

# TRAINING ON STRENGTHENING BASIC LITERACY FOR ELEMENTARY, JUNIOR HIGH, AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL LEVELS AT TAMAN LOKOMOTIF BOJONEGORO

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## ABSTRACT

Despite the rapid advancement of technology and artificial intelligence, the ability to write remains irreplaceable. Writing is an integral part of the government's literacy movement, which is actively promoted across all levels of education, from elementary schools to universities. Efforts to improve literacy are crucial to ensure that students can effectively absorb and process knowledge. Literacy also plays a vital role in fostering reading and writing interest within communities. To support this goal, the government, in collaboration with lecturers, teachers, and parents, is consistently providing guidance and support for literacy programs. The ability to read and write is expected to be evenly distributed across Indonesia. In response to this, the PKM Program of ITB Tuban is taking part by offering basic literacy strengthening training for elementary, junior high, and senior high school students in the Bojonegoro area. Developing literacy skills requires a comprehensive and dedicated approach to ensure its successful implementation.

**Keywords:** *Writing, Basic Literacy Strengthening, Elementary, Junior High, Senior High School.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

In today's rapidly evolving world, writing remains an irreplaceable skill — one that is not only essential for communication but also valuable for future professional opportunities. This training program is designed to expand students' knowledge, instill discipline, strengthen literacy, and raise awareness of the growing importance of writing skills. As Scott Galloway, a successful entrepreneur and author, emphasizes, "The ability to tell a story, to write clearly and persuasively, will be among the most valuable and highly paid skills in the future" (Galloway, 2023). Thus, writing is no longer just an academic exercise; it is an investment in a student's future.

This literacy and writing training program targets elementary, junior high, and senior high school students, guiding them through the essential stages of developing strong writing skills. Participants will learn to articulate ideas clearly, present arguments supported by data, and visualize information through infographics and slideshows—making writing a multidimensional skill.

However, challenges to literacy remain significant. Many children have limited access to books, relying solely on school workbooks (LKS), and often lack support and motivation from their immediate environment. Reading is still perceived as a passive activity, and literacy awareness is minimal in many areas. High school students, for instance, still struggle with basic sentence construction, and their interest in books has diminished due to prolonged exposure to digital devices. This situation calls for urgent intervention—particularly through enjoyable and engaging literacy-based activities.

To address these concerns, the Entrepreneurship Study Program at the Institut Teknologi dan Bisnis Tuban is implementing a literacy training model in outdoor settings such as public parks. These natural environments offer a fresh and enjoyable approach to reading and writing, providing a relaxing yet stimulating atmosphere that fosters creativity. Activities are conducted weekly, with students grouped according to their educational level. Each session brings a wide range of books and writing materials, ensuring participants have access to diverse resources. The primary goal is to inspire, motivate, and empower students to engage meaningfully with reading and writing.

This community service initiative is led by Siti Nur Aisya Putri, S.Hum., M.Hum, a lecturer in the Entrepreneurship Program at the Institut Teknologi dan Bisnis Tuban, with academic expertise in literature and linguistics. As an active writer of both fiction and nonfiction, she brings a deep understanding of the

writing process and a passion for fostering literacy. Her involvement ensures that the program is not only theoretically grounded but also creatively rich and relevant to students' real-world needs.

The training focuses on fiction and nonfiction writing, aiming to make literacy more effective and students more confident and productive in creating literary works. It also includes scientific writing sessions to help students prepare for academic competitions and writing contests. By blending creativity with structure, the program nurtures both expressive and critical thinking skills, paving the way for a generation of articulate, thoughtful, and future-ready writers.

## II. METHODOLOGY

This activity employed a writing skills training method focused on both fiction and nonfiction writing. The training sessions were designed to be practical, interactive, and contextually relevant, with a strong emphasis on encouraging creative expression and critical thinking. Participants were given opportunities to read various books brought by the facilitator, serving as models and inspiration for their own writing. Exposure to diverse texts not only stimulated imagination but also broadened vocabulary and improved language structures, which are essential for effective writing (Krashen, 2004).

To foster a more inspiring and relaxed learning atmosphere, the training was conducted in open public spaces—specifically city parks. Outdoor environments have been shown to positively impact creativity and reduce anxiety, making them ideal settings for literacy development (Kuo, 2015). The change in environment from the typical classroom setting allowed students to engage more deeply with the writing process and find real-life inspiration for their stories and essays.

A key component of the training involved storytelling sessions, where students were invited to orally share personal reflections and narratives. This activity served as a warm-up to help participants develop their spoken vocabulary and narrative structure before transitioning to written form. As emphasized by Egan (1986), storytelling is a powerful pedagogical tool that bridges oral and written literacy and deepens learners' engagement with language.

The overarching aim of the program was to guide students to become proficient in writing fiction and nonfiction works, while also preparing them for academic writing competitions and enhancing their basic literacy. To achieve this,

the content of the training included practical modules on planning, structuring, and drafting literary texts. Participants were introduced to the steps of writing—from brainstorming to editing—and were taught how to incorporate data, character development, and narrative coherence into their work.

To ensure personalized and effective learning, participants were divided into small groups based on their education levels (elementary, junior high, senior high). Each group received focused mentoring, and participants were trained progressively until they were able to independently produce a complete fiction or nonfiction manuscript. This tailored approach allowed facilitators to address the unique writing needs of each group and support them in overcoming individual challenges.

### III. RESULTS

The success of the writing training program was influenced by several key factors: a conducive learning environment, participant discipline, and strong intrinsic motivation to pursue productive literacy. These elements played a central role in shaping the overall effectiveness of the program. Creating a two-way, interactive training approach also proved essential, as it allowed for real-time feedback, enabling facilitators to identify and address participants' weaknesses while enhancing their strengths.



Figure 1. Training Program Held by the Author

One of the core outcomes observed was the heightened awareness among students about the importance of effective literacy. As they engaged in scientific, fiction, and nonfiction writing, students began to understand that structured

writing not only improves their communication but also sharpens their critical thinking and cognitive organization. This aligns with prior research, which suggests that structured literacy practices lead to more coherent thought processes and better academic outcomes (Graham & Perin, 2007).

The training served a dual purpose: it not only equipped students with writing skills for daily academic tasks but also prepared them to participate in scientific writing competitions. As a result, students were no longer confused or hesitant when tasked with writing fiction or nonfiction narratives. Many of them expressed increased confidence in developing original work, and several completed drafts of their own creative and academic texts by the end of the session.



Figure 2. The Audiences were Divided into Several Groups

The event was held on January 29, 2025, at Taman Lokomotif Bojonegoro, and was attended by 10 student participants from elementary to senior high school levels. Prior to the main session, students received a motivational briefing on the importance of effective literacy, including an orientation on the government's mandatory literature curriculum, which provided context for the significance of structured writing in formal education. This preliminary step helped build enthusiasm and focused the participants' attention on the goals of the program.

Following the introductory session, students were divided into small groups to receive hands-on training in composing fiction, nonfiction, and scientific texts. The sessions were guided directly by a university lecturer with expertise in

language and literature, ensuring that each participant received targeted feedback and guidance throughout the writing process.



Figure 3. The Audiences Enjoyed the Program

By the end of the training, participants had not only gained new knowledge but also produced tangible outputs in the form of draft manuscripts. The use of open public spaces and flexible scheduling helped make the process enjoyable and accessible, supporting the notion that literacy activities, when well-planned and purpose-driven, can thrive even in informal learning environments.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

The implementation of this writing and literacy training demonstrates how structured and engaging literacy activities can significantly enhance students' skills in both creative and academic writing. The use of open spaces, such as city parks, proved effective in fostering a relaxed and inspiring environment for writing. This supports the idea that informal, outdoor learning contexts can stimulate creativity and reduce psychological barriers to expression, especially among younger learners (Rickinson et al., 2004).

The effectiveness of the program was closely tied to the interactive and student-centered approach employed during the training. Active involvement in storytelling, group discussions, and hands-on writing exercises helped participants internalize literacy concepts more deeply. According to Vygotsky

(1978), learning is most effective when it occurs within a social context, where learners can engage in dialogue, reflection, and guided practice. The dialogic nature of the training enabled students to receive constructive feedback in real-time and encouraged them to refine their ideas continuously.

Another important finding is that early exposure to structured writing practices can reshape students' perceptions of literacy from being passive and burdensome to being purposeful and empowering. As Graham and Hebert (2010) suggest, regular writing practice not only enhances writing skills but also improves reading comprehension, as both activities share overlapping cognitive processes. This reciprocal relationship was evident as students began to articulate their ideas more clearly and develop stronger narrative coherence.

The success of the activity also reaffirms the crucial role of teacher/facilitator expertise in guiding literacy development. The presence of a lecturer with a background in humanities and linguistics provided academic depth and practical insight, allowing students to engage with writing not just as a school task but as a tool for expression and future achievement. The training also aligned with the framework of "productive literacy," where students are not merely consuming texts but are actively creating new knowledge through writing (Lankshear & Knobel, 2006).

Furthermore, the training addressed one of the most common barriers in student writing: lack of confidence and clarity in starting and structuring written work. By providing clear steps and ongoing mentoring, the program allowed participants to break down the writing process into manageable components—brainstorming, outlining, drafting, and revising. This step-by-step approach supports the writing process model, which emphasizes recursive stages of planning, translating, and reviewing as essential to producing quality texts (Flower & Hayes, 1981).

Ultimately, the literacy training served as a transformative experience for the participants. It empowered them with tangible skills and instilled a sense of agency in expressing their thoughts through written words. The results of this initiative highlight the need for sustained, context-sensitive, and well-facilitated literacy programs to cultivate a generation of confident, articulate, and critical young writers.

## V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Writing training is a fundamental skill that every student should acquire throughout their educational journey. In this context, the implementation of effective literacy practices becomes not only necessary but also urgent. The Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud) has mandated the integration of mandatory literature into school curricula, underscoring the importance of providing comprehensive training and exposure to both literary and literacy-based competencies.

The ability to write fiction, nonfiction, and academic texts is no longer an optional skill—it is a critical component of academic and personal development. Therefore, focused mentorship and continuous writing training must be prioritized at every level of education. In an era where digital technology and artificial intelligence are rapidly advancing, writing remains one of the uniquely human skills that cannot be fully replicated or replaced. It is through writing that students articulate their thoughts, reflect on knowledge, and present structured arguments—skills essential for success across disciplines.

Students who are proficient and productive in writing tend to excel more easily, as they possess the tools to express their understanding clearly and confidently. At the elementary, junior high, and senior high school levels, the cultivation of effective literacy enables learners to absorb and organize knowledge in a coherent and systematic way.

Furthermore, the fulfillment of Kemendikbud's mandatory literature program requires that schools not only introduce literary texts but also ensure that students are equipped with the necessary skills to analyze, interpret, and produce literary works. In this light, the integration of writing training is not merely supplementary—it is central to achieving national educational goals.

## VI. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The success of this writing and literacy training initiative would not have been possible without the support and collaboration of many parties. First and foremost, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Institut Teknologi dan Bisnis Tuban, particularly the Entrepreneurship Study Program, for their full support and encouragement in initiating and implementing this program.

Our heartfelt thanks go to the students and school representatives from Bojonegoro, whose enthusiastic participation and commitment contributed greatly to the success of the training. Special appreciation is also extended to the



local government of Bojonegoro, for allowing the use of Taman Lokomotif as an open, inspiring space for learning.

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