



## The effect of question-answer relationship (QAR) strategy on students' reading interest and reading comprehension ability

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Article info	Abstract
Keywords: QAR strategy, reading interest, reading comprehension	This study aims to describe fourth-grade elementary school students' reading interest and reading comprehension ability through the Question Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy. This type of research is quasi-experimental with a nonequivalent control group design. The research sample was fourth-grade students at SD Inpres Bontoala I Gowa, totaling 60 students. Data on reading interest was collected through a questionnaire technique, and reading comprehension ability was assessed using a test technique. The collected data were analyzed through descriptive and inferential analysis techniques consisting of independent sample t-tests and Manova tests. The results showed an increase in students' average reading interest and reading comprehension ability through the QAR strategy, so it can be concluded that the QAR strategy can increase the reading interest and reading comprehension ability of fourth-grade students of SD Inpres Bontoala I Gowa.

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### 1. Introduction

Reading is a language skill that cannot be separated from everyday life. In essence, reading is not only limited to learning activities at school, but almost every daily activity involves reading activities. In addition, reading is to get information and add insight. In line with this, Burn believes that the ability to read is one of the absolute abilities that the community must master because it is one of the factors supporting the progress of society (Ambarita et al., 2021). The more skilled a person is at understanding a text, the more transparent and open his thoughts will be (Ambarita et al., 2021). Therefore, reading skills can be regarded as essential skills that are mastered by every society.

Knowledge acquisition is mainly done through reading activities, so it has become one of the basic skills students need to master. However, acquiring knowledge through reading can be achieved if done carefully and accompanied by an understanding of the contents of the reading. This is what is called reading comprehension. According to Kusman, reading comprehension is a reading activity carried out carefully and thoroughly by readers to hone critical reading skills to understand reading in detail (Prihatsanti et al., 2018).

Reading comprehension is a complex skill in which readers construct meaning from texts independently and form representations either explicitly or implicitly (Rollins et al. I, 2022). The principle of reading comprehension is the same as reading in general but emphasizes the understanding of the reader both explicitly and implicitly to train critical thinking skills. This is in line with the expert opinion that in the learning process, elementary school students' critical thinking models include three categories: reading comprehension, inferential thinking, literary responses or interpretations, and concepts and text structures (Hartati et al., 2022). Furthermore, critical thinking includes the skill component of analyzing arguments, making inductive and deductive conclusions, reasoning, assessing or evaluating, and making decisions or solving problems (Cahyono, 2017).

Reading comprehension is one of the reading competencies that students must master. Reading comprehension is needed to learn Indonesian and in all fields of study. Of course, this is because all fields of study involve reading activities in the learning process. Even when working on questions, students must understand the intent and purpose of the questions to give the correct answers. In addition, reading comprehension can broaden horizons and train critical and creative thinking skills.

Reading comprehension is one of the essential reading competencies that must be mastered by elementary school students starting in grade IV. This is based on the level of reading development; namely, students in grade IV of elementary school (second stage) should already be familiar with reading comprehension. This is the opinion put forward by Dalman (2013) that the second stage of reading development, around children sitting in grades III and IV, can analyze the words they know using writing patterns and conclusions based on context. What must be considered in reading activities is a person's ability to understand the meaning of reading as a whole, or what is called the ability to read comprehension. Therefore, after reading the text, the reader can convey the results of his reading comprehension by summarising the contents using his language and communicating it orally and in writing.

Based on the results of pre-research observations, students' reading comprehension skills were still low. This is evidenced by the way students answer questions related to reading. In addition, based on the results of an interview with the homeroom teacher for class IV in October 2022, the teacher stated that students' interest in reading was still lacking. This is due to the low awareness of students about the importance of books, which makes them less familiar with and feel foreign to books. Ultimately, students' interest in reading becomes low. The teacher also explained that students' awareness of reading is still lacking because there are not many learning models that assign students to read books to seek more information or knowledge than what is being taught; the negative impact of technological developments, especially smartphones, is that students are more interested in smartphones than reading knowledge books and average grades. -the average student is below the KKM. This is supported by data from the homeroom teacher based on the results of daily tests, which resulted in an average of 66.8. This achievement is below the minimum completeness criteria (KKM), set at 75. In addition, teachers still use conventional strategies that have not been varied with other reading strategies.

This is not in line with what is expected. Therefore, based on these problems, it is necessary to improve and increase efforts in learning so that students do not just read but can understand the contents of the reading and foster their interest in reading. One learning strategy that can improve students' reading comprehension skills is the question-answer relationship (QAR) learning strategy.

