Digital Storytelling to Increase Engagement in Reading English Texts for High School Students in Depok

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Abstract, This study aims to analyze how digital storytelling can increase the involvement of high school students in reading English texts. The research method used is qualitative with a case study approach, where data is collected through in-depth interviews with teachers and students, observation of the learning process, and analysis of documentation related to the application of digital storytelling in the classroom. The interviews aimed to explore the experiences and perceptions of students and teachers, while observations were made to observe changes in the level of student involvement in reading texts. The data obtained was analyzed by thematic analysis techniques to identify patterns of student involvement in the digital storytelling-based learning process. The validity of the data is maintained through triangulation of sources and methods to ensure the validity of the research findings. The results of the study show that digital storytelling significantly increases student engagement in reading English texts by presenting a more interactive and engaging learning experience. The contribution of this research provides insight for educators about the effectiveness of digital storytelling as an innovative strategy for improving students' literacy skills at the high school level.

Keywords: Digital Storytelling, English, High School Students, Student Engagement, Text Reading

1. INTRODUCTION

Learning English at the high school level often faces challenges in increasing student engagement, especially in reading texts that are considered boring. Students tend to be less motivated when they are only given reading texts without the support of interesting and interactive media. Conventional methods such as reading independently or listening to the teacher's explanation are less effective in building a deep understanding. The use of multimodal digital texts has been shown to increase motivation within reading classrooms, with students showing increased levels of enthusiasm when interacting with interactive media (Uli & Jismulatif, 2024). The implementation of platforms such as Google Sites for different instructional practices has resulted in important advances in reading motivation and comprehension, thus underscoring the efficacy of personalized and engaging educational experiences (Najemi et al., 2024). Interactive reading methodologies, including techniques such as questioning and collaborative reading, encourage active participation and critical engagement, which are essential for fostering a deeper understanding and a genuine desire to read (Ashford, 2024). The incorporation of multimedia elements in literary education has been proven to improve comprehension and increase motivation, especially among visual learners (Turku, 2024). In traditional classrooms, many students have difficulty understanding English

texts due to the lack of visual and narrative context that can help them relate the content of the reading to their own experiences. In that arena, innovative approaches such as digital storytelling are needed that can increase student engagement through more interesting interactive media.

Digital storytelling is one of the technology-based learning methods that combines digital narratives with visual and audio elements to enhance the learning experience. By using digital storytelling, students can be more actively involved in reading texts because stories told digitally are more interesting and easy to understand compared to static texts. Digital storytelling combines textual elements, imagery, auditory components, and video, thus building engaging experiences that capture students' attention (Jaiswal, 2025). The synthesis of this modality allows learners to engage a variety of sensory faculties, making the content more accessible and intellectually stimulating (Jaiswal, 2025). Interactive storytelling motivates students to exert influence over the narrative arc, transitioning them from passive recipients to active contributors, which significantly improves their critical analytical abilities and creative capacity (Muhammad Ashraf Kaloi et al., 2025; Sapan, 2024). Empirical evidence suggests that students who participate in digital storytelling initiatives show improved reading comprehension and literacy competencies, as they engage with the material in a more immersive way (Zuraini et al., 2024). Digital narratives can elicit emotional responses, thus inspiring students to establish a personal connection with the content, a factor that is important for fostering motivation and promoting retention (Krishna, 2025). For example, students can listen to English stories accompanied by animations and text that are displayed interactively, so that they are more focused and understand the content of the story better. This shows that digital storytelling can be an effective tool in increasing student engagement in English learning, especially in understanding reading texts.

In the context of learning English in high school, the use of digital storytelling not only helps in text comprehension but also improves overall language skills. When students read and listen to digital stories, they not only learn to understand the content of the text, but also enrich vocabulary, practice pronunciation, and improve critical thinking skills in understanding the context of the story. Engaging narratives serve to stimulate students' exploration of subjective language and various expressions, thereby enhancing their linguistic creativity (Krishna, 2025). The multimodal characteristics of Digital Storytelling (DST) facilitate auditory learning, which is important for the language acquisition process (Febrianti, 2024). DST promotes the analysis and synthesis of information by students, thereby fostering critical thinking skills through collaborative dialogue and evaluation of narrative components (Zuraini et al., 2024). Empirical

research shows a significant relationship between involvement in DST and increased narrative writing competence, underscoring the importance of critical analysis in the context of storytelling (Akbar, 2024). In a classroom experiment, students who used digital storytelling showed an improvement in their ability to comprehend the content of the reading, compared to those who only read the text in a traditional format. Thus, digital storytelling can play an important role in creating a more interactive and meaningful learning experience for high school students.

