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Enhancing literacy competence of 5th-grade students at SDN 3 Kerticala through learning assistance

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ABSTRACT

The Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia has implemented Kurikulum Merdeka policy to improve the quality of education. This policy contains assessment points covering literacy and numeracy. One of the instruments used in this policy is Asesmen Kompetensi Minimum (AKM), a tool for teachers to analyze student learning outcomes. To help teachers improve student literacy, a team of Kampus Mengajar Program batch 5 at SDN 3 Kerticala carried out community service that focused on helping the learning process of class V students at SDN 3 Kerticala. In this community service, 12 students of SDN 3 Kerticala took part in a learning assistance program run by a team of students from the Kampus Mengajar program. Implementing community service activities is filled with activities that can increase student literacy and play an essential role in assisting teachers in measuring and assessing student achievement at AKM. Data from the trial results after the implementation of learning assistance shows that the percentage of students who achieve competency has increased compared to the results obtained before the assistance. During the implementation of the assistance program, it was found that students needed to achieve specific competencies optimally. These findings can encourage teachers to optimize teaching and learning strategies that align with students' needs and learning styles.

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ABSTRAK

Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia telah menerapkan kebijakan Kurikulum Merdeka untuk meningkatkan kualitas pendidikan. Kebijakan ini berisi pokok penilaian yang meliputi literasi dan numerasi. Salah satu instrumen yang digunakan dalam kebijakan ini adalah Asesmen Kompetensi Minimum (AKM), yang berperan sebagai alat bagi guru untuk menganalisis hasil belajar siswa. Untuk membantu guru mengupayakan peningkatan literasi siswa, tim mahasiswa Program Kampus Mengajar Angkatan 5 yang bertugas di SDN 3 Kerticala melaksanakan pengabdian kepada masyarakat yang difokuskan pada pendampingan proses pembelajaran peserta didik kelas V di SDN 3 Kerticala. Pada pengabdian ini, terdapat 12 peserta didik dari SDN 3 Kerticala yang mengikuti program pendampingan belajar yang dijalankan oleh tim mahasiswa program Kampus Mengajar. Pelaksanaan kegiatan pengabidan diisi dengan aktivitas yang dapat meningkatkan literasi peserta didik dan berperan penting dalam membantu guru dalam mengukur dan menilai pencapaian peserta didik pada AKM. Hasil dari data uji coba setelah pelaksanaan pendampingan pembelajaran menunjukkan bahwa persentase siswa yang mencapai kompetensi mengalami peningkatan dibandingkan dengan hasil yang diperoleh sebelum melaksanakan pendampingan. Selama pelaksanaan program pendampingan, ditemukan bahwa beberapa kompetensi tertentu tidak dicapai oleh peserta didik secara maksimal. Temuan ini dapat dijadikan perhatian bagi para guru untuk mengoptimalkan strategi belajar mengajar yang lebih sesuai dengan kebutuhan dan gaya belajar siswa.

Kata Kunci: *AKM; kompetensi literasi; kompetensi numerasi; pendampingan belajar.*

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INTRODUCTION

The transformation of education in the 21st century has changed the form of education from conventional to digital. This requires students to be able to keep pace with global developments by acquiring learning and innovation skills, as well as the ability to utilise technological developments and apply their life skills effectively (Hardhienata *et al*., 2021). According to Jennifer R. Nichols and M. Hosnan, 21st-century skills can be developed through: (1) critical thinking and problem-solving skills, (2) communication skills, (3) creativity and innovation skills, and (4) collaboration skills (Angga *et al*., 2022). Schools, as places of learning for students, play a crucial role in equipping them with the skills they need to face the challenges of the times. To master these skills, various programs have been initiated to enable students to understand and apply what they have learned, aligning with national education goals, thereby developing students' potential in several aspects, including spiritual, social, and academic aspects (Wati *et al*., 2022).

