



## The Effect of Applying the Problem Based Learning Model to Improve the Ability to Analyze Intrinsic Elements of Short Stories

Wandi<sup>1\*</sup>, Iis Ristiani<sup>2</sup>

<sup>12</sup>Program Magister Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia, Universitas Suryakencana, Cianjur, Jawa Barat, Indonesia

\*E-mail: [wandidoang444@gmail.com](mailto:wandidoang444@gmail.com)

### ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the effect of applying the Problem-Based Learning model on improving the ability to analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories. This study uses a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental method and a Nonequivalent Control Group Design. The study was conducted in the odd semester of 2025/2026 at SMPN 5 Campaka. The population of this study was ninth-grade students who participated in learning using problem-based learning. The research sample consisted of two classes: the experimental class, which received treatment using the Problem-Based Learning model, and the control class, which received conventional learning. Data were collected through pre- and post-tests on the ability to analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and parametric inferential statistics, namely the t-test. The results of the study indicate that the application of the Problem-Based Learning model has a significant impact on improving students' abilities to analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories. Students who learned using the Problem-Based Learning model showed a higher increase in scores compared to students who learned conventionally. Thus, the Problem-Based Learning model is effectively used in literature learning to develop students' critical and analytical thinking skills.

*Keywords: effect of applying, problem based learning, ability to analyze, intrinsic element, short stories*

## Pengaruh Penerapan Model *Problem Based Learning* untuk Meningkatkan Kemampuan Menganalisis Unsur Intrinsik Cerpen

### ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui pengaruh penerapan model *Problem Based Learning* dalam meningkatkan kemampuan menganalisis unsur intrinsik cerpen. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan metode eksperimen semu (*quasi-experiment*) dan desain *Nonequivalent Control Group Design*. Penelitian dilaksanakan pada semester ganjil 2025/2026 di SMPN 5 Campaka. Populasi penelitian ini adalah para siswa kelas IX yang mengikuti pembelajaran menggunakan *problem based learning*. Sampel penelitian terdiri atas dua kelas, yaitu kelas eksperimen yang diberi perlakuan menggunakan model *Problem Based Learning* dan kelas kontrol yang memperoleh pembelajaran konvensional. Data dikumpulkan melalui tes *pretest* dan *posttest* kemampuan menganalisis unsur intrinsik cerpen. Data dianalisis menggunakan statistik deskriptif dan statistik inferensial parametrik yakni uji-t. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penerapan model *Problem Based Learning* berpengaruh signifikan terhadap peningkatan kemampuan siswa dalam menganalisis unsur intrinsik cerpen. Siswa yang belajar menggunakan model *Problem Based Learning* menunjukkan peningkatan nilai yang lebih tinggi dibandingkan dengan siswa yang belajar secara konvensional. Dengan demikian, model *Problem Based Learning* efektif digunakan dalam pembelajaran sastra untuk mengembangkan kemampuan berpikir kritis dan analitis peserta didik.

*Kata kunci: pengaruh penerapan, problem based learning, kemampuan menganalisis, unsur intrinsik, cerpen*

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## INTRODUCTION

Indonesian language learning comprises two language groups, namely literature and literature. In reality, literature learning in schools seems marginalized, as evidenced by the lower emphasis placed on literature compared to language learning. Yet, it is no less important than language learning, and is equally crucial for students to master. Literature is a linguistic art that incorporates aesthetic elements and literary writing conventions, to express the soul (Lutfi, 2023). Literature is divided into several genres, one of which is the short story. A short story is a narrative centered on a central event, described through a series of events. Short stories require clear characterization. The characters are the central idea of The story. The story begins with the character and ends with the fate of the person who receives the character (Ristiani, 2012; Sumiyadi & Duracman, 2014).