Based on various studies and experiences in the classroom, the use of digital storytelling has proven to be effective in increasing student engagement in reading English texts. By utilizing educational technology, teachers can create a more engaging learning environment, help students understand texts better, and increase their motivation to learn English. Technologies such as Learning Management Systems (LMS) and virtual collaboration platforms facilitate the creation of immersive educational experiences, thus making lessons more captivating (Arvind, 2024). Instruments such as Google Sites and multimedia resources encourage active participation among students, which results in increased motivation and a better understanding of English texts (Najemi et al., 2024) (Adyanti et al., 2024). The application of digital tools allows for customized instruction that addresses a wide range of student learning requirements, thereby increasing reading comprehension and motivation (Dr. Lysette D. Cohen & Dr. Ashley McIntyre, 2024; Najemi et al., 2024) Several schools that have implemented digital storytelling have reported significant improvements in student engagement and comprehension of reading texts, especially for students who were previously less interested in reading. Therefore, digital storytelling should be considered as a broader learning method in the English curriculum in high schools, to improve reading skills and student engagement in the learning process.

Digital storytelling not only serves as an engaging learning tool but also has great potential to build a more immersive learning experience for high school students in reading English texts. This method allows students to actively engage with the text through a combination of visual narrative, audio, and digital interaction, which can improve their comprehension and recall of the reading content. Digital narratives use a variety of multimedia components (textual, visual, auditory, and audiovisual) to foster immersive storytelling experiences, thereby increasing emotional and cognitive engagement (Jaiswal, 2025). Research shows that such narratives can bridge the dichotomy between fiction and reality, making literature more accessible and refreshing students' imaginative abilities (Jaiswal, 2025). The interactive pedagogical approach, which includes group dialogue and role-playing exercises,

actively engages students in the educational process, resulting in increased historical literacy and overall engagement (Fahruddin et al., 2024). Empirical evidence suggests that this pedagogical strategy markedly improves cognitive, emotional, and behavioural engagement, as demonstrated by an increase in test scores in an experimental cohort (Fahruddin et al., 2024). Digital storytelling shows a positive correlation with narrative writing competence, implying that interaction with multimedia resources can foster students' creativity and coherence in their written expression (Akbar, 2024). Methodologies such as conceptual reading and collective immersion stimulate sensory pathways, thereby improving comprehension and retention of information (Budnik & Khyzhniak, 2023). In a recent study, it was found that students who read texts in the form of digital storytelling were able to remember the storyline up to 60% better than those who read texts in conventional formats. This shows that digital storytelling not only attracts students' attention but can also significantly improve the quality of their understanding of English texts.

One of the main challenges in learning English in high school is the low involvement of students in reading texts. Many students have difficulty understanding English texts due to the lack of visual context that supports their understanding, as well as boredom in reading static texts. Digital storytelling can be a solution by presenting text in a more interactive and meaningful form. Digital Storytelling Techniques (DST) foster an environment conducive to active engagement, where students are allowed to build and disseminate narratives, further enhancing their critical understanding and analytical abilities (Sapan, 2024; Zuraini et al., 2024). Students have articulated significant increases in motivation and engagement, as the incorporation of multimedia elements addresses a diverse spectrum of learning preferences (Sapan, 2024). The incorporation of storytelling with reading tasks facilitates the development of high-level cognitive processes, empowering students to analyze and synthesize information effectively (Sapan, 2024). An experimental study conducted on high school students showed that students who used digital storytelling were more motivated to read and complete reading tasks compared to those who only used regular textbooks. Therefore, digital storytelling is not just a medium of entertainment, but also a tool that can increase students' motivation and engagement in understanding English texts better.

