

Using Big Books to Foster English Reading Comprehension for Children

Nadilatul Jannah¹, Kristi Nuraini²

¹English Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Jember, Indonesia
²English Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Jember, Indonesia

Article Info	Abstract
<p><i>Keywords:</i> <i>Big Books,</i> <i>Reading Comprehension,</i> <i>Children,</i> <i>English Language Teaching</i></p> <hr/> <p><i>Article History:</i> Received : 17/01/2025 Revised : 20/01/2025 Accepted : /01/2025 Available Online: 31/01/2025</p>	<p>This study explores using Big Books as a pedagogical tool to improve reading comprehension among elementary school students aged 6-12. Big Books, characterized by their large texts and vivid illustrations, create an engaging learning environment that supports vocabulary acquisition, critical thinking, and reading fluency.</p> <p>By synthesizing findings from 15 previous studies from 2010-2024, this study highlights the effectiveness of Big Books in fostering literacy through interactive and enjoyable reading sessions. The results show that the combination of visual aids and textual elements not only attracts students' attention but also enhances their ability for reading comprehension, improves vocabulary mastery, and can boost students' self-confidence. In addition, the interactive nature of Big Book sessions can motivate students to participate actively, which enhances engagement and learning outcomes. This paper underscores the importance of integrating Big Books into the English language teaching curriculum to build a strong literacy foundation for young learners.</p>

Introduction

One of the skills that students must master during the English learning process is reading skills, which include reading comprehension. According to (Yola et al., 2017) reading comprehension is a basic skill that students, especially elementary school students, must have to support academic success. For young learners, strong reading comprehension skills are essential because this skill is the foundation for their future educational achievements. However, many children face challenges in comprehending texts, which are often caused by the lack of interesting and age-appropriate reading materials, such as stories with interesting illustrations, relevant characters, or themes that are relevant to their daily experiences (Yola et al., 2017). To overcome this problem, innovative approaches that meet the unique needs and interests of early learners are essential. Among the various teaching aids, Big Book has emerged as an effective medium for teaching English to children.

Big Books are characterized by their large texts and appealing illustrations, creating an engaging reading experience for young readers(Tse & Nicholson, 2014). These books capture attention and make the reading process more enjoyable and interactive. The use of Big Books in classrooms aligns with pedagogical principles that emphasize visual learning and contextual understanding, making them particularly effective in enhancing reading

comprehension among young learners. Combining textual and visual elements helps children connect words and their meanings, thereby improving their ability to understand and retain information.

Previous studies have consistently highlighted the benefits of using Big Books in educational settings. According by (Muhammadi, 2017) demonstrated the success of Big Books in fostering literacy and critical thinking among second-grade students. Their study revealed that Big Books could be adapted to meet curriculum standards, ensuring relevance and alignment with learning objectives. Similarly, (Rahmasari, 2022) found that Big Books not only improved reading comprehension but also enriched students' vocabulary as they were introduced to new words in an engaging context (Eka et al., 2020) These findings underscore Big Books' flexibility as a teaching tool supporting various language development aspects.

The motivational aspects of Big Books further contribute to their effectiveness, as they encourage students to actively engage with the material, which in turn deepens their understanding of the text. By creating a fun and interactive reading environment, Big Books helps children associate learning with enjoyment, making it easier for them to focus and retain information (Kusuma Dayu & Setyaningsih, 2022). This intrinsic motivation not only increases participation but also enhances their ability to connect concepts and grasp the nuances of the content being taught. According to (Mahayanti & Asrina, 2017) as well as (Rawian et al., 2022) the appealing illustrations and large format of Big Books capture students' attention, making reading sessions more focused, interactive, and enjoyable. Such engagement is critical for young learners, who are more likely to absorb information when actively involved in the learning process. Furthermore, the interactive nature of Big Book sessions often encourages students to participate in discussions, ask questions, and share their interpretations, fostering a deeper understanding of the material.

It is evidenced that Big Books supports reading comprehension for effectiveness. This study aims to analyze the impact of Big Books on English reading comprehension among elementary school students aged 6-12 years. Specifically, this study examines how Big Books can effectively improve students' reading comprehension.