The QAR learning strategy is designed to help students understand the relationship between the questions and answers posed and consider the information obtained based on the text and the student's knowledge (Raditya, 2016). Tompkins suggests that the steps of the QAR learning strategy consist of (1) reading questions, (2) understanding the level of questions, (3) reading texts, (4) answering questions, and (5) sharing answers (Budianty, 2023). The level of QAR questions consists of explicit text (1) "right here" (in the text), that is, answers can be found in the reading text, (2) implicit text "think and search," that is, answers can be found in the text. Reading, but has a higher level of thinking than the

first level, and (3) reading information and reading knowledge "on my own"; that is, students are required to think about what they already know from reading and experience (prior knowledge) to formulate answers (Budianty, 2023).

The QAR strategy has different levels of questions, and students are guided to classify and answer questions from various levels of question difficulty. Exercises like this will improve students' ability to answer questions. Therefore, the researcher chose the QAR strategy to overcome the problem of students' reading comprehension and interest in reading. In this study, researchers will look at the effect of the QAR learning strategy on students' reading comprehension ability, the impact of the QAR strategy on students' reading interest, and the effect of the QAR strategy on students' reading ability and interest simultaneously. This aligns with Budianty's opinion that the QAR strategy is appropriate for improving students' reading skills because QAR learning steps guide students to focus and easily understand reading according to their level.

## 2. Method

This research is quasi-experimental research using a pretest-posttest nonquivalent control group design. The study consisted of two groups, namely the control group and the experimental group. This study aims to describe fourth-grade elementary school students' reading interest and reading comprehension ability through the Question Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy. The study population was all fourth-grade students of SD Inpres Bontoala I Gowa, consisting of 30 students in grade IV A and 30 students in grade IV B. The study used total sampling so that all populations were samples. The researcher used tests and questionnaires to collect student reading comprehension and interest data. Data were analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistical analysis. Inferential analysis uses several techniques: the independent sample t-test and the Manova test. However, before carrying out the independent and Manova t-tests, a prerequisite test, which consisted of homogeneity and normality tests, was previously carried out.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1 Reading Interest

Data collection of students' interest in reading is done through a questionnaire. Data on students' interest in reading was collected at the post-test stage in the experimental and control classes.

**Table 1.** Description of student reading interest results (post-test)

Statistics	Control	Experiment
Number of samples	30	30
Ideal score	100	100
Maximum score	81.25	95
Minimum score	40.62	75
Score range	40.62	20
Average	63.75	84.67
Mean	64.06	85
Variance	75.26	44.71
Standard deviation	8.68	6.69

Based on **Table 1**, several comparisons stand out. The mean reading interest score in the post-test of experimental class students looks better than the post-test control score, namely  $84.67 > 64.06$ . This shows that the reading interest score data of students who were given the question-answer relationship strategy treatment was affected compared to the class that was not given any treatment.

After being given treatment in the form of a QAR strategy, the reading interests of the experimental class students were grouped into four categories, so the frequency and percentage distributions were obtained as follows.

**Table 2.** Categorization of reading interest (post-test)

Score Range	Category	Experiment		Control	
		F	(%)	F	(%)
23 – 32	Very High	30	100	7	23.3
18 – 22	High	0	0	20	66.7
13 – 17	Medium	0	0	3	10
8 -12	Low	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

The results of the reading interest of the experimental class showed that all students' interest in reading was in the very high category, namely 100%. Meanwhile, students' interest in reading was not like that in the control class. Only seven students were in the very high category, with a percentage of 23.3%; 20 were in the high category, 66.7%, and three were in the low category or 10%. These results indicate that the reading interest of students who use the QAR strategy is better than those who do not use the QAR strategy.

### 3.2 Reading Comprehension Ability

Data on students' reading comprehension skills were collected through test techniques. The test was carried out twice in the experimental and control classes. The results of the test analysis at the pretest stage are presented in **Table 3** below.

**Table 3.** Categorization of reading comprehension (pre-test)

Score Range	Category	Experiment		Control	
		F	(%)	F	(%)
0 – 74	Low	18	60	24	80
75 – 83	Medium	9	30	4	13,3
84 – 92	High	3	10	2	6,7
93 – 100	Very High	0	0	0	0
<b>Amount</b>		<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 3** shows that students' reading comprehension skills were initially low in the experimental and control classes during the pretest stage. In the experimental class, 60% of students were in the low category, 30% in the medium category, and only 10% in the high category, with none in the very high category. Similarly, in the control class, 80% were in the low category, 13.3% in the medium category, and 6.7% in the high category. After implementing the QAR strategy in the experimental class and conventional methods in the control class, a post-test was conducted to measure students' reading comprehension improvement, with the results presented in **Table 4**.

**Table 4.** Categorization of reading comprehension ability (post-test)

Score Range	Category	Experiment		Control	
		F	(%)	F	(%)
0 – 74	Low	0	0	9	30
75 – 83	Medium	12	40	8	26,7
84 – 92	High	13	43,3	9	30
93 – 100	Very High	5	16,7	4	13,3
<b>Amount</b>		<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

The results of the post-test analysis in Table 4 show that students' reading skills have increased. In the experimental class, no one else was in the low category; students in the medium category increased to 12 students or 40%, in the high category increased to 13 students or 43.3%, and in the very high category increased to 5 students or 16, 7%. However, in the control class, the increase in students' reading comprehension skills was not as significant as in the experimental class. There are still nine students, or 30%, who are in the low category; eight students in the medium category, or 26.7%; 9 students, or 30%, in the high category; and four students, or 13.3, in the very high category. Based on the results of the analysis, it can be seen that the percentage of high and very high categories in the experimental class is greater than that of the control class. This means that the QAR strategy significantly affects students' reading comprehension skills.

### 3.3 Normality Test

The normality test results for students' reading interest in the experimental and control classes at the pretest stage obtained sig. 0.076 and the post-test stage 0.087 > 0.05, so the data is declared normally distributed. Likewise, the significance value of the normality test for students' reading comprehension at the pretest and post-test stages obtained significance values of 0.69 and 0.82 > 0.05. The data is stated to be normally distributed.

### 3.4 Homogeneity Test

The homogeneity test obtained a significance value of 0.057 > 0.05, so it is known that the variance of the post-test data for the experimental and control classes is the same or homogeneous.

### 3.5 Independent Sample Test

The results of the sample t-test on reading interest show a significance value of 0.000 < 0.05, which means that there is an influence of the question-answer relationship (QAR) strategy on students' reading interest. The independent sample t-test on reading comprehension ability obtained a significance value of 0.000 < 0.05, which means that the question-answer relationship (QAR) strategy influences students' reading comprehension ability.

### 3.6 Manova Test

Based on the Manova test, a significant value of 0.001 < 0.005 was obtained, so it was stated that the question-answer relationship (QAR) strategy simultaneously affected students' reading interest and reading comprehension ability.

## 4. Discussion

Based on the research results, the question-answer relationship strategy influences students' reading interest and reading comprehension ability. The results of this study support several previous studies that stated that the QAR strategy had a positive effect on students' reading comprehension skills (Anjarwati, 2021; Khasanah, 2016; Subekti et al., 2016; Asiz, 2017). In this study, researchers also proved that the QAR strategy can increase students' interest in reading. The significant effect of the QAR strategy on students' reading interest and reading comprehension skills seems to be influenced by the principle of implementing the QAR strategy; namely, students are trained to combine prior knowledge before reading by making questions related to the text they will read and are trained to dig in-depth information to find answers that according to the questions asked. By asking questions, students are encouraged to predict the possibilities discussed in the reading text. Using appropriate strategies can increase students' interest in reading. We can see that students' reading interest increased in the experimental class that was given the QAR strategy treatment. This aligns with Budianty's opinion that

the QAR strategy is appropriate for improving students' reading skills because QAR learning steps guide students to focus and easily understand reading according to their level (Budianty, 2023).

While teaching reading, questioning is an essential factor in students' reading comprehension (Anggraini, 2021), and that factor is in the QAR strategy step. In addition, this strategy helps students recognize various questions, respond comprehensively to the questions given, and find answers related to the questions asked. (Sartini et al. 2018). Furthermore, the QAR strategy encourages students to identify questions based on their answers (Nurhayati et al., 2019). In addition, it is better to use appropriate strategy training to improve students' reading comprehension. Using QAR as a training strategy can improve metacognitive learning performance and awareness (Gutierrez & Schraw, 2014). When reading, training in techniques related to reading comprehension is helpful to students as an effective way to assist students in understanding texts and to make them aware of the difficulties they face in creating new meanings and finding meaningful information in reading.

## 5. Conclusion

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the question-answer relationship (QAR) strategy can increase students' reading interest and reading comprehension skills so that it can be one of the solutions for teachers in dealing with reading learning problems, especially reading comprehension. However, in implementing the QAR strategy, the teacher must consider the steps to make learning effective.

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