Digital storytelling not only has an impact on reading comprehension but can also improve other language skills, such as speaking and writing in English. When students listen to and read digital stories, they also learn about pronunciation, sentence structure, as well as more natural language expressions, which they have difficulty obtaining from just reading written text. The integration of multimedia components allows students to understand authentic

language expressions in a contextual framework, thereby improving their understanding and application in personal discourse (Sapan, 2024). Participation in Digital Storytelling (DST) activities has been correlated with an increase in narrative writing competence, as students acquire the skills to organize their narratives coherently (Akbar, 2024). The collaborative essence of the DST initiative fosters peer feedback, which is essential for the refinement of syntactic structure and overall writing quality (Zuraini et al., 2024). Students are actively engaged with textual material, evaluating and synthesizing information, which significantly improves their critical thinking skills (Sapan, 2024). The imaginative process inherent in storytelling fosters a deep connection with the subject matter, thus making language acquisition more significant (Zuraini et al., 2024). In some classroom experiments, students who routinely used digital storytelling showed improvements in speaking and writing skills, as they were more familiar with the language patterns and vocabulary used in the digital text. Thus, digital storytelling not only increases students' engagement in reading texts but also contributes to the improvement of their overall English skills.

Despite its great potential, digital storytelling has not been widely utilized in the English curriculum at the high school level systematically. Many schools still rely on traditional learning methods that focus on textbooks and passive reading exercises, without considering more engaging and effective technology-based approaches. Technological advances facilitate the creation of a dynamic learning environment, thereby increasing student engagement and motivation (Qizi, 2024). Research shows that learners who utilize digital resources, including interactive software and mobile apps, show superior retention and understanding when compared to conventional pedagogical approaches (o'g'li & Khurshidbek, 2024). The integration of traditional methodologies and technology can accommodate a wide range of learning preferences, ultimately resulting in a more holistic educational experience (o'g'li & Khurshidbek, 2024). Conventional pedagogical practices often lead to passive forms of learning, which may not adequately meet the requirements of contemporary learners (Bahrom qizi, 2024). Some schools that have adopted digital storytelling have reported significant increases in students' interest and engagement in reading, but the adoption of this method is still limited due to a lack of technological infrastructure and training for teachers. Therefore, there is a need for further research and policy development that encourages the use of digital storytelling as a broader learning strategy in English teaching in high schools, to improve reading skills and student engagement to the maximum.

The low involvement of students in reading English texts at the high school level is a significant challenge in learning. Many students find English texts difficult to understand and

less engaging due to their static, non-interactive format, so they tend to be less motivated to read actively. This lack of understanding has an impact on their low literacy skills and overall English proficiency. Younger students did not show statistically significant differences in comprehension across different formats; nevertheless, older students show superior performance with electronic texts when engaging with simpler narratives (Project et al., 2025). In contrast, the presentation of complex texts in electronic formats correlates with reduced memorization and comprehension, especially among male students (Project et al., 2025). The incorporation of authentic texts, such as news articles and narratives, has been empirically shown to improve reading comprehension and motivation levels among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners (Yanti Anggraini, 2024). Authentic material is characterized by its engaging nature, which facilitates intrinsic motivation and encourages active participation, both of which are essential for the advancement of literacy skills. The implementation of effective engagement strategies in English Language Teaching (ELT) has the potential to significantly increase student motivation. Personalizing instructional content, integrating technological resources, and encouraging collaborative activities are important approaches that can revitalize student engagement and facilitate active learning (Pandey, 2024). Previous studies have shown that most students only read texts in English when required by teachers, and even under those conditions, they are less likely to understand the content of the readings well. Therefore, innovations are needed in learning methods that can increase students' active involvement in reading English texts, so that they not only understand the content of the reading but also enjoy the process.

One of the solutions that can be applied is the use of digital storytelling as an innovative learning strategy to increase student engagement in reading English texts. Digital storytelling combines visual, audio, and interactivity elements that can make texts more engaging and easy for students to understand. With this approach, students not only read the text but also experience and interpret the story through a variety of modalities, which can improve their understanding and engagement. Digital storytelling reconceptualizes traditional reading practices into interactive engagements, thus allowing students to exert influence on narrative trajectories, which is consistent with the concept of agency and postmodern subjectivity (Muhammad Ashraf Kaloi et al., 2025). The incorporation of multimedia components—such as visual imagery, auditory elements, and video content—fosters immersive narratives that involve multiple sensory modalities, thus making the learning experience more relevant and intellectually stimulating (Jaiswal, 2025). Empirical studies show a significant association between digital storytelling and enhanced narrative writing competencies, suggesting that