Literature learning plays a crucial role in developing students' critical, creative, and communicative thinking skills. One competency that demands higher-order thinking skills is analyzing the intrinsic elements of short stories. This skill requires not only understanding the story's content but also analyzing the structure and meaning that construct the literary work. According to Hosnan (2014), 21st-century learning requires students to actively construct knowledge through meaningful learning experiences. Therefore, a learning model is needed that can foster students' active involvement and analytical thinking skills in understanding literary works.

The ability to analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories is a component of literary appreciation competency, which requires analytical, interpretive, and evaluative thinking skills. Intrinsic aspects of short stories include theme, characters and characterization, plot, setting, point of view, and moral message (Nurgiyantoro, 2018). According to Darmawati (2018), the ability to analyze intrinsic elements means students' ability to identify, explain, and interpret the structure of a story based on the relationships between these elements.

Through this ability, students not only understand the content of the story but also interpret the human values and moral messages contained within the literary work. Therefore, the ability to analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories is a crucial indicator of students' literary appreciation in secondary schools.

Empirically, learning outcomes in short story analysis in junior high schools remain low. Based on initial observations at SMPN 5 Campaka, most students experienced difficulties with intrinsic elements such as theme, characterization, and plot. Students tended to simply retell the contents of short stories without understanding their meaning. This condition indicates that the learning process is still dominated by lecture and question-and-answer methods, so students have not been trained to think critically and discover the meaning of the literary texts they read. This fact aligns with Bastian's (2022) findings, which state that low student engagement in literature learning affects their ability to analyze the elements of literary works.

The gap between the demands of 21st-century learning theory and the reality on the ground demonstrates the need for innovative learning models. Ideally, literature learning should not only focus on memorizing literary elements but also encourage students to discover, interpret, and relate the values in short stories to their life experiences. One relevant learning model to address this issue is Problem-Based Learning.

According to Hosnan (2014), Problem-Based Learning is a learning model that places problems as the starting point for learning activities, encouraging students to think critically and solve problems independently. This model aligns with the demands of 21st-century learning, which emphasizes higher-order and collaborative thinking skills. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture (2020), problem-based learning provides students with opportunities to develop critical thinking skills through solving real-life problems. However, Indonesian language learning practices in many schools still tend to be conventional, not fully implementing a student-centered approach.



Several previous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of the Problem-Based Learning model in improving critical thinking skills and student learning outcomes. For example, research by Fitriyani (2021) concluded that implementing the Problem-Based Learning model can improve students' text analysis skills because it requires students to find solutions to the problems presented actively. Similarly, Rahayu (2022) stated that implementing Problem-Based Learning in literature learning helps students understand the elements of story building more deeply because they are directly involved in reading, discussing, and interpreting meaning. Based on these findings, the application of problem-based learning is believed to be relevant for addressing challenges in short story learning in junior high schools.

Based on this study, the research questions in this study are: 1) the ability of ninth-grade students at SMPN 5 Campaka to analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories before implementing the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model, 2) the students' abilities after implementing the model, and 3) whether there is a significant difference between the ability to analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories of students taught using the Problem-Based Learning model and those taught using conventional learning.

The purpose of this study is to describe the ability of grade IX students of SMPN 5 Campaka in analyzing the intrinsic elements of short stories before and after the application of the Problem Based Learning model, to determine the effect of the application of the model on improving students' analytical abilities, and to identify differences in learning outcomes between students who learn with the Problem Based Learning model and conventional learning.

This research is expected to provide significant contributions to various parties. For students, it can help develop critical thinking, analytical skills, and appreciation for literary works, particularly short stories. For teachers, the results can serve as a reference for implementing an effective, innovative, problem-based learning model in

literature instruction. For schools, this research can serve as a reference for enhancing the quality of Indonesian language instruction. Meanwhile, for other researchers, the results can serve as a reference for conducting further research related to the application of learning models in the field of literature.

Based on the above description, this research is crucial for improving the ability to analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories through the application of the Problem-Based Learning model in ninth-grade students at SMPN 5 Campaka. This research is expected to contribute to the development of more active, contextual literature learning, oriented toward developing students' critical thinking skills. Furthermore, the results of this study can serve as a reference for Indonesian language teachers in selecting effective learning models to improve the quality of literature learning in junior high schools.

## METHOD

This study used a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental method. This approach and method were chosen because, according to Sugiyono (2021), Fraenkel et al., (2012), and Cresswell, (2008) state that quasi-experimental research is used when researchers cannot fully control external variables that could influence the research results, but still involve special treatments to determine their impact on learning outcomes. This statement aligns with the circumstances of the school selected for the study.

The research design used was a Nonequivalent Control Group Design, involving two sample groups without randomization, based on the objectives and circumstances of the school being studied. The experimental group was treated using the Problem-Based Learning model, while the control group received conventional learning. Both groups were given pretests and posttests to measure differences in their ability to analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories after the treatment (Sugiyono, 2021).

This research was conducted at SMPN 5 Campaka, Cianjur Regency, during the odd semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. The study population was all ninth-grade students at SMPN 5 Campaka. The sample selection was conducted using a purposive sampling technique, which selects samples based on specific considerations relevant to the research objectives (Bastian, 2022). The study sample consisted of 21 students from class IX-A, the control group, who participated in short story learning using the conventional method, and 22 students from class IX-B, the experimental group, who participated in short story learning using the Problem-Based Learning model.

The variables in this study consisted of the independent variable (X), namely the Problem-Based Learning model, and the dependent variable (Y), namely the students' ability to analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories. The study participants included all students from both sample classes, which had relatively homogeneous age characteristics. Both the independent and dependent variables mutually influenced the success of this study.

The research instruments used included: (1) Student Worksheets (LKPD) based on the Problem-Based Learning model, which included activities to analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories; (2) a short story analysis ability test (pretest and posttest) to measure students' initial and final abilities; (3) a short story analysis assessment rubric, which assessed aspects of theme, characters/characterization, plot, setting, point of view, and moral message; and (4) a learning activity observation sheet to monitor student participation during the learning process. All instruments underwent content validation by Indonesian Language and Literature education experts to ensure their suitability for the research objectives.

Data collection techniques included written tests, in the form of pretests and posttests, to measure students' ability to analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories; observation, to monitor student activities during the problem-based learning

process; and documentation, to support data on the learning process. According to Sugiyono (2021), the combination of tests, observation, and documentation can produce more comprehensive quantitative and qualitative data.

The research instruments used underwent validity and reliability testing to ensure that the measuring instruments used were valid and consistent. The validity test was conducted using content validity through expert judgment, consisting of one lecturer with a Master's degree in Indonesian Language and Literature Education and one junior high school Indonesian language teacher. The validated aspects included the suitability of the test items to the indicators of the ability to analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories, clarity of language, and integration of the material with the learning objectives. The validation results indicated that all instrument items were deemed appropriate with some minor revisions to the wording.

Meanwhile, a reliability test was conducted to determine the instrument's level of consistency. The reliability test used the Cronbach's Alpha formula because the instrument was a descriptive test with multiple assessment criteria. The calculation resulted in a reliability coefficient of 0.87, which is considered very high (Sugiyono, 2021; Fulcher & Davidson, 2007; Razak, 2020). Thus, this research instrument was declared valid and reliable, making it suitable for use in measuring the ability to analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories of ninth-grade students at SMPN 5 Campaka.

Before analyzing the data, the results of the test on the ability to analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories were scored. Scoring was conducted based on a pre-developed and validated assessment rubric, covering six aspects: theme, characters and characterization, plot, setting, point of view, and moral. Each aspect was scored on a scale of 1-5, with a score of 5 indicating excellent ability and a score of 1 indicating very poor ability. The scores for each aspect were summed to obtain a total score for each student's ability to analyze the intrinsic elements of the short story.



Next, the total score is converted into ability categories based on the following score ranges:

- 1) 85 - 100 = very high
- 2) 70 - 84 = high
- 3) 55 - 69 = moderate
- 4) 40 - 54 = low
- 5) Below 40 = very low.

This category is used to interpret the extent of students' ability to analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories, including mastery of theme, characters and characterization, plot, setting, and moral.

After the research was conducted, the collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean, percentage, and standard deviation) to describe students' analytical abilities, and an independent samples t-test (independent samples t-test) to determine significant differences between the learning outcomes of the experimental and control groups after treatment (Sugiyono, 2021). Therefore, this study will present actual data based on the research results.

## RESULTS

This study aims to determine the effect of implementing the Problem-Based Learning model on students' ability to analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories. The ability to analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories in this study encompasses several key aspects: (1) the ability to identify the theme or main idea of the story, (2) the ability to describe characters and characterization, (3) the ability to understand the plot or storyline, (4) the ability to recognize the setting, (5) the ability to determine the narrative point of view, and (6) the ability to interpret the moral message or message in the story.

According to Ristiani (2012), analyzing the intrinsic elements of short stories requires logical and interpretive thinking skills to discover the meaning of the narrative structure that constructs the story. Thus, the ability to analyze intrinsic elements involves not only identifying

story elements but also understanding the interrelationships between these elements in shaping the overall meaning of a literary work. Data were obtained through pretests and posttests administered to two classes: an experimental class and a control class. The experimental class adopted the Problem-Based Learning model, whereas the control class employed conventional learning.

Table 1  
Average Pretest Score for the Ability to Analyze Intrinsic Elements of Short Stories

No.	Intrinsic Element	Group	
		Post-test	Pre-test
1	Theme	230	255
2	Characters and Characteriz	200	230
3	Storyline	140	165
4	Setting	190	210
5	Message	260	290
	Total	1020	1150
	Percent	46,36	54,76
	Category	low	low

Based on Table 1, students' initial ability to analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories in both the experimental and control classes was still relatively low. The average score for the experimental class was 46.36, while the average for the control class was slightly higher at 54.76. This indicates that before the learning intervention, the initial abilities of both groups were relatively balanced and had not yet demonstrated optimal mastery of the aspects of analyzing the intrinsic elements of short stories.

Based on ability, the highest scores in both classes were for the moral element, with scores of 260 in the experimental class and 290 in the control class. This indicates that students found it easier to understand the moral message implied in the story than other elements. Conversely, the lowest scores were for the plot element, with scores of 140 in the experimental class and 165 in the control class. Low ability in this aspect indicates that students still have

difficulty understanding the sequence of events, conflict, and cause-and-effect relationships in the story. Ability in the theme and character/development aspects also remained low. Students tended to only be able to recognize the surface aspects of the story without being able to identify the main idea or character traits in depth. Meanwhile, regarding the setting aspect, most students were unable to accurately describe the relationship between place, time, and atmosphere that shape the story's plot.

Overall, the results of this pretest indicate that students' ability to analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories is still limited to the recognition level, not yet reaching the stage of in-depth analysis. This situation highlights the need for the implementation of learning models that can enhance students' critical thinking and interpretive abilities regarding literary texts, one of which is through the Problem-Based Learning model, which focuses on problem-solving and active student involvement in the learning process.

Table 2

Mean Posttest Score for the Ability to Analyze Intrinsic Elements of Short Stories

No.	Intrinsic Element	Group	
		Post-test	Pre-test
1	Theme	375	275
2	Characters and Characteriz	275	250
3	Storyline	270	185
4	Setting	315	230
5	Message	335	310
	Total	1570	1250
	Percent	71,36	59,52
	Category	high	high

Table 2 shows an improvement in students' ability to analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories after the implementation of the Problem-Based Learning (PBL) model in the experimental class. The overall average score for the experimental class increased to 71.36, which is considered high, while the control class only achieved 59,52 which is still

considered low. This difference indicates that the implementation of the PBL model has had a significant impact on improving students' ability to understand and analyze the elements that construct a story.

When examining each aspect of ability, the most striking improvement occurred in the theme element, which rose to 375 in the experimental class, indicating that students were better able to identify the main idea of the story. Character, characterization, and plot elements also experienced significant improvement, indicating that students not only recognized characters but also began to understand the cause-and-effect relationships within the story. Furthermore, in the setting and moral aspects, the results showed that students were able to connect the place, time, atmosphere, and moral message in the story to their real-life context.

Meanwhile, the average score for the control class actually showed stagnation or even decline in several aspects of ability. These scores, which remain in the low category, indicate that conventional learning is not yet effective in developing students' analytical and critical thinking skills regarding literary texts. Overall, the posttest results reinforce the finding that the Problem-Based Learning model positively contributes to improving students' ability to analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories, both in terms of understanding the structure and interpreting the overall meaning of the story.

To facilitate comparison, the following table presents the overall average pretest and posttest scores, presented on a scale of 1 to 100.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics of Pretest and Posttest Scores

No.	Group	N	Mean		Gain Score
			Pre-test	Post-test	
1	Treatment	22	43,46	71,36	25
2	Control	21	54,76	59,52	-4,73

Table 3 shows a clear difference between the learning outcomes of the experimental and control classes. In the experimental class, the average pretest score of 46.36 increased to 71.36 on the posttest, with a gain score of 25.00. This indicates a significant improvement in skills following the implementation of the Problem-Based Learning model. This improvement suggests that problem-based learning can encourage students to think critically, engage in active discussions, and gain a deeper understanding of the intrinsic elements of short stories. Conversely, in the control class, the average pretest score of 54.76 decreased to 54,76 on the posttest, with a gain score of -4.73. This negative value indicates that conventional teacher-centered learning is ineffective in improving students' ability to analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories. The difference in results between the two classes demonstrates that the use of the Problem-Based Learning model not only improves students' understanding of story structure but also develops their analytical and interpretative skills regarding the elements that make up literary texts in greater depth.

Table 4

Results of the Gain Score t-Test for the Experimental and Control Group

Group	N	Mean Gain	SD	t hitung	t (0,05;41)	Note
Treatmet	22	25,00	15,00	7,65	2,02	sig.
Control	21	0,23	12,00			

Based on the t-test analysis of the gain scores of the experimental and control classes, the calculated t-value was 7.65, which is greater than the t-table of 2.020 at a significance level of 0.05 with degrees of freedom (df) = 41. Thus, there is a significant difference between the average gain scores of the two groups.

The average gain score in the experimental class was 25.00 with a standard deviation of 15.00, while in the control class it was only 0.23 with a standard deviation of 12.00. These results indicate

that the experimental class significantly improved their ability to analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories compared to the control class.

This difference indicates that the implementation of the Problem-Based Learning model has a positive and significant impact on improving students' ability to analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories. In other words, students who learned using the Problem-Based Learning model experienced more significant improvements in their abilities than students who learned using the conventional learning model. This means that the Problem-Based Learning model significantly improved students' ability to analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories, as shown in the bar graph below.

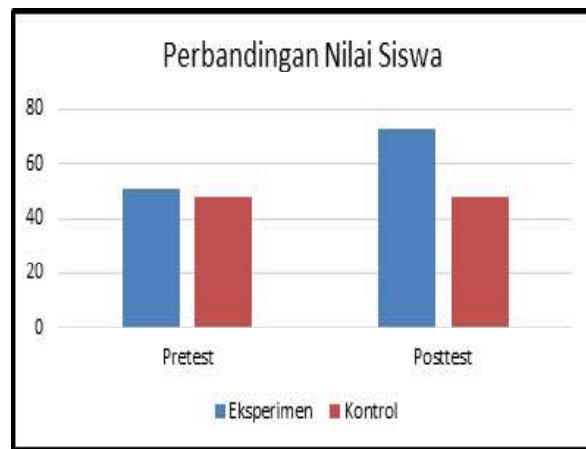


Figure 1  
 Bar Graph Comparing Scores between the Control and Experimental Group

The ability to analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories in this study included aspects of theme, characters and characterization, plot, setting, and moral. According to Ristiani (2012), the ability to analyze intrinsic elements is a higher-order thinking skill that requires students to understand the relationships between elements that construct a story logically and meaningfully. Therefore, the increase in test scores indicates that students are increasingly able to identify and interpret the meaning behind the story's structure.

Converting posttest scores in the experimental class into ability categories shows that students' ability to analyze theme and characters is in the high category (range 70-84), their ability to analyze plot and setting is also high, and their ability to analyze moral values is in the very high category (85+). This indicates that students not only understand the structural elements of the story but are also able to interpret the moral values contained within it.

Meanwhile, in the control class, the majority of students still fall in the low category (scores 40-54). This low achievement indicates that conventional learning has not been able to foster students' critical thinking and interpretative abilities regarding literary works.

Overall, the significant improvement in the experimental class aligns with Hosnan's (2014) opinion, which states that Problem-Based Learning encourages students to think analytically and relate concepts to real-world contexts. This model places students at the center of learning activities, enabling them to be more active in discovering the meaning of the literary texts they study. Therefore, it can be concluded that the implementation of the PBL model is effective in improving the ability to analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories in ninth-grade students at SMPN 5 Campaka.

## DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that the Problem-Based Learning model effectively improves the ability to analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories. This improvement occurs because the Problem-Based Learning model places problems as the starting point of learning, encouraging students to think critically, find solutions, and construct understanding through the problem-solving process (Hosnan, 2014). In the context of literary learning, short story analysis activities require students to understand the structure and meaning of the story through active and reflective engagement, making the problem-based approach highly relevant.

These findings also reinforce 21st-century learning theory, which emphasizes the development of higher-order thinking skills through contextual learning experiences (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2020). Students not only memorize story elements but also interpret moral values, understand character traits, and relate the short story's content to everyday life. Thus, learning becomes more meaningful and oriented toward developing students' character and reasoning skills.

These results align with research by Fitriyani (2021), who found that implementing the Problem-Based Learning model can improve junior high school students' critical thinking skills through text-based problem-solving activities. Similarly, Rahayu (2022) stated that Problem-Based Learning in literature learning helps students understand the elements of story building in depth because they are actively involved in reading, discussing, and interpreting the text's content. By directly engaging in the learning process, students gain a stronger cognitive experience compared to conventional learning.

Empirically, t-test results indicate that learning outcomes in the experimental class were significantly higher than in the control class. This demonstrates that Problem-Based Learning can create a more engaging and challenging learning environment, encouraging students to develop their analytical skills in relation to the intrinsic elements of short stories. This model also allows teachers to act as facilitators, guiding students in discovering concepts, rather than simply providing information.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the implementation of the Problem-Based Learning model has a positive impact on improving students' ability to analyze the intrinsic elements of short stories. The results of this study support the theories and previous research by Hosnan (2014), Fitriyani (2021), and Rahayu (2022), which suggest that Problem-Based Learning is a relevant learning model for literature instruction, improving students' critical and analytical thinking skills.



## CONCLUSION

Based on the research results and discussion, it can be concluded that the implementation of the Problem-Based Learning model has been shown to have a significant effect on improving students' analytical skills. This is supported by the study's findings, which reveal a substantial difference in learning outcomes between students who participated in the Problem-Based Learning model and those who participated in conventional learning. The application of Problem-Based Learning can enhance students' ability to identify, understand, and interpret the intrinsic elements of short stories, as they are actively engaged in critical thinking, collaboration, and problem-solving.

Therefore, the application of Problem-Based Learning can be an effective alternative learning strategy in literature instruction, particularly in analyzing the intrinsic elements of short stories. This model not only enhances students' analytical skills but also promotes independent learning, creativity, and a deeper appreciation for literary works.

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