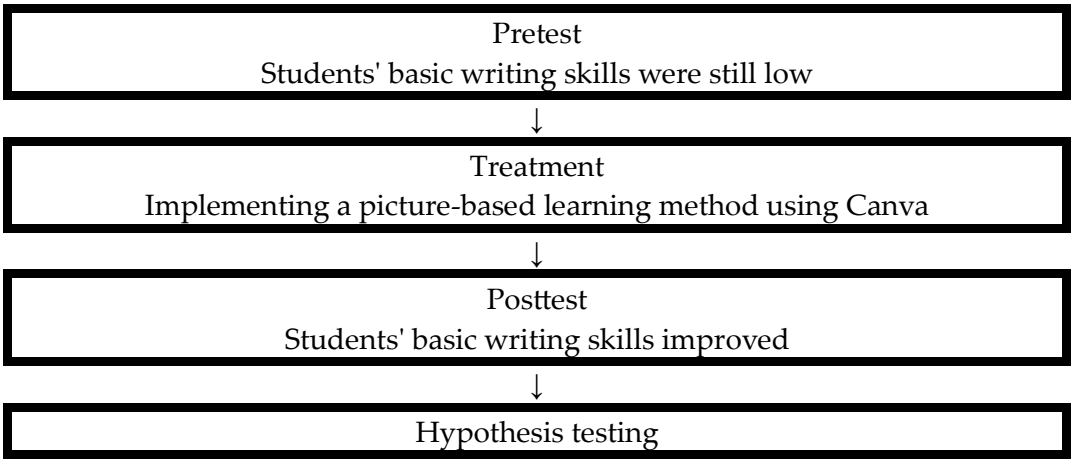
activities based on pictures. To ensure the validity of the instrument, both the test items and the assessment rubric underwent expert validation (expert judgment) by education specialists before being implemented.

The students' writing ability was evaluated using five specific writing indicators adapted from Widodo, Hidayati, Fauzi, Erfan, & Indraswati (2020): content (ideas), form (organization), grammar (syntax), vocabulary, and mechanics (spelling and punctuation). Each indicator was assessed using a scoring rubric with a scale of 1 to 4. The raw scores were then converted to a 100 point scale to determine student achievement. In accordance with the school's curriculum, the Learning Objectives Achievement Criteria was set at 66. Thus, students scoring 66 or above were categorized as having achieved mastery.

The data were processed and analyzed using SPSS software. Descriptive statistics were used to calculate the mean, standard deviation, and mastery percentage. Inferential statistical analyses were performed to test the hypothesis, including the Shapiro–Wilk test for data normality (since N < 50), the paired-samples t-test to examine significant differences between pretest and posttest scores, and the N-Gain test to determine the magnitude and effectiveness of the improvement in students' basic writing skills.

The following research framework illustrates the logical flow of this study:

Figure 1. Research Framework



FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The study conducted with 27 students in Class II C at SDN 30 Mattirowalie demonstrated an improvement in students' basic writing skills following the implementation of a picture-based learning method using Canva. The data obtained from the pretest and posttest results are presented in the following table:

Table 1. Comparison of Pretest and Posttest Results

Statistical Indicator	Pretest	Posttest	Increase/Change
Mean Score	52.81	76.52	+23.71 points
Highest Score	76	91	+15 points
Lowest Score	25	60	+35 points
Standard Deviation	14.51	8.62	−5.89 (More Homogeneous)
Mastery Percentage	22.22%	92.60%	+70.38%

Source: Processed primary data (2026)

Based on the data above, the mean score increased from 52.81 to 76.52. In addition, the number of students who achieved the Learning Objectives Achievement Criteria (LOAC) increased from only 6 students in the pretest to 25 students in the posttest. The decrease in the standard deviation indicates that the students' writing skills became more evenly distributed after the treatment.

This test is essential to prove that the data follows a normal distribution before proceeding with parametric testing. Since the significance values (Sig.) for both the pretest (0.159) and posttest (0.271) are greater than 0.05, the data is considered normally distributed.

Table 2. Normality Test Results (Shapiro-Wilk)

Data	Statistic	df	Sig.	Conclusion
Pretest	0.945	27	0.159	Normal
Posttest	0.954	27	0.271	Normal

Source: Processed SPSS output (2026)

This table demonstrates whether the intervention caused a statistically significant change in student performance. The significance value of 0.000 is lower than the 0.05 threshold (0.000 < 0.05), leading to the rejection of H_0 and the acceptance of H_a. This confirms that the picture-based learning method using Canva significantly improved students' basic writing skills.