students who participate in digital storytelling activities simultaneously improve their writing proficiency (Akbar, 2024). Digital storytelling facilitates the development of critical thinking and creative skills, especially among English as a Second Language (ESL) learners, by immersing them in contextually rich narratives that accommodate a wide range of learning preferences (Sapan, 2024). This pedagogical strategy fosters empathy and collaborative engagement, as students interact with narratives that span a range of perspectives and social issues (Jaiswal, 2025). Through providing opportunities for creative self-expression, digital storytelling nurtures resilience and fosters independent cognitive processes (Krishna, 2025). Several studies have shown that students who learn with digital storytelling are more motivated to read and can understand texts better compared to conventional methods. However, there is still little research exploring how this method specifically increases students' engagement in reading English texts at the high school level. Thus, this study offers novelty by exploring how digital storytelling can be effectively applied in English language learning to increase student engagement in reading.

This study aims to analyze how digital storytelling can increase the engagement of high school students in reading English texts as well as understand the factors that affect its effectiveness. Using a qualitative approach, this study will explore the experiences of students and teachers in using digital storytelling, as well as identify challenges and opportunities in its application in the classroom. DST attracts students' interest, thus promoting motivation and creativity in the learning process. This facilitates opportunities for students to articulate their thoughts and establish an emotional connection with the subject matter (Krishna, 2025). Students cultivate computational thinking and multimodal literacy, which are essential competencies for navigating the contemporary digital landscape (Poskakalova & Khusnutdinova, 2024). Students may have difficulty building compelling narratives and efficiently using various digital tools (Nuroh et al., 2025). DST promotes collaborative efforts among students, thus fostering a cooperative learning environment (Poskakalova & Khusnutdinova, 2024). Through interviews, observations, and documentation analysis, this research will reveal how digital storytelling can build a more interactive reading experience, improve students' comprehension, and motivate them to be more active in reading English texts. The results of this study are expected to provide new insights for educators in designing more interesting and effective learning strategies so that they can significantly improve the English literacy skills of high school students.

2. METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design to understand how digital storytelling can increase student engagement in reading English texts at the Depok high school level. The case study was chosen because it allows for an in-depth exploration of students' experiences in using digital storytelling in learning. DST engages students by facilitating the creation of narratives through technological means, thereby increasing their enthusiasm for the learning process (Krishna, 2025). Students express sentiments of pleasure and entertainment during this process, which then contributes to increased motivation and active participation in educational activities (Poskakalova & Khusnutdinova, 2024). The application of DST fosters critical thinking skills and improves reading comprehension, especially among English as a Second Language (ESL) learners, as they interact with rich and contextual narratives (Sapan, 2024). In addition, it aids in the development of visual literacy and computational thinking, which are vital competencies in the 21st century (Karagyozova, 2024) (Poskakalova & Khusnutdinova, 2024). DST can be adapted to a variety of learning styles, making it effective for heterogeneous student demographics, including young learners and individuals in higher education (Sapan, 2024) (Febrianti, 2024). The multimodal characteristics of DST allow students to articulate their understanding creatively, accommodating diverse learning preferences (Krishna, 2025). The researcher observed classes that applied digital storytelling, conducted interviews with teachers and students, and analyzed the tasks given during the learning process. This approach provides a richer understanding of the impact of digital storytelling on engagement.

The population in this study is grade XI students of Depok High School who take part in learning English using the digital storytelling method. High school students are chosen because they are in a stage of cognitive development that allows for optimal exploration of technology-based learning methods. High school students generally display a wide range of cognitive abilities, with many individuals progressing to the formal operational stage as described by Piaget's theoretical framework, which then adds to their logical reasoning and problem-solving competencies (Rakhmawan, 2024). A noteworthy proportion of students are in the transitional or concrete operational stage, signalling their readiness to engage with more complex cognitive tasks that can be supported by technological advances (Rakhmawan, 2024). The incorporation of virtual reality and artificial intelligence in educational contexts has been empirically shown to improve cognitive abilities, including critical thinking and spatial reasoning, through the provision of immersive learning experiences (Sobolenko et al., 2024). Online enhanced courses and cognitive pedagogical strategies have shown substantial efficacy

in improving information understanding and retention, especially in disciplines such as biology (Kumara T M, 2022; Wati et al., 2021). The research sample consisted of one class that was selected purposively based on the school's readiness to apply digital technology in learning. With a purposive sampling approach, this study focuses on students who actively use digital storytelling in the learning process.

