

## **The Effect of an Enrichment Reading Program on Arabic Language Achievement : A Case Study of Wadi Al-Salt Elementary Mixed School**

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### **Abstract**

This study investigated the impact of the “We Love Reading” enrichment program on the Arabic proficiency of first to third graders in a Jordanian elementary school. A sample of 95 students (40% of total population) participated in three-month program. To assess the program’s impact, students underwent pre- and post-program Arabic assessments, with statistical significance evaluated using the paired-sample Sign test. The results showed no statistically significant differences in the overall Arabic language scores before and after the program. However, a significant improvement was observed in the overall supplementary assessment scores ( $p < 0.05$ ). Gender analysis revealed no significant differences in overall Arabic language scores but reveal significant improvements in the supplementary assessment ( $p < 0.05$ ). When analyzed by academic stage, significant differences were observed only in the Arabic language scores for third grader and in supplementary assessment scores for both second and third graders ( $p < 0.05$ ). These findings indicate that enrichment programs characterized by interactive, non-classroom activities can enhance motivation, connect learning to real-world contexts, and improve academic performance, especially in younger students. The study recommends implementing similar initiatives to enhance Arabic language learning and foster a love of reading among students.

### **Keywords:**

Enrichment reading program, final grade, Arabic language proficiency

## Introduction

### 1.1 Language Skills as the Foundation of Literacy and Success

Reading proficiency remains a cornerstone of academic achievement. However, assessments of Arabic reading skills in Arab countries indicate that students are struggling in this area (AbuBakr, 2013). This is the against the backdrop of it being an important national, cultural, and religious identity. The divine directive in the Holy Quran, "Read in the name of your Lord who created" (1) - Surah Al-Alaq, marks the inaugural revelation to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and underscores the paramount importance of reading, particularly among Muslim communities. This command signifies reading's vital role in shaping human character, empowering individuals to cultivate the earth, and disseminating divine messages. Moreover, a strong correlation exists between literacy levels and individual success, suggesting that that improving literacy can significantly enhance quality of life (Akyol et al., 2014).

Recognizing the importance of language skills in fulfilling life aspirations, educational and developments in the Persian Gulf have shifted focus toward language skills education (McCollum, 2012). Within the context of modern psychology, language skills encompass the ability to express thoughts and communicate effectively. These skills are comprised of four essential components: listening, reading, writing, and speaking. Speaking and writing are classified as productive skills, as they involve actively producing sounds and symbols. In contrast, listening and reading are considered receptive skills, as they primarily involve passively receiving information (Husain, 2015).

### 1.2 Importance of Receptive Language Skills (Listening and Reading Skills)

While all language skills are essential, Krashen (1982) argued that language teaching should prioritize developing learners' receptive abilities over productive skills, suggesting that productive skills would naturally emerge from receptive knowledge. As as primary drivers of language learning, listening and reading merits paramount attention. Listening is recognized as the foremost linguistic skill, given that humans spend more time listening than speaking in various life situations (Vani & Naik, 2023). Language acquisition begins with listening, as a child hears before speaking, and subsequently learns to read and write. Neglecting listening skills can compromise speech mastery, reading proficiency, and language comprehension, impacting the individual's future balance (Coskun & Uzunyol-Köprü, 2021).

Similarly, reading is a fundamental life skill that significantly impacts a student's academic development and success (Ahmed & Rajab, 2015). Proficient reading involves not just comprehension but also critical analysis, discernment between trivial and valuable information, and the ability to differentiate between the futile and the beneficial (Gedik & Akyol, 2022). Through reading, individuals gain insight into the challenges of life, adopting it as a problem-solving approach that hones thinking abilities, refines language pronunciation, and fosters overall growth across diverse fields and domains (Hall & Barnes, 2017).

