

## BRIEF READING, SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A 15 MINUTE READING HABITUATION PROGRAM USING PICTURE STORYBOOKS TO STRENGTHEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' CHARACTER

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### ABSTRACT

Strengthening character education at the elementary school level is increasingly important in addressing contemporary educational challenges. One practical strategy widely implemented in schools is a 15-minute reading habituation program utilizing picture storybooks. This study aims to systematically examine the contribution of short reading habituation using picture storybooks to the development of elementary school students' character. This research employed a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach by analyzing relevant national and international journal articles published between 2022 and 2025. Data were collected from reputable academic databases and analyzed descriptively to identify key patterns related to literacy practices, character formation, and the pedagogical role of picture storybooks. The findings indicate that consistent short-duration reading activities effectively support the internalization of character values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, empathy, and cooperation. Picture storybooks facilitate value transmission through narrative and visual elements that align with children's cognitive and emotional development, enabling moral learning to occur naturally and enjoyably. In conclusion, the 15-minute reading habituation program using picture storybooks represents a simple yet sustainable literacy-based strategy for strengthening character education in elementary schools when implemented consistently and supported by a conducive school environment.

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## INTRODUCTION

Reading literacy constitutes a fundamental component of elementary education because it supports the development of students' cognitive, emotional, and social capacities (Keogh & McGillicuddy, 2025; Pratiwi et al., 2024). At the elementary school level, reading is not only positioned as a technical skill for comprehending written texts, but also as a medium for internalizing character values and life skills (Sabilarrahmah et al., 2025; Fitriani, 2025). Accordingly, efforts to cultivate reading habits from an early age have become a strategic priority within the education system (Oktaviana et al., 2025; Afifah et al., 2025).

Responding to this need, the government has promoted school literacy initiatives through various policies, including the implementation of a 15-minute reading activity conducted before formal instruction begins (Septiani & Wardhana, 2022). This program is designed as a practical and sustainable form of reading habituation that can be applied consistently in school settings (Harahap, 2024). Although the allocated time is relatively short, several studies suggest that the activity can yield meaningful outcomes when supported by a conducive learning environment and continuous implementation (Munir, 2024; Siregar, 2025).

However, empirical conditions indicate that elementary school students' interest in reading remains relatively low (Pujiyanti, 2022; Dewi et al., 2025). Many students tend to view reading as an academic obligation rather than a personal need or enjoyable activity (Cremin & Scholes, 2024). This situation is further influenced by excessive gadget use and limited access to reading materials that align with students' developmental characteristics. Consequently, the potential of reading activities as a medium for character development has not been optimally realized (Kar et al., 2025).

Within this context, picture storybooks offer a relevant and effective literacy medium for elementary students (Pramesti & Cahyaningtyas, 2025; Dita et al., 2024). By integrating simple narrative texts with attractive visual illustrations, picture storybooks facilitate students' comprehension of story content and the moral messages embedded within it (Chen et al., 2023; Pebriyani et al., 2025). Through story characters and plots that reflect everyday experiences, values such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, cooperation, empathy, and social awareness can be developed implicitly and meaningfully (Chen et al., 2025; Sukma et al., 2025).

Although previous studies have examined reading literacy, character education, and the use of picture storybooks independently, comprehensive reviews that synthesize these aspects within the context of school literacy programs remain limited. Therefore, this article aims to systematically review research findings related to the implementation of a 15-minute reading habituation program using picture storybooks in strengthening elementary school students' character through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach. This review is expected to provide both theoretical and empirical insights for teachers, schools, and policymakers in optimizing literacy programs so that they function not merely as routine activities, but as meaningful and sustainable strategies for character development.

