



# The Student's Perception of The Use of Wattpad in Reading Mastery through Story for Eleventh Students at MA Matholibul Huda Mlonggo in Academic Year 2023

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Sari, Y.P and Haryanto. (2025). The Student's Perception of The Use of Wattpad in Reading Mastery through Story for Eleventh Students at MA Matholibul Huda Mlonggo in Academic Year 2023. *Journal of English Language and literature*, 10(1), 165-176. doi: 10.37110/jell.v10i1.276

Received: 12-01-2025

Accepted: 15-02-2025

Published: 02-03-2025

**Abstract:** This study aims to describe the data on the students' perceptions of using the Wattpad application in teaching reading mastery. This research used a qualitative descriptive design with inductive analysis, which uses descriptive data in written or oral words. The researcher used the non-probability sampling technique to get deeper data. The participants are 35 students of the eleventh-grade science class of MA Matholibul Huda Jepara. The researcher used interviews and documentation to collect the data. To analyze the obtained data, the researchers used coding. Researchers compare different codes, and several codes are combined into one because of the emergence of a similarity. The study's results found that the motivation and engagement aspects of learning reading through the Wattpad application highlight the platform's potential to foster a positive reading culture among students. Teachers can better understand how Wattpad influences students' reading habits, interests, and engagement with literature. The improvement in reading aspects provides a comprehensive view of the various dimensions of reading skill improvement. The variety of content in learning reading emphasizes the platform's ability to cater to diverse interests and reading preferences. The positive influence and reading habits for learning reading foster a love for reading and develop consistent reading practices among students. The challenges and negative aspects of learning reading emphasize potential barriers to effective reading engagement and literacy development.

**Keywords:** *Students' Perception, Reading Comprehension, Wattpad*

## INTRODUCTION

According to Grabe (2009), reading is one of the most important abilities in educational environments. Students must have strong reading comprehension skills to understand the text's content. Harrison (2004) adds that the value of reading is linked to people's ability to

think critically and acquire knowledge. Reading is an essential component of education and cannot be isolated from the learning process (Mokhtari et al., 2009; Fitriyani & Nulanda, 2017). Reading students also benefit from increased vocabulary, spelling, writing, and reading comprehension (Mason & Krashen, 2018). Reading is also a

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psychological process of thinking and learning in addition to a cognitive one. This perspective holds that reading is a multifaceted mental activity that involves several interactions, including thinking, learning, and information processing (Hacker, 2009).

However, people in Indonesia, even students, have been reported to be uninterested in reading (Rahman, 2018). As a result, particularly in reading-intensive classes, it may cause them to lag in their learning and comprehension of the subject matter. Bad readers struggle to understand the text and are not good at concluding, according to Cain et al. (2004). Furthermore, Andreas (2018) discovered that Indonesian EFL students had a low level of reading interest, with their level being 1. For students, reading motivation is crucial (Rahman & Weda, 2018). According to Guthrie et al. (2000), a person's objectives, values, and beliefs about the reading's subjects, procedures, and outcomes constitute their reading motivation.

Reading gives students access to a broader range of reading materials, including articles, books, journals, tabloids, newspapers, magazines, short tales, and websites. It is also used outside the classroom because most people find reading enjoyable (Harmer, 2007). According to research, reading comprehension and speed are increased when reading is taught properly. This results in significant vocabulary acquisition, and students demonstrate growth in both vocabulary and spelling (Shen, 2008). Students are, therefore, free to select the books they wish to read. According to Powell (2005), students are encouraged to look for different reading materials more appropriate for their interests and reading comprehension level if they do not find the chosen materials engaging.

Extensive reading activities outside of the classroom are among the various things kids can now perform online, thanks to technological advancements. An Internet connection also gives students access to a wealth of real resources that enhance the

pleasure of learning English (Dang, 2011; Haryanto, H., & Effendi, D. E. (2023)). Numerous online reading services include Wattpad, Google Books, Glose, Tumblr, Goodreads, and more. According to Wattpad, over 70 million people used the platform in 2019. The platform allows users to read and write a great deal. Wattpad offers a wide range of reading materials in many genres for students who read a lot. These can be selected according to their interests. Wattpad is a possible platform for students to engage in independent reading comprehension exercises outside the classroom.

