



Improving SMAN 1 Pangkalan Kuras Students' Reading Comprehension of Narrative Text Bypeer Assisted Learning Strategy (PALS)

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Article Info	Abstract
Article History Received: 2024-07-22 Revised: 2024-08-19 Published: 2024-09-02 Keywords: <i>Reading Comprehension; Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS); English Language Learning.</i>	This action research aimed to improve reading comprehension among second-grade students at SMAN 1 Pangkalan Kuras by implementing the Peer-Assisted Learning Strategy (PALS). The study combined professional development with experimental classroom research. Each cycle involved planning, action, observation, and reflection. Data were collected through tests, observation, field notes, and interviews. Quantitative analysis of test scores showed improvements in reading comprehension. Qualitative analysis of observation and interview data highlighted increased student engagement and motivation. The findings from classroom action research conducted at SMAN 1 Pangkalan Kuras demonstrate the effectiveness of implementing the Peer Assisted Learning Strategy (PALS) in enhancing senior high school students' reading comprehension skills. Through PALS, students engaged actively in collaborative learning, which led to deeper understanding of texts and increased motivation to participate in learning activities. The study revealed significant improvements in student participation and academic achievement in narrative comprehension, highlighting the potential of PALS to enhance English language learning outcomes in high school settings.
Artikel Info	Abstrak
Sejarah Artikel Diterima: 2024-07-22 Direvisi: 2024-08-19 Dipublikasi: 2024-09-02 Kata kunci: <i>Pemahaman Membaca; Strategi Pembelajaran Berbantuan Rekan (PALS); Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris.</i>	Penelitian tindakan ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan pemahaman membaca di antara siswa kelas dua di SMAN 1 Pangkalan Kuras dengan menerapkan Strategi Pembelajaran Berbantuan Rekan (PALS). Studi ini menggabungkan pengembangan profesional dengan penelitian kelas eksperimental. Setiap siklus melibatkan perencanaan, tindakan, observasi, dan refleksi. Data dikumpulkan melalui tes, observasi, catatan lapangan, dan wawancara. Analisis kuantitatif dari skor tes menunjukkan peningkatan dalam pemahaman membaca. Analisis kualitatif dari data observasi dan wawancara menyoroti peningkatan keterlibatan dan motivasi siswa. Temuan dari penelitian tindakan di kelas yang dilakukan di SMAN 1 Pangkalan Kuras menunjukkan efektivitas implementasi Strategi Pembelajaran Berbantuan Rekan (PALS) dalam meningkatkan keterampilan pemahaman membaca siswa sekolah menengah atas. Melalui PALS, siswa terlibat aktif dalam pembelajaran kolaboratif, yang mengarah pada pemahaman yang lebih dalam tentang teks dan peningkatan motivasi untuk berpartisipasi dalam kegiatan pembelajaran. Studi ini mengungkapkan peningkatan signifikan dalam partisipasi siswa dan prestasi akademik dalam pemahaman naratif, yang menyoroti potensi PALS untuk meningkatkan hasil pembelajaran bahasa Inggris di lingkungan sekolah menengah.

I. INTRODUCTION

The primary objective of learning English, as emphasized by Getie (2020), is to enhance students' ability to communicate effectively in both oral and written forms. This study underscores the significance of reading, particularly in terms of comprehension, which is considered one of the fundamental language skills alongside listening, speaking, and writing (Rusdi, 2019). Reading plays a crucial role in acquiring knowledge, understanding language, and achieving academic success. However, research indicates a low level of reading comprehension among students in Indonesia.

The primary objective of learning English is to enhance students' ability to communicate in oral and written forms. English proficiency is not a simple task (Getie, 2020). This study emphasizes the significance of reading, particularly in terms of comprehension. Reading is a fundamental skill in language acquisition, alongside listening, speaking, and writing. It is considered one of the most crucial language skills, in addition to the other three (Rusdi, 2019). Furthermore, reading is a skill that every student should strive to master when learning English. Students should be capable of comprehending the subject matter, extracting information, acquiring knowledge, and

understanding the main purpose of learning the language through reading.