The Ministry of Education and Culture has determined that the public needs to master six basic literacies, namely (1) language literacy, (2) numeracy, (3) scientific literacy, (4) digital literacy, (5) financial literacy, and (6) cultural and civic literacy. Literacy skills are important indicators of improving student achievement and success. Literacy development must be instilled from an early age, as it is the primary foundation for building a smart and culturally enriched nation. On the other hand, literacy and numeracy among students in Indonesia are classified as low. This is evidenced by data from the OECD, which shows that in 2018, Indonesia ranked 72nd out of 77 countries in terms of literacy, with an average score of 371 and an international average score of 487 (Hendrayanto *et al*., 2021). These PISA results are not merely scores and rankings but reflect children's behavior, learning conditions, background, teaching methods, and so on.

The problem faced at SDN 3 Kerticala, Tukdana District, Indramayu, based on the results of the pretest, is low student literacy. This may be caused by ineffective planning, implementation, or assessment of the learning process. This is because national examinations have been abolished since 2020. This is outlined in one of the core policies of the Merdeka Belajar (Free to Learn) education program (see: https://gtk.kemdikbud.go.id/read-news/merdeka-belajar, accessed May 2023). In its place, the National Assessment will be implemented, aimed at evaluating and developing students' competencies and character.

The National Assessment is a program to evaluate the quality of every school, madrasah, and equivalency program at the elementary and secondary levels. The quality of educational units is assessed based on students' basic learning outcomes in terms of literacy, numeracy, character, as well as the quality of the learning process and the supportive educational climate (Nurjanah, 2021). This information is obtained from three main instruments, namely the Minimum Competency Assessment (AKM), Character Survey, and Learning Environment Survey, all of which are mutually supportive factors in teaching and learning activities. National assessments are conducted to evaluate the input, process, and quality of teaching and learning in the classroom, aiming to improve the quality of education in Indonesia (Rokhim *et al.,* 2021).

The assessment components in AKM include two basic competencies, namely reading literacy and mathematical/numeracy literacy. Both encompass logical and systematic thinking skills, reasoning skills that utilize concepts and knowledge acquired, as well as information sorting and processing skills (Fauziah *et al*., 2021). Literacy is not merely a tool that requires students to be able to read; it is essential and has broad significance. Similarly, the questions developed in the AKM related to literacy are contextual, consist of various question formats, measure problem-solving competencies, and encourage students to think critically (Abdoeloh & Suryana, 2023).

The procurement of AKM requires learning assistance as an effort to improve students' abilities, particularly in understanding the context of reading and numeracy literacy. Several studies, including the

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one conducted by Muhammad *et al.* (2022), have found that students who had fallen behind can effectively catch up after receiving learning assistance. Furthermore, the results of Khurriyati *et al.* (2021) showed that learning assistance had a positive effect on learning outcomes. This learning assistance also yielded positive results, as explained by Barkah et al. (2020), who highlighted that not everyone can provide effective practical learning assistance because the material taught may not be comprehensible to the assistant. However, the assistant can provide support in other forms, such as moral support and motivation, so that students are enthusiastic about learning a subject.

Based on several studies, it has been revealed that learning assistance in specific subjects has varying effects. In the learning assistance study conducted by Kumala *et al*. (2020), a Snakes and Ladders board game was used to help the learning assistance process, particularly in English. In the same subject but with a different tutoring method, Kuspiyah *et al.* (2021) achieved positive results, resulting in improved student learning competencies. Subsequently, Jera *et al.* (2020) conducted direct tutoring for mathematics learning and obtained good results. In addition to providing direct instruction, learning assistance can be conducted through guidance using online games as a learning medium, as done by Widya *et al.* (2021), which helped motivate students through an engaging teaching method. Each type of learning material has its concept; learning assistance can involve teaching fundamental concepts to students, as successfully demonstrated in producing effective solutions (Kusuma *et al*., 2022).

Seeing this possibility, the student team provided learning assistance to improve literacy skills as an effort to increase literacy scores, which are an important component in the AKM assessment. The AKM results received by schools serve as a benchmark for student competency (Sari & Sayekti, 2022). This community service is one of the activities in the Kampus Mengajar program. Kampus Mengajar is a program under Kampus Merdeka that provides students with opportunities to develop themselves through activities and creativity outside the academic setting, enabling them to directly engage with various conditions in elementary schools across Indonesia (Anugrah, 2021). Based on the above, this article aims to examine the implementation of the mentoring program by observing the mentoring activities conducted by the student team in the Kampus Mengajar program in Grade V of SDN 3 Kerticala, Tukdana District, Indramayu.