## METHOD

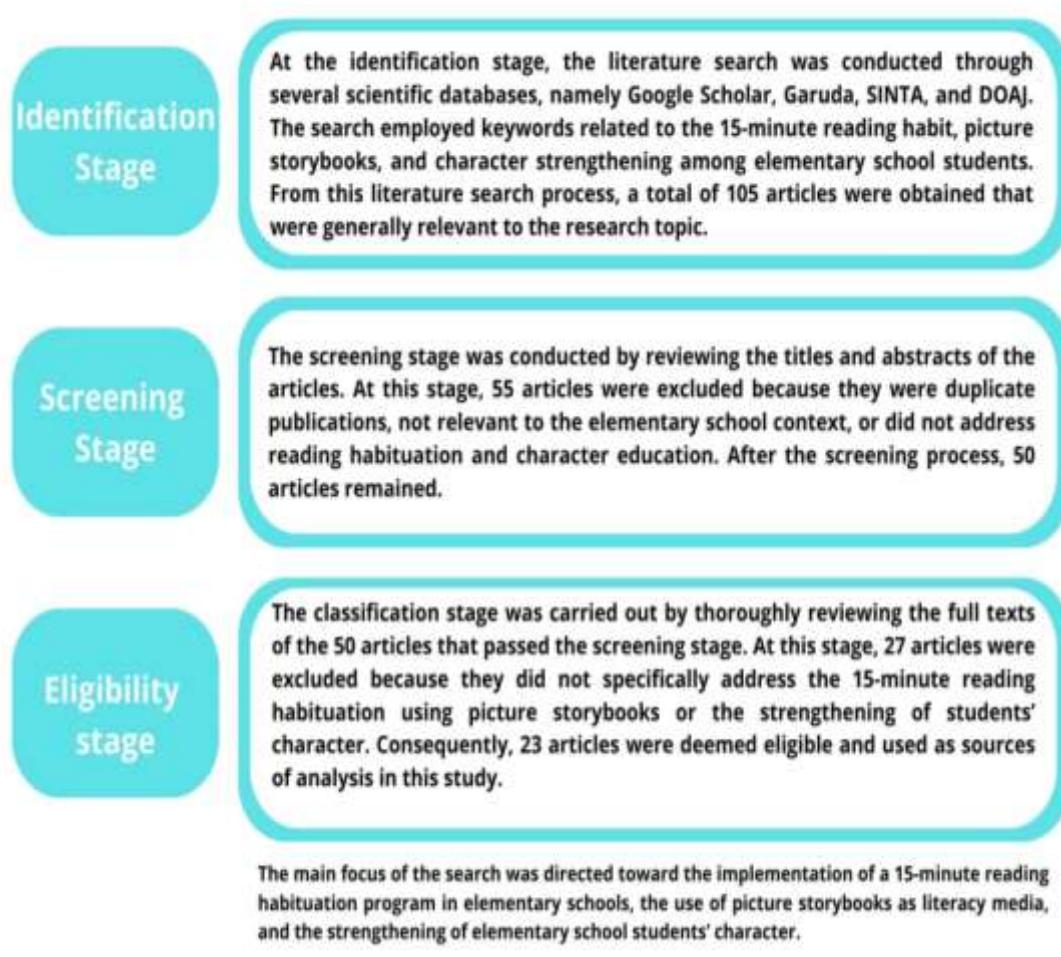
This study adopts a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to examine in depth the practice of a 15 minute reading habituation program using picture storybooks in strengthening the character of elementary school students (Yudistira, 2025). The SLR approach was chosen as it enables the systematic gathering, critical examination, and synthesis of relevant research findings, thereby allowing a nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the topic. Data sources were drawn from scientific articles published in national and international journals in the fields of elementary education and literacy within the period of 2022–2025. Literature retrieval was conducted through databases such as Google Scholar, Garuda, ERIC, SINTA, and DOAJ, employing keywords related to reading habituation, picture storybooks, character education, and elementary school learners. The selected articles met the relevance criteria of the review and demonstrated direct alignment with the research focus. The collected studies were subsequently subjected to descriptive analysis by examining research objectives, methodological designs, and

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principal findings reported by the authors. The analysis specifically emphasized the influence of the 15-minute reading habituation program using picture storybooks on the strengthening of elementary school students' character. The synthesized findings were then used to draw overarching conclusions and to illustrate the contribution of brief yet continuous reading practices to character formation.

**Figure 1.** PRISMA Flow of the Systematic Literature Review (Yudistira, 2025)



## RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents the results of the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) focusing on the implementation of a 15-minute reading habituation program using picture storybooks to strengthen elementary school students' character. The reviewed articles were identified through reputable academic databases within a clearly defined publication range, ensuring the credibility and relevance of the data sources.