Firstly, students need more vocabulary. They needed help understanding the meaning of the word and translating it word by word into Indonesian. They were not accustomed to using English daily, so it was difficult for the students to know the text. Secondly, students need help finding information in the reading text. Students are challenged to comprehend narrative text. Then, students need help finding the message or data in the reading text. The students had problems because they could not see and catch information from the text, so they could not comprehend it well. Thirdly, students need more motivation. The students were not interested in learning English, which made them lazy to read. Mainly, reading influences their reading ability because the traditional way the teacher teaches English affects the students' interest. In order to address these issues, the teacher can employ a strategy to enhance students' reading comprehension. The writer suggests implementing a peer teaching strategy called Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS) to enhance students' abilities. PALS is believed to give students chances to be involved in the discussion and will enhance their reading and critical thinking skills to take responsibility for their learning. PALS encourage collaboration and cooperation among students. Students learn from each other's strengths and weaknesses, which help build a supportive and inclusive learning environment. In PALS, students provide feedback to each other, which helps identify improvement areas. Feedback from PALS is often more relatable and less intimidating than teacher feedback, which helps build confidence and motivation.

According to Nerantzi & Chrissi (2020), peer teaching enables the maximization of all the resources at a teacher's disposal. In general, the implementation of PALS can enhance students' reading comprehension through the encouragement of active participation, collaboration, feedback, diverse perspectives, and personalized learning. Based on the background above, the writer was interested in conducting research entitled "Improving SMAN 1 Pangkalan Kuras Students' Reading Comprehension of Narrative Text by PALS".

II. METHOD

This research was conducted at SMAN 1 Pangkalan Kuras, Pelalawan Regency, from November 2022 to June 2024. English teaching was conducted in 2x40-minute sessions per meeting. This research combines professional development with experimental classroom research, and is qualitative and quantitative in nature, aiming to develop teaching methods and solve classroom problems faced by teachers.

The purpose of this study was to improve students' reading comprehension through the application of Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS). The research consisted of two cycles that included planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. This cyclical approach allows for modifications in the teaching process.

This classroom action research involved 30 students of class XI4 SMAN 1 Pangkalan Kuras in the 2022/2023 academic year. The data were analyzed using quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative analysis was carried out with descriptive analysis of test results to evaluate students' reading comprehension of narrative texts, while qualitative analysis was carried out on data obtained from observations, interviews, and field notes.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Results

This chapter discusses the results of the research on using the Peer-Assisted Learning Strategy (PALS) to improve reading comprehension of narrative texts among students at SMAN 1 Pangkalan Kuras. The findings and discussions aim to answer the research question: "Is there any significant improvement in SMAN 1 Pangkalan Kuras students' reading comprehension of narrative text by PALS?" The inquiry was responded to based on data collected from reading comprehension tests, observation sheets, field notes, and interview sheets.

1. Results of the Base Score (Pre-Test)

Before conducting the research, the researcher administered a test to the students on Saturday, September 23, 2023, to obtain the base score of students' reading comprehension in narrative text and their general study habits in English. The base score test results indicated that most students had significant reading comprehension problems in narrative texts.

Table 1. Students' Comprehension in Narrative Text for Base Score

	No Indicators/Component	Score	Level
Narrative Text	1 Orientation	4.83	Very Poor
	2 Evaluation	3.67	Very Poor
	3 Complication	2.00	Very Poor
	4 Resolution	4.50	Very Poor
	5 Reorientation	4.00	Very Poor
Reading Comprehension	6 Main Idea	5.17	Poor
	7 Meaning of Vocabulary	3.50	Very Poor
	8 Reference	7.70	Good
	9 Understanding Detail	5.67	Poor
	10 Checking Comprehension	4.30	Very Poor
	Mean Score	45.33	Very Poor

The initial assessment revealed that students struggled with reading comprehension of narrative text, as evidenced by their performance on a 20-question test conducted within an 80-minute timeframe. Scores across various comprehension indicators were consistently low: Orientation (4.83), Evaluation (3.67), Complication (2.00), Resolution (4.50), and Reorientation (4.00), indicating significant difficulties. Specific skill scores also reflected poor performance: Finding the main idea (5.20), Guessing vocabulary (3.50), Identifying references (7.70), Understanding detail (5.70), and Checking comprehension (4.30). The overall average score across indicators was 45.33, indicating a very poor level of comprehension. While performance varied slightly across indicators, it was evident that students' reading comprehension in narrative text was inadequate overall. This assessment underscores the need for interventions like the Peer-Assisted Learning Strategy (PALS) to improve reading comprehension skills.