METHODS

This community service was conducted at SDN 3 Kerticala, involving 12 fifth-grade students. One of the programs in the Campus Teaching initiative provides academic tutoring to help students improve their academic skills, including reading, sentence comprehension, writing, and solving math problems. The student team provided tutoring to enhance these skills as part of an effort to improve the students' literacy skills.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Concept of Minimum Competency Assessment

Assessment is a process of collecting various data that provides an overview of student learning progress, using multiple assessment tools to obtain information regarding the extent of student learning outcomes. AKM measures literacy and numeracy achievements, which are used to map the quality of education in Indonesia against international standards (Tju & Murniarti, 2021). Assessment tools or instruments help measure and evaluate something according to its condition. Assessment is designed to map and improve the overall quality of education (Rohim, 2021), and AKM plays a crucial role in achieving national education goals (Anas *et al*., 2021).

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Literacy Competency

Reading ability refers to the ability to comprehend written material (Alpian & Yatri, 2022). Reading is one of the essential language skills that every human being should possess, especially students (Ambarita *et al*., 2021). Reading is a means of absorbing knowledge, understanding, analytical skills, synthesis, and evaluation skills (Lestari, 2021). Reading skills are crucial for comprehending information, instructions, and guidelines in everyday life. Literacy is the knowledge and ability to read, write, search for, find, process, and understand informational texts in order to analyze, respond to, and use texts to achieve goals, develop and improve understanding and potential, and prepare for participation in social environments. Literacy and learning are not separate entities but two things that can be done together (Indriyani *et al*., 2019). Reading is not just reading; it can be the first step in understanding other basic literacies, such as scientific literacy, numeracy, digital literacy, financial literacy, and cultural and civic literacy (Fauzanah *et al*., 2022). Improving students' literacy skills is also closely tied to numeracy, science, digital literacy, financial literacy, and cultural and civic literacy.

Implementation of Learning Assistance to Improve Student Literacy

The Learning Assistance Program, one of the community service programs, focuses on supporting the learning process of students at SDN 3 Kerticala by providing learning guidance. The student team conducted several learning assistance activities designed to enhance students' literacy skills, encompassing both reading and numeracy. Some of the activities carried out include collaborating with teachers at SDN 3 Kerticala, providing tutoring, and innovating learning activities using technology, such as interactive learning through educational games, group discussions, learning through play, and ice-breaking activities to make learning more engaging and less monotonous. The use of diverse methods can increase participation and interest in the learning process, thereby improving learning outcomes (Liu *et al.,* 2021). As a form of support for efforts to improve students' literacy competencies, the student team updated the reading corner so that students could use it to practice their reading skills, as well as to increase their motivation to learn, interest in reading, reading comprehension, writing skills, numeracy skills, and confidence in solving mathematical problems. Learning resources were also provided to support the learning activities. The use of technology, games, teacher assistance, and other efforts can increase students' confidence in the learning process (Malkawi *et al*., 2023), allowing them to feel more comfortable asking questions when they encounter difficulties (Cohen & Zusho, 2023).

Minimum Competency Assessment as a Tool for Measuring Literacy Competency in Elementary School Students

AKM measures the minimum competencies required so that schools in each region can be mapped based on the minimum competencies they possess. AKM is an assessment required by every student to improve their capacity and participate positively in society. Class AKM is designed to produce information that will spur improvements in the quality of learning and student learning outcomes. Classroom teachers can utilize the results of AKM to develop effective learning strategies tailored to students' cognitive levels (Rohim, 2021). Literacy competencies can be reviewed from three components: content, cognitive processes, and context. Cognitive level refers to the thinking process that requires students to solve problems and think critically. The cognitive process in literacy competencies can be divided into three levels, namely (1) finding information, (2) interpretation and integration, and (3) evaluation.

Berikut ini merupakan komponen AKM untuk literasi (at **Table 1**):

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Table 1. AKM Literacy Components

No	Reading Literacy	
1	Content	Fictional (Imaginative) Texts and Informational (Factual) Texts
2	Cognitive Processes	Finding, interpreting, integrating, evaluating, and reflecting on informational texts.
3	Context	Personal, Social and Cultural, Scientific

Source:Service 2023

Each generation has distinct characteristics and learning styles, which in turn influence changes in the assessment system for students. AKM is considered the best solution prepared by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture, with indicators that have been established (Purwati et al., 2021). Specifically, the following discussion will focus on AKM at the elementary school level as a tool for evaluating students' literacy skills. This AKM program has also been equipped with various instruments ready for use as training tools.

The participants in this AKM were fifth-grade students at SDN 3 Kerticala. Based on the findings obtained through the AKM for fifth-grade students at SDN 3 Kerticala before the mentoring, which included the percentage of students' success in answering the specified competencies, the results were as follows (**Table 2**):

Table 2. Literacy Score Results for Level 2 AKM Grade V Before Mentoring

No	Competency	Level of Cognition	Number of Students	Number of Students Answering Correctly	Percentage of Students Answering Correctly
1	Finding explicit information (who, when, where, why, how) in fictional texts that increase in complexity according to their level.	Fictional Texts	12	7	58%
2	Finding explicit information (who, when, where, why, how) in fictional texts that increase in complexity according to their level.	Fictional Texts	12	2	17%
3	Finding explicit information (who, when, where, why, how) in fictional texts that increase in complexity according to their level.	Fictional Texts	12	3	25%
4	Finding explicit information (who, when, where, why, how) in fictional texts that increase in complexity according to their level.	Fictional Texts	12	7	58%
5	Finding explicit information (who, when, where, why, how) in fictional texts that increase in complexity according to their level.	Fictional Texts	12	7	58%
6	Finding explicit information (who, when, where, why, how) in fictional texts that increase in complexity according to their level.	Fictional Texts	12	6	50%

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No	Competency	Level of Cognition	Number of Students	Number of Students Answering Correctly	Percentage of Students Answering Correctly
7	Assessing the suitability of illustrations with the content of fiction texts that continue to increase in level.	Fictional Texts	12	3	25%
8	Summarize the feelings and characteristics of characters and other intrinsic elements such as the setting and events in the story based on detailed information in fictional texts that increase in complexity according to their level.	Fictional Texts	12	1	8%
9	Make inferences (conclusions) related to the content of the text to determine whether a comment/question/statement is relevant to the content of the fictional text.	Fictional Texts	12	9	75%
10	Relate the content of fictional texts to personal experiences according to their level.	Fictional Texts	12	2	17%
11	Identify and explain the problems faced by characters in fictional texts according to their level.	Fictional Texts	12	2	17%
12	Find explicit information (who, when, where, why, how) in informational texts that increase in complexity according to grade level.	Information Text	12	4	33%
13	Find explicit information (who, when, where, why, how) in informational texts that increase in complexity according to grade level.	Information Text	12	7	58%
14	Find explicit information (who, when, where, why, how) in informational texts that increase in complexity according to grade level.	Information Text	12	3	25%
15	Find explicit information (who, when, where, why, how) in informational texts that increase in complexity according to grade level.	Information Text	12	1	8%
16	Find explicit information (who, when, where, why, how) in informational texts that increase in complexity according to grade level.	Information Text	12	4	33%
17	Assessing the suitability of illustrations with the content of information texts that continue to increase in level.	Information Text	12	3	25%
18	Explain the main ideas and supporting ideas in informational texts that increase in complexity according to grade level.	Information Text	12	1	8%
19	Explain the main ideas and supporting ideas in informational texts that increase in complexity according to grade level.	Information Text	12	9	75%

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No	Competency	Level of Cognition	Number of Students	Number of Students Answering Correctly	Percentage of Students Answering Correctly
20	Explain the main ideas and supporting ideas in informational texts that increase in complexity according to grade level.	Information Text	12	5	42%

Source: Service 2023

The AKM Level 2 Literacy test consists of 20 competencies. The cognitive level is divided into two, namely 11 cognitive levels for fictional texts and nine cognitive levels for informational texts. According to the table above, the highest percentage of students who answered correctly at the cognitive level of fictional text was 75%. The highest percentage is found in the competency of making inferences (conclusions) related to the content of the text to determine whether a comment/question/statement is relevant to the content of the fictional text. This proves that students are unable to answer half of the cognitive level competencies in fictional texts. Meanwhile, the lowest percentage is 8%, which corresponds to the cognitive level of fictional text, involving the competency of summarizing the feelings and characteristics of characters, as well as other intrinsic elements in fictional texts. In addition to the highest percentage, three competencies at this level obtained a percentage of more than half of the total number of students in the class, namely 59%. Based on this, it suggests that students have not yet fully grasped the literal understanding of fictional texts. For competencies at the cognitive level of informational texts, the highest percentage was achieved at 75%, specifically in explaining the main ideas and several supporting ideas in informational texts, which continued to increase with the level.

In addition to the highest score, there is one competency that received a percentage score of more than half of the fifth-grade students, namely 58%. The lowest percentage at the cognitive level of informational text is 8%, found in two competencies: the ability to identify explicit information (who, when, where, why, how) in informational texts, which continues to improve with grade level, and the ability to explain the main idea and some supporting ideas in informational texts, which also continues to improve with grade level. Thus, it is evident that few students can achieve these competencies.

Based on the results of the AKM Level 2 Literacy scores prior to this mentoring program, it was found that many competencies were still beyond the students' reach. Therefore, teachers need to pay special attention to providing appropriate learning to encourage students to improve their abilities in achieving existing competencies. The results of the AKM Level 2 Literacy scores before the mentoring program are compared to the results of the AKM Level 2 Literacy scores after the mentoring program. The results of the AKM Level 2 Literacy scores after the mentoring program for fifth-grade students at SDN 3 Kerticala are as follows (at **Table 3**):

Table 3. Literacy Score Results for Level 2 AKM Grade 5 After Mentoring

No	Competency	Level of Cognition	Number of Students	Number of Students Answering Correctly	Percentage of Students Answering Correctly
1	Finding explicit information (who, when, where, why, how) in fictional texts that increase in complexity according to their level.	Fictional Texts	12	6	50%

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No	Competency	Level of Cognition	Number of Students	Number of Students Answering Correctly	Percentage of Students Answering Correctly
2	Find explicit information (who, when, where, why, how) in fictional texts that increase in difficulty according to grade level.	Fictional Texts	12	6	50%
3	Find explicit information (who, when, where, why, how) in fictional texts that increase in difficulty according to grade level.	Fictional Texts	12	9	75%
4	Find explicit information (who, when, where, why, how) in fictional texts that increase in difficulty according to grade level.	Fictional Texts	12	5	42%
5	Assessing the suitability of illustrations with the content of fiction texts that increase in difficulty according to their level.	Fictional Texts	12	4	33%
6	Summarize the feelings and characteristics of characters and other intrinsic elements such as the setting and events in the story based on detailed information in fictional texts that increase in complexity according to their level.	Fictional Texts	12	7	58%
7	Summarize the feelings and characteristics of characters and other intrinsic elements such as the setting and events in the story based on detailed information in fictional texts that increase in complexity according to their level.	Fictional Texts	12	9	75%
8	Summarize the feelings and characteristics of characters and other intrinsic elements, such as the setting and events in the story, based on detailed information in fictional texts that increase in complexity according to their level.	Fictional Texts	12	4	33%
9	Make inferences (conclusions) related to the content of the text to determine whether a comment/question/statement is relevant to the content of the fictional text.	Fictional Texts	12	12	100%
10	Relate the content of fictional texts to personal experiences according to their level.	Fictional Texts	12	10	83%
11	Identify and explain the problems faced by characters in fictional texts according to their level.	Fictional Texts	12	8	67%
12	Identify and explain the problems faced by characters in fictional texts according to their level.	Fictional Texts	12	10	83%
13	Identify and explain the problems faced by characters in fictional texts according to their level of complexity.	Fictional Texts	12	10	83%

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No	Competency	Level of Cognition	Number of Students	Number of Students Answering Correctly	Percentage of Students Answering Correctly
14	Find explicit information (who, when, where, why, how) in informational texts that increase in complexity according to grade level.	Information Text	12	5	42%
15	Find explicit information (who, when, where, why, how) in informational texts that increase in complexity according to grade level.	Information Text	12	5	42%
16	Find explicit information (who, when, where, why, how) in informational texts that increase in complexity according to grade level.	Information Text	12	4	33%
17	Summarize events, procedures, ideas, or concepts based on detailed information in an appropriate level of informational text.	Information Text	12	4	33%
18	Make inferences (conclusions) related to the content of the text to determine whether a comment/question/statement is relevant to the content of the information text.	Information Text	12	8	67%
19	Compare key points (e.g., differences in events, procedures, characteristics of objects) in informational texts that increase in complexity.	Information Text	12	6	50%
20	Explain the main ideas and supporting ideas in informational texts that increase in complexity according to grade level.	Information Text	12	4	33%

Source: Service 2023

Questions to assess the results of AKM Level 2 Literacy for fifth-grade students after mentoring are divided into 20 competencies, categorized into two cognitive levels: 13 cognitive levels for fictional texts and seven cognitive levels for informational texts. Based on the table above, the highest percentage in the cognitive level of fiction text is 100% with the competency of drawing inferences (conclusions) related to the content of the text to determine whether a comment/question/statement is relevant to the content of the fiction text. This indicates that all fifth-grade students at SDN 3 Kerticala can achieve this competency. The lowest percentage at the cognitive level of fictional text is 33% with the competency of summarizing the feelings and characteristics of characters and other intrinsic elements, such as the setting of the story and events in the story, based on detailed information in the fictional text, which continues to increase according to the level. The number of students who answered correctly in more than 50% of the competencies is 8 out of 14.

At the cognitive level of informational text, the highest percentage was 67%, indicating the competency of making inferences (conclusions) related to the text's content to determine whether a comment, question, or statement is relevant to the content. This indicates that 8 out of 12 fifth-grade students at SDN 3 Kerticala demonstrated this competency. The lowest percentage of students answering correctly is 33%, found in three competencies. Meanwhile, the percentage of students answering correctly more than 50% is only one out of seven competencies, which is the highest percentage. The provision of learning support has a significant impact on students' literacy skills. As a result, teachers can provide special attention in

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the form of developing learning strategies, relevant activities, and evaluations that can enhance students' achievements in line with the competencies targeted in the AKM assessment.

The mentoring provided by the student team of the Teaching Campus program has generally brought about changes in the students. One of these changes can be seen in the AKM Level 2 literacy scores of fifth-grade students before and after the mentoring, which showed an improvement. The mentoring provided helped students understand issues related to improving their literacy skills. Additionally, from the teachers' perspective, there has been an effort to continuously improve literacy skills by actively participating in mentoring and studying the literacy competencies that students need to master. Teachers undertake this initiative as a foundation for developing teaching methods and strategies that support the enhancement of students' literacy skills.

CONCLUSION

Based on the learning assistance provided, the impact is evident in the results of the AKM Level 2 Literacy scores of fifth-grade students at SDN 3 Kerticala before and after the assistance process. AKM, as a tool for evaluating student literacy in elementary schools, can help teachers measure and determine students' achievement in meeting learning competencies, allowing them to identify the percentage of correct and incorrect answers. This makes it easier for teachers to determine how many students have achieved the desired competencies. Furthermore, based on the AKM Level 2 Literacy scores of fifth-grade students at SDN 3 Kerticala after the mentoring process, it can be observed that the percentage of students who achieved the competencies was higher than the percentage obtained from the scores. This indicates that the learning mentoring process within the context of community service has made significant progress. However, in some competencies, the percentage of students answering questions remains low. This should be a focus for teachers to improve teaching strategies, innovate materials, and so on.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The author declares that there are no conflicts of interest related to the publication of this article. The author confirms that the data and content of the article are free from plagiarism.

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