The article selection process followed the PRISMA framework, which consisted of identification, screening, and eligibility stages. At the identification stage, articles were collected using specific keywords related to reading literacy, character education, picture storybooks, and elementary education. During the screening stage, duplicated records and articles that did not align with the research focus were excluded. The eligibility stage involved a full-text assessment to ensure methodological relevance and alignment with the objectives of this review.

The selected articles met predefined inclusion criteria, including relevance to elementary literacy development, character education, and the use of picture storybooks within a school literacy context. Only empirical studies published within the specified time frame and accessible in full text were included. Conversely, studies focusing on secondary education, non-literacy-based interventions, or lacking clear methodological descriptions were excluded from the analysis.

The results of the review are summarized in Table 1, which provides a structured overview of the authors, publication year, article titles, key findings or thematic focus, and relevance to the present study. This tabulation enables a systematic comparison across studies and highlights dominant trends related to the effectiveness of the 15-minute reading program in fostering students' character values. Through this synthesis, the table serves as a foundation for further analytical discussion regarding the contribution of picture storybooks to character strengthening in elementary school literacy practices.

**Table 1.** Article Review

No	Author(s) & Year	Article Title	Findings / Theme	Title Relevance
1.	Amirah et al. (2022)	Development of Picture Storybook in Digital Form	Picture storybooks support children's language and cognitive development.	Strengthening the suitability of picture storybook media for elementary school students.
2.	Amreta et al. (2025)	Implementation of the School Literacy Culture Movement	Reading before lessons enhances mental readiness and literacy skills.	Supporting the reflective function of the 15 minute reading activity.
3.	Andini & Suriani (2024)	The Effect of 15-Minute Reading Before Learning	A short duration enhances reading interest and literacy skills.	Strengthening the effectiveness of short reading duration.
4.	Apriyani (2024)	Fostering Reading Habits through Reading Corner	Short reading programs help maintain focus and prevent fatigue.	Supporting the psychological aspects of the 15-minute duration.
5.	Crawford et al. (2024)	Picturebooks and Young Children	Picture books have strong potential in meaningful learning.	Strengthening the role of picture stories as value-based media.
6.	Farrar et al. (2024)	Thinking and Learning Through Images	Visual elements deepen children's understanding and moral literacy.	Supporting a visual narrative approach without a didactic impression.
7.	Gulo et al. (2025)	Character Education through Picture Stories	Picture stories are effective in instilling character values.	Relevant to character internalization through narrative.
8.	Lestari & Ramadan (2025)	Impact of the 15-Minute Reading Program	The 15-minute program enhances students' literacy culture.	Supporting the sustainability of reading habituation.

No	Author(s) & Year	Article Title	Findings / Theme	Title Relevance
9.	Maratusholihah & Wibowo (2022)	Character Education Through Habituation	Habituation and role modeling are effective in shaping character.	Serving as a theoretical foundation for reading habituation.
10.	Mou (2024)	Visual Storytelling in Learning	Text and visuals enhance imagination and meaning-making.	Strengthening the effectiveness of picture stories.
11.	Nadifa & Zulvani (2024)	School Literacy Policy	School literacy supports the strengthening of values and skills.	Supporting the context of school literacy policy.
12.	Nizma & Kusumawardani (2023)	15-Minute Extensive Reading Approach	Short reading activities create a conducive classroom atmosphere.	Supporting the pedagogical impact of reading before lessons.
13.	Nurpratiwi et al. (2025)	Effectiveness of Self-Selected Reading	Consistent reading improves comprehension and motivation.	Strengthening the importance of reading continuity.
14.	Nurya & Saputra (2023)	Internalization of Character Values in the School Literacy Movement (SLM)	Routine literacy activities serve as a medium for the internalization of character values.	Supporting the role of short reading activities in character education.
15.	Paranoan et al. (2024)	Influence of Picture Story Books	Picture stories enhance students' interest and comprehension.	Strengthening the advantages of picture story media.
16.	Rahmadhani & Dahlan (2023)	Internalization of the Character Value of Reading Interest	Literacy programs foster the character of reading interest.	Supporting the strategic conclusions of the study.
17.	Khaeratul et al. (2025)	Implementation of Literacy Movement Program	Literacy programs are flexible across various school contexts.	Supporting the generalization of program implementation.
18.	Rohyana et al. (2025)	Daily 15-Minute Literacy Program	Consistency has a greater impact than longer duration.	Strengthening the argument for short yet sustained duration.
19.	Rosdiana (2022)	Literacy through Picture Storybooks	Picture books influence students' character.	Serving as a primary reference for the relationship between literacy and character.
20.	Safitri et al. (2023)	Strengthening the Character of Reading Interest	Literacy as a preventive strategy and a means of character strengthening.	Supporting character education through reading.
21.	Septiani & Wardhana (2022)	15-Minute Reading Literacy	The program increases elementary school students' reading interest.	Strengthening the effectiveness of reading habituation.
22.	Septianingrum et al. (2023)	Cultivating the Character of Reading Interest	Literacy habituation instills a reading oriented character.	Relevant to the goals of character development.