Table 3. Paired Samples t-Test Results

Comparison	Mean Difference	*t*	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Conclusion
Pretest – Posttest	-23.704	-11.459	26	0.000	Significant Difference (H_0 Rejected)

Source: Processed SPSS output (2026)

The N-Gain test measures the magnitude of the improvement and the effectiveness of the treatment. The average N-Gain score of 0.50 falls within the $0.30 \leq g < 0.70$ range, classifying the improvement as moderate. The distribution shows that 23 out of 27 students (85.19%) achieved a moderate level of improvement.

Table 4. Summary of N-Gain Analysis

Variable	Average N-Gain Score	Category
Basic writing skills	0.50	Moderate

Source: Processed primary data (2026)

The significant improvement in students' basic writing skills is fundamentally supported by Constructivist Theory and Dual Coding Theory. Under Constructivism, students were not passive recipients but active builders of knowledge. They independently interpreted visual stimuli from Canva into their own written expressions. Dual Coding Theory further explains this success, Canva's visual templates acted as a mental scaffold, allowing students to bridge the gap between a visual concept and the verbal syntax required to describe it.

Canva proved to be a highly effective medium because it aligns with the cognitive characteristics of second-grade students, who are in the concrete operational stage of development. At this age, students still struggle with abstract thinking and require concrete visual support to stimulate their imagination and organize their thoughts. Conventional methods, such as copying from a whiteboard, failed to provide this stimulus, leading to boredom and low engagement. In contrast, Canva's interactive and colorful templates provided a real-world context that captured students' attention and facilitated scaffolding. Teacher could demonstrate how a single image translates into a sentence, helping students overcome the difficulty of generating initial ideas.

The statistical results offer deeper insights into the impact of this method. The significant decrease in standard deviation (from 14.51 to 8.62) indicates that the treatment effectively minimized the capability gap between students. While initial writing skills were highly diverse, the structured visual support from Canva helped lower performing students catch up with their peers, resulting in a more homogeneous and equitable distribution of writing ability across the entire class.

Furthermore, the moderate N-Gain score (0.50) reflects the complex and procedural nature of writing as a skill. Writing is a productive language skill that requires the coordination of motor skills, vocabulary mastery, and grammar, which cannot be mastered instantly. Therefore, a moderate shift is a realistic and positive outcome for a short-term intervention, indicating that while students improved significantly, they still require continuous practice to achieve a high mastery level.

Finally, these findings are highly consistent with previous studies in the field of elementary literacy. Similar to the research by Sanusi, Nurani, & Mahendra (2025), this study confirms that visual stimuli increase student enthusiasm and facilitate idea generation. The moderate N-Gain achievement also mirrors the results of Wihana,

Kanzunnudin, & Kuryanto (2024), reinforcing the conclusion that interactive visual media is a reliable tool for improving foundational writing performance in lower elementary grades. By integrating digital technology, this research successfully addresses the gaps in traditional literacy instruction at SDN 30 Mattirowalie.

Despite the significant findings, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the use of a pre-experimental one-group pretest–posttest design means there was no control group to compare the results against. Consequently, it is difficult to fully determine if the improvement was solely due to the picture-based learning or influenced by other external factors. Second, the scope was limited to a single class with a relatively small sample size of 27 students. This specific focus may limit the generalizability of the results to other schools or different grade levels. Finally, the short research duration, consisting of only four treatment sessions within a one-month period (May–June 2026), represents a short-term intervention. Writing is a procedural skill that requires long-term, consistent practice to reach high mastery, which may not have been fully captured within this timeframe.

CONCLUSION

The use of a picture-based learning method using Canva improved the basic writing skills of class II C students at SDN 30 Mattirowalie. This was demonstrated by an increase in the mean score from 52.81 on the pretest to 76.52 on the posttest. The percentage of students achieving learning mastery also increased from 22.22% (6 students) on the pretest to 92.60% (25 students) on the posttest. The decrease in the standard deviation from 14.51 to 8.62 indicates that the students' basic writing skills became more consistent after the implementation of the learning method. The results of the paired-samples t-test showed a significance value (Sig. (2-tailed)) of $0.000 < 0.05$, indicating that H_0 was rejected and H_a was accepted. Furthermore, the N-Gain analysis produced an average score of 0.50, which falls into the moderate category.

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are proposed for future research. Future researchers are encouraged to expand this study by employing an experimental design that includes a control group, allowing the effects of the picture-based learning method using Canva to be compared more objectively. Further research is also needed to examine the implementation of this method across different grade levels, involve larger sample sizes, and explore its application to other learning materials in order to obtain more comprehensive results in improving the quality of education through digital technology.

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