Method

This study uses a literature review method, often referred to as a desk-based research approach, to explore the role of Big Books in improving English reading comprehension among young learners, especially in elementary school. By synthesizing findings from existing research, this method provides a comprehensive understanding of the topic without the need for direct fieldwork or experimental interventions. This approach ensures a broad perspective by analyzing multiple sources from credible publications.

The research process involved several types of relevant literature, which were identified through targeted searches in academic databases. This article uses 15 articles from 2010-2024 as reference sources for writing the article. These sources were then systematically screened to determine their relevance to the research objectives. After collecting the literature, it was then systematically analyzed to determine the main findings, namely how the Use of Big Books promotes English Reading Comprehension for Children.

This approach ensures that conclusions are based on multiple perspectives and strong evidence from previous research.

Findings and Discussion

The results of the review of 15 articles relevant to the use of Big Books in improving children's reading comprehension. Various studies have shown that Big Books not only function as teaching aids but also play an important role in creating interactive and enjoyable learning experiences (Rahmasari, 2022). By combining enlarged text and attractive illustrations, Big Books can attract students' attention and encourage their active involvement in the learning process (Gobi et al., 2024)(Jayendra et al., 2018). These findings provide in-depth insight into the effectiveness of Big Books in supporting the development of children's literacy skills, which will be discussed further in this discussion.

Using Big Books has many benefits in improving children's reading comprehension (Rahmasari, 2022). One of the main benefits is improving reading comprehension skills, which is explained by (Rawian et al., 2022). Big Books make it easier for students to recognize words through enlarged text, while attractive illustrations provide a visual context that helps students understand the story better (Mahayanti & Asrina, 2017); (Eka et al., 2020). This makes learning more interactive and increases student engagement during reading sessions (Mahayanti et al., 2017). In addition, Big Books are also effective in improving vocabulary and language acquisition. According to (Oktaviana et al., 2021) frequently repeated word patterns in the text help students remember new vocabulary more easily, while interesting contexts presented through stories make them more interested in learning (Rahmasari, 2022).

Another benefit of using Big Books is their ability to foster enthusiasm and interest in reading (Yanti, 2024). The large size and colorful illustrations of Big Books are very attractive to students, making reading sessions more enjoyable. This encourages them to be more active and enjoy the learning process, thus increasing their motivation to read (Yola et al., 2017); (Kusuma Dayu & Setyaningsih, 2022). Not only that, Big Books also supports interactive learning. This media allows students to be actively involved by providing responses, sharing opinions, or interacting with teachers and friends, which ultimately helps improve their critical thinking skills (Saefuddin et al., 2019).

Lastly, according to (Oktaviana et al., 2021) explain that Big Books also help increase students' confidence in reading. By presenting a fun and non-threatening reading experience, students who may have difficulty reading feel more confident. Supportive visuals and simple texts make it easier for them to understand the content of the story, thus encouraging them to practice reading more often (Yanti, 2024); (Eka et al., 2020). All these benefits make Big Books an effective tool to support teaching and learning reading among children.

In English language education for children, the use of Big Books has been proven to be very effective in improving reading comprehension. With the combination of enlarged text (Setyorini et al., 2019), engaging illustrations (Setyorini et al., 2019), and active interaction, Big Books creates a holistic learning experience. Children not only learn to read but also think critically (Muhammadi, 2017), active interaction with their peers and teacher (Saefuddin et al., 2019), and developing their vocabulary (Rahmasari, 2022).

The effectiveness of Big Books also lies in its ability to capture children's attention (Gobi et al., 2024)(Rawian et al., 2022)(Mahayanti & Asrina, 2017), making them more motivated to learn (Yola et al., 2017)(Eka et al., 2020). Thus, as educators, it is imperative to integrate Big Books into English language teaching, especially for young children, to maximize their learning process. With these findings, your article can show that Big Books are not only a teaching tool but also a rich medium for building strong literacy skills among children.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the use of Big Books in English teaching has proven to be very effective in improving children's reading comprehension. The combination of enlarged text and attractive illustrations not only attracts students' attention but also creates an interactive and enjoyable learning environment. Big Books help students recognize new vocabulary, improve critical thinking skills, and build confidence in reading. By increasing students' motivation and participation, Big Books provides a holistic and immersive learning experience. Therefore, as educators, it is imperative to integrate Big Books into the English teaching curriculum, especially for young children, so that they can reach their maximum literacy potential. Thus, Big Books are not just a teaching tool but also a rich medium for building strong literacy skills among children.

