

Creative Writing Training to Enhance Creative Ideas and Imagination in Short Story Writing for PKK in Bakalan Village, Pasuruan City

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ABSTRACT

Writing short stories is an effective way to express creative ideas, experiences, and imagination. The Women's Group (PKK) plays a very strategic role in empowering women and improving the quality of family life. One way to strengthen this role is by developing literacy skills, such as writing short stories. This creative writing training in short story writing aims to 1) enhance the writing skills and creativity of the PKK women in Kelurahan Bakalan, 2) provide basic knowledge about the techniques and structure of short story writing, 3) build the confidence of the women in writing and expressing themselves through short stories, and 4) encourage the PKK women of Kelurahan Bakalan to publish their short stories in print or online media to be commercialized, thereby creating economic opportunities that can improve family welfare. The method used in this community service activity for creative writing training in short story writing is a structured, participatory training method with intensive guidance to ensure participants can follow, understand the material, and write short stories effectively. The target group for this community service in creative writing training in short story writing is the PKK women of Kelurahan Bakalan, Pasuruan City, totaling 25 (Kelurahan Bakalan PKK administrators). The training instruments include participant worksheets as a reference for writing short stories and an assessment rubric to evaluate the short stories written by the PKK women of Kelurahan Bakalan, Pasuruan City. The results of this creative writing training in short story writing showed good outcomes with the following details: 1) an improvement in short story writing skills among the PKK women of Kelurahan Bakalan, indicated by the high scores of the short stories based on the assessment rubric applied in the training, 2) increased self-confidence as indicated by the willingness of the PKK women of Kelurahan Bakalan to present their written works in public, 3) enthusiasm and commitment of the participants as indicated by their commitment to continue creating short stories, which will be published in an anthology, a collection of short stories written by the PKK women of Kelurahan Bakalan, Pasuruan City.

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INTRODUCTION

Writing is a fundamental skill that is crucial to develop within society, especially in today's digital era. Writing activities not only serve as a medium for self-expression but also as a means to share knowledge and experiences (Pratikno et al., 2023). Writing short stories is one effective way to express creative ideas, experiences, and imagination (Sadid, 2018). This writing activity is not only beneficial in improving literacy skills but can also serve as a means to enhance emotional and social well-being. Amid the demands of daily life, writing can become an enjoyable activity that provides emotional benefits, particularly for mothers involved in the PKK (Family Welfare Empowerment) group in Bakalan Village, Pasuruan City.

In Bakalan Village, Pasuruan City, PKK members hold great potential for developing short story writing skills, which can become a productive and enjoyable activity in their free time. The PKK group plays a strategic role in empowering women and improving family quality of life (Hanis & Marzaman, 2020). One way to strengthen this role is by developing literacy skills. A tangible success of literacy activities is writing, and this writing activity can be directed towards creative writing (El-Sulukiyyah & Mardiningsih, 2023). One form of creative writing is short story writing. As a concise and dense form of literary work, short stories can serve as an effective medium for expressing ideas and emotions, as well as for raising local stories filled with meaningful values (Tarsinih, 2018).

This creative writing training in short story writing is designed to provide opportunities for PKK members to develop their creativity and writing skills. With improved writing abilities, it is hoped that they will be able to share their stories and experiences, thus enriching local literacy and strengthening social bonds within the community. The objectives of this creative writing training in short story writing are: 1) to enhance the writing skills and creativity of PKK members in Bakalan Village, 2) to provide basic knowledge of short story writing techniques and structure, 3) to build the confidence of the PKK members in writing and expressing themselves through short stories, and 4) to encourage them to publish their short stories through print or online media, thereby creating economic opportunities that can improve family welfare.

Thus, through this training, it is expected to make a positive contribution to the empowerment of women in Bakalan Village, Pasuruan City, by helping them explore their potential in writing. This creative writing training in short story writing is also expected to contribute to enhancing creativity, providing new useful skills, and creating economic opportunities to improve family welfare. Therefore, this creative writing training in short story writing can become a regular activity that fosters increased interest and writing skills within the local community.

METHODS

Activity Target

The target group for this community service activity, conducted through creative writing training in short story writing, is the PKK (Family Welfare Empowerment) mothers of Bakalan Village, Pasuruan City. This community service activity is held for one day at the Early Childhood Education (PAUD) classroom in Bakalan Village, Pasuruan City, with 25 participants. The training participants are members of the PKK Bakalan Village Management Board, whose names are listed in the official decree of the PKK Management Board of Bakalan Village, Pasuruan City.