No	Author(s) & Year	Article Title	Findings / Theme	Title Relevance
23.	Yulianti et al. (2021)	Cultivating the Literacy habituation is effective in fostering character. Character of Reading Interest	Supporting a long-term habituation approach.	

Source: Processed from reviewed articles (2022–2025).

The following article review classification table presents the grouping of articles based on the main themes and core issues addressed in each study. Each theme is accompanied by relevant articles that serve as sources for the review, along with an explanation of their relevance to the research title, namely the 15-minute reading habituation program using picture storybooks in strengthening elementary school students' character. This presentation aims to clarify the contribution of each article to the research focus under investigation. Accordingly, the table helps demonstrate the alignment between the literature review and the research objectives in a systematic and structured manner.

**Table 2.** Classification of Reviewed Articles Based on Research Focus

No	Main Theme	Core Discussion	Relevant Articles	Relevance to the Research Title
1.	Short Reading (15 Minute Reading Habituation)	The effectiveness of short reading duration, consistency, focus, and students' learning readiness	Andini & Suriani (2024); Apriyani (2024); Septiani & Wardhana (2022); Nizma & Kusumawardani (2023); Amreta et al. (2025); Rohyana et al. (2025); Nurpratiwi et al. (2025)	Representing the concept of short reading as a core strategy
2.	Picture Storybooks as a Learning Medium	The role of narrative and visuals in meaning-making, imagination, and value transmission	Amirah et al. (2022); Crawford et al. (2024); Farrar et al. (2024); Mou (2024); Paranoan et al. (2024); Nadifa & Zulvani (2024); Gulo et al. (2025)	Explaining the selection of picture storybooks as the primary medium
3.	Significant Impact on the Strengthening of Elementary School Students' Character	Internalization of character values through literacy, habituation, role modeling, and school culture	Rosdiana (2022); Nurya & Saputra (2023); Rahmadhani & Dahlan (2023); Safitri et al. (2023); Maratussholihah & Wibowo (2022); Yulianti et al. (2021); Septianingrum et al. (2023); Lestari & Ramadan (2025); Khaeratul et al. (2025)	Strengthening the phrase "significant impact" in the character development of elementary school students

Source: Processed from reviewed articles (2022–2025).

The 15 minute short reading habituation program using picture storybooks demonstrates strategic potential in supporting the strengthening of elementary school students' character (Rosdiana, 2022). Conceptually, routine short reading activities function as an initial stimulus for building a literacy culture while also serving as a medium for the internalization of character values (Nurya & Saputra, 2023). Picture storybooks are positioned not only as reading materials but also as value-based learning media that align with the cognitive and affective developmental stages of

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elementary school students (Crawford et al., 2024; Amirah et al., 2022). It can be concluded that the 15-minute short reading habituation program using picture storybooks is a simple yet effective strategy for fostering a literacy culture while sustainably strengthening the character of elementary school students.

The results of the theoretical review indicate that short yet consistent reading duration can create a learning experience that does not burden students, thereby increasing their acceptance of reading activities (Andini & Suriani, 2024; Nurpratiwi et al., 2025). Picture stories present a combination of text and visuals that facilitate meaning comprehension, strengthen imagination, and help students relate moral messages to everyday life situations (Mou, 2024; Putri et al., 2025). Character values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, empathy, and cooperation can be conveyed implicitly through storylines and characters that are closely connected to children's world (Gulo et al., 2025). Based on the theoretical review, consistent short reading habituation using picture stories is effective in enhancing reading interest while also serving as a medium for the natural and contextual internalization of character values among elementary school students.