2. The Result of Cycle I

a) Plan

To address the existing challenges, the researcher opted for a new approach: implementing PALS as a reading teaching strategy. The aim was to improve students' comprehension of narrative text and their engagement with English lessons. Research instruments were aligned with the curriculum, including an observation checklist and field notes. Lesson plans were collaboratively developed for pre-teaching, while-teaching, and post-teaching stages, with each session lasting 80 minutes. The initial cycle comprised four meetings, as outlined in Table 2.

Table 2. The top i cand the Schedule for Cycle I

Meetings	Topic	Dates
1	The Apple Tree and a Boy	September 26 th 2023
2	Malin Kundang	September 29 th 2023
3	The Legend of Telaga Warna	October 3 rd 2023
4	The Clever Violinist	October 5 th 2023
5	Test for Cycle I	October 6 th 2023

Teaching Sessions Overview

1) The First Meeting

Held on Tuesday, September 26th, 2023, this session focused on "The Apple Tree and A Boy." After greetings and attendance, the researcher introduced the narrative text and explained the Peer Assisted Learning Strategy (PALS). Students worked in pairs to discuss and extract information from the text, though some lacked focus. The session concluded with a prayer.

2) The Second Meeting

On Friday, September 29th, 2023, "Malin Kundang" was the chosen narrative. After initial formalities, students revisited PALS, discussed the main idea, and summarized key points from the text. The session concluded with an oral recap and a prayer.

3) The Third Meeting

Taking place on Tuesday, October 3rd, 2023, this session centered on "The Legend of Telaga Warna." Following greetings and attendance, students reviewed the previous material and engaged in discussions with their partners. The session ended with an oral recap and a prayer.

4) The Fourth Meeting

Conducted on Thursday, October 5th, 2023, "The Clever Violinist" was the focus. Similar to previous sessions, students discussed the main idea and summarized key information, concluding with a collective summary and oral questions.

The researcher then reminded students to prepare for an upcoming test before concluding the teaching-learning process and closing the class with a prayer.

b) Observation

Observations were conducted throughout the teaching and learning process, focusing on indicators of reading comprehension and overseen by the collaborator. Both the collaborator and the researcher actively monitored students' engagement, particularly during activities involving the Peer Assisted Learning Strategy (PALS). After observing the initial cycle, it was noted that PALS effectively motivated students to learn English and comprehend narrative texts. While the classroom environment remained generally manageable, occasional noise disruptions were observed. The improvement in narrative text reading comprehension skills was evident in the test scores from the first cycle, as detailed below:

Table 3. The Students' Comprehension in Narrative Text for Cycle I

No	Indicators/Component	Score	Level
Narrative Text	1 Orientation	7.50	Good
	2 Evaluation	4.67	Very Poor
	3 Complication	7.70	Good
	4 Resolution	5.80	Poor
	5 Reorientation	6.30	Poor
Reading Comprehension	6 Main Idea	6.17	Fair
	7 Meaning of Vocabulary	8.17	Good
	8 Reference	8.17	Good
	9 Understanding Detail	7.83	Good
	10 Checking Comprehension	6.00	Fair
Mean Score		68.31	Fair

In Cycle I, there was significant improvement in students' reading comprehension of narrative text across various indicators compared to the base score. Notably, scores for complication, guessing vocabulary, and identifying references exceeded those of other components, indicating substantial progress. The average score across all indicators in Cycle I was 68.31, reflecting a fair level of comprehension.

c) Reflection

Based on the Cycle I test results, the researcher concluded that students' reading comprehension of narrative text had improved. Although some students showed improvement in each indicator, Cycle II was deemed necessary as some students had not yet reached the minimum score required. Additionally, the researcher planned to implement further strategies in Cycle II, including providing more explanations and

models using the Peer Assisted Learning Strategy (PALS) to enhance students' reading comprehension.

d) The Result of Cycle II

1) Plan

Following observations from Cycle I, the researcher curated more engaging texts for Cycle II to further enhance students' reading comprehension skills. The focus remained on fostering increased participation and creating a conducive classroom environment. Cycle II comprised four implementation sessions and one test, with the following schedule:

Table 4. The Topic and Schedule of Cycle II

Meetings	Topic	Dates
1	The Legend of Situ Bagendit	October 10 th 2023
2	The Story of Bawang Merah and Bawang Putih	October 12 nd 2023
3	The Frog Prince	October 13 rd 2023
4	Finding Nemo	October 17 th 2023
5	Test for Cycle II	October 19 th 2023

- a. The inaugural session took place on Tuesday, October 10th, 2023, focusing on "The Legend of Situ Bagendit." The researcher conducted attendance checks, assessed students' readiness, and provided motivation. Subsequently, a review of the preceding session's material occurred. Before progressing, questions related to the previous lesson were presented to assess students' comprehension. Students responded orally. The researcher then divided students into pairs as in cycle I and explained narrative text and PALS again. Text copies were distributed, and students discussed with their partners, retelling, finding information, and answering questions. The session concluded with oral summarization and a prayer.
- b. The second session was on Thursday, October 12nd, 2023, focusing on "The Story of Bawang Merah and Bawang Putih." Attendance checks, motivation, and a review of the previous session's material were conducted. Questions related to the

previous lesson were posed, and students responded orally. The researcher revisited PALS and distributed text copies. Students discussed with partners, summarized, and answered questions orally. The session ended with oral summarization and a prayer.

- c. The third session occurred on Friday, October 13th, 2023, focusing on "The Frog Prince." Attendance checks, motivation, and a review of the previous session's material were conducted. Questions related to the previous lesson were posed, and students responded orally. The researcher reiterated PALS, distributed text copies, and students discussed with partners, summarized, and answered questions orally. The session concluded with oral summarization and a prayer.
- d. The four meetings were on Tuesday, October 17th, 2023, focusing on "Finding Nemo." Attendance checks, preparation review, and material review were conducted. The researcher explained narrative text and the strategy, distributed text copies, and students discussed with partners, summarized, and answered questions orally. Students' engagement and comprehension improved in cycle II, evident from test scores exceeding those of cycle I.

The observation stage involves systematically monitoring students' engagement in classroom activities and the overall teaching and learning process. The researcher, along with a collaborator, implemented this approach in each meeting. To assess the outcomes of cycle II actions, a final test was administered to gauge students' progress. The improvement in students' achievements was evaluated through percentage scores obtained in the test. The researcher employed interviews and concurrent observation during the teaching and learning process, recording data in field notes. Through observations in the second

cycle, the implementation of the Peer-Assisted Learning Strategy (PALS) effectively motivated students to engage with English, particularly in comprehending narrative texts. This enthusiasm was reflected in their active participation during classroom activities. Students addressed difficulties promptly by seeking guidance from the teacher, maintaining classroom control despite occasional noise disruptions. Additionally, improvements in these aspects were evident in the results of test II, with scores from cycle II exceeding those of the cycle I test. Details of students' reading comprehension of narrative texts in cycle II are provided in the subsequent table and diagram (Table 5).

Table 5. Students' Comprehension of Narrative Text for Cycle II

	No	Indicators/Component	Score	Level
Narrative Text	1	Orientation	9.00	Excellent
	2	Evaluation	7.00	Good
	3	Complication	9.00	Excellent
	4	Resolution	7.17	Good
	5	Reorientation	8.00	Good
Reading Comprehension	6	Main Idea	8.00	Good
	7	Meaning of Vocabulary	8.17	Good
	8	Reference	8.50	Excellent
	9	Understanding Detail	8.00	Good
	10	Checking Comprehension	7.83	Good
Mean Score			80.48	Good

Referring to Table 5 regarding reading comprehension in narrative text during cycle II, students achieved notable scores: 9.00 (Excellent) for orientation, 7.00 (Good) for evaluation, 9.00 (Excellent) for complication, 7.00 (Good) for resolution, and 8.00 (Good) for reorientation. Similarly, based on Table 5, students attained satisfactory scores in narrative text comprehension during cycle II: 8.00 (Good) for finding the main idea, 8.17 (Good) for guessing vocabulary, 8.50 (Excellent) for identifying references, 8.00 (Good) for understanding detail, and 7.83 (Good) for checking comprehension. The mean score for all indicators in cycle II was 80.48 (Good), reflecting improvement compared to cycle I. Overall, students demonstrated better comprehension and performance in cycle II, surpassing the previous cycle.