The method used in this community service activity is a structured, participatory, and intensive guidance training method (Mawardi et al., 2019). This approach is employed to ensure that participants can follow, understand the material, and write short stories effectively. The training is expected to equip the PKK mothers with beneficial and sustainable short story writing skills.

Below are the stages of the creative writing training in short story writing:



FIGURE 1. Stages of the Creative Writing Training in Short Story Writing

Preparation Stage

In this stage, the following activities are carried out: 1) identifying participants by contacting and inviting the PKK management members of Bakalan Village, Pasuruan City, to participate in the training. Participants are expected to have an interest in writing, even if they have no prior experience, 2) providing an experienced facilitator skilled in short story writing with excellent teaching abilities, 3) preparing training materials that cover basic short story writing theory, idea development techniques, and writing practice.

Training Implementation Stage

This stage begins with the first session, which includes a theoretical presentation on: a) an introduction to short stories, including basic concepts, elements of a short story (theme, characters, plot, setting, point of view, tone, and language style), and the importance of writing short stories. b) writing techniques, which cover how to discover and develop story ideas, build characters and dialogue, as well as techniques for writing compelling openings and closings.

The second session is the practice session, which includes: a) writing exercises where participants are invited to write short stories on a collectively chosen theme—everyday life experiences. Facilitators provide guidance and support throughout the writing process.

The third session is a reading and discussion session, where participants read their completed short stories and receive feedback from the facilitator. This discussion aims to provide constructive feedback and motivate participants.

Evaluation and Monitoring Stage

In this stage, an evaluation is conducted on each participant's short story. The evaluation uses a rubric <https://bit.ly/RubrikPenilaianPenulisanCerpen>. Stories are assessed based on their structure, creativity, language use, character development, and the conveyed message or meaning. Facilitators offer suggestions for improvement and appreciation for well-written, engaging stories.

To measure satisfaction and the achievement of the training's objectives, a satisfaction questionnaire is used to collect participants' opinions and suggestions about the training to improve future activities. As a follow-up to this community service activity through creative writing training in short story writing, participants are encouraged to continue writing and explore the possibility of publishing their stories through local media or online platforms. Additionally, it is hoped that this training can become a regular program held periodically.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

This training was conducted in one day in the Early Childhood Education (PAUD) classroom of Bakalan Village. The training sessions lasted for three hours, led by an experienced facilitator in creative writing. The training aimed to provide an enjoyable and beneficial learning experience for participants, motivating them to continue writing and improving their skills.

The short story writing training for the PKK mothers in Bakalan Village was structured with a schedule that involved participatory and intensive guidance to ensure the achievement of the desired objectives. Below is the detailed implementation of the activities:

Opening

The activity began with a welcoming speech from the head of the PKK. Participants were introduced to the facilitator and the supporting team for the training. The facilitator provided an overview of the goals and benefits of the training.

Training Material Presentation Session

- 1) Introduction to Short Stories: The facilitator explained the basic concepts of short stories, including the elements that form a short story such as theme, characters, plot, setting, point of view, tone, and language style. This explanation was accompanied by relevant short story examples to help participants better understand the material.
- 2) Writing Techniques: The facilitator provided material on techniques for idea development, character building, dialogue creation, and strategies for writing engaging openings and closings. Participants were encouraged to take notes on key points that could be applied in their writing practice, using the Writing Practice Instrument accessible via the link <https://bit.ly/LKPPelatihanMenulisCerpren>



FIGURE 2. Presentation of Creative Writing Training Materials in Short Story Writing

An interactive discussion took place between the facilitator and participants regarding story ideas that could be developed into short stories. Participants were encouraged to share their personal experiences, which could serve as inspiration for their writing.

Writing Practice Session

Participants were given time to write short stories in groups under the guidance of the facilitator. They followed the agreed-upon theme and used the Writing Practice Instrument provided via the following link: <https://bit.ly/LKPPelatihanMenulisCerpren>. During this session, the facilitator moved around the room, offering support, direction, guidance, and feedback to participants as they worked on their short stories.



FIGURE 3. Creative Short Story Writing Practice

The results from the short story writing practice produced six short stories written by six groups. The titles of these six stories are as follows:

TABLE 1. Writing Practice Instrument (LKP) for Creative Writing Short Story Training

Team Name	Story Title	Introduction: 1. Opening Sentence 2. Introduction of Characters 3. Introduction of Setting 4. Introduction of Conflict	Plot Development: 1. Initial Event 2. Character Development 3. Conflict Development 4. Key Event	Climax: 1. Story's Peak 2. Character Reactions 3. Important Decision	Resolution: 1. Conflict Resolution 2. Character Change 3. Conclusion
1	Perjuangan Seorang Ibu	https://bit.ly/CerpenKelompok6Bakalan			
2	Buah Hatiku	https://bit.ly/CerpenKelompok6Bakalan			
3	Derita Seorang Menantu	https://bit.ly/CerpenKelompok6Bakalan			
4	Kisah Anak yang Aktif	https://bit.ly/CerpenKelompok6Bakalan			
5	Anakku Bukan Dagingku	https://bit.ly/CerpenKelompok6Bakalan			
6	Bansos di Kelurahan Bakalan	https://bit.ly/CerpenKelompok6Bakalan			

The complete short stories written by the six participant groups from the training can be accessed at the following link: <https://bit.ly/CerpenKelompok6Bakalan>

Reading and Discussion of the Work

Participants who have completed their short stories are given the opportunity to present their work in front of other groups. Each short story receives feedback from the facilitator, aimed at providing encouragement and suggestions for improvement. The evaluation is conducted using the following rubric: <https://bit.ly/RubrikPenilaianPenulisanCerpen>. The evaluation results of the six short stories written by the training participants are as follows:

Team Name	Assessment Aspects					Sum
	Structure	Creativity	Language Usage	Character Development	Meanings or Moral Value	
1	2	3	3	2	3	13
2	3	3	3	3	3	15
3	3	4	3	3	4	17

4	4	2	3	2	3	14
5	3	3	3	3	3	15
6	3	3	3	3	2	14

- **Score 1:** Indicates that the aspect is not fulfilled or is very weak.
- **Score 2:** Indicates that the aspect is minimally fulfilled or requires significant improvement.
- **Score 3:** Indicates that the aspect is fulfilled well, though there is still room for improvement.
- **Score 4:** Indicates that the aspect is fulfilled perfectly or exceptionally well.

From the evaluation results, it can be seen that participants have demonstrated the ability to write short stories well, although improvements and further development are still needed to enhance the quality.

Closing

The activity concluded with participants reflecting on the experiences and knowledge gained during the training. As feedback, participants were given a questionnaire to assess their understanding of the training material. The purpose of this questionnaire was to gauge participants' responses to the training. It included several questions aimed at measuring participants' comprehension and their enthusiasm and commitment to follow-up actions after attending the creative writing training in short story writing. The facilitator also provided motivation, encouraging participants to continue writing and developing their skills in the future. Additionally, a follow-up plan was discussed for those interested in publishing their short stories, creating potential economic opportunities to improve their welfare.

Discussion

The implementation of the short story writing training for the PKK mothers in Bakalan Village yielded several key findings and lessons that can serve as evaluation material and a basis for developing similar programs in the future.

Participant Enthusiasm and Participation

The PKK mothers of Bakalan Village demonstrated high enthusiasm throughout the training. This was evident from their consistent attendance and active involvement in the discussion and writing practice sessions. Participants were not only eager to write but also to share ideas and personal experiences that could be developed into short stories. This active participation indicates that writing can become a positive medium for self-expression and stimulate a new learning spirit.

In the context of community service, such active participation is a sign that the program successfully addressed the needs and interests of the target community. This was reflected in participants' focus on learning motivation, driven by a desire to learn, with hope for future benefits (Puspitadewi, Dyah Qonita, 2017). Similarly, in community service activities conducted by Nufus (2022), which also included short story writing training, participants showed interest in writing, as evidenced by their enthusiasm during the training.



FIGURE 4. Enthusiasm and Participation of Training Participants

The above figure shows the enthusiasm of the PKK mothers of Bakalan Village during the short story writing training. In this community service, the participants' active involvement, particularly that of the PKK mothers, became one of the indicators of the program's success. Their consistent presence and engagement in discussions and writing practices reflect a deep interest in this activity. This involvement not only demonstrates high learning spirit but also reveals that writing can be an effective means of expressing oneself and sharing valuable life experiences. Writing short stories became a powerful medium for participants to address personal and social issues they had experienced, enhancing solidarity and understanding among participants.

This community service highlights the importance of tailoring training content to the specific needs and interests of the target group. In the case of Bakalan Village, the short story writing training not only enhanced writing skills but also served as a tool for empowering the PKK mothers by strengthening their self-identity and enabling them to share meaningful stories. Active participation also suggests the long-term potential of community service programs that can continue to grow and provide sustainable positive impacts for the community.

Challenges Encountered

Although participants showed great interest, several challenges were identified during the training, including:

- **Educational Background Variation.** Participants had diverse educational backgrounds, which affected their understanding of the material presented. This required a more personalized and adaptive approach from the facilitator. With the varied educational backgrounds of the participants, the use of differentiated learning approaches proved effective. This aligns with Husni (2013), who noted that differentiated learning is a teaching process that gives learners the opportunity to study the material according to their abilities and needs.
- **Time Constraints.** The limited duration of the training left some participants feeling they had not fully mastered short story writing techniques, and the stories they wrote were still considered less engaging. Some participants suggested extending the training time to facilitate a deeper understanding, leading to more compelling and well-written stories. To address the time constraints, giving participants assignments or projects can help them continue practicing and receive constructive feedback. In writing, discipline and individual determination are key, and with a strong desire to improve, obstacles can be more easily overcome (Risnawati et al., 2022).
- **Self-Confidence.** Some participants lacked confidence in their writing abilities, as they had no prior experience in writing short stories, leading to hesitation when reading their work in front of others. Strategies such as small group discussions, where participants could provide mutual support and positive feedback, can help gradually build their confidence. Interactive and practical approaches were also effective in developing participants' creative writing skills and boosting their confidence (Nurcaya & Chairunnisa, 2024).

Benefits

Participants expressed that the training significantly enhanced their writing skills and confidence. They also noted that it helped them become more creative and skilled in expressing ideas through writing. Furthermore, participants felt that writing could be an enjoyable and beneficial activity to fill their leisure time. This aligns with Zulfitria (2022), who found that short story writing training was beneficial for participants, not only to pass the time but also as a potential source of income for those who become short story writers.

Recommendation

Based on the training implementation and evaluation, several recommendations are proposed for improvement and future development:

- **Sustainable Program.** It is recommended that this training become a sustainable program with regular meetings to ensure participants continue to develop their writing skills.

- Individual Mentoring. Provide individual mentoring sessions for participants who require further guidance, especially in writing techniques and idea development.
- Work Publication. Organize follow-up activities to help participants publish their short stories, either through local print media or online platforms, so they can gain broader recognition for their work and create economic opportunities by selling short story collections, both in print and digital formats.

Therefore, this short story writing training not only enriched participants' knowledge but also strengthened social bonds among the PKK mothers. The activity successfully built a writing community that can support and inspire each other.

Results and Evaluation

After the training, participants are expected to be able to:

- Write short stories with a good structure.
- Develop story ideas into engaging works.
- Have the confidence to share and publish their work.

Evaluation was conducted through the assessment of the short stories written by participants and a questionnaire filled out by participants to provide feedback on their satisfaction, understanding, and commitment to the training they had attended.

CONCLUSION AND RECCOMENDATION

Conclusion

The creative writing training in short story writing conducted for the PKK in Bakalan Village, Pasuruan City, successfully achieved the expected objectives and had a positive impact on the participants. Several conclusions can be drawn from this activity as follows:

- There was a significant improvement in participants' writing skills, demonstrated by their enhanced understanding and ability to write short stories.
- The participants showed high enthusiasm and commitment, as evidenced by their interest in the training and their dedication to continuing to write after the training.
- The participants gained increased confidence in writing and public speaking, as seen in their ability to express themselves during the reading and discussion of their short stories.
- It is recommended that similar programs be held regularly to reinforce and expand the positive impact achieved. Additionally, mentoring programs and publication opportunities should be provided to further support the participants' writing skill development.

The outcomes of this training activity are as follows:

- The creative writing training resulted in six short stories produced by six groups of participants, which will be further developed by each PKK member in Bakalan Village.
- The activity enhanced the participants' understanding, particularly for those with no prior experience in short story writing.
- Participants successfully learned to write short stories through the stages of idea development, title selection, and the integration of essential story elements.

This training not only succeeded in improving the writing abilities of the PKK mothers but also strengthened social bonds among community members. By continuing this program on a regular basis, it is hoped that a strong literacy culture will be established and a more skilled and creative community will emerge in expressing their ideas and stories.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are directed to the Village Government and the Bakalan Village administration:

- Encourage the PKK mothers of Bakalan Village to develop their writing skills in short stories.
- Provide facilities for publishing the short stories written by the PKK members in an anthology.
- Facilitate participation in creative writing competitions held by various institutions, including universities, the Ministry of Education, or state-owned enterprises.

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