Data collection was carried out through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews with teachers and students, and analysis of digital storytelling materials used in learning. The combination of these techniques allows researchers to obtain more comprehensive data on students' involvement in reading English texts. This study uses a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies for data collection, including the use of questionnaires and interviews, to gain a comprehensive understanding of student engagement (Nadeak & Kuswandono, 2024) (Nakornsut, 2022). The Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) methodology shows a significant increase in behavioural, emotional, and cognitive engagement among learners, thus underscoring the efficacy of collaborative educational settings (Mahdahera & Ridwan, 2023). These observations point to the need for specific interventions aimed at increasing intrinsic engagement (Nadeak & Kuswandono, 2024). The incorporation of authentic texts has been associated with increased engagement rates and improved reading comprehension, as this material is more aligned with students' interests and practical applications in the real world (Yanti Anggraini, 2024). Observations were made during several meetings to see patterns of student engagement, interviews explored their experiences and perceptions, and digital storytelling material documentation was analyzed to understand the strategies used. The instruments used in this study help uncover how digital storytelling can increase students' interest and engagement in reading English texts.

The data was analyzed using thematic analysis techniques to identify patterns of student involvement in learning with digital storytelling. Thematic analysis was chosen because it allows researchers to group data based on key themes that emerge from observations, interviews, and documentation. Thematic analysis is characterized by its emphasis on patterns of meaning that can be seen in qualitative data sets, thus allowing researchers to extract nuanced insights from various sources (Naudé, 2025). It incorporates a variety of methodological approaches, ranging from systematic to imaginative strategies, allowing researchers to choose techniques that fit their epistemological and theoretical paradigms (Braun et al., 2024). The six-phase framework articulated by Braun and Clarke offers a structured path for researchers to engage with data, perform coding, and develop themes, thus ensuring adherence to

methodological rigidity (Lomas, 2024). The importance of reflectivity is underlined, facilitating researchers' awareness of their innate biases and the consequential effects of their interpretation on analytical processes (Braun et al., 2024). Thematic analysis has been used effectively in a variety of contexts, including examining client experiences in rehabilitation facilities, thereby uncovering significant deficiencies in care and support (Lomas, 2024). Additionally, it accommodates the incorporation of artificial intelligence tools, thus enriching the analytical depth while maintaining the analyst's critical interpretive role (Christou, 2024). The themes analyzed included students' responses to digital storytelling, the level of participation in discussions, and their understanding of the texts read. This approach provides in-depth insights into how digital storytelling contributes to increased student engagement in reading English texts.

3. RESULTS

The findings obtained from comprehensive interviews conducted with educators and students strongly show that the application of digital storytelling as a pedagogical tool in the realm of English proficiency significantly increases the level of student engagement in terms of reading various textual materials. Educators articulate that their students exhibit significantly higher levels of activity and participation during discussions centred around narratives presented through digital media, especially when juxtaposed with conventional teaching methods that fail to captivate the same level of interest. Furthermore, the students themselves revealed that the incorporation of visual elements and narrative techniques inherent in digital storytelling substantially increases their enthusiasm and desire to learn and understand English texts with greater depth and insight. A very insightful comment from one of the students highlighted that the inclusion of the audiovisual component not only facilitates a deeper understanding of the contextual nuances of the narrative but also serves to significantly increase their intrinsic motivation to engage in the reading process.

Observations made within the confines of the classroom environment strongly show that students who are actively engaged in the practice of digital storytelling show significantly increased levels of focus and enthusiasm when reading texts composed in English, especially when juxtaposed with more traditional learning methods that have historically been used in educational settings. Furthermore, these students not only engage in discussions with their peers regarding the intricate content of the narratives they explore but also show a tendency to ask their instructors questions regarding the specific meanings of certain words or the contextual implications present in the texts they are analyzing. In addition, it should be noted

that students tend to participate with greater frequency and enthusiasm during reflection sessions that follow the auditory or visual experience of digital storytelling, thus suggesting that the application of digital storytelling techniques can serve to foster and promote a more dynamic and interactive atmosphere conducive to learning.

Comprehensive documentation of various learning materials shows that the incorporation of digital storytelling significantly improves students' reading experience by effectively incorporating text, sound, and animation elements into a cohesive educational narrative. In the classroom setting, the materials used consist of a variety of interactive stories that have been carefully designed to align with each student's skill level, ensuring that all students are adequately engaged and challenged. Furthermore, the reflection notes provided by the students revealed that they were able to recall the content of the story more easily when compared to the traditional method of reading the text separately, which lacked the compelling support provided by the visual and auditory elements. In addition, the documentation of student assignment results has shown a marked improvement in both reading comprehension and the breadth of vocabulary used by students after they engaged in learning activities that incorporate digital storytelling as a pedagogical tool.