REFERENCES

- Eka, E. P., Dhieni, N., & Supena, A. (2020). Early Discipline Behavior: Read aloud Story with Big Book Media. *JPUD - Jurnal Pendidikan Usia Dini*, 14(2), 321–331. <https://doi.org/10.21009/jpud.142.10>
- Gobi, A. L., Lacbao, J. L., Adiston, M. A. L., Lingwa, E. B., Jefeme, N., Saguid, K. O., Calabias, A. J., & Ablasa, L. A. (2024). *BIG BOOKS: IT'S EFFECTIVENESS ON READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS* Alfa L. Gobi, Jolibeth L. Lacbao, May Ann L. Adiston, Erica B. Lingwa, Jefeme N. Sagayo, Karen O. Saguid, Aniza J. Calabias, Lemar A. Ablasa, PhD.
- Jayendra, I., Nitiasih, P., & Mahayanti, N. (2018). the Effect of Big Books As Teaching Media on the Second Grade Students' Reading Comprehension in South Bali. *International Journal of Language and Literature*, 2(2), 72–81. <https://doi.org/10.23887/ijll.v2i2.16097>
- Kusuma Dayu, D. P., & Setyaningsih, N. D. (2022). Big book to increase 5th grade students' reading literacy. *Jurnal Prima Edukasia*, 10(1), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.21831/jpe.v10i1.41115>
- Mahayanti, N. W. S., Artini, L. P., & Nur Jannah, I. A. (2017). the Effect of Big Book As Media on Students' Reading Comprehension At Fifth Grade of Elementary School. *International Journal of Language and Literature*, 1(3), 142. <https://doi.org/10.23887/ijll.v1i3.12544>
- Mahayanti, N. W. S., & Asrina, N. K. A. (2017). *The Implementation of Big Book as Media to Teach Reading Comprehension for the Sixth Grade Students of Elementary School*. 134(Icirad), 184–188. <https://doi.org/10.2991/icirad-17.2017.35>

- Muhammadi, T. (2017). *Developing Literacy Reading Teaching Materials by Using Big Books as an Effort to Build the 2nd Grade Students' Characters in Elementary School*. 118, 835–844. <https://doi.org/10.2991/icset-17.2017.136>
- Oktaviana, W., Warmansyah, J., & Trimelia Utami, W. (2021). The Effectiveness of Using Big Book Media on Early Reading Skills in 5-6 Years Old. *Al-Athfal: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak*, 7(2), 157–166. <https://doi.org/10.14421/al-athfal.2021.72-06>
- Rahmasari, B. S. (2022). Big Book: An Attractive Way to Comprehend Reading Text for Young Learners. *Journal of Teaching and Learning in Elementary Education (Jtlee)*, 5(1), 48. <https://doi.org/10.33578/jtlee.v5i1.7905>
- Rawian, R., Yahaya, M. F., Sanjaya, D., & Abdullah, A. (2022). Engaging Literary Appreciation and Comprehension via a Big Book. *World Journal of English Language*, 12(4), 2–15. <https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v12n4p2>
- Saefuddin, A., Malik, A., Maulidah, I. R., Chusni, M. M., Salahudin, A., & Carlian, Y. (2019). Students' reading skills related to science learning using big book media. *Journal of Physics: Conference Series*, 1318(1). <https://doi.org/10.1088/1742-6596/1318/1/012089>
- Setyorini, R., Saddhono, K., Ermanto, Wildan, M., & Kirom, S. (2019). The Effort of Implementing of the Big Book as A Media to Improve the Intelligence of Linguistic Verbals for Early Childhood. *Journal of Physics: Conference Series*, 1339(1). <https://doi.org/10.1088/1742-6596/1339/1/012087>
- Tse, L., & Nicholson, T. (2014). The effect of phonics-enhanced Big Book reading on the language and literacy skills of six-year-old pupils of different reading ability attending lower SES schools. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 5(OCT). <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2014.01222>
- Yanti, P. (2024). *THE EFFECT OF USING BIG BOOK MEDIA ON THE READING ABILITY OF GRADE II*.
- Yola, N., Fauzia, A., & Syafei, R. (2017). Big Book As a Media To Teach Reading Comprehension. *Journal of English Language Teaching Volume*, 6(1), 1–6.