### 1.3 Reading Skills

Reading is considered a complex and difficult language skill because it connects and integrates the other language skills (listening, speaking, and writing) (Alderson, 1984; Koch, 1974). It can be categorized into two based on their performance methods, namely silent and oral readings (Yildirim & Ates, 2012). Silent reading involves looking at what is written to recognize and comprehend its meaning. This can be done by visually or tactually identifying letters for sighted readers or using touch for blind readers. It can also involve mentally translating written symbols into letters and words, allowing the reader to understand without vocalizing. Silent reading is a mental process or "the process of speaking with the mind, not the tongue" (Al-Hashimi, 2001). Characteristics of silent reading include: 1) allowing the mind to understand and analyze meanings, comprehend ideas, and absorb content; 2) providing a quiet environment that aids in understanding, reinforcing, and internalizing meanings; 3) saving effort and time, thereby fostering self-reliance in understanding; and 4) facilitating knowledge acquisition, thus enriching learner experiences, and enhancing linguistic and intellectual achievements (Al-Hashimi, 2001; Reutzel & Juth, 2014).

On the other hand, Oral reading differs from silent reading in one aspect: sound and the use of a speech mechanism. In oral reading, one reads first and then understands. This is because the written text is vocalized after recognition and then transformed into sounds. Oral reading involves translating written symbols into spoken words that the reader understands, considering pronunciation accuracy and language rules. It is characterized by the visual perception of written or printed words, utilizing sight and the nervous system, as well as the pronunciation of written or printed symbols, employing the speech mechanism and the sense of hearing (Al-Hashimi, 2001). Considering its significant impact on reading comprehension (Roehrig et al., 2008; Rasinski et al., 2011), oral reading method was adopted for implementing enrichment program, where students will practice the skills of listening and attentiveness to enjoy enrichment reading.

## 1.4 Enrichment Reading

The effectiveness of reading skills hinges on a combination of mental, physical, and emotional factors, including vision, hearing, pronunciation, and social and environmental influences (Akyol et al., 2014). Furthermore, effective reading requires readiness in experiences and abilities, including linguistic dictionary capacity and the development of visual discrimination skills linked to organic, nervous, and sensory maturation (Kamhi & Catts, 2002). To address reading difficulties, various reading models have been developed, including enrichment reading. Enrichment reading is a form of enriched curriculum that aligns with the Enrichment Triad Model (ETM) proposed by Renzulli (1977). This model emphasizes providing students with a diverse range of learning strategies and environments tailored to their individual interests and skills, fostering valuable experiences. Enrichment reading programs and applications can benefit both gifted children and those with learning difficulties. By considering students' areas of interest and motivation, these programs offer comprehensive reading education (Akyol et al., 2014). Extensive research on the SEM has examined its effectiveness with students from diverse backgrounds, schools, and regions, revealing significant benefits across these varied contexts (Reis & Peters, 2021).

## 1.5 Enrichment Reading and Academic Achievement

Various research studies have shown that the enrichment learning model can increase achievement, enthusiasm, and engagement for learning (Beecher & Sweeny, 2008), reverse underachievement (Renzulli, 1999), positively impact students' attitudes toward learning (Olenchak & Renzulli, 1989), and improve the educational experiences of students with a combination of talents and disabilities (Baum et al., 2014). In particular, studies on the impact of various forms of enrichment reading on students' academic achievement in Arab nations are accumulating. For instance, Katana (2008) examined the impact of enrichment readings on the academic achievement and attitudes toward Islamic Education of tenth-grade female students in Oman. Two groups of tenth-grade female students from Shati Al-Qurm Public Girls' School were chosen: a 40-student "experimental group" receiving instruction with enrichment readings and a 38-student "control group" using conventional methods. Both groups were assessed with achievement tests and attitude scales. The results revealed a statistically significant difference in test scores, favoring the experimental group.

The favorable effect of enrichment readings has also been observed by the study of Al-Tamimi and Kazem (2015) in Iraq, which investigated the impact of external

readings on the academic achievement of sixth-grade female students in the subject of Geography. The study included 44 students, evenly divided between a control group and an experimental group. A standardized achievement test was utilized as the primary research tool. The findings indicated statistically significant differences in favor of the experimental group, which had engaged with Geography through the incorporation of external readings.

Further supporting this findings is Abu Tu'ma and Hamida's (2015) study on the impact of reading storybooks on the development of early reading skills among Jordanian kindergarten children. The study encompassed a sample of 106 preschool children (54 girls and 52 boys) at the preparatory level, forming control and experimental groups. An early reading test, developed by the researchers to assess children's early reading skills, ensured the reliability and validity of the procedures. Results, analyzed through a two-way analysis of variance, indicated statistically significant differences at a significance level of 0.05 between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups in the post-reading early reading test, favoring the experimental group. However, no statistically significant differences were observed at the 0.05 significance level in the post-reading early reading skills test among children with respect to gender and the interaction between the group and gender.