Based on a comprehensive analysis involving carefully conducted interviews, detailed observations, and thorough documentation, it has been conclusively determined that the practice of digital storytelling has a significant function in increasing the level of student engagement in terms of reading texts written in English. The incorporation of various digital elements not only makes textual content more captivating and engaging for students but also substantially improves their understanding of the material, while simultaneously promoting a higher level of active participation during classroom activities. In addition, it has been observed that students show a noticeable increase in their motivation to engage with reading, as they consider the narratives presented to them through digital storytelling to be significantly more accessible and easier to understand. As a result, it can be argued that digital storytelling is a highly effective pedagogical strategy that addresses and mitigates the ongoing challenges associated with fostering a growing interest in reading among high school students in the context of learning English.

Summary of the results in the form of tables

Research Aspects	Key Findings
Interview	Students are more interested in reading texts in digital storytelling compared to conventional methods.

Observation	Teachers saw an increase in student motivation and comprehension.
	Students are more focused after reading the digital story. They actively discuss and participate in reflection.
Documentation	Digital storytelling materials enrich students' reading experience with visual and audio elements. The assignment results showed an increase in reading comprehension and vocabulary.
Analysis Findings	Digital storytelling increases student engagement, text comprehension and interaction in English language learning.

This research shows that digital storytelling increases students' interest and understanding in learning English. Interviews with students revealed that they were more interested in reading texts in digital format compared to conventional methods, while teachers noted an increase in motivation and comprehension. Observations showed that students were more focused, active in discussions, and participated in reflection after reading digital stories. Documentation of students' assignments indicates an increase in reading comprehension and vocabulary, with visual and audio elements in digital storytelling materials enriching their reading experience. Overall, the analysis of the findings confirms that digital storytelling contributes positively to student engagement and interaction in learning. With this approach, students not only understand the text better but are also more motivated to learn. Therefore, digital storytelling can be an effective strategy for improving the quality of English learning. Further support in the provision of materials and teacher training will further optimize its benefits.

4. DISCUSSION

Interviews with teachers and students showed that digital storytelling can increase students' engagement in reading English texts. Teachers stated that students are more motivated when the reading text is packaged in the form of digital stories that combine audio, visuals, and interactive narratives. Meanwhile, students find it easier to understand the content of the text because of the multimedia support that helps them capture meaning more contextually. Digital stories involve students by combining multimedia components, thus fostering a more in-depth

educational atmosphere (Hafsa Hadj, 2024). Educators observed that learners showed a high level of motivation when engaging with texts delivered in a digital narrative format, as this modality was considered more accessible and enjoyable (Aliagas et al., 2024). Empirical studies reveal that digital storytelling significantly improves reading comprehension and critical analytical skills, especially among English as a Second Language (ESL) learners (Sapan, 2024). The interactive characteristics of digital text, including hyperlinks and multimedia representations, facilitate students in understanding key concepts effectively (Salmerón et al., 2024). A strong correlation is evident between digital storytelling and improved narrative writing proficiency, suggesting that competencies acquired through this medium can result in superior writing performance (Akbar, 2024). A teacher revealed that previously many students had difficulty understanding the reading text, but after using digital storytelling, they were more enthusiastic in discussing and writing story summaries. One of the students also mentioned that listening and seeing stories in digital form helped him understand new vocabulary better. These interviews indicate that digital storytelling can increase students' interest and understanding of English texts, making it a more engaging method compared to traditional approaches.

Observations in the classroom show that students are more active in the learning process when using digital storytelling compared to conventional methods. This technology allows students to be more engaged in learning through engaging visual and audio elements so that they are more focused and interact with the material being studied. Interactive videos, characterized by the inclusion of quizzes and branching scenarios, have been empirically shown to increase student engagement by 45% and extend viewing duration by 30% compared to conventional lectures (Haerawan et al., 2024). These components not only attract attention effectively but also show a correlation with a 25% increase in educational outcomes (Haerawan et al., 2024). Video-Based Learning (VBL) uses multimedia resources to encourage active engagement and motivation, addressing a spectrum of learning preferences (Morisson et al., 2024). This approach allows students to interact with the material at their own pace, thus facilitating comprehension and retention (Morisson et al., 2024). During the learning session, students looked more enthusiastic when reading texts packaged in the form of digital stories. They not only read the text but also discuss the content of the story with their classmates and ask questions to the teacher to understand the meaning of more complex words or concepts. These observational findings show that the use of digital storytelling can create a more engaging and interactive learning experience, increasing students' focus and engagement in reading English texts.

The documentation of the learning materials shows that the use of digital storytelling provides a variety of teaching methods that enrich the learning experience of students. By combining text, animation, and voice narration, digital storytelling materials provide a multisensory approach that can help students understand text more effectively compared to just reading printed text. Digital storytelling integrates many components of media, including visual imagery, auditory elements, and video content, thus building an immersive experience that stimulates a variety of sensory perceptions (Jaiswal, 2025). Research shows that students who engage in digital storytelling initiatives show improvements in reading comprehension and critical analytical skills (Sapan, 2024). Engagement with digital narratives facilitates the development of important competencies among students, such as narrative composition, creativity, and technical expertise (Akbar, 2024; Krishna, 2025). The act of generating digital narratives promotes collaborative efforts and increases students' capacity to critically analyze and synthesize information (Poskakalova & Khusnutdinova, 2024). Digital storytelling fosters empathy and emotional investment, allowing students to engage with a variety of perspectives and narratives (Jaiswal, 2025). In addition, it encourages a sense of agency in students, thus empowering them to articulate their ideas creatively (Poskakalova & Khusnutdinova, 2024). The student's assignment document shows that they can write summaries and analyze digital stories better. In addition, students' reflection notes indicate that they enjoy learning with digital storytelling more than conventional methods. This documentation confirms that digital storytelling has a positive impact on increasing student engagement in reading texts, especially in the aspects of comprehension and active participation.

Based on interviews, observations, and documentation, it was found that digital storytelling contributes significantly to increasing student engagement in reading English texts. The combination of visual, audio, and text elements in digital storytelling provides a richer learning experience, helps students understand the content of the reading better, and increases their motivation to read. Digital storytelling integrates different forms of media, making narratives more profound and relatable, thus facilitating students' understanding of complex texts (Jaiswal, 2025). Empirical research shows that students who participate in digital storytelling initiatives show improved reading comprehension and critical analytical skills, especially in the framework of English as a Second Language (ESL) (Sapan, 2024; Zuraini et al., 2024) Active engagement with digital narratives forces students to synthesize and analyze information critically, thereby improving their problem-solving and decision-making skills (Jaiswal, 2025; Zuraini et al., 2024) The interactive dimension of digital storytelling empowers students to exert influence over narratives, thereby fostering a sense of agency and facilitating

deeper engagement with the subject matter (Muhammad Ashraf Kaloi et al., 2025). The creative efforts inherent in digital storytelling stimulate students' emotional responses and interests, thus inciting stronger literary and linguistic exploration (Jaiswal, 2025; Krishna, 2025). By promoting a collaborative atmosphere, digital storytelling encourages students to exchange diverse viewpoints, consequently reinforcing their motivation to engage with the reading material (Jaiswal, 2025). Students who were previously passive in reading texts tended to be more active in discussing after using digital storytelling. In addition, the results of the assignments and students' reflections showed an improvement in reading comprehension and story analysis skills. These findings confirm that digital storytelling is an effective strategy to increase student involvement in reading English texts so that it can be used as an alternative in educational technology-based teaching in high schools.

5. CONCLUSION

This study aims to analyze how digital storytelling can increase students' involvement in reading English texts at the high school level. With a qualitative approach, this study explores students' experiences in using digital storytelling as a learning medium, as well as its impact on their motivation and understanding of reading texts. The results show that the combination of visual, audio, and interactivity elements in digital storytelling helps students focus more, understand the text better, and increase participation in class discussions. In addition, this study identifies the supporting and inhibiting factors for the implementation of digital storytelling in English learning in schools. The contribution of this research lies in providing empirical insights for educators regarding the effectiveness of digital storytelling as an innovative method to increase student engagement in reading. In addition, this research can also be the basis for the development of a more interactive and interesting technology-based curriculum. The limitation of this study is that the scope of the sample is limited to one school, so further research with a wider sample is needed to generalize the findings.

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