

## Improving beginning reading ability through scrabble games in children Age 5-6 Years

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### Abstract

The aim of this research is to obtain data on improving the initial reading abilities of children aged 5-6 years through Scrabble games held at RA Nurul Yaqin. The research subjects were students aged 5-6 years at RA Nurul Yaqin with a total of 15 children consisting of 7 boys and 8 girls. Kemmis and Mc model PTK. Taggart was used in this research through the stages of planning, implementation, observation and reflection. Data collection techniques in this research use observation, interviews and documentation. Data analysis uses the formula for average value, maximum score and percentage. The results of the research showed that the results of pre-cycle observations reached a percentage of 48%, which shows that initial reading ability was still low, so action was needed in cycle I. Children experienced an increase in cycle I until they got a percentage of 59%, because the results did not meet the researchers' expectations, namely 80%. action is taken in cycle II. In cycle II there was a good increase, cycle II got a percentage of 81% so it was found that the results of the activities carried out were successful in achieving the target

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## INTRODUCTION

Children aged 0-8 years are considered early childhood who experience part of the sensitive period, in this period children are in the golden age (The Golden Age). This period is a period where children's brain growth occurs quickly and rapidly. Thus, this period needs to be utilized as best as possible by making adjustments and conditioning children in learning situations that are appropriate to the child's world. The learning concept that is suitable for children's world is learning while playing and playing while learning, this concept can provide opportunities for children to participate actively and creatively (Partini, 2015:96). According to Law No. 20 of 2003, early childhood education is emphasized on children from birth to six years of age, with the aim of helping physical and spiritual growth and development so that children are ready to face further stages of education (Astuti et al., 2021:74).

One of the developments that it is important for children in their growth and development, namely aspects of language development. For a child, language is a means used by children to communicate and as a medium to express negative or positive emotions (Yumi et al., 2019:192). In essence, there are four developments in children's language development, namely (1) listening, (2) speaking, (3) reading, and (4) writing (Anggraini et al., 2020).

The term used in early childhood reading ability is called early reading ability, which involves visual activities in understanding symbols and writing (R. F. Astuti & Istiarini, 2020:32). According to Baraja, when children learn to recognize symbols of language sounds, a series of letters and then relate them to the meaning contained in a series of letters, it is called beginning reading (Herlina, 2019:337). According to I Gusti Oka, with the aim of developing the basics of reading mechanisms, initial reading can be given when children are 5-6 years old (Herlina, 2019:337).

This research was motivated by the results of observations and interviews conducted by researchers at RA Nurul Yaqin which showed that children's early reading abilities had not developed optimally. In the class there are 15 children, of which 7 children are in the Not Yet Developing (BB) category and 8 children are still in the MB (Starting to Develop) category. The majority of children in group B still face difficulties in reading the letters listed on the board. Children tend to memorize the letters through singing but not all children can name the letters of the alphabet correctly. When it comes to recognizing consonants and vowels, children don't yet understand what the difference is. Likewise with reading syllables and words, children are still confused and hesitant when reading.

After making observations, researchers found the cause of children's weakness in beginning reading, namely the use of learning media that was not optimal, children learned to read using special reading books that contained syllables, words and sentences. This makes children less active and feel bored when studying because the learning media used is less interesting for children. Referring to the explanation above, the researcher is interested in carrying out classroom action research on "Improving Beginning Reading Ability Through Scrabble Games in Children Aged 5-6 Years".

According to Sabarti Akharga, et al., to teach children to begin reading, focus can be given to developing basic reading skills which include the ability to pronounce written letters, syllables, words and sentences orally (Pertwi, 2016:761). In this way, children can start by combining letter sounds to form syllables, and these words can produce meaning. In an effort to improve children's initial reading skills, teachers can implement activities through games. In essence, children learn through playing, play activities are a learning method that is suitable for children and can create an encouraging learning atmosphere for children and provide motivation for children (Tika, 2021:2).

One game that suits children's characteristics and can attract children's attention is Scrabble. Scrabble is a game media with a fairly simple concept, where the rules in this game are only to attach letters alternately which are played by 2-4 people so that they form words vertically or horizontally (Pratama, 2020:137). Scrabble has benefits for children, namely that it can increase vocabulary, pronounce words correctly, can develop strategies, strengthen bonds between children if they often play together, increase focus and train sportsmanship and honesty (Aida Iskandar & Cahyadi, 2021:117). In this context, previous researchers such as Indriana Ruslan (2020) and Ita Purnamasari (2021) have proven that the game Scrabble can improve early reading abilities in early childhood. In this study, the researcher provides a new variation in the use of the Scrabble game, the Scrabble that will be used is in the form of letter pieces and a board that has fewer boxes and is equipped with several pictures that are attractive to children and make it easier for children to compose words on the Scrabble board. Before playing, the researcher will read a story related to the vocabulary theme that will be played in Scrabble.

## METHOD

The Kemmis and Mc. Taggart model of classroom action research is used in this research. This model has four stages as follows: planning, action, observation, reflection. According to Kasihani in (Septantiningtyas et al., 2020) PTK is a practical research carried out by providing actions to make improvements to existing deficiencies in classroom learning. The actions given are aimed at finding answers to the obstacles faced by teachers in the learning process. The problems that will be studied must be in accordance with the existing reality and experienced by the teacher, so that it can provide a solution for the teacher to the problems experienced.

The subjects of this research were group B students at RA Nurul Yaqin with a total of 15 children consisting of 7 boys and 8 girls, and the participants involved were class teachers. The types of instruments in this research include observation and documentation in the form of student data, research instrument sheets and documentation results. Researchers validated the data using triangulation of data sources obtained from students, researchers and collaborators. This research will obtain quantitative data in the form of figures resulting from children's early reading abilities and qualitative data, namely the results of analyzed observations. To analyze the success of this research, data analysis was used which focused on improving beginning reading skills through the game of Scrabble. The achievement target aimed at in this research is 80% with data processing following the formula of average value, maximum score and percentage.

The data collection techniques in this research are assessment instrument sheets, observation and documentation. The assessment in this research was obtained from what the researcher observed, researched, saw and heard. The documentation results are in the form of photos and videos. Observations were carried out using an assessment instrument for improving initial reading skills through playing Scrabble for children aged 5-6 years at RA Nurul Yaqin. The instrument grid in this study includes children's abilities in (1) recognizing vowels and consonants, (2) reading letters, (3) reading syllables, (4) arranging letters into syllables, (5) reading words, (6) arrange syllables into words, and (7) read pictures into words. Data analysis in this study uses the formula for average value, maximum score and percentage so that it will produce data on increasing initial reading ability in each cycle starting from pre-cycle, cycle I to cycle II. The success indicator in this research was 80%.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Result

Improving initial reading skills through Scrabble games for children aged 5-6 years is carried out at RA Nurul Yaqin which is located on Jl. H. Alam No.1, RT.003/RW.027, Pengasinan Village, Rawalumbu District, Bekasi City. In this institution there is group B with an age range of 5-6 years that will be studied.

#### Pre Cycle

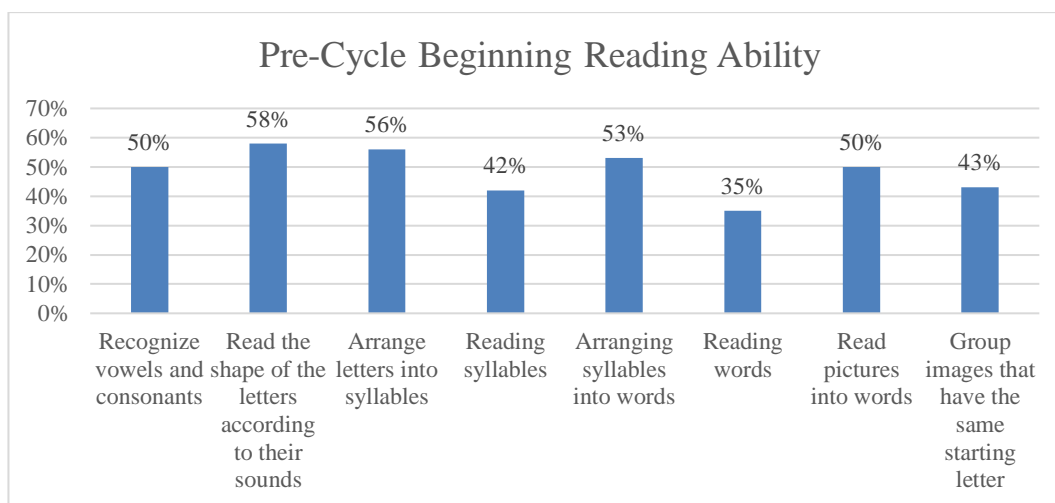
The initial observation was carried out on August 28 2023. This initial observation was carried out to find out what problems emerged in teaching and learning activities on initial reading skills in children aged 5-6 years at RA Nurul Yaqin. Based on the results of observations, it was found that children aged 5-6 years at RA Nurul Yaqin's initial reading skills were still less than optimal. This is proven by the number of 15 children who do not yet have abilities in the Developing According to Expectations (BSH) or Very Well Developing (BSB) categories due to the lack of use of varied media at school so that children are less interested in learning to read.

