



## Extended Abstract

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# **The Effects of Fiction on Learning Paragraph Writing Skills of Sixth-Grade Elementary School Students**

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## **Introduction**

Writing skills, as one of the four essential skills –listening, speaking, reading, and writing– hold significant importance in elementary education, enabling students to share their ideas, thoughts, and feelings with others through writing. Writing is among the most critical skills, influencing learners' performance across various subjects. Acquiring these skills is vital as they serve as a foundation for learning other subjects, reinforcing the mother tongue, and fostering the intellectual, cultural, and social development of students. Despite the necessity of writing skills in both the learning process and the daily lives of students, most elementary students exhibit inadequate writing proficiency.

A prerequisite for effective writing is the development of paragraph writing skills, which is emphasized during the elementary schools. Creating an appropriate environment to address reading, writing, and comprehension difficulties requires the adoption of new and diverse strategies by teachers. Therefore, this research utilizes narrative literature as a favored method among students to investigate its effectiveness on students' paragraph writing skills.

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**Research Method, Background, and Objective**

The present study was conducted to examine the impact of narrative literature on the acquisition of paragraph writing skills among elementary school students. This research employs a semi-experimental design of pre-test and post-test with a control group. The statistical population includes all sixth-grade students from primary schools in district one of Tehran, while the sample consists of 60 participants, selected through random sampling, divided into an experimental group (30 students) and a control group (30 students). The experimental group received instruction utilizing various forms of narrative literature, while the control group was taught using conventional methods for ten sessions.

Data collection was carried out using a researcher-developed checklist assessing basic and advanced paragraph writing skills. The validity of the tool was confirmed by teachers and experts, and its reliability was established using Cronbach's alpha. The data analysis, conducted using covariance analysis, revealed that narrative literature significantly enhanced students' paragraph writing skills at both the basic and advanced levels.

Related studies also indicate that educational interventions based on language teaching approaches can strengthen writing and composition skills among students. Employing instructional methods such as interactive stories, folktales, poetry, storytelling, sentence combining, modeling from well-written texts, summarization, and peer support leads to improvements in writing skills, grammar, and vocabulary development in elementary students.

**Discussion and Analysis**

In line with the objective of this research, paragraph writing skills were divided into two categories: basic skills (including selecting appropriate topics; indenting the first line; organizing drafts prior to final writing; legibility and adherence to writing conventions; and final reading and review) and advanced skills (including brevity and succinctness; breaking down a general topic into smaller sub-topics; the topic sentence; stating the main message in the first sentence; maintaining coherence and sequence between sentences; and ensuring the sentences are cohesive and complementary). The results obtained from testing the first and the second hypotheses indicated that narrative literature positively impacts the acquisition of both basic and advanced paragraph writing skills for sixth-grade elementary students.

The findings of this study align with other relevant research suggesting that storytelling enhances writing skills, grammar, vocabulary development, and paragraph structuring among elementary students. Therefore, it can be stated that literature plays a significant role in enriching content and providing appropriate thematic diversity for writing and paragraph composition. Literary stories often feature diverse characters, events, and situations that depict various historical, cultural, and social topics, either through real or imaginary adventures, making them inspiring and supportive starting points for students in selecting

writing topics. Moreover, these narratives indirectly prompt students to engage in meticulous writing and pay closer attention to how they craft their texts. Especially when they appreciate the linguistic beauty of the narratives, they become more motivated to write accurately and neatly.

Additionally, the repetitive nature of stories and students' interest in discussing and debating them afterwards significantly contributes to improving reading and final review skills in paragraph writing. Furthermore, narrative literature, particularly oral and folk tales, provides a unique opportunity for generating ideas, interaction, dialogue, and applying succinctness in students' paragraph writing due to its conversational language and improvisational, narrative, and interactive characteristics.

Another explanation could be that success in writing is entirely dependent on the student's vocabulary, imagination, and creativity. Progress in writing cannot be achieved unless these two elements are well developed. Thus, fantasy and imaginative literature, with its creative features, plays a critical role in helping students structure their texts and generate new writing dimensions and concepts through the creation of inspiring characters and the depiction of new worlds. Well-structured literary stories, featuring a coherent and strong composition –comprising an introduction, body, and conclusion– assist students in dividing a general topic into smaller sections and crafting various components to create a coherent and cohesive paragraph.

## Conclusion

The main findings of this research indicate that students exposed to diverse and rich narratives have significantly improved their paragraph writing skills. This improvement was particularly evident in aspects such as the coherence of the content, logical sequence of sentences, use of diverse vocabulary, and enhanced creativity in writing. Therefore, it can be concluded that weaknesses in students' writing and paragraphing skills can largely be addressed through the revision of educational methods and their integration and updating with topics that interest students. Certainly, providing various opportunities, such as establishing libraries in schools and classrooms, creating appropriate spaces for reading non-curricular books, offering collaborative and interactive activities, generating diverse writing situations, integrating writing and paragraphing activities with different literary forms and suitable artistic activities, and using educational tools and materials like flashcards, can significantly contribute to this area.

**Keywords:** narrative literature, elementary education, paragraph writing skills, writing skills

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