In addition, the 15 minute reading habituation program provides students with reflective space before entering core learning activities (Amreta et al., 2025). Pedagogically, this practice contributes to students' mental readiness, enhances learning focus, and helps create a more conducive classroom atmosphere (Nizma et al., 2023). The review findings indicate that short reading habituation has a substantial impact in the context of character formation, even when implemented within a limited time frame (Septianingrum et al., 2023). It can be concluded that a 15-minute reading habituation activity conducted before lessons not only improves students' mental readiness and learning focus but also makes a significant contribution to character development, despite its short duration.

The 15 minute reading habituation program using picture storybooks can be understood as a preventive and reinforcing strategy for character education (Safitri et al., 2023). From the perspective of character education theory, character formation is achieved not only through explicit value instruction but also through repeated habituation and role modeling (Maratussholihah & Wibowo, 2022). This short reading activity serves as a form of habituation that allows character values to be gradually embedded in students' awareness (Yulianti et al., 2021). It can be concluded that the 15 minute reading habituation program using picture storybooks is an effective form of habituation for gradually instilling character values through continuous reinforcement and role modeling.

Picture storybooks have advantages as instructional media because they present values through narrative rather than normative instruction (Paranoan et al., 2024). This narrative approach aligns with theories of children's moral development, which emphasize that children more easily understand concepts of right and wrong through stories and concrete examples (Nadifa & Zulvani, 2024). Visual elements in picture storybooks strengthen moral messages and help students interpret meanings more deeply without feeling lectured or instructed in a didactic manner (Farrar et al., 2024). It can be concluded that picture storybooks are effective media for instilling character values, as their narrative and visual approaches enable students to understand moral messages naturally without a didactic impression.

The 15 minute reading duration, although relatively short, represents a key strength of the program. Psychologically, the limited time helps maintain students' attention and prevents boredom (Apriyani, 2024). Consistency of implementation is more important than the length of reading time, as substantial impact is not produced by momentary intensity but by the continuity of activities carried out on a daily basis (Rohyana et al., 2025). It can be concluded that the 15-minute reading duration serves as a program strength by maintaining students' focus, while consistent implementation is the primary factor determining its long-term impact on character formation.

Conceptually, the implementation of a 15-minute reading habituation program using picture storybooks reflects a humanistic and contextual educational approach (Lestari & Ramadan, 2025). This program does not rely on specific empirical conditions, but can be flexibly implemented across various school contexts (Septiani & Wardhana, 2022). Therefore, short reading habituation can be viewed as a simple yet fundamental strategy for sustainably building elementary school students' character (Rahmadhani & Dahlan, 2023; Khaeratul et al., 2025). It can be concluded that

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the 15-minute reading habituation program using picture storybooks represents a humanistic, flexible, and simple yet fundamental approach to sustainable character development among elementary school students.

## CONCLUSION

The 15-minute reading habituation program using picture storybooks represents a simple yet meaningful educational strategy for strengthening elementary school students' character. Despite its brief duration, this activity demonstrates a significant influence when implemented consistently and aligned with students' cognitive and affective development. Picture storybooks serve as effective narrative media for internalizing character values in a natural and non-instructional manner, allowing students to interpret moral messages through contextual story experiences.

Analytically, the main strength of this program lies in its integration of literacy development and character education through sustained habituation. Short, routine reading activities not only enhance students' reading interest but also support psychological readiness and create a positive learning atmosphere at the beginning of the learning process.

From a practical perspective, this review implies that teachers can utilize picture storybooks as accessible literacy media to embed character values without adding instructional burden or extending learning time. Schools are encouraged to institutionalize the 15-minute reading activity as part of daily literacy practices by providing age-appropriate storybooks and creating a supportive reading environment. Furthermore, policymakers may consider strengthening literacy policies by emphasizing the role of narrative-based reading activities as a foundation for character education in elementary schools. Overall, the 15-minute reading habituation program can be viewed as a holistic and sustainable approach to character development that is feasible for broad implementation across diverse elementary school contexts.

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