

## Exploring Students' Engagement in Comprehending Analytical Exposition Texts through Gallery Walk Technique

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**Abstract:** This study aims to explore students' engagement in comprehending Analytical Exposition texts through the use of the Gallery Walk technique. Conducted in an eleventh-grade English class at a state senior high school in Jember during the 2024/2025 academic year, this research employed a qualitative descriptive method through observation, interviews, and documentation. The purpose was to investigate how the Gallery Walk technique influences students' behavioral, cognitive, and affective engagement during reading activities. The results showed that the Gallery Walk technique effectively enhanced students' behavioral, cognitive, and especially affective engagement. Students participated actively, demonstrated improved understanding, and showed enthusiasm during learning. The findings suggest that the Gallery Walk fosters a more interactive and motivating classroom environment, making it a beneficial strategy to improve reading comprehension and student engagement in English language learning.

**Keywords:** Students' Engagement, Gallery Walk Technique, Affective Engagement

### INTRODUCTION

In English language learning at the senior high school level, reading skills occupy a significant portion, both in the class assessment and in national examinations. One important type of text included in the curriculum is the Analytical Exposition text, which requires students to understand arguments and organize ideas logically. However, the reality in the field shows that many students still struggle to comprehend the structure, content, and purpose of this type of text. This difficulty is often caused by the low level of students' engagement during the learning process. Students' engagement includes cognitive, emotional, and behavioral aspects. Without optimal engagement, the learning process becomes passive and less meaningful.

Student engagement is now widely acknowledged in higher education as a crucial and valuable element that greatly influences the teaching and learning process, while also playing a key role in enhancing students' academic achievement (Kahu, 2013; Oz and Boyaci, 2021). Student engagement is widely regarded as a fundamental requirement and key indicator of effective teaching, however defining it in simple terms remains challenging due to the various factors and components that influence it (Farah and Hattami, 2023).

Student engagement describes the extent of a students' physical and mental involvement in their academic journey. As a result, highly engaged students tend to invest significant effort in their studies, actively participate in academic and social activities, and maintain consistent communication with both their teachers and peers (Buchele, 2021). Student engagement can be better understood by contrasting it with signs of disengagement, such as low motivation to learn, lack of interest in the subject matter, minimal participation in classroom activities and intentional postponement of academic tasks (Skinner & Belmont, 1993; Finn et al., 1995)

The classroom environment serves as the setting in which the learning process takes place, with teachers and students acting as the central participants in that process (Gherasim, et al, 2011). Teachers play a crucial role in guiding, motivating, directing, and shaping both the character and knowledge of students, helping them become capable individuals who can contribute positively to others. However, the classroom serves as the foundational component of the learning environment. The core elements of this environment include the classroom itself, the teacher, and the students. Educators strive to foster learning atmosphere grounded in values, guiding principles, and positive practices embraced by all members of the school community. To achieve this, teachers must cultivate supportive relationships, encourage active participation, and design instructional strategies that cater to diverse learning needs. A well-structured and inclusive classroom not only enhances academic achievement but also promotes students' social and emotional growth. When students feel respected, valued, and safe, they are more likely to engage meaningfully in the learning process and develop a lifelong love for learning.

While student engagement has been extensively studied in higher education, but in middle school contexts there is still a notable lack of qualitative research focusing on how high school students, particularly at the senior secondary level, engage with learning process. Most existing studies tend to emphasize cognitive and behavioral aspects of engagement in university settings, often using quantitative instruments to measure outcomes. High school students' complex, lived experiences, particularly in varied learning environments, are still not well understood, nonetheless. This creates a significant gap in understanding the emotional, social, and contextual factors that affect the anticipation of senior high school students. There is an urgent need for qualitative insights to guide more responsive teaching practices and policies catered to this age group, since engagement at this point is crucial for both academic performance and long-term motivation.

Although student engagement has been recognized as an important factor in contributing to learning success, most existing studies still focus on basic skills such as vocabulary mastery or general classroom activity. Research by Kusumayanthi and Rusmiyati (2021) has for instance explored student engagement in English vocabulary learning through gamification using Kahoot!, while Ginting (2021) provides a conceptual overview of active learning strategies to increase students' engagement in English classroom. However, no studies have been found out that specifically examine the relationship between strategies to increase student engagement and the development of advanced language skills, particularly critical reading, especially in senior high school students. In fact, reading comprehension is very important in advanced English learning because they involve the ability to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize complex information. Therefore, research is needed that examines how engagement strategies such as active learning, problem-based learning, gallery walk technique, or game-based learning can be effectively integrated to increase students' engagement while developing reading comprehension of senior high school students.

A previous study that was conducted by Kusumayanthi and Rusmiyati (2021) has shown that digital learning media such as Kahoot is effective in enhancing student engagement through fun and interactive approaches. This platform encourages students' participation, particularly in affective and behavioral aspects, due to their game-based and competitive nature. However, the engagement they generate tends to be short-term and primarily focused on quiz or assessment activities, lacking deeper cognitive involvement. A study by Hasdina et al, (2024) examined student engagement in an English course at the junior high school level. The research identified three types of engagement like cognitive, behavioral, and affective, with cognitive engagement being the most dominant. They also found that factors such as teacher support, peers, school environment, and task characteristics influenced engagement, with teacher

support playing the biggest role. Moreover, student engagement in collaborative and exploratory learning contexts remains underexplored. The Gallery Walk technique, as an alternative instructional method, offers the potential to foster more comprehensive engagement by involving physical movement, group discussion, and active exploration of learning materials. Therefore, further research is needed to examine how the Gallery Walk technique can enhance students' cognitive, affective, and behavioral engagement in English language learning. Grounded in the theoretical background and prior empirical findings, this study addresses the following research questions:

- a. How do students emotionally respond to the Gallery Walk technique when engaging with analytical exposition texts?
- b. How does the Gallery Walk technique affect students' behavioral patterns such as task completion, participation, and rule-following during reading based-group activities?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Connell and Wellborn (1991), Skinner and Belmont (1993), Finn, Pannozzo, and Voelkl (1995), as well as Birch and Ladd (1997), have all contributed to the foundation of theories regarding student engagement in traditional (offline) learning settings. According to these scholars, student engagement is closely tied to their experiences at school, which play supportive role in their learning efforts. Engagement is generally categorized into three interconnected dimensions: behavioral, emotional (or affective), and cognitive. These forms of engagement are interrelated – for instance, teacher guidance can enhance students' behavioral engagement (such as participation in class, consistent attendance, and constructive behavior) by fostering their cognitive engagement (like self-regulation) or by strengthening emotional engagement (such as a sense of belonging or positive relationships within the school environment).

According to Major (2015) key characteristics that affect engagement include motivation, attention, active participation, and intellectual effort. Gray and DiLoreto (2016) suggest that several personal traits such as attitudes, personality, motivation, effort, and self-confidence play a significant role in shaping student interaction and engagement. Fredrick et al., (2004) stated that student engagement can be categorized into three forms: affective, cognitive, and behavioral engagement. Anderson et al., (2004) Student engagement encompasses positive behaviors such as attending classes, staying attentive, and actively participating in learning activities. It also includes the psychological aspects of feeling connected to the school, where students feel value, respected, and a genuine part of the school community.

Harton (2019) states Gallery walk technique is an interactive group discussion technique that promotes students' participation and collaboration by having them rotate through different stations around the classroom in a small group. Francek (2006) Gallery walk technique is a learner-centered approach that encourages students to actively engage in synthesizing key scientific ideas, developing writing skills, and practicing public speaking. According to Bahtiar, et al. (2020) The Gallery Walk technique is especially beneficial for kinesthetic learners, as it involves physical movement around the classroom and it creates an active learning environment that encourages student participation, offering advantages for both learners and teachers.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design, which is appropriate for exploring how students engage in reading comprehension within a specific classroom context (Creswell, 2018). The research was grounded in an interpretive paradigm, aiming to understand students' experiences and engagement from their own perspectives, rather than through numerical measurement. This approach allowed the researcher to examine behavioral, cognitive, and affective aspects of engagement as they naturally occurred during classroom reading activities.

This research took place in was February 2025 at a state senior high school in Jember, involving 34 students of class XI-5. The researcher also acted as the classroom teacher, allowing direct interaction and observation during the learning process. To reduce bias, reflective notes, interviews, and document analysis were used for triangulation. Purposive sampling was applied to select participants who showed indicators of engagement: asking/responding to questions (cognitive), following rules and completing task (behavioral), and expressing interest or enthusiasm (affective). The Gallery Walk activity involved students rotating among text-based stations, discussing, and completing guided tasks collaboratively. Data collection involved classroom observation, semi-structured interviews, and student worksheets. The students' reading comprehension was assessed using 20 item multiple-choice test based on three texts taught in class, focusing on main ideas, supporting arguments, and text structure. This method allowed the researcher to capture rich, contextual data on how Gallery Walk influenced students' engagement in English reading activities.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The research findings indicate that the Gallery Walk technique significantly enhanced students' engagement in reading analytical exposition texts. This engagement manifested in behavioral, cognitive, and affective forms, with affective engagement emerging as the most dominant. The results are presented according to these three categories and in alignment with the research questions.

### 1. Behavioral Engagement

In this study, behavioral engagement refers to students' actions that reflect active involvement in the learning process. It encompasses observable behaviors such as active participation, adherence to instructions, diligent effort, and conduct that supports a productive classroom environment (Reeve and Lee, 2014). Observation findings indicate that students' behavioral engagement was apparent through their compliance with instructions and classroom routines. This was illustrated by interactions between teachers and students during English lessons. Students demonstrate behavioral engagement by complying with the teacher's instruction to stand up. Here is the example of behavioral engagement in an English class on the topic of analytical exposition text:

**Teacher:** Could you please give your opinion about those pictures? (*The teacher showed two pictures about how smartphone influences people's habit*).

**Student:** (*Raise her hand and tell her opinion*) Dulu orang-orang masih suka ngobrol bareng bu, sekarang lebih fokus ke hp- nya masing-masing. (People used to talk together, but now they are more focused on their smartphone)

This shows the student's awareness of and adherence to classroom rules and routines, which are key indicators of behavioral engagement. This behavior includes a physical reaction from the student in response to instructions or information provided. Based on the data

presented above, students demonstrate behavioral engagement by offering short responses to the information delivered by the teacher during the English lesson. The engagement is shown through their physical actions in following directions, reacting to the given information, and adhering to classroom rules.

## 2. Cognitive Engagement

In this study, cognitive engagement refers to students' active mental involvement, such as concentrating on teacher's explanation, showing willingness to attempt answering the questions, and making efforts to comprehend and grasp the material (Gibbs and Poskitt, 2010). This type of engagement was observed when students responded to the teacher's questions related to the English lesson. The following is an example of cognitive engagement based on the writer's experience when carrying out teaching practice activities.

**Teacher:** What is the definition of Analytical Exposition Text?

**Student:** (*students collectively raise their hands but the teacher only chooses one student to answer the question*). Me miss, me ,me.

**Teacher:** Alright, you can answer the question (teacher chooses 1 student to answer the question).

**Student:** An analytical exposition text is a type of argumentative text that aims to persuade the reader by presenting logical arguments and evidence to support the writer's point of view or opinion on a particular issue.

**Teacher:** That's good, thank you for answering the question.

The dialogue above illustrates an example of cognitive engagement, as the students actively process and mentally engage with the material being discussed. When the teacher asks about the definition of analytical exposition text, multiple students show their willingness to participate by raising their hands, indicating their attention and readiness to recall or apply their understanding. The selected student then provides a clear and accurate explanation, demonstrating not only comprehension of the concept but also the ability to articulate it effectively. This response reflects a thoughtful effort to understand and convey the learning material, which is a key aspect of cognitive engagement.

The study reveals that cognitive engagement is the most frequently demonstrated type of engagement among students during English learning activities. This finding supports the theories proposed by Fredricks et al (2004) and Appleton et al (2006), that cognitive engagement helps foster students' attention to the teacher's explanations, enhance their concentration and focus, and reflects the extent of their efforts to comprehend and master English materials in order to attain the desired competencies.

## 3. Affective Engagement

In this research, affective engagement denoted the emotional responses students' exhibit during interactions with their teacher. These responses, whether positive or negative, have the potential to influence students' overall participation in the learning process (Fredricks et al, 2004). When students experience positive emotions such as interest, enjoyment, or a sense of belonging, they are more likely to participate actively and remain motivated in classroom activities. On the other hand, negative emotions like bored, frustration, or anxiety may reduce their willingness to engage and persist in learning tasks. The emotional atmosphere fostered through teacher-student interactions thus plays a vital role in shaping students' attitudes and behaviors toward learning. Affective engagement is considered crucial for sustaining long-term academic interest and building positive perceptions of the educational experience. The

following example illustrates affective engagement as observed by the writer during teaching practice activities:

**Teacher:** So far any question?

**Student:** *(one of the students raises his hand to ask a question).*

**Teacher:** Alright, what do you want to ask?

**Student:** Bu, bagaimana cara belajar bahasa inggris yang cepat dan mudah? *(Miss, How to learn English fast and easy?)*

**Teacher:** Kalau saya dulu belajar bahasa inggris dari music atau film berbahasa inggris. Saya juga menulis dan mencari arti dari kosakata bahasa inggris yang saya belum ketahui artinya seperti di kamus ataupun di Google translate. *(I used to learn English from English music or movies. I also wrote and looked up the meaning of English words that I didn't know in the dictionary or Google translate).*

**Student:** Baik bu, terima kasih. *(Alright miss, thank you).*

This exchange reflects a positive emotional connection, where the student feels comfortable communicating with the teacher, and the teacher's supportive response fosters a respectful and empathetic learning environment. Such interactions contribute to building trust and emotional security, which are essential aspects of affective engagement in the classroom. When students feel emotionally safe and supported, they are more likely to develop a positive attitude toward learning and maintain open communication with their teacher. This sense of emotional connection not only encourages student participation but also strengthens the overall teacher-student relationship, which plays a crucial role in sustaining student engagement.

Based on the research findings, the most dominant type of engagement used in the classroom is affective engagement. This can be seen from students' positive emotional responses to learning activities, such as enthusiasm, interest, and pleasure when participating in the teaching and learning process. The affective engagement is increasingly apparent when the researcher applies the gallery walk technique in learning. Students showed high excitement and enthusiasm during learning activity. This technique provides a different learning experience because students do not just sit passively on the chair, but actively move from one station to another to read the analytical exposition text. The physical activity involved in this technique is very much in line with kinesthetic learning style that some students have, so they are more easily engaged emotionally and cognitively in the learning process.

Based on the observation and data analysis, from the three forms of students' engagement, the most prominent form of engagement when the gallery walk technique is applied is affective engagement. This can be seen from students' expressions that show enthusiasm, excitement, and interest during learning process. The classroom atmosphere becomes livelier, and students seem to enjoy activities that involve interaction and physical movement. This emotional engagement is supported by the activity design that allows students to not only sit passively, but actively move from one station to another to read and understand the analytical exposition text. In addition, behavioral engagement also appeared, indicated by students' active participation in completing tasks at each station as well as their compliance with the rules and instructions given. Meanwhile, cognitive engagement also emerged, although it varied between individuals. Some students were able to demonstrate a deep understanding of the text content, but others were still at a basic level of understanding. These findings suggest that the gallery walk technique is effective in building students' emotional and behavioral engagement, as well as providing space for the development of cognitive engagement through more dynamic learning activities that suit kinesthetic learning styles.

### Summary of Students' Engagement Observed

To summarize the different types of engagement observed during the Gallery Walk activity, the following table provides a concise overview:

Table 1: Observed indicators of students' engagement during Gallery Walk activities

Type of Engagement	Indicators	Examples
<b>Behavioral</b>	Following instructions, active participation, and compliance with rules.	Students ask permission, move between stations, and respond to instructions.
<b>Cognitive</b>	Concentration, answering questions, and applying knowledge.	Students define analytical exposition, read the texts aloud, and use new vocabulary.
<b>Affective</b>	Interest, emotional connection, enthusiasm.	Students express excitement, ask advice on learning, and engage with the teacher.

### Factors Influencing Students' Engagement

Student engagement is a complex and multidimensional construct that plays a crucial role in the learning process. According to Major (2015) and Hoskins (2012), it involves various interrelated elements, including motivation, attention, active participation, and the mental effort students invest in academic activities. In this study, these elements are categorized into several key dimensions that shape how students emotionally and behaviorally respond to instructional techniques. The following table presents a summary of the major factors influencing students' engagement, drawn from relevant literature.

Table 2: Major factors influencing students' engagement

No.	Category	Key Aspects	Selected Resources
1.	<b>Motivation and Focus</b>	Internal drive, attentiveness, persistence, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.	Schunk and Zimmerman (2012); and Major (2015)
2.	<b>Active Participation</b>	Engagement in discussions, group work, volunteering answers, willingness to complete tasks.	Hoskins (2012); Tinto (2012)
3.	<b>Academic Challenge</b>	Willingness to confront difficult materials, deep processing, critical thinking.	Kuh (2009); Gray and DiLoreto (2016)
4.	<b>Social Interaction</b>	Peer collaboration, student-teacher interaction, involvement in class activities and informal school life.	Tinto (2012); Gray and DiLoreto (2016)

These categories provide a comprehensive lens through which student engagement can be examined. In the context of this study, these dimensions help to analyze how students responded to Gallery Walk technique, both emotionally and behaviorally. Understanding the interaction

among motivation, participation, social engagement, and academic demands enables a deeper exploration of the learning experience in the reading class.

## CONCLUSION

This qualitative study has provided valuable insights into nature of student engagement in comprehending Analytical Exposition texts within the context of English language learning in a senior high school setting. The findings indicate that student engagement is a multidimensional construct that encompasses behavioral, cognitive, and affective aspects, all of which play crucial roles in the learning process. Through the implementation of the Gallery Walk technique, students were observed to demonstrate increased participation, enthusiasm, and attentiveness during reading activities. This technique not only facilitated active involvement by incorporating physical movement and peer interaction, but also aligned with the diverse learning styles of students, particularly kinesthetic learners, thereby creating more dynamic and inclusive classroom environment.

Behavioral engagement was reflected in students' compliance with classroom routines, active responses to teacher instructions, and consistent participation in group discussions. Cognitive engagement emerged as students showed efforts to understand and articulate the main ideas of the texts, respond to comprehension questions, and apply their prior knowledge in analyzing argumentative structures. Most notably, affective engagement became the most prominent, as indicated students' expressions of enjoyment, curiosity, and emotional connection with the learning tasks. These emotional responses appeared to be amplified by the interactive and student-centered nature of the Gallery Walk, which broke the monotony of traditional reading instruction and allowed students to explore content more freely and collaboratively.

In conclusion, this study contributes to the growing body of literature that highlight the importance of student engagement in secondary education and offers practical implications for enhancing reading instruction. It underscores the necessity of designing instructional approaches that are participatory, contextually relevant, and emotionally resonant. Future research may explore the long-term effects of such techniques on literacy development and investigate their impact across various educational contexts and text genres.

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