Some researchers have conducted studies related to the current topic. Ramadhanti et al. (2021), Mesiono & Sahana (2021), Siti (2021), and Anindita (2020) conducted a study on the Wattpad application to increase reading skills for junior high school students. The research indicates that using Wattpad media positively impacts learners' ability to read text. In comparison, Mufaridah et al. (2019), Putri (2019), Permatasari et al. (2020), and Anggitasari et al. (2020) investigated the use of Wattpad to increase the writing skills of junior high school students. The results showed that the students generally have the motivation and desire to write on the Wattpad application, even though some do not dare do it because they lack confidence. However, some students position themselves as readers and active writers and are motivated to keep writing.

Based on the earlier study, the researcher concludes that while the advantages of the Wattpad activity for students were investigated, no specific investigation of how students felt about utilizing the site to improve their reading skills was conducted. This study is not the same as the others. This study focuses on how senior high school students in class XI MIPA 2 respond to or perceive the benefits of utilizing Wattpad media and how it influences their reading mastery. After that, Wattpad was incorporated into the reading mastery curriculum, where students were already using



Wattpad media to innovate their learning. Senior high school students are currently permitted to carry devices so they can use them to further their education.

Learning English is difficult for the pupils at MA Matholibul Huda, particularly regarding the reading skills component. Based on the researcher experience when conducting pre-observation in class, many students have difficulty understanding the material because they lack of information and the learning media used are less interesting. So that most students do not pay attention to what the teacher says during class. This can happen because teacher still use traditional learning method, it means lecturing approach. This method only focuses on the teacher because the teacher is more active in explaining while students passively listen. Therefore, the lack of students motivation, lack of use learning media and teacher-centered learning approach, and there are still students who do not pay attention to the teacher, these are the things that make students feel bored when studying in class. We need to use an engaging teaching strategy to keep the pupils engaged and avoid boredom. When teaching, student excitement is crucial; thus, it is your responsibility as a teacher to give your pupils engaging possibilities. To make the process of selecting the best course of action for their students easier, teachers must also be aware of the character traits of their students. The most crucial elements of this approach to problem-solving are encouraging students to participate, educating them to analyze and make judgments, and motivating slow learners. This study is necessary since no previous research has examined how students feel about using a large social network such as Wattpad. According to Aini et al. (2024), the Wattpad platform's use for reading mastery and its advantages for students' language skills requirements are appreciated and must be explored to incorporate the platform's activities into reading courses in the future.

Reading has become crucial in education; by viewing a series of written symbols and

interpreting their meaning, students can gain information and increase their knowledge (Amin, 2023). The educational system extensively uses interactive teaching techniques for technology in English language instruction. One of the most important talents in educational environments is reading. Students must have strong reading comprehension skills to understand the text's content. Furthermore, reading has a significant impact on people's ability to think as well as their ability to acquire knowledge. The development of emotional, moral, and verbal intelligence will thus depend on this skill (Chamba & Ramirez-Avila, 2021; Cicerchia & Freeman, 2018).

### **The Problems of Reading**

Numerous English language learners struggle to acquire reading abilities, according to Ibrahim (2022). This is because there are numerous barriers to reading proficiency, and the methods of instruction teachers utilize do not meet the needs of their students. This type of English instruction often leaves students feeling disinterested and unmotivated. There is a lack of student involvement and creativity in the learning process since students are less interested in reading books. Therefore, professors are forced to teach in a traditional or lecture-style manner. In English learning activities, teachers continue to employ traditional methods, which leads to this issue (Fitri et al., 2021). Students with weak reading skills, those who struggle with spelling and reading, and those who are unable to read books are the issues with this study. It is still tedious and difficult to understand (Muhtarom et al., 2021). According to Mubarak et al. (2022), Indonesian EFL students lack frequent English reading practice because they struggle to comprehend the content of English reading materials and come across many unfamiliar words that hinder their ability to comprehend what they read. Reading is boring and challenging for many kids because it's probably a hard skill to learn in English. Not reading can

harm children's knowledge and development as they get older.

Due to the cognitive and metacognitive skills required to manage dynamic learning that involves interaction, online work, and downloading text, audio, and video, students may find learning English challenging. Teachers also employ educational films and pictures projected on the LCD screen as a way to help pupils quickly learn and comprehend the teachings (Ariffin et al., 2021). Students can also look for answers to their queries online if the teacher has one or if the textbook does not provide the answer. According to Karmila et al. (2021), principals also assist teachers in enhancing instruction and learning. Students are increasingly more interested in utilizing contemporary techniques than more conventional ones as time goes on. Because they find it more engaging and fascinating, pupils find learning through media easier. Thus, the media is the most effective way to instruct students (Mustaeva et al., 2022).

First, problems of language knowledge or condition when the reader lacks mastery of five aspects of language knowledge: phonological, semantic, syntactic, morphemic, and pragmatic. Second, problems of background knowledge or the condition when the readers find the differences between their previous knowledge and what the author intended in the text. Another problem with background knowledge is difficulty understanding some culture's loaded words and phrases even though the readers know every word in the text. Third, problems of motivation or the students have less motivation in reading. Less motivation in reading is also why the students face problems and cannot achieve the target in reading comprehension. If the students are not interested in the topic they are reading, they might face difficulty and failure in reading comprehension. On the contrary, if the students are interested in the topic, it can become an important factor because positive motivation plays a significant role in reading development,

which promotes comprehension so that the students may be motivated to read other topics. Fourth, problems of reading strategy or the condition when the students used inappropriate reading comprehension strategies. If the readers have a good strategy for reading comprehension, they can process the text efficiently. On the contrary, if the readers have a bad strategy, they will face problems in reading comprehension. In conclusion, the reading strategy shows how the readers comprehend a text, how they read it, and what they do when they face difficulty reading comprehension. The last is problems with the reading process or the condition when the students cannot concentrate till the end of a passage. Sometimes, the readers seem to forget what they have already read and must move backward and reread it. In short, some aspects of reading problems can hinder the students' reading comprehension (Sari et al., 2020).

### **Wattpad Application in Reading**

Wattpad is a site for both seasoned and aspiring authors. Through it, authors can publish their work, receive criticism, and interact with readers and other writers. Wattpad is a blogging app and website that lets users write and read content on websites designed for those who enjoy writing, whether creating poetry, short tales, serial stories, or essays. Allen Lau and Ivan Yuen founded Wattpad in 2006, with its headquarters in Canada. Currently, over 90 million people globally may access it.

According to Aini (2023), students' motivation can be raised using Wattpad as a learning tool to spark their interest in reading. Readers can use Wattpad to find books that suit their interests. Furthermore, this program offers fiction and nonfiction of many genres or varieties, making it the ideal option for people who enjoy writing. One of the largest literacy platforms globally, Wattpad offers services for authors to share their writing and for readers to enjoy.

Numerous genres and works are categorized by category on Wattpad. Wattpad offers tools



for both story creation and feedback. Additionally, the algorithm will enable readers to discover the novel they will adore. Because of its features, branding, and ease of use, Wattpad has become one of the most popular reading platforms available for download (Shoji et al., 2021; Susanti et al., 2024).

Wattpad's search engine offers a variety of genres, so users can select the kind of reading they wish to do. A short narrative is among Wattpad's most eloquent pieces. A short story on Wattpad receives more votes and comments, and more readers enjoy it. The short story writer's rating rises with the number of votes and comments. When readers enjoy a piece of writing, it increases the likelihood that publishers will take a look at it and decide to print and publish it. Intriguing works were not only published but also filmed.

Wattpad is a reading app with tales, novels, comics, and other content. Wattpad also lets us produce tales or articles to be published within the app, so we may read them while simultaneously creating our own or someone else's story. Researchers are exploring Wattpad apps to assist students in better understanding the app and the stories they are reading. A captivating story and knowledge transfer can increase students' interest in reading. Wattpad can help them learn and remember things. In this case, Wattpad can help students read stories more fluidly and support their memory of their writing. Kids may feel the same way about the story if a creative can explain or clarify the scenario. Wattpad's built-in search engine allows users to choose the kind of reading they want to do. Among the most significant ways to read short stories and literary gems is to use the Wattpad app.

On the Wattpad app, the more people appreciate a poem, the more votes and comments it receives. A higher ranking is given to the author's poem when there are more votes and comments. The publisher's likelihood of printing and publishing an article increases with reader enjoyment. Fascinating works that have been filmed and published. The most popular

genre on Wattpad is teen fiction, and its serial distribution architecture inevitably influences writers' and users' practices. Samosir et al. (2008) claim that Wattpad users utilize it for excitement, primarily to research fanfiction or cultivate creators. Consequently, Wattpad has many benefits. Students can, for example, appreciate the material, which helps improve their reading skills. Wattpad is a widely used and well-liked program for everyone who appreciates writing and reading.

## METHOD

The researcher employed a qualitative descriptive design with inductive analysis to examine how students perceive using the Wattpad application for reading mastery. The descriptive data used in this study comes from written or spoken words from people or actors that can be observed (Sugiyono, 2017: 9; Kotler & Keller, 2016: 104). This study also employed an inductive-qualitative method to help collect sample data and optimize the outcomes. According to Kusumastuti and Khoiron (2019:11), the researcher is interested in how students view Wattpad and its advantages for reading proficiency.

The researchers used the non-probability sampling technique because this sampling technique is more suitable for qualitative research to get deeper data. According to Sugiyono (2017:81). The researcher uses this sampling technique to rely on their judgment when choosing population members to participate in the study. The students from the eleventh-grade science class of MA Matholibul Huda Jepara have been chosen as the data source. The researcher took one of six science classes in Eleventh Grade at MA. The sample of this research takes three representatives in one class, especially students with higher, medium, and lower levels.

The researcher used interviews and documentation to collect the data. The researcher used qualitative descriptive analysis to analyze the data. To process the data obtained from the interview results, the

researchers used data analysis using coding. According to Charmaz (2006), coding is a process in which research data is categorized or grouped with a shorter name, showing similarities with other data. Researchers compare different codes, and several codes are combined into one because of the emergence of a similarity. The combined codes do not disappear but are presented in a new code. By comparing each code contained in the data, researchers can see the reciprocal relationship between the codes.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

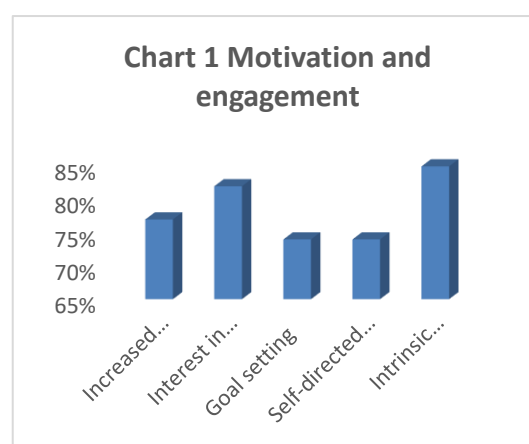
This study aims to present the data on the students' perceptions of using the Wattpad application to master reading. The instrument in this research seeks to collect data and information from student informants in the eleventh-grade science class of MA Matholibul Huda Jepara. The results obtained from this research used interview techniques with informants as a form of direct data search and documentation, which the researchers then analyzed. This analysis focuses on second-semester students in the eleventh-grade science class of MA Matholibul Huda Jepara who use the Wattpad application.

### **Motivation and Engagement**

According to Aini (2023), using Wattpad as a learning medium to increase interest in reading can help increase student motivation. The indicator of increasing motivation can be viewed from several aspects, like (1) increased reading frequency for the number of times students read stories on Wattpad over a specific period in which the students report reading more often than traditional reading methods.; (2) interest in reading for the student's enthusiasm for reading in which the students express excitement about exploring new stories and genres available on Wattpad; (3) goal setting for the ability of students to set personal reading goals in which the students create and track reading goals, such as completing several stories or chapters within a timeframe; (4) self-

directed learning for the extent to which students take initiative in their reading choices in which the students actively seek out and select stories that interest them, demonstrating autonomy in their learning process; (5) the intrinsic motivation for the internal drive to read for pleasure and personal satisfaction in which the students report reading for enjoyment rather than external rewards, such as grades or assignments.

Below is Chart 1 for motivation and engagement in using Wattpad

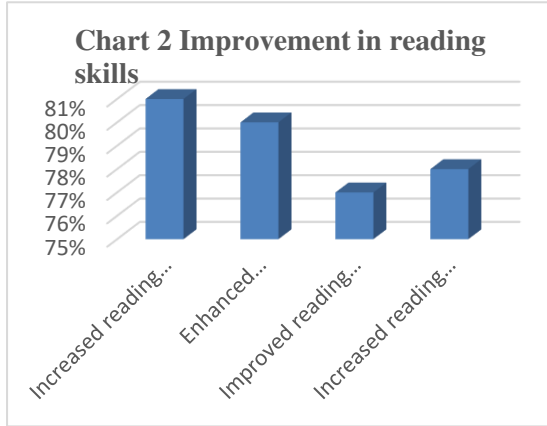


**Chart 1.** Motivation and engagement

### **Improvement in reading skills**

The improvement in reading skills comprises: (1) increased reading comprehension as the ability to understand and interpret the meaning of texts; the students demonstrate improved comprehension through higher scores on reading assessments, quizzes, or discussions about the material; (2) enhanced vocabulary acquisition as the growth in the number of words a student understands and can use effectively; the students use a broader range of vocabulary in their writing and speaking, and they can define and use new words encountered in their reading; (3) improved reading fluency as the ability to read smoothly and accurately with appropriate speed; the students read aloud with greater speed and expression, and their oral reading fluency scores show improvement over time; (4) increased reading engagement as the level of interest and motivation a student

has toward reading; the students voluntarily choose to read more often, participate in reading-related discussions, and express enthusiasm for reading activities.



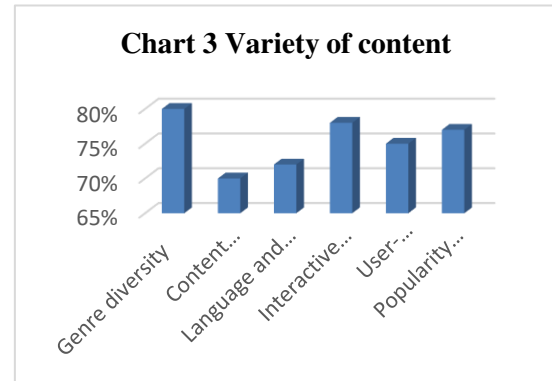
**Chart 2.** Improvement in reading skills

### Variety of content

The indicators of various content comprise (1) genre diversity for the various genres available on the platform; the availability of multiple genres such as romance, fantasy, science fiction, mystery, horror, non-fiction, and poetry allows students to explore various literary styles; (2) content length of format as the different lengths and formats of reading materials; it is the availability of short stories, novellas, full-length novels, and serialized content, catering to different reading preferences and time commitments; (3) language and reading levels as the variety of language styles and complexity of texts; it is the availability of content written in different reading levels, from beginner to advanced, accommodating students with varying literacy skills and language proficiencies; (4) interactive and multimedia content as the inclusion of interactive elements and multimedia features; they are stories that incorporate images, videos, or reader polls, enhancing the reading experience and making it more engaging; (5) user-generated content as the extent of content created by users of the platform; it is a large volume of user-generated stories, allowing for a continuous influx of new

and diverse content that reflects current trends and interests; and (6) popularity and trending content as the presence of popular and trending stories on the platform; it is a dynamic selection of trending stories that reflect current interests and popular themes, encouraging students to engage with widely-read content.

The variety of content can be seen as follows:



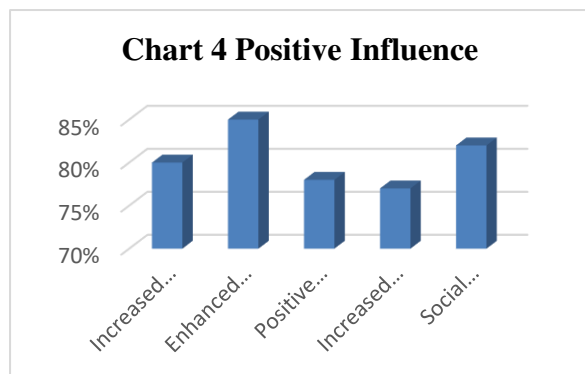
**Chart 3.** Variety of content

### Positive Influence

The indicators of positive influence comprise: (1) Increased reading enjoyment as the level of pleasure students derive from reading on Wattpad in which the students report feeling more excited and motivated to read due to the engaging and diverse content available on the platform; (2) Enhanced reading motivation as the drive to read more frequently and explore new materials in which the students express a desire to read more often and actively seek out new stories, indicating a shift in their motivation toward reading; (3) Positive attitude toward reading as the overall perception of reading as a valuable and enjoyable activity in which the students demonstrate a more favorable attitude toward reading, viewing it as a fun and rewarding pastime rather than a chore; (4) Increased exposure to diverse content as the variety of genres and themes students encounter while using Wattpad in which the students explore a broader range of topics and genres, leading to a more well-rounded reading experience and a greater appreciation for different literary styles; (5) Social interaction and community engagement as the extent to

which students engage with peers through reading-related activities in which the students participate in discussions, share recommendations, and interact with other readers and writers, fostering a sense of community around reading.

The positive influence can be seen as follows:



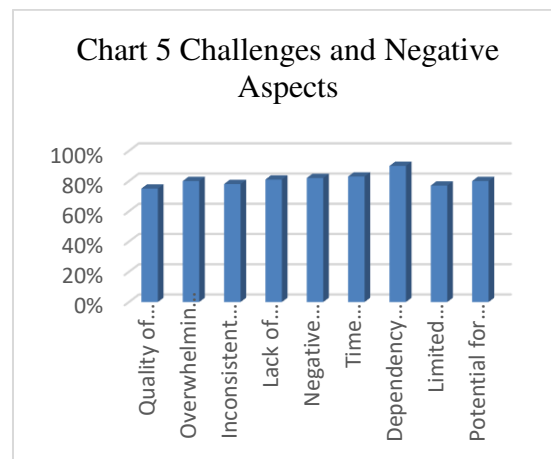
**Chart 4.** Positive influence

**Challenges and Negative Aspects**

The indicators of these challenges and negative aspects are: (1) Quality of Content as the variability in the quality of stories available on the platform in which the students encounter poorly written or edited stories, which can lead to frustration and a negative perception of reading; (2) Distraction and Engagement Issues as the potential for distractions within the app that can detract from focused reading in which the students report being easily distracted by notifications, advertisements, or other content, leading to fragmented reading experiences; (3) Overwhelming Choices as the vast amount of content available on Wattpad in which the students feel overwhelmed by the sheer volume of stories, making it difficult to select what to read and potentially leading to decision fatigue; (4) Inconsistent Reading Levels as the variation in reading complexity across different stories in which the students struggle to find content that matches their reading level, leading to frustration or disengagement; (5) Lack of Structured Learning as the absence of a formalized reading curriculum or guidance in which the students may miss out on essential reading skills and strategies due to the

unstructured nature of the platform, leading to gaps in their literacy development; (6) Negative Social Interactions as the potential for negative experiences in the community aspect of Wattpad in which the students encounter bullying, negative comments, or toxic interactions in discussions or comments, which can discourage participation and engagement; (7) Time Management Issues as the difficulty in balancing reading with other responsibilities in which the students report spending excessive time on Wattpad, leading to neglect of other academic or personal commitments; (8) Dependency on Digital Formats as the reliance on digital reading as opposed to traditional print reading as students become accustomed to digital formats, they may struggle with reading comprehension or retention when transitioning to print materials; (9) Limited Access to Educational Resources as the lack of supplementary educational materials or resources in which the students may not have access to guided reading questions, vocabulary support, or comprehension strategies that are often found in traditional educational settings; (10) Potential for Inappropriate Content as the presence of stories that may not be suitable for all age groups in which the students encounter content that includes mature themes or language, which may not align with their age or maturity level, leading to discomfort or negative experiences.

The chart of challenges and negative aspects is as follows:



**Chart 5.** Challenges and Negative Aspects

## CONCLUSION

Based on the research results presented by the researcher in the previous discussion, it can be concluded that the second-semester students' perceptions of MA Matholibul Huda Mlonggo Jepara towards Wattpad as a medium for learning mastery of English vocabulary. First, positive perceptions, namely, Wattpad effectively teaches English reading mastery. Wattpad is less effective for knowing the meaning of English vocabulary.

The motivation and engagement aspects of learning reading through the Wattpad application highlight the platform's potential to foster a positive reading culture among students. Teachers can better understand how Wattpad influences students' reading habits, interests, and engagement with literature. The improvement in reading aspects provides a comprehensive view of the various dimensions of reading skill improvement. Tracking these improvements can also help motivate students and reinforce the importance of reading as a lifelong skill. The variety of content in learning reading emphasizes the platform's ability to cater to diverse interests and reading preferences. Wattpad can enhance students' reading experiences, foster engagement, and promote a love for reading by providing a rich array of genres, authors, themes, and formats. The positive influence and reading habits for learning reading foster a love for reading and develop consistent reading practices among students. The challenges and negative aspects of learning reading emphasize potential barriers to effective reading engagement and literacy development.

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