Scramble Learning Model with the Assistance of Word Box Media: Beginning Reading Ability of Elementary School Students

Viki Andriyani[1], A Fatoni[2], Anton Tri Hasnanto[3]
[1, 2, 3] Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Intan Lampung, Indonesia

Article Info	ABSTRACT
	Early reading skills are a crucial foundation in elementary school but are often a challenge for first-grade students. Therefore, this study aims to examine the effect of implementing the Scramble learning model mediated by word boxes on improving early reading skills in elementary school students. This study uses a quantitative approach with a pre-experimental research type of one-group pretest-posttest design. The study population was all first-grade students at elementary school 3 Way Galih, South Lampung. The research sample consisted of 38 first-grade students. The instrument used was a written test of early reading skills given in the form of a pretest (before treatment) and a posttest (after treatment). Data analysis was carried out using a paired sample t-test. The results of descriptive statistics showed a significant increase in students' abilities, evidenced by an increase in the average score from 46.18 (pretest) to 69.87 (post test). The results of the paired sample t-test hypothesis test showed a Sig. (2-tailed) value of 0.000. Because the Sig. (0.000) is smaller than alpha = 0.05, then H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted. These results demonstrate that the Scramble learning model with word box media improves word stringing and beginning reading. This study shows that the simple and interactive Scramble learning model, supported by word box media, can help teachers overcome beginning reading difficulties and motivate elementary school students.

Corresponding Author:

Viki Andriyani,
Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Intan Lampung, Indonesia
Email: andriyaniviki1@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesian language classes in elementary schools serve as a subject that can augment student engagement (Amalia & Khaerunnisa, 2022; Salam et al., 2022). Acquiring a language entails mastering the communication of knowledge, skills, creativity, and attitudes. The school curriculum encompasses four facets of language proficiency: auditory comprehension, verbal expression, reading, and written communication (Linggasari & Rochaendi, 2022; Lubis, 2020). Indonesian serves as a vital national communication instrument that unifies the cultural and linguistic diversity

of Indonesia. At the elementary level, the objective of Indonesian language instruction is to cultivate students' linguistic competencies, both oral and written, which underpin the acquisition of other topics (Maritim, 2023; Wibowo et al., 2023). However, numerous problems with the instruction of Indonesian in primary schools arise throughout its execution (Al Farizi, 2019; Fadila et al., 2025; Sukma et al., 2023).

Language is the primary medium for human communication, including sharing information, exchanging ideas, seeking and disseminating knowledge, and so on (Bondi & Cacchiani, 2021; Bonvillain, 2019). Every human being is expected to master language skills to support interactions with other individuals (Permana et al., 2021). Language is a primary instrument for human communication, rendering proficiency in language skills crucial for facilitating social interaction and the dissemination of information (Martyushev et al., 2021). In children, mastering basic language skills—namely reading, writing, and constructing words—is paramount, especially in first grade when students are required to recognize these skills early in their education. Accurate mastery of early reading skills is crucial for students to effectively express their ideas and comprehend various types of information (Amri & Kurniawan, 2023).

Learning to read is crucial for students because reading skills are related to the process of understanding and giving meaning, appropriately utilizing reading material to increase knowledge and insight, thus enhancing their abilities (Nurani et al., 2021; Setiawan et al., 2023). Readers utilize their prior knowledge and experience by observing written symbols, connecting references and words, evaluating, creating, and interpreting what they observe. It can be understood that at the beginning reading level, this transformation process is primarily fostered and mastered, and this is primarily done during childhood, especially in the early years of school (Satriana et al., 2022). The definition of transformation here also includes the introduction of letters as symbols of language sounds. Once students have firmly mastered the transformation of language sounds, emphasis is placed on understanding the content of the reading. In reality, some students still struggle with reading. For students who are not yet able to read, they cannot understand the instructions in the book. Thus, students show discomfort with learning and tend to play alone during the process (Pratiwi & Ariawan, 2017; Hapsari, 2019).

Early reading is a process, namely recording and decoding. In the recording process, learning to read refers to words and sentences, which are then associated with sounds that correspond to the writing system used (Dewi, 2015; Muhyidin, 2017). In the decoding process, reading refers to translating graphic sequences into words. In the early reading stage, children are introduced to the form of the letters of the alphabet from A to Z, and then the letters are pronounced and memorized according to their sounds (Arianto et al., 2024; Danita, 2023). Through reading, students can gain knowledge, insight, information, and new experiences. There are many types of reading skills, one of which is the ability to read early (Maulidiyah, 2022; Rahmawati & Handayani, 2023). This ability serves as the foundation for the subsequent stages of reading. This ability must be possessed by elementary school students, especially for the early grades. If this basic ability is weak, students may face difficulties at the advanced reading stage (Kusmayanti, 2019). By recognizing the letters and sounds of each letter, this process

will give students initial experience to master reading skills. The reading skills acquired in early reading significantly influence their advanced reading skills (Rofi'i & Susilo, 2022).

Early reading aims to provide students with basic knowledge that can be used as a foundation for reading Indonesian and is aimed at strengthening their oral language skills (Arianto et al., 2024; Soleha et al., 2022). So, early reading isn't just about learning to read letters and say them correctly; it's also about learning the basic skills that are important for overall reading success. The importance of early reading instruction is also reflected in various approaches and learning models specifically designed to adapt to the characteristics of children's cognitive and language development (Fahmiyah et al., 2025). Teachers act as facilitators in this context, guiding students through the gradual and engaging process of recognizing letters, words, and sentences (Susilawati et al., 2024; Utsman et al., 2025). With the right method, early reading instruction can increase children's interest in reading while positively impacting other language skills such as writing and speaking.

A preliminary study indicated that the low initial reading performance of first-grade students at Elementary School 3 Way Galih is generally due to the suboptimal use of innovative learning models and learning media that support language development. In this learning environment, the current use of learning models and media fails to effectively stimulate the development of early reading skills; as a result, some students appear to pay less attention when the teacher presents the material. To overcome the problem of early reading skills at elementary school, 3 Way Galih, learning models, and media are needed that can provide solutions to improve students' understanding of early reading, namely by using the scramble learning model with the help of word box media.

Before implementing the scramble learning model, the teacher first prepares the questions or material to be studied, then encourages students to identify answers and solve the problems by distributing question and answer sheets with available alternative answers (Aprilia et al., 2025; Bakar & Zamroni, 2024; Talia & Airlanda, 2025). "Scramble," in an educational context, refers to a learning model that involves playing random words, sentences, or paragraphs (Sari et al., 2025). This model aims to improve students' concentration, thinking speed, and ability to understand and remember lesson material through fun and challenging activities (Acim et al., 2023; Rustam & Ekadayanti, 2023). The Scramble model can be combined effectively with box media, especially in the context of certain learning methods or games.

Word box media is an effective learning tool for improving children's reading and word recognition skills (Usman, 2021; Nisah et al., 2024). This concept involves using a box containing cards with words that children can combine or arrange, making it easier for them to recognize and understand basic words (Setyowati & Imamah, 2023). With this media, students can take word cards from the box and use them as interactive learning materials. Word box media has several main components, such as word cards containing words related to the learning theme, a board or place to attach the cards, and supporting stationery. This media is designed to be easy for students to understand and use, making the learning process more engaging and enjoyable. The use of word boxes

can also facilitate student learning both independently and in groups, thereby increasing their engagement and motivation (Husain et al., 2022).

In this study, we will use the scramble learning model and word boxes to teach first-grade elementary school students how to construct words. Word boxes are a tool that can be used to convey information visually and audibly, making it easier for students to understand the word formation process being taught (Ross & Joseph, 2019). This media can also be an interactive tool, enabling students to communicate and collaborate in groups. Furthermore, using word boxes can enhance student engagement in the learning process by providing a fun and interactive experience. By using the scramble learning model with the aid of word boxes, it is hoped that students will more easily remember and master the new words they have constructed. We urgently need to utilize a fun and effective method to develop basic reading skills. There are several indicators in beginning reading, as follows: (a) the capacity to correlate letters with the phonetic sounds they denote, (b) the advancement of ocular movements for reading from left to right, and (c) the proficiency in reading basic words and sentences. By using an innovative learning model such as Scramble, it is hoped that students can learn in a stimulating way, without feeling burdened, and more easily master the word structure taught (Kavarela & Utomo, 2024; Yuliana & Nurhayati, 2025). In this study, researchers hope to provide a clear picture of how the Scramble learning model assisted by word box media can influence students' mastery of word structure.

While many studies focus on models or media separately, this study addresses this gap by testing the comprehensive effectiveness of a Scramble Learning-based intervention enhanced by Word Box Media. This study is the first to present strong evidence that the combination of active word manipulation (scramble) and concrete visualization (word box) significantly accelerates early childhood students' mastery of beginning reading skills, an aspect rarely explored in depth in integrated learning contexts.

This study aims to examine the influence of the scramble learning model with the help of word box media on the initial reading skills of grade 1 students. Thus, it is hoped that the results of this study can provide a practical overview for educators in implementing effective learning methods to improve basic reading skills.

2. METHOD

This study employs a quantitative research methodology within the experimental research group. The research employed is the pre-experimental design method. This study was performed on a single cohort, specifically the experimental group, who received instruction through the Scramble learning model. This study employs a one-group pretest-posttest research design. This design employs a single group, as the pre-experimental design administers treatment to one patient without a control group. This study involved administering a pretest to students prior to treatment, followed by a posttest at the conclusion of the study to assess the final scores achieved by the students. The data was subsequently analyzed to evaluate the differences in the effects observed. Figure 1 illustrates the design of this investigation.
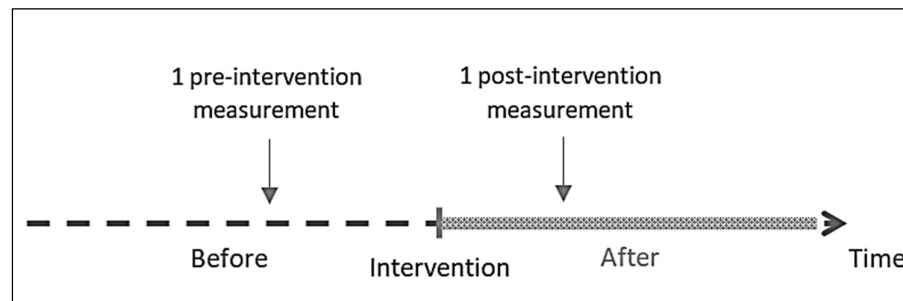
Figure 1. One Group Pre-test – Post-Test Research Design

Much of this study comprised first-grade kids of Elementary School 3 Way Galih. The sample comprised 38 first-grade children. The instrument, an initial reading proficiency assessment, was administered prior to and following the intervention. The instrument employed in this investigation was an assessment. The assessment comprised inquiries regarding the accurate reading of syllables and the proper arrangement of jumbled words. These questions were employed to assess students' initial reading proficiency. The substance of the question was authenticated and sanctioned by a learning specialist to guarantee its alignment with the study objectives. This study employed data collection methods utilizing instruments to assess the dependent variable, beginning reading skills, and the independent variable, the Scramble learning model. The validity of the data was assessed utilizing the Pearson Product Moment method. Simultaneously, data reliability was assessed with the Cronbach's Alpha formula.

The data analysis methods included precondition tests and hypothesis testing. The necessary assessments comprised normality and homogeneity tests. After the preparatory tests, a t-test, or mean difference test, was performed as a benchmark for hypothesis testing. Data analysis is the paramount phase in any research, since it facilitates the derivation of conclusions from the results. A t-test was performed using SPSS to evaluate the significance of the difference in means. The difference in means test was employed to ascertain if the scramble learning model, supplemented by word boxes, affected first reading proficiency.

3. **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Results

This study was performed in Elementary School 3 Way Galih, South Lampung Regency, utilizing an experimental research methodology characterized by a pre-experimental design, namely the One-Group Pretest-Posttest Design. Research data were gathered via reading proficiency assessments administered during the pretest and posttest phases. The pretest was administered before treatment began. The post test was administered following treatment to gather conclusive data on student abilities in both classes. The classifications of student learning results prior to the implementation of the Scramble Learning Model or pretest scores, delineate student learning outcomes, which can be categorized as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Pretest score results

Value Range	Number of Students	Category
0-59	31	Poor
60-69	7	Sufficient
70-79	0	Good
80-89	0	Very Good

Table 1 demonstrates that, before training (treatment/pretest), 31 first-grade pupils displayed reading outcomes below 59, designating them as failing, while 7 students attained scores between 60 and 69, labeling them as deficient. A considerable proportion of kids had insufficient preliminary reading outcomes. Table 2 displays the results of descriptive statistics preceding the implementation of the Scramble learning model, supported by Word Box media, in the initial reading instruction process.

Table 2. Pretest Descriptive Statistics

Statistics	Pre-test Statistical Value
Number of Samples	38
Mean	46,18421
Median	45
Mode	50
Minimum Value	20
Maximum Value	60
Standard Deviation	11,41563

Table 2 illustrates that the mean pretest score for 38 students is 46.18421, reflecting the typical learning outcomes prior to therapeutic intervention. The median, 45, represents the central score among 38 students. The mode is 50, indicating the value that appears most frequently among the 38 recorded student scores. The minimum score is 20, indicating the lowest score attained by students before undergoing treatment. The highest score is 60, indicating the peak score attained by pupils before undergoing treatment. The standard deviation is 11.41563, reflecting the mean value obtained from the calculation procedure. The classifications of student learning outcomes after using a scramble learning model, utilizing word box media, or the posttest scores indicating student reading successes can be categorized according to the student learning outcomes outlined in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Posttest Score Results

Value Range	Number of Students	Category
0-59	2	Poor
60-69	15	Sufficient
70-79	13	Good
80-100	8	Very Good

Table 3 demonstrates that, subsequent to the treatment (post-test), a minority of pupils, precisely 2, displayed inadequate reading outcomes. Conversely, 15 students obtained scores ranging from 60 to 69, designating them as sufficient; 13 students scored between 70 and 79, defining them as good; and 8 students achieved scores from 80 to 100, positioning them in the very good category. The results of descriptive statistics

after implementing the Scramble learning paradigm, supported by Word Box media for initial reading among first-grade elementary pupils, are displayed in Table 4.

Table 4. Posttest Descriptive Statistics

Statistics	Pre-test Statistical Value
Number of Samples	38
Mean	69.86842
Median	70
Mode	70
Minimum Value	50
Maximum Value	95
Standard Deviation	9.62028

Table 4 illustrates that the average posttest score for 38 students is 69.86842, signifying the mean learning results after the treatment. The median score is 70, indicating the central value among 38 students. The mode is 70, indicating the value with the most frequency among the 38 reported student scores. The minimum score is 50, indicating the lowest score attained by students before undergoing treatment. The highest score is 95, indicating the peak score attained by students before undergoing treatment. The standard deviation is 9.62028, indicating the mean value obtained from the calculation procedure. Before conducting the hypothesis test, preliminary evaluations, such as the normality test and the homogeneity test, are performed. The results of the standard evaluation are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Normal Test Results

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pretest	.105	38	.200[*]	.969	38	.354
Posttest	.179	38	.004	.954	38	.125

Table 5 indicates that the significance level for the pretest was 0.354, but for the posttest it was 0.125. The data normality test results for both the experimental and control groups exceeded 0.05, indicating that the data were normally distributed. A homogeneity test was subsequently performed to ascertain whether the data from both classes exhibited homogeneity.

The data analysis revealed a substantial value for initial reading competency in both the pretest and posttest for first grade. The notable value obtained was 0.407, surpassing the 5% significance threshold and 0.05, signifying that the variance of the research data is homogeneous. A hypothesis test was conducted using parametric statistics, especially the Paired Samples Statistics test, to compare the mean results of the pretest and posttest in first grade. The hypothesis test was conducted with SPSS 25 for Windows software.

The Paired Samples Test produced a t-value of -23.450 for the pretest and posttest scores, with 37 degrees of freedom and a two-tailed significance level of 0.000. Since the significance level (0.000) is below 0.05, it can be inferred that a significant difference exists between the pretest and posttest results. The mean difference of -23.684 indicates that the posttest score surpasses the pretest score. Thus, it can be concluded that the participants' skills were enhanced after the implementation of the treatment/intervention. This outcome illustrates the influence of the scramble learning

method, supported by word boxes, on the fundamental reading skills of first-grade students at Elementary School 3 Way Galih.

A Normalized Gain (N-Gain) assessment was conducted to evaluate the improvement of beginning reading skills. The N-Gain test aims to assess the extent of improvement in each student's reading proficiency, as shown by the questions presented. The subsequent results of the N-Gain test were obtained using the SPSS 25 for Windows software, as illustrated in Table 6.

Table 6. Hasil Uji N- Gain

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
N-Gain Score	38	.27	.86	.4489	.12059
N-Gain Percent	38	27.27	85.71	44.8870	12.05851

Table 6 presents the results of the descriptive analysis of the N-Gain value, revealing an average (mean) N-Gain score of 0.4489, which corresponds to 44.89%. This number is within the moderate category, since it lies in the range of $0.3 \leq g < 0.7$. This signifies that student abilities improved following the treatment (post test) relative to prior to the treatment (pretest); however, the enhancement was suboptimal. The implemented learning was successful in enhancing student learning outcomes to a moderate degree.

Discussion

This discussion explores the improvement in students' beginning reading skills after implementing the Scramble Learning Model with the aid of Word Box Media. This analysis uses descriptive tests, assumption tests, paired-samples t-tests, and normalized gain (N-Gain) tests.

Improvement in Learning Outcomes (Pretest vs. Posttest)

The results show a significant improvement in student learning outcomes from the pretest to the posttest phase. Initial Condition (Pretest): Before the treatment, the average student score was 46.18421. Most students (31 out of 38) were in the Poor category (scores below 59), indicating that their beginning reading skills were at an inadequate level. The minimum score was only 59. Posttest: After implementing the Scramble Learning Model with Word Box, the average score increased dramatically to 69.86842. The shift in learning outcome categories was very visible. Only two students remained in the Poor category, eight students reached the Very Acceptable category (scores 80–100), 13 students were in the Acceptable category (scores 70–79), and 15 students were in the Sufficient category (scores 60–69). This average score increase of 23.68 points descriptively indicates the success of the intervention.

Hypothesis Verification and Treatment Effectiveness

The statistical test results provide strong support for the effectiveness of the treatment. The Shapiro-Wilk Normality Test (Sig. = 0.354) and posttest (Sig. = 0.125) data were normally distributed because the significance value exceeded 0.05. The

Homogeneity Test also indicated that the data variance was homogeneous (Sig. = 0.407) because it exceeded 0.05. This condition permitted the use of the parametric hypothesis test, the paired samples t-test. Meanwhile, the test results show a t-value of -23.450 with a two-tailed significance level (Sig.) of 0.000. Since the significance value (0.000) is less than alpha = 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. The rejection of H_0 proves that there is a significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores. The mean difference of -23.684 confirms that the posttest score substantially exceeds the pretest score, which implies that students' reading ability has improved significantly after the intervention.

Normalized Gain (N-Gain) Analysis

To measure the level of improvement in reading ability, the Normalized Gain (N-Gain) test was used. N-Gain Results: The average N-Gain value obtained was 0.4489 or 44.89%. This value of 0.4489 falls within the Moderate category (0.3 < 0.7). Although the hypothesis test showed a highly significant difference, the N-Gain test clarified that the level of improvement achieved was suboptimal or moderate. This indicates that the Scramble Learning Model with Word Box was successful in improving student learning outcomes compared to the initial conditions. However, there is still room for further optimization in the implementation of the learning to achieve a high improvement category.

Relevance to Theory and Practical Contribution

The active characteristics of the Scramble Learning Model and the concrete nature of the Word Box media are responsible for this significant improvement. The Scramble Model encourages students to actively decompose and restructure words or sentences (Acim et al., 2023; Sarumaha & Laiya, 2023). This process trains decoding skills and structural understanding of language at a higher cognitive level than mere memorization. The use of Word Box Media allows students to manipulate word fragments or syllables, providing crucial kinesthetic and visual support for first-grade students in associating symbols (letters) with sounds (phonemes) (Ross & Joseph, 2019). The results of this study confirm that this combination of methods is effective as an intervention to improve early reading skills. Although the improvement is categorized as moderate, these results still indicate that this experimental approach is far superior in addressing the problem of very low learning outcomes at the pretest stage.

The Scramble Learning Model allows students to creatively answer questions or pair concepts by arranging randomly arranged letters (Manik et al., 2024). Students must work in groups for Scramble. Scrambling letters, words, sentences, or paragraphs to construct the proper response might help students answer questions. In addition to the learning model, media help teachers deliver learning resources to meet learning objectives (Hasnanto et al., 2024; Hasnanto, 2025; Hidayah et al., 2020). This supports Meylani (2024) suggestion that teachers can use media as tools, means, intermediaries, and connectors to disseminate and convey messages and ideas, stimulating students' thoughts, feelings, actions, interests, and attention to teach and learn. Using learning

media helps motivate and interest pupils in learning (Intiana et al., 2024; Rohmah et al., 2024). This study used word boxes because they provide images to transmit messages and aid student learning. These boxes encourage children to form words from photographs of concrete items (Khasanah et al., 2024). Word boxes usually have a primary box, material cards, stimulus cards, and a board to attach them to.

The advantages of both qualities made the scramble learning model with word boxes successful in this investigation. Scramble learning involves pupils actively. Students form words from scrambled letters in this language game. Since students must guess the solution using jumbled letters, this model enhances accuracy and speed.

The scramble learning model with word boxes in grade 1 worked well. Since they were actively studying, students focused on location and position terminology. Use of the word "box" showed student interest. Students competed to generate the correct word from scrambled letters in the word box as quickly as possible. This debate shows that using the scramble model with the word box may help first-graders learn to read. Numerous studies indicate that this model improves basic literacy and makes learning more fun and meaningful (Aprilia et al., 2025; Purnama et al., 2024; Sarumaha & Laiya, 2023; Sukerti & Pudjawan, 2020).

This research provides an important theoretical contribution to elementary education literature, particularly related to early reading instruction. This research strengthens the theory that learning involving active manipulation and problem-solving (the Scramble Learning Model) can significantly improve students' basic cognitive skills, particularly decoding skills in early reading. Furthermore, this study provides empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of integrating the Scramble Learning Model with Word Box Media. This combination provides a rarely researched integrated visual-kinesthetic intervention model, filling a gap in the literature, which generally examines models or media separately.

This contribution offers a practical solution that educational practitioners, particularly early grade teachers, can implement. First-grade elementary school teachers received recommendations for learning models proven to significantly improve early reading learning outcomes. The Scramble Learning Model with Word Box Media can be an alternative to address the problem of low learning outcomes in first-grade students. This study offers practical guidance on how simple media such as word boxes can be used to facilitate word reordering activities, directly training students' phonemic awareness and decoding skills, which are essential foundations for basic literacy. By using an easy-to-create and adapt medium (Word Box), this study shows that significant improvements in reading ability can be achieved without the need for sophisticated technology or expensive costs.

4. CONCLUSION

The Scramble learning model, using word boxes, significantly improved the beginning reading skills of first-grade students at elementary school 3 Way Galih. The improvement was demonstrated by a significant difference between pretest and posttest scores after the implementation of the learning model, with a paired sample t-test

significance value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. After the treatment, students' beginning reading skills significantly improved, as evidenced by an average score increase from 46.18 in the pretest to 69.87 in the posttest. This learning model also made the learning process more active, engaging, and enjoyable, motivating students to engage more in beginning reading. Overall, the Scramble learning model, using word boxes, is effective in strengthening the basic literacy skills of first-grade students and can be an alternative strategy for learning Indonesian in lower elementary schools. Therefore, it can be concluded that the Scramble learning model, using word boxes, is effective in beginning reading and can be used as an alternative strategy for learning Indonesian in lower elementary schools to improve students' basic literacy skills.

As a suggestion for teachers and educational practitioners, it is recommended to implement the Scramble learning model with the aid of word boxes as an alternative Indonesian language learning strategy, particularly in strengthening the early reading skills of lower-grade students. Teachers need to adapt the game format and word difficulty level to the students' abilities to make learning more effective and enjoyable. For schools, it is hoped that they can facilitate teachers by providing supporting learning media such as word boxes and other visual aids, as well as providing training on the application of innovative learning models that can foster reading interest and student activeness from an early age. For future researchers, it is recommended to develop this study with an experimental design involving a control group so that the results obtained are stronger in demonstrating the effect of the Scramble learning model on early reading skills. Add other variables, such as learning motivation, reading interest, or early writing skills, to see the continued impact of the Scramble model implementation. Conduct research across diverse grade and school levels to ascertain the model's effectiveness in various educational contexts. Combine the Scramble model with digital learning media or interactive technology to adapt to developments in the 21st-century learning era.

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