Evidence-based storytelling program targeted for primary school students has been explored as a determinant of attitudes toward reading (Al-Nassar & Al-Majedl, 2010). The program included ten supporting activities designed to reinforce positive effects during implementation. Over six weeks, teachers in the experimental group read between 1216- stories. The study employed a scale to measure students' attitudes toward reading before and after program implementation. Results indicated a significant positive impact of the storytelling program on students' attitudes toward reading, evidenced by statistically significant differences (at the 5% significance level) in the pre-test and post-test scores of the attitude scale in favor of the post-test.

Al-Hameed (2010) investigated the effectiveness of a story-based program in fostering creativity, flexibility, originality, and detail skills in third-grade students in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The researcher employed an experimental approach with both randomly assigned experimental and control groups (30 students each) from Al-Baha city. Specific tools and instructional materials were developed, including a list of creative reading skill indicators, the story-based program itself, and a post-test for creative reading skills. The study revealed statistically significant differences in the post-

test performance of the experimental group in all targeted skills, including creativity, flexibility, originality, and detail retention. Notably, the results demonstrated a large effect size ( $d=4.4$ ), indicating the program's substantial impact on overall creative reading skills and highlighting its practical value in the classroom.

While previous research from Oman (Katana, 2008), Iraq (Al-Tamimi & Kazem, 2015), Jordan (Abu Tu'ma & Hamida, 2015), UAE (Elhoweris et al., 2022), Saudi Arabia (Al-Hameed, 2010), Turkey (Akyol et al., 2014) and USA (Reis et al., 2011) has demonstrated the benefits of enrichment reading programs, this study extends that evidence by examining the impact of variables such as gender and academic level on Arabic language achievement in a Jordanian elementary school. A unique aspect of this study is its execution in a modest environment, yet its results were significant. Beyond academic performance, this research emphasizes the psychological and social outcomes of students after implementing the program. The study's relevance extends beyond the local context to government or private schools both nationally and internationally, emphasizing the importance of enrichment reading model to promote academic achievement, self-motivation, self-confidence, reading ability, and artistic appreciation among students.

### Study Questions:

This study aims to address the following questions:

1. What is the impact of the enrichment reading program on the academic achievement of students in the first-three grades in the Arabic language after its implementation?
2. Are there differences in the academic achievement of first three-grade students in the Arabic language attributed to the gender variable after the implementation of the enrichment reading program?
3. Are there differences in the academic achievement of first three-grade students in the Arabic language attributed to the academic level variable after the implementation of the enrichment reading program?

## Method

### Study Design

This study utilized a quantitative research design with a within-subject design, where the same group of 95 first to third-grade students was assessed before and after

participating in the “We Love Reading” enrichment program. The program’s impact on Arabic proficiency was evaluated using pre- and post-program assessments, with statistical significance determined through the paired-sample Sign test. The study also incorporated supplementary assessments to capture broader effects. Additionally, gender and academic stage (first, second, and third grades) were analyzed to identify any differences in program impact.

### Pre-Enrichment Observations and the Enrichment Program

In October 2015, the researcher, serving as the director of Wadi Al-Salt Mixed Primary School, closely observed students’ performance across multiple subjects and found significant deficiencies in academic outcomes, particularly in Arabic, English, mathematics, and science. Daily monitoring revealed poor student engagement during lessons, weak personalities in school radio participation, and low cultural involvement. Furthermore, diagnostic tests conducted in the 20162017- academic year highlighted specific weaknesses in foundational subjects, including reading comprehension in English, arithmetic concepts in science, and expressive writing in Arabic. The school also faced structural challenges, such as an underused library, overburdened teachers, ineffective traditional teaching methods, and inaccurate evaluation tools. Recognizing the need for reform, the researcher introduced alternative teaching methods, including Quranic audio tools and educational applications, but realized these were not enough to sustain long-term improvement.

To address these challenges, the researcher collaborated with the “Change Association” to implement the “We Love Reading” initiative. This initiative aimed to foster student engagement with reading through storytelling, supported by volunteers such as parents and teachers. The program was conducted in two phases, “We Love Reading 1 and 2”, and included training workshops on oral reading techniques and puppet usage. Volunteers were given resources, including illustrated books by Jordanian authors, to read to students on a weekly basis. The program was actively monitored through surveys and field visits by the association, while the school administration provided logistical support. The researcher also engaged with the community by sharing reading sessions on the school’s social media, helping to spread the initiative’s impact. Despite these efforts, the researcher continued to seek sustainable methods to improve reading outcomes and teacher support within the school. Details of the enrichment program protocols can be found in the Appendix.

### Sampling Techniques

The sampling method involved convenience sampling, with all 95 students in the target grades (1st to 3rd) from Wadi Al-Salt Mixed Elementary School participating in the program. This sample represented 40% of the total student population in those grades. The students' participation was voluntary, and parental consent was obtained. The sample was balanced in terms of gender and included a representative cross-section of students, ensuring comprehensive data for evaluating the program's effectiveness.

### Study Evaluation Instruments

The research employed evaluation tools sanctioned by the Ministry of Education to assess students in the initial three grades. The methodology relied on a comparative analysis of final grades in the Arabic language (maximum value of 100) before and after the enrichment reading program to address the study inquiries. Furthermore, the study incorporated a supplementary assessment that specifically targeted the 9-mark score related to reading and comprehension skills within the broader 25-mark evaluation encompassing various language skills. This additional (second) assessment was administered to students in the first-three grades in accordance with Article (4) of the Foundations of Success, Completion, and Failure outlined by the Jordan Ministry of Education.

### Statistical Analysis

To determine the appropriate statistical analysis, Shapiro-Wilk normality test was conducted. The results indicated the null hypothesis for both the final grade in Arabic language data ( $p < 0.05$ ) and supplementary assessment data ( $p < 0.05$ ) should be rejected, suggesting that neither dataset was normally distributed. Consequently, median values were used to compare the the group results using a non-parametric method. Specifically, a paired-samples sign test, a non-parametric test, was used to determine whether a difference existed between pre- and post-enrichment Arabic final grades and supplementary (reading and comprehension) assessments. This test was chosen over dependent t-test or Wilcoxon signed-rank test because the distribution of differences between the paired observations were neither normal nor symmetrical, respectively. The analysis was done using IBM SPSS v25.

### Results

This study examines the impact of the enrichment reading program on academic achievement in Arabic language. Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics of the scores of first-three grade students, indicating a general improvement in the median values for final grade and supplementary assessment for Arabic language following the enrichment program.



**Table 3. Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Min.	Max.	Percentiles		
				25th	50th (Median)	75th
Final grade (Pre-enrichment)	95	42	100	71.00	88.00	94.00
Final grade (Post-enrichment)	95	50	100	70.00	89.00	96.00
Reading and comprehension (Pre-enrichment)	95	1	9	6.00	7.00	9.00
Reading and comprehension (Post-enrichment)	95	2	9	7.00	8.00	9.00

To measure whether the impact of the enrichment reading program on academic achievement was significant, the researcher compared the final grades in the Arabic language and the supplementary assessment before and after the program using a sign test. The results of the test statistics, along with the frequencies, are presented in Table 4. The enrichment program resulted in an increase in median final grades (pre: 88, post: 89) and reading comprehension scores (pre: 7, post: 8), as shown in Table 3. While the change in final grades was not statistically significant ( $p = 0.054$ ), the improvement in reading comprehension was significant ( $p = 0.001$ ).

**Table 4. Median Differences in Arabic Achievement Among the Study Sample Using Sign Test<sup>I</sup>**

Frequencies			p-value
		N	
Final grade (Post-enrichment) - Final grade (Pre-enrichment)	Negative Differences	34	0.054
	Positive Differences	53	
	Ties	8	
	Total	95	
Reading and comprehension (Post-enrichment) - Reading and comprehension (Pre-enrichment)	Negative Differences	16	0.001
	Positive Differences	42	
	Ties	37	
	Total	95	

I In Sign test, negative differences indicate the post values are smaller than the pre values, positive differences indicate the post values are larger than the pre values, and ties indicate no difference between pre and post values.

The study further assess the effect of gender on the median difference in the Arabic final grades and supplementary assessment before and after the enrichment program. The results, showing the frequencies of positive and negative differences as well as the test statistics, are reported in Table 5. According to the results, the assessments showed no significant median difference except for the supplementary assessment among the females ( $p = 0.006$ ).

**Table 5. Median Differences in Arabic Achievement Based on Gender Using Sign Test**

Frequencies				p-value
Gender			N	
Male	Final grade (Post-enrichment) - Final grade (Pre-enrichment)	Negative Differences	14	0.144
		Positive Differences	24	
		Ties	6	
		Total	44	
	Reading and comprehension (Post-enrichment) - Reading and comprehension (Pre-enrichment)	Negative Differences	9	0.089
		Positive Differences	19	
		Ties	16	
		Total	44	
Female	Final grade (Post-enrichment) - Final grade (Pre-enrichment)	Negative Differences	20	0.253
		Positive Differences	29	
		Ties	2	
		Total	51	
	Reading and comprehension (Post-enrichment) - Reading and comprehension (Pre-enrichment)	Negative Differences	7	0.006
		Positive Differences	23	
		Ties	21	
		Total	51	

Lastly, we investigated whether the impact of the enrichment program on the Arabic language achievement is influenced by the educational stage. The results of the sign test, presented in Table 6, revealed that median difference in the final grade of Arabic language for second and third educational stages as well as supplementary assessment for only students in the third grades were statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Table 6. Median Differences in Arabic Achievement Based on Educational Levels Using Sign Test**

Frequencies				p-value
Educational level			N	
First stage	Final grade (Post-enrichment) - Final grade (Pre-enrichment)	Negative Differences	11	0.059
		Positive Differences	23	
		Ties	1	
		Total	35	
	Reading and comprehension (Post-enrichment) - Reading and comprehension (Pre-enrichment)	Negative Differences	10	0.832
		Positive Differences	12	
		Ties	13	
		Total	35	
Second stage	Final grade (Post-enrichment) - Final grade (Pre-enrichment)	Negative Differences	3	0.000
		Positive Differences	24	
		Ties	4	
		Total	31	
	Reading and comprehension (Post-enrichment) - Reading and comprehension (Pre-enrichment)	Negative Differences	5	0.302
		Positive Differences	10	
		Ties	16	
		Total	31	
Third stage	Final grade (Post-enrichment) - Final grade (Pre-enrichment)	Negative Differences	20	0.011
		Positive Differences	6	
		Ties	3	
		Total	29	
	Reading and comprehension (Post-enrichment) - Reading and comprehension (Pre-enrichment)	Negative Differences	1	0.000
		Positive Differences	20	
		Ties	8	
		Total	29	

Overall, while there was an increase in the median value for both Arabic final grade and supplementary assessment after the enrichment program, it was only statistically significant for the supplementary assessment (Arabic reading and comprehension). Based on gender, the median difference was only significant for the supplementary Arabic assessment among females. Considering the educational levels, there was a significant median increase in both Arabic final grade and supplementary assessment for students in the third grade, as opposed to only supplementary assessment for students in the second grade.

## Discussion

This study assessed the impact of the enrichment reading program (We Love Reading) on the Arabic language achievement of elementary students. The specific questions addressed were as follows: What is the impact of the enrichment reading program on the academic achievement of students in the first three grades in the Arabic language after its implementation? The study found no differences in the overall Arabic language scores across all grades. However, there were significant improvements in the supplementary assessment (reading and comprehension) for all three grades. The researcher attributes the uniform total scores in the Arabic language to the fact that the subject consists of four skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening), each assessed through performance tests that contribute equally (25% each) to the overall grade. The enrichment program's focus on reading likely explains why its impact was most pronounced in the supplementary assessment. This improvement underscores the pivotal role of reading and comprehension as gateway skills that facilitate the development of other language abilities over time. The impact of the program on productive skills such as writing and speaking may manifest more gradually, as receptive skills like reading and listening often precede productive ones (Krashen, 1982). Furthermore, the significant gains in reading and comprehension are particularly important because these foundational skills support literacy development and enhance students' ability to succeed in other subjects that require understanding and interpreting written materials (Vani & Naik, 2023). This finding aligns with the results of Al-Hamid (2010) and Al-Nassar and Al-Majdal (2015), reinforcing the importance of targeted reading interventions in improving students' overall language competence.

To understand the role of gender in the low Arabic language proficiency, the study introduced the following research: "Are there differences in the academic achievement of students in the first three grades in the Arabic language attributed to the gender variable after implementing the enrichment reading program?" The results indicated no statistically significant differences in the overall Arabic language scores for all grades based on gender. However, there were statistically significant differences favoring females in all grades for the supplementary assessment. The observed performance differences in supplementary assessments may be linked to gendered behavioral and social patterns. For example, prior studies have shown that female students often exhibit higher levels of emotional intelligence, stronger social interaction skills, and greater linguistic fluency, which may enhance their engagement with reading tasks (Joshi & Dutta, 2014; Shakib & Barani, 2011). However, these explanations remain

speculative. One plausible hypothesis is that female students may dedicate more time to reading-related activities outside the classroom, as research by Christin (2012) and van Hek et al. (2019) found that girls tend to enjoy reading and engage with it more frequently than boys. Future studies could explore whether these differences stem from intrinsic motivation, socialization patterns, or environmental factors, such as parental involvement in reading habits.

The findings also align with the study by Manu et al. (2023) in Finland, which reported similar gender differences, but contradicted Abu Ta'mah and Hamida's (2015) findings in Jordan. These inconsistencies could be attributed to cultural and contextual differences between the regions, variations in program design, or the measurement tools used to assess reading outcomes. For instance, cultural norms regarding gender roles and expectations might influence the extent of female students' engagement in reading activities, whereas differences in instructional methods or teacher-student interactions could affect the program's impact. While enrichment programs are critical for improving language skills, individual and developmental differences among learners play an important role. (Senad et al., 2021). To investigate whether grade-level differences influenced outcomes, the study examined Arabic language achievement across first, second, and third grades following the implementation of the enrichment reading program. Results indicated significant improvements in the second grade for overall Arabic language scores and in the third grade for both overall scores and supplementary assessments. However, no statistically significant improvements were found in the first grade for either assessments. The lack of improvement in the first grade may reflect developmental readiness. First-grade students, typically around six years old, may lack the cognitive maturity or foundational language skills needed to fully benefit from an enrichment program designed to enhance reading and comprehension. Younger students may also have shorter attention spans and less familiarity with structured reading tasks, which could limit the program's immediate effectiveness. This aligns with Devlin's (1996) findings, which suggest that older and more mature students are better equipped to employ affective learning strategies and derive greater benefit from such interventions.

The stronger outcomes observed in the second and third grades could be attributed to both developmental and contextual factors. By the third grade, students are generally more capable of expressing their thoughts coherently, particularly in narrative forms such as stories and essays. This enhanced ability may have amplified their performance in assessments focused on reading and comprehension. Additionally,

the significant improvements in supplementary assessments for the second and third grades could be linked to the teacher's expertise in storytelling, presenting issues, and facilitating discussions, as both grades were taught by the same instructor. This suggests that teacher experience and pedagogical skill play an integral role in maximizing the program's impact..

## Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, the We Love Reading enrichment program demonstrated positive effects on the Arabic language proficiency of first-to-third-grade students. While no significant differences were observed in overall Arabic language scores, the program effectively improved supplementary assessment scores. Gender and academic stage influenced the program's impact. Although no significant differences were found in overall Arabic language scores based on gender, female students exhibited notable gains in supplementary assessments. Additionally, older students (second and third graders) showed greater improvements in both Arabic language scores and supplementary assessments compared to first graders, highlighting the influence of developmental readiness and academic maturity on program outcomes.

These findings underscore the potential of enrichment programs to enhance student motivation, link learning to real-world contexts, and improve academic performance, particularly in fostering a love of reading among young learners. The results suggest that incorporating interactive, non-classroom-based activities, such as storytelling and discussion, can play a crucial role in promoting engagement and language development. To inform future iterations of the program, these findings point to the importance of tailoring strategies to developmental stages. For younger students, such as first graders, integrating foundational skill-building activities that align with their cognitive readiness may enhance the program's effectiveness. Additionally, leveraging gender-specific motivators, