



**Improving Early Reading Learning Outcomes
Using the Magic Box at TK Negeri Pembina, Ngadirojo District,
Wonogiri Regency**



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Abstrak

Tujuan dari Penelitian ini adalah untuk meningkatkan hasil belajar membaca permulaan melalui teknik bermain Magic Box pada anak didik Kelompok A TK Negeri Pembina Kecamatan Ngadirojo Kabupaten Wonogiri Tahun Pelajaran 2025/2026. Penelitian ini merupakan Penelitian Tindakan Kelas (PTK) yang dilaksanakan dalam dua siklus, dengan subjek penelitian anak didik Kelompok A yang berjumlah 21 anak. Teknik pengumpulan data menggunakan observasi, dokumentasi, dan penilaian hasil belajar anak. Analisis data yang dilakukan secara deskriptif kuantitatif Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penerapan teknik bermain Magic Box dapat meningkatkan hasil belajar membaca permulaan pada anak. Hal ini terlihat dari peningkatan persentase ketuntasan belajar anak pada setiap siklus. Pada kondisi awal, kemampuan membaca permulaan anak masih rendah, mencapai nilai rata-rata 30%, kemudian meningkat pada siklus I mengalami peningkatan yang lebih baik yaitu nilai rata-rata 74,3% pada siklus II hingga mencapai kriteria ketuntasan yang ditetapkan nilai rata-rata 92%. Teknik ini mampu menciptakan suasana belajar yang menyenangkan, meningkatkan keterlibatan anak dalam kegiatan pembelajaran, serta membantu anak lebih mudah mengenal huruf dan kata sederhana sehingga hasil belajar memuaskan. Kata kunci: membaca permulaan, teknik bermain, Magic Box, anak usia dini, penelitian tindakan kelas.

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to improve the learning outcomes of early reading through the Magic Box playing technique in Group A students of Pembina State Kindergarten, Ngadirojo District, Wonogiri Regency, Academic Year 2025/2026. This study is a Classroom Action Research (CAR) which was carried out in two cycles, with the research subjects of Group A students totaling 21 children. Data collection techniques used observation, documentation, and

	assessment of children's learning outcomes. Data analysis was carried out descriptively quantitatively. The results of the study show that the application of the Magic Box playing technique can improve the learning outcomes of early reading in children. This can be seen from the increase in the percentage of children's learning completeness in each cycle. In the initial conditions, children's early reading abilities were still low, reaching an average value of 30%, then increased in cycle I experiencing a better increase, namely an average value of 74.3% in cycle II until reaching the criteria for completeness set at an average value of 92%. This technique is able to create a pleasant learning atmosphere, increase children's involvement in learning activities, and help children more easily recognize letters and simple words so that learning outcomes are satisfactory.  Jurnal Indria (Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Prasekolah dan Sekolah Awal) is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.
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INTRODUCTION

An important foundation that affects children's learning processes in the educational ladder is reading ability (Ritonga & Rambe, 2022). Afdila et.al. (2024) emphasized that good reading skills in children not only support academic readiness, but also contribute to children's cognitive and social development. The results of Astuti (2019) research show that reading skills must be taught from an early age, because at this age, children have optimal learning capacity.

Various problems that cause children to have difficulty in reading at the beginning include the child's psychological condition, family environment, and learning methods applied by teachers (Amanda et.al. 2025). Yani's research (2019) shows that the factors that cause early reading difficulties in early childhood are caused by children not having readiness to read, which includes five things, namely: recognizing basic colors; recognizing letters; recognizing numbers; acting like people reading (pretending to read); and writing their own names even though some letters are still upside down

Based on observations made at Kindergarten Negeri Pembina, Ngadirojo District, Wonogiri Regency, especially in group A, several problems were found

related to the initial reading learning process, including: (1) children's motivation in participating in low initial reading learning, (2) children lack concentration when participating in learning, (3) the results of early reading have not been maximized and are still below the school target to be achieved. Based on the documentation of learning outcomes from 21 children who received a score of Very Good Development (BSB) there were none, there were 4 children with a percentage of (19%), who received a score of Starting to Develop (MB) 16 children with a percentage (76%) and those who received a score of Not Developed (BB) there was 1 child with a percentage (5%).

This problem arises because in the learning process teachers use conventional learning media, and do not use learning techniques that are in accordance with the characteristics of children. The characteristic of early childhood is love to play, therefore to overcome these problems, innovation in learning is needed by applying play techniques. Fadilah (2019), argues that play activities are a means of socialization that is expected to provide opportunities for children to discover, explore, create, express feelings and learn in a fun way. Then by playing as well, children will get to know themselves and the environment where children live.

One of the play techniques that can be used in early childhood is the Magic Box (magic box) playing technique. The Magic Box is a box-shaped medium that contains cards with letters, syllables, and simple words. Children take cards from the box in turn, then mention the letters or read the words in them. This activity involves the element of surprise and play, so that children learn to read in a fun atmosphere. Through the Magic Box game, children are actively involved in the reading process and make them interact with others.

Several studies related to the use of the Magic Box technique have been conducted by several previous researchers, including: Sari (2022) showed that the use of Magic Box media can improve the ability to recognize children's letters in Mulyono et.al. (2025) proves that the implementation of the use of APE Magic Box in developing the cognitive abilities of children aged 3-4 years. Minatin et.al. (2024) proves that there is a significant increase in children's language skills and speaking aspects after the application of the Magic Box game. Apriyani et.al. (2020) shows

that early childhood is a playtime, therefore the best learning method is the play method. Research by Lubis & Khadijah (2025) shows that role-playing methods have been proven to be able to make a positive contribution to improving the language skills of children aged 5-6 years.

In order to overcome the problem of low early reading ability in children at Pembina State Kindergarten, Ngadirojo District, Wonogiri Regency, it is necessary to take action in the form of classroom action research by applying magic box media through play techniques. The purpose of this study is to find out the learning process and improve the learning outcomes of early reading with the Magic Box playing technique in group A students of Pembina State Kindergarten, Ngadirojo District, Wonogiri Regency for the 2025/2026 school year.

LITERATURE REVIEWS

Media Magix Box

Magic box is an educational game tool (APE) in the form of a box made of used items (cardboard, plywood, cardboard, etc.) with various sizes adjusted to the needs which are filled with various games that children like. Ariska & Suyadi (2020) argue that the Magic Box is an educational game tool made from simple materials such as cardboard and contains various games to stimulate aspects of early childhood development. Ask et.al. (2024) said that through the Magic Box is an educational game tool that can be used in learning by showing concrete objects to help children to increase vocabulary. APE magix box is able to develop children's ability to learn to distinguish between various object names (Minatin et.al., 2024). Fitrianti et al., (2020) stated that the Magic Box is a visual learning medium in the form of a cube in which it is filled with various concrete objects that function to help children's cognitive development, the Magic Box not only functions as a means of play but also as a medium that can help children understand basic concepts through direct experience, so that it can increase children's creativity and imagination.

Based on the various opinions above, it can be elaborated that the Magic Box is an APE in the form of a box or cube containing various games, which functions to stimulate aspects of children's cognitive development. The Magic Box

is designed to help optimize children's basic abilities in (1) recognizing the name of food and its taste, (2) recognizing the use of objects, (3) knowing how to do the task to completion, and (4) recognizing the concept of many and little of a size.

Playing Techniques

Risaldy (2019), play is an activity that children choose for fun, not because of gifts or praise. Through play, all aspects of children's development can be improved. By playing freely, children can explore to strengthen things that are already known and discover new things. Play is a fundamental activity in early childhood development and can be integrated as an effective learning method. Through play, children not only gain a fun experience, but also develop various aspects of development holistically, ranging from physical, cognitive, social, to emotional (Limbong et al., 2024; Sulikasmi et al., 2024). In general, there are three types of play that are often used in early childhood learning, namely social play, playing with objects, and role play (Mulyasa, 2012; Limbong et al., 2024): Play plays an important role in early childhood development> the results of research by Purnamasari and Nasution, (2021), show that play has a positive effect on children's development. Children can develop social, emotional, cognitive, language, and motor skills through play activities. In addition, Ashar et.al (2023) mentioned that play has a very good function in improving early childhood social and emotional abilities. Children can more easily interact with peers, learn to regulate their emotions, and learn empathy through hands-on experience in a fun learning environment with play. Welding (2022) stated that the development of social and emotional skills at preschool age is very important for children's long-term success both at school and in daily life.

Play-based learning is believed to be the most effective way for early childhood to build knowledge and skills (Fajzrina et al., 2022; Aprilia et al., 2024). Thus, play is not just an entertainment activity, but an integral educational strategy in supporting children's optimal growth and development (Gea & Zega, 2025; Usman & Azizah, 2024). Innovation in early childhood learning can be carried out through the integration of various creative approaches, such as fun-based learning, project-based learning, and the use of child-friendly digital technology (Aprilia et

al., 2024). The results of the study also show that game-based learning can improve motor skills, literacy, numeracy, and understanding of basic concepts in early childhood (Nurdiana, 2023; Dhika et al., 2025). By paying attention to the various approaches and methods above, educators are expected to create a conducive, creative, and inclusive learning environment, so that every child can develop according to their potential.

Beginner Reading Skills

The basic stage of reading begins when children begin to master the prerequisites for reading. After entering school, children can distinguish letters in the alphabet. Children can already read several words that are popular symbols on television shows or other media. Children are able to distinguish letter patterns, even though they do not understand the meaning of words (Retnaningrum & Umam, 2021).

Reading skills are part of the four language skills that must be mastered by every learner, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Beginning reading is a basic skill in reading that focuses on the mechanical process of encoding language symbols through the process of recoding and decoding. The reading process in early childhood is taught to recognize letter symbols, convert them into sounds, and understand their meanings gradually (Chandra et al., 2018). Early reading is an important part of basic literacy for students where students must be able to translate written sound symbols into meaningful sounds (Hapsari, 2019). Early reading learning begins with the introduction of the alphabet, both capital letters and lowercase letters, as well as proper pronunciation. In the next stage, students are taught to recognize the shape and sound of letters, students are directed to spell syllables, read words, and short sentences in order (Janawati, 2020).

Early reading has a crucial role in the development of students' literacy. Success in this stage will affect subsequent reading skills, including understanding of more complex texts (Huduni et al., 2022). Various studies show that barriers to early reading are not only derived from mastery of the teacher's material or teaching methods, but are also influenced by students' motivation and interest in learning (W. P. Putri & Chandra, 2024). Barriers to early reading can be caused by internal

factors such as intelligence level, reading interest, and learning motivation. Meanwhile, external factors include a less supportive family environment and a less conducive learning atmosphere at school (Sakinah et al., 2022). Rohman et al., (2022) stated that various factors can affect the success of early reading, ranging from internal factors such as cognitive ability, phonological awareness, and motivation, to external factors such as family roles, teaching methods in schools, and the availability of appropriate reading materials (Rohman et al., 2022)

METHODS

The type of research used in the current research is the class action research method (PTK) with the Kurt Lewin model (in Hidayat et al., 2024). The main concept of Kurt Lewin's PTK model consists of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The research was carried out at the Pembina State Kindergarten, Ngadirojo District for group A students in Semester II of the 2025/2026 academic year. in the second semester of the 2025/2026 school year, starting from January 2026 to March 2026. The research was carried out in 2 (two cycles), the first cycle of activities included planning by compiling RPPH with Magic Box media. Implementation: Using the Magic Box in letter recognition activities. Observation: Observing the child's activity and ability, and reflection: analyzing the results for the improvement of cycle I. Cycle II perfects activities based on the reflection of cycle I, and performs follow-up actions with variations of Magic Box games.

The initial reading learning process through the Magic Box playing technique is said to be successful if students get the criteria for active indicators in the minimum category of very good at the end of the cycle. Observation indicators to take data on the initial reading learning process using the Magic Box playing technique are student activity, enthusiasm and participation. Data is collected by techniques: (1) document, namely: collecting data on the level of skill level and the results of the initial reading learning before the action (initial condition). (2) Observation is the collection of data on how to observe the level of skill and the results of the beginning reading learning outcomes. (3) The performance test is in the form of an assessment of the initial reading performance in each cycle. (4) Interview is the collection of data by having a conversation with the students. The

data were analyzed using simple qualitative and quantitative descriptive techniques, by comparing the results between cycles to see an improvement in children's pre-reading ability.

Before the action was taken, the activeness of students in participating in initial reading learning showed that most of the students, namely as many as 14 students (70%) had not actively participated in learning, only 7 (30%) students were ready to participate in learning, while students who were not active were not active. The enthusiasm of students in participating in learning showed that as many as 14 students (70%) were not enthusiastic about participating in lessons, while as many as 7 (seven) students or 30% seemed enthusiastic about participating in lessons, thus the enthusiasm of students was classified as not good. The participation of students in learning activities was classified as less active, where as many as 14 (70%) students did not play an active role in lessons, while 7 students were seen to play an active role in the learning process.

Based on the results of the observation of the Pre-Cycle learning process as explained above, they are: (1) Student activity participation is 30%, Student enthusiasm in participating in learning activities is 30%, and (3) Student participation in learning activities is 30%, thus the average percentage of the pre-cycle learning process is 30%. Thus, the pre-cycle learning process is classified as **poor**. The learning outcomes of pre-cycle reading ability: BSB category 0%, BSH 19%, MB: 76%, and BB of 5%.

Cycle 1 Description

After taking action by applying the magic box playing technique, the children's activity of 16 (76%) students began to be active in participating in lessons, as many as 5 (24%), still did not show activeness in learning. Most students were enthusiastic about learning to read at the beginning of the 21 students, namely out of 21 students as many as 15 (71%) were classified as enthusiastic, while 6 others (29%) had not shown their enthusiasm in following the lessons. The participation of students in participating in the initial reading learning activities of 21 students as many as 16 (76%) participated in learning, while 5 (24%) had not played an active role in learning.

Based on the results of the observation of the learning process in Cycle I, it was known that the student activity was 76%, enthusiasm 71%, participation 76%, and the average learning process reached 74.3%. The learning outcomes of reading at the beginning of the BSB category were 10%, BSH 57%, MB 33%, and BB was absent (0%), thus the completeness of learning in Cycle I reached 67%. This means that although learning outcomes have increased learning outcomes, they have not reached the expected performance, which is above 81%.

Cycle II Breakdown

The activeness of students in participating in initial reading learning activities after the second cycle of actions was carried out, of the 21 students all (100%) had actively participated in the lessons. The enthusiasm of the students as many as 18 (86%) were enthusiastic in following the lessons. The participation of students in learning activities from 21 students as many as 19 (90%) showed an active role in learning. Thus, in Cycle II the average percentage of the learning process was 92%, this result shows that the performance achieved has exceeded the set performance of 81%. The learning results of the second cycle of the BSB category were 43%, BSH was 48%, MB was 9%, and BB was 0%. Thus, students who have achieved learning completeness are 91%, meaning that the learning outcomes have achieved the set performance of 81%.

Comparison of Action Results

Based on the results of the research, a comparison can be made of the results of actions, both the learning process, and the learning outcomes. The comparison of the learning process looks like the following table.

Table 6. : Comparison of Learning Process Scores Precycle, Cycle I and Cycle II

Indicator	Precycle	Cycle I	Cycle II
Activeness	30%	76%	100%
Enthusiastic	30%	71%	86%
Participation	30%	76%	90%
Average	30%	74%	92%

From the table above, it can be seen that the average increase in the performance of the learning process from pre-cycle to cycle I, from 30% increased to 74%, from cycle I to cycle II increased from 74% to 92%, thus after taking action as many as 2 cycles the learning process increased by 62%.

Comparison of the learning outcomes of reading initiation from pre-cycle, cycle I, and cycle II as shown in the following table.

**Table 2: Comparison of Learning Process Scores
Precycle, Cycle I and Cycle II**

No	Category	Precycle	Cycle I	Cycle II
1	BSB	0%	0%	43%
2	BSH	19%	19%	48%
3	MB	76%	76%	9%
4	BB	5%	5%	0%
	Quantity	100%	100%	100%

In the table above, it can be seen that the learning learning outcomes of reading at the beginning of the BSB category from pre-cycle to cycle I have not increased, after cycle II there has been an increase to 43%. The pre-cycle BSH category to cycle I has not increased, after cycle II there has been an increase to 48%. The MB category from pre-cycle to cycle I has not decreased, but after cycle II there has been a decrease to 9%, and the BB category from precycle to cycle I there has been no decrease/increase, after cycle II there is no longer a reading comprehension learning result with the BB category. Thus, after 2 cycles of action, the learning outcomes of reading the BSB category increased by 43%, the BSH category increased by 29%, the MP category was bracketed by 67%, and the BB category decreased by 5%.

The low initial reading learning outcomes in Group A students of Kindergarten Negeri Pembina, Ngadirojo District, Wonogiri Regency before action is taken because the learning process is still dominated by the lecture method, namely teachers deliver material orally to students The delivery of reading material without using learning media causes students to be less interested

in participating in lessons, even students feel bored in following lessons, Wijaya Research et.al. (2025) shows that the lack of use of learning media has an impact on low learning outcomes. Kindergarten students are in the phase of concrete thinking, so in the learning process teachers need to provide the right stimulation in accordance with the stages of development so that all children's intelligence can develop optimally (Susanto, 2019). The use of concrete objects such as magic boxes can be used by teachers in providing stimuli through the use of the social environment, the natural environment, and the artificial environment around children's lives (Tiara, Sahidun, and Husen, 2023). Fahraini's research. Syarifuddin, & Haris. (2026); Badriyah & Farida (2026); Amelia & Sitorus.A.S. (2024); and research by Wulandari & Handayani (2025). shows that the use of *Magic Box* has a significant effect on improving initial reading skills in Indonesian subjects.

Some of the obstacles in the implementation of learning by using magic boxes as learning media include that students at first still experience obstacles, including that students still find it difficult to recognize letters, distinguish similar letters. This is in line with the research of Amanda et.al. (2025) which concluded that several obstacles in the ability to read initially, such as difficulty recognizing letters, distinguishing letters, and understanding symbols and numbers. However, in the end, students are able to achieve learning outcomes well, because the three teachers use the magix box media as a learning medium for thermotidated students to take lessons so that students are able to explore the subject matter will increase naturally (Yunita, Dhieni.& Nurjannah, 2025). This is in line with the results of Musfiroh's (2018) research; Minatin et.al. (2024); and Apriyani et.al. (2020), which concluded that the use of the depat play method increases interest in learning and children are interested in learning because play-while learning and learning while playing activities are very encouraging for children.

CONCLUSION

The process of implementing learning with *the Magic Box playing technique* has been proven to improve the quality of the learning process, and improve the ability to read early in early childhood at the Kindergarten Negeri

Pembina Negeri Pembina Ngadirojo, Wonogiri Regency which is shown by the percentage of learning completeness from the precycle of 19%, the first cycle increased to 67% and in the second cycle to 91%. This shows that learning in early childhood will be more effective if it is done with play techniques with Magic Box media techniques. Teachers can take advantage of play techniques by using *Magic Box* as an innovative learning medium so that learning becomes more fun, interactive and not monotonous. For teachers' students, they should be able to use this media as a medium for learning and play. For PAUD managers, it is better to provide facilities to support the development of magic box media by teachers.

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