The researcher concluded from the cycle II results that the implementation of PALS significantly enhanced students' reading comprehension of narrative text. Moreover, there was a noticeable improvement in narrative text proficiency

across all indicators. Thus, the decision was made to conclude the research data collection after cycle II.

B. Discussion

This action research was structured into two cycles, each comprising four 80-minute sessions, culminating in a test at the cycle's conclusion. It involved second-year students of SMAN 1 Pangkalan Kuras. Initial data analysis revealed students' low proficiency in reading comprehension of narrative texts. To address this challenge, the researcher, also serving as the teacher, introduced the Peer-Assisted Learning Strategy (PALS) to enhance students' reading comprehension. The objective was to improve their skills and identify contributing factors, supported by test results, observations, field notes, and interviews.

1. The Effect of Peer-Assisted Learning Strategy (PALS) Could Improve Students' Reading Comprehension in Narrative Text

The effectiveness of PALS in improving reading comprehension was assessed through pre-action research tests and tests during both cycles. Results indicated a significant improvement, particularly in cycle II.

Table 6. Comparison of Students' Narrative Text Comprehension from Base Score to Cycle II

	No	Indicators	Students' Comprehension in Narrative Text		
			Base Score	CycleI	CycleII
Narrative Text	1	Orientation	4.83	7.50	9.00
	2	Evaluation	3.67	4.67	7.00
	3	Complication	2.00	7.70	9.00
	4	Resolution	4.50	5.80	7.17
	5	Reorientation	4.00	6.30	8.00
Reading Comprehension	6	Main Idea	5.17	6.17	8.00
	7	Meaning of Vocabulary	3.50	8.17	8.17
	8	References	7.70	8.17	8.50
	9	Understanding Detail	5.67	7.83	8.00
	10	Checking Comprehension	4.30	6.00	7.83
		Mean Score	45.33	68.31	80.48

Based on Table 6 the average of all indicators increased progressively from the base score to cycle II. The students' reading comprehension scores for narrative text improved from 45.33 (Poor) at the base score to 68.31 (Poor) in cycle I, and further to 80.48 (Fair) in cycle II. The diagram also illustrates a consistent increase in all indicators from the base score to cycle II, indicating improved comprehension from cycle to cycle and demonstrating the effectiveness of the Peer-Assisted Learning Strategy (PALS) in

enhancing their understanding of narrative texts.

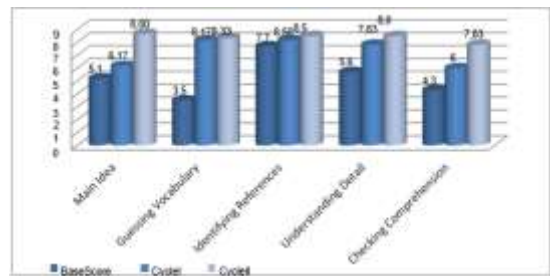


Figure 1. Diagram The Comparison of Students' Reading Comprehension in Narrative Text From Base Score to Cycle II

Based on figure 1 it is evident that all indicators consistently improved from the base score to cycle II. For instance, students' reading comprehension in narrative text for finding the main idea increased from 5.17 (Poor) in the base score to 8.00 (Good) in cycle II. Similarly, for guessing vocabulary, it improved from 3.50 (Very Poor) in the base score to 8.17 (Good) in cycle I and remained at 8.17 (Good) in cycle II. Moreover, identifying references progressed from 7.70 (Good) in the base score to 8.50 (Excellent) in cycle II. Additionally, understanding detail advanced from 5.67 (Poor) in the base score to 8.00 (Good) in cycle II. Lastly, checking to understand increased from 4.30 (Very Poor) in the base score to 7.83 (Good) in cycle II. Consequently, the mean of all indicators improved across cycles, with the base score at 45.33 (Very Poor), cycle I at 68.31 (Fair), and cycle II at 80.48 (Good).

Table 7. Comparison of the Average Score of Students' Comprehension in Narrative Text from Initial Score to Cycle II

Base Score	CycleI	CycleII
45.33	68.31	80.48

According to Table 7 students' mean scores in narrative text improved progressively from the base score to cycle II. The mean score for the base score was 45.33 (Very Poor), indicating students' initial performance in answering questions in their own ways. In cycle I, where the Peer-Assisted Learning Strategy (PALS) was implemented, the mean score increased to 68.31 (Fair). Although an improvement from the base score was observed, the mean score still did not reach

the target score of KKTP (80). Finally, in cycle II, the mean score significantly improved to 80.48 (Good), with all students achieving KKTP (80) indicating the effectiveness of the intervention in enhancing students' performance.

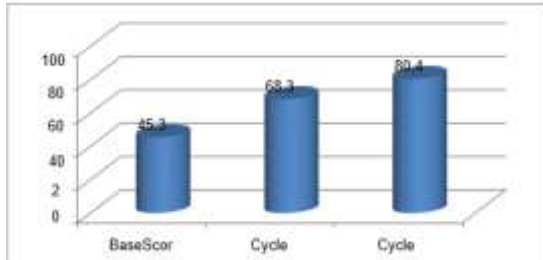


Figure 2. The Comparison of the Students' Mean Score in Narrative Text From Base Score to Cycle II

According to figure 2, it can be seen that each cycle was increased. The mean score for the base score was 45.33 (Very Poor). The mean score for cycle I was 68.31 (Fair), and the last mean score for cycle II was 80.48 (Good).

2. The Factors Influenced Students' Reading Comprehension in Narrative Text by Using Peer Assisted Learning Strategy (PALS)

The students' interest in using Peer Assisted Learning Strategy (PALS) plays a significant role in improving their reading comprehension in narrative text. PALS enhances their understanding of the material, making the learning process more engaging and enjoyable. Many students find PALS helpful in decoding words and sentences, expanding their vocabulary, and fostering a positive attitude towards learning English.

During the teaching sessions, the researcher, acting as the teacher, ensures that the material is presented in a way that students can easily grasp. Warm-up activities are utilized to motivate students, and efforts are made to establish a positive classroom atmosphere by building rapport. The teacher guides students through the text using PALS, providing additional explanations and support when needed. Overall, the classroom environment is carefully crafted to create an enjoyable and engaging learning experience, thus sustaining students' interest and preventing boredom while learning English.

The students' motivation in reading was significantly influenced by the use of Peer Assisted Learning Strategy (PALS) during the research. They found the PALS method to be enjoyable and effective in enhancing their understanding of narrative text reading comprehension. This increased their motivation to engage with the material.

The students expressed happiness and enjoyment during the class, attributing it to the effectiveness of PALS in aiding their memorization and comprehension. They found learning through PALS to be more efficient compared to individual learning methods. Additionally, the teacher's efforts in creating a fun atmosphere and providing incentives, such as awards for active participation, further motivated the students.

Student feedback, such as the statement "learning by using PALS makes me understand more than learning alone," highlights the positive impact of PALS on students' motivation and comprehension.

In conclusion, the factors that influenced students' reading comprehension in narrative text through PALS included their interest in the method and increased motivation to participate actively in the reading class. These findings underscore the effectiveness of PALS in fostering a conducive learning environment and enhancing students' engagement with the material.

IV. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

A. Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that internships for students can contribute to the work readiness of students of the Faculty of Economics & Business, National Development University of East Java Class of 2020. *Future Time Perspective* in students can contribute to the work readiness of students of the Faculty of Economics & Business, National Development University of East Java Class of 2020. These results indicate the importance of strengthening internships and *future time perspective* in improving work readiness which can provide significant benefits for students who will enter the workforce.

B. Suggestion

Based on these conclusions, here are some suggestions that the author can give: first, from the explanation above regarding internships and *future time perspective*, students must have a high productive nature towards themselves and towards what will and has been done in order to achieve future goals and work targets. If students cannot be productive, it will be difficult for them to enter the world of work. By adding experience, students can increase productivity, if students can add a lot of experience, then their work readiness will increase along with their confidence and experience. Second, having a high *future time perspective* will be able to make students more ready to work. Students must be able to have a connection between current and future activities to be able to fulfill goals. Especially to be able to prepare in the future, students must be able to control present activities to get goals in the future. Third, for future researchers, it is recommended to develop this research by adding other variables to be used as indicators in further research. Future researchers can examine factors related to Learning Achievement, Motivation, etc. This is because there are related relationships that are related to Learning Achievement, Motivation, etc. This is because there is a related relationship that can affect student work readiness.

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