**Table 1.** Observation Results of Pre-Cycle Beginning Reading Ability

No	Assessment aspect	Data Average Pre Cycle	Category
1.	Recognize vowels and consonants	50 %	BSH
2.	Read the shape of the letters according to their sounds	58%	BSH
3.	Arrange letters into syllables	56%	BSH
4.	Reading syllables	42%	MB

5.	Arranging syllables into words	53%	BSH
6.	Reading words	35%	MB
7.	Read pictures into words	50%	BSH
8.	Group images that have the same starting letter	43%	MB
<b>Average indicators of class success</b>		<b>48,4%</b>	<b>MB</b>

From the table above, it can be seen that the indicator for recognizing vowels and consonants obtained a percentage of 50%. On the indicator of reading letter shapes according to their sounds, the percentage was 58%. In the indicator of arranging letters into syllables, a percentage of 56% was obtained. In the syllable reading indicator, the percentage was 42%. In the indicator of arranging syllables into words, a percentage of 53% was obtained. In the word reading indicator, a percentage of 35% was obtained. In the indicator of reading pictures into words, a percentage of 50% was obtained. In the indicator for grouping images that have the same initial letter, the percentage is 43%. There is an average class success result in pre-cycle initial reading ability of 48.4%. Pre-cycle results data can be explained using the graph below:



**Figure 1.** Pre-Cycle Beginning Reading Ability Percentage Graph

Based on the graph above, it can be seen that of the 8 aspects of the assessment the average is still in the Starting to Develop (MB) category with a percentage range of 35% -58%, therefore the researcher will take action in the form of implementing the Scrabble game to improve initial reading skills.

### Cycle I

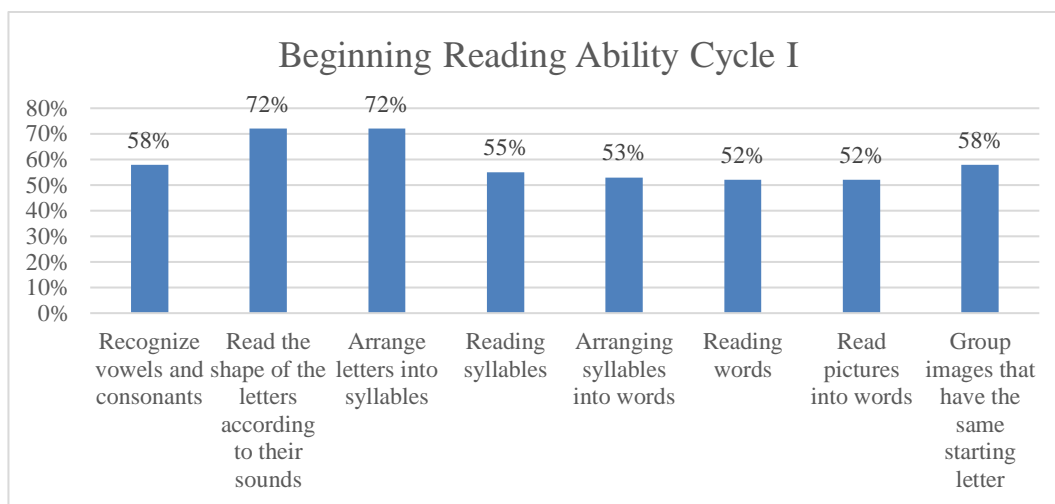
Make an action plan for cycle I by preparing a Daily Activity Plan (RKH) with the group B class teacher and making teaching preparations by preparing media in the form of a Scrabble board, story books and rewards. Observations were carried out in cycle I to obtain the scores obtained by children after being given action in the form of a Scrabble game to improve their initial reading skills.

**Tabel 2.** Obsevation Result of initial Reading Ability Cycle 1

No	Assessment aspect	Data Average Pre Cycle	Category
1.	Recognize vowels and consonants	58%	BSH
2.	Read the shape of the letters according to their sounds	72%	BSH
3.	Arrange letters into syllables	72%	BSH

4.	Reading syllables	55%	BSH
5.	Arranging syllables into words	53%	BSH
6.	Reading words	52%	BSH
7.	Read pictures into words	52%	BSH
8.	Group images that have the same starting letter	58%	BSH
<b>Average indicators of class success</b>		<b>59%</b>	<b>BSH</b>

From the table above, it can be seen that the indicator for recognizing vowels and consonants obtained a percentage of 58%. On the indicator of reading letter shapes according to their sounds, the percentage was 72%. In the indicator of arranging letters into syllables, a percentage of 72% was obtained. In the syllable reading indicator, the percentage was 55%. In the indicator of arranging syllables into words, a percentage of 53% was obtained. In the word reading indicator, the percentage was 52%. In the indicator of reading pictures into words, a percentage of 52% was obtained. In the indicator for grouping images that have the same initial letter, the percentage is 58%. There is an average class success result in pre-cycle initial reading ability of 59%. Pre-cycle results data can be explained using the graph below:



**Figure 2.** Percentage graph of reading ability at the beginning of cycle I

Based on the graph above, it can be seen that of the 8 aspects of the assessment the average is still in the Starting to Develop (MB) category with a percentage range of 52% -72%, therefore the researcher will take action in the form of implementing the Scrabble game to improve initial reading skills.

The results obtained in cycle I have not met the research achievement target of 80%, so the researcher will continue to cycle II. This is done so that the initial reading ability of children aged 5-6 years at RA Nurul Yaqin can increase according to what is expected in order to correct deficiencies in cycle I.

## Cycle II

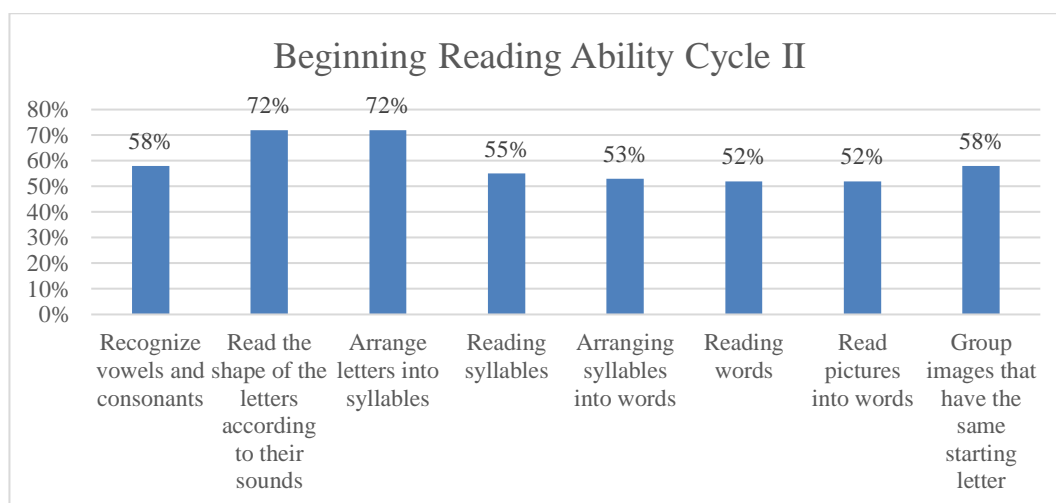
Observations were carried out in cycle II to obtain the scores obtained by children after being given action in the form of a Scrabble game to improve their initial reading abilities.



**Table 2.** Observation Results of Reading Ability at the Beginning of Cycle II

No	Assessment aspect	Data Average Pre Cycle	Category
1.	Recognize vowels and consonants	75%	BSH
2.	Read the shape of the letters according to their sounds	88%	BSH
3.	Arrange letters into syllables	88%	BSH
4.	Reading syllables	78%	BSH
5.	Arranging syllables into words	78%	BSH
6.	Reading words	77%	BSH
7.	Read pictures into words	78%	BSH
8.	Group images that have the same starting letter	87%	BSH
<b>Average indicators of class success</b>			<b>BSH</b>

From the table above, it can be seen that the indicator for recognizing vowels and consonants obtained a percentage of 75%. On the indicator of reading letter shapes according to their sounds, the percentage was 88%. In the indicator of arranging letters into syllables, a percentage of 88% was obtained. In the syllable reading indicator, the percentage was 78%. In the indicator of arranging syllables into words, a percentage of 78% was obtained. In the word reading indicator, the percentage was 77%. In the indicator of reading pictures into words, a percentage of 78% was obtained. In the indicator for grouping images that have the same initial letter, the percentage is 87%. There is an average class success result in pre-cycle initial reading ability of 81.1%. The data from cycle II can be explained using the graph below:



**Figure 3.** Percentage Graph of Reading Ability at the Beginning of Cycle II

Based on the graph above, it can be seen that of the 8 aspects of the assessment the average is still in the Starting to Develop (MB) category with a percentage range of 75%-87%, therefore the researcher will take action in the form of implementing the Scrabble game to improve initial reading skills.

## Discussion

The research results obtained from cycle I and cycle II showed that there was an increase in the initial reading ability of children aged 5-6 years at RA Nurul Yaqin. This increase in initial reading skills occurred at every meeting from cycle I to cycle II. In the first cycle of action, there were 13 children or 87% in the Starting to Develop (MB) category and 2 children or 13% in the Developing According to Expectations (BSH)

category.

The research in cycle I still needed improvement so the researchers continued to cycle II because the results of cycle I had not met the research achievement target of 80%. The obstacles found in cycle I were that children still needed a lot of help from the teacher when arranging and naming letters, and children still made many mistakes in several letters that had similar letter shapes. The results of research in cycle II can be concluded that there has been a quite good increase in beginning reading abilities in children aged 5-6 years at RA Nurul Yaqin. This research was declared successful because the research results obtained were 81% and the research achievement target was 80%. The final results obtained in cycle II were 87% or 13 children in the Developing According to Expectations (BSH) category and 13% or 2 children in the Very Well Developing (BSB) category. Scrabble games can improve beginning reading skills in children aged 5-6 years. This is in accordance with Paterson's opinion that the game Scrabble is a game that uses the phonics method, namely an initial reading method. This method begins by spelling out the smallest parts starting from letters, syllables, words and sentences (Priyanto, 2018).

The Scrabble game used in this research is very effective in improving children's beginning reading skills. This Scrabble game also provides a new variation in playing where children will be read story books related to the theme of the Scrabble game so that children are familiar with the vocabulary used on the Scrabble board. According to Siregar et al., (2022) Scrabble is a means of playing which has the form of an arrangement of letters arranged on a special board by arranging them horizontally and vertically and has certain points. The game that is played on a rectangular board that has been provided and is played by arranging the letter blocks into words in an orderly and horizontal manner is called the game of scrabble (Hardianti, 2019). From this expert's opinion, it is concluded that the game of Scrabble can improve initial reading skills by arranging letters into words on a Scrabble board.

Research on the initial reading ability of children aged 5-6 years at RA Nurul Yaqin increased significantly after being given action in the form of a Scrabble game which consisted of two cycles, namely cycle I and cycle II. This can be seen from children's interest in playing Scrabble where children are very enthusiastic when playing and children are also starting to learn to work together and children can wait their turn to play in a conducive manner. Based on the explanation above, the researcher drew the conclusion that the research was declared successful in accordance with expectations so that the research was stopped until cycle II because the increase in children's initial reading abilities had reached the research achievement target.

The initial reading ability of group B at RA Nurul Yaqin had not yet developed optimally before the Scrabble game was implemented. It can be seen that the majority of children in group B faced difficulties when taking tests on reading letters, arranging syllables and words, and grouping pictures with the same initial letter. The percentage obtained at this pre-cycle stage was 48%. Efforts made to improve the initial reading skills of children aged 5-6 years at RA Nurul Yaqin are through the implementation of the Scrabble game which begins with reading story books related to the game theme. Before taking action, teachers and researchers reviewed the curriculum to determine the basic competencies and indicators that would be taught to children in accordance with improving their initial reading abilities through playing Scrabble. Basic competencies include children recognizing vowels and consonants, arranging syllables into words, reading syllables, arranging syllables into words, reading words, and grouping pictures with the same initial letter. The researcher and class teacher made an agreement that the research was carried out in three cycles of three meetings each. Researchers also make teaching preparations such as Daily Activity Plans (RKH), determine the methods to be used, and prepare the media used in research assisted by the class teacher.

## CONCLUSION

The results of research on improving initial reading skills through Scrabble games at RA Nurul Yaqin, East Bekasi, the conclusions that can be drawn are as follows: The initial reading abilities of children aged 5-6 years can be improved through Scrabble games. This modification to the Scrabble game makes it easier and more interesting for children. because this game is fun and is something new for children. This fact is reflected in research data where the pre-cycle percentage results were 48%, cycle I was 60% and cycle II reached 81%.

This modified Scrabble game is done by reading a story related to the learning theme, then the child plays the game by arranging the letters on the Scrabble board alternately and reading the words that have been arranged and grouping pictures that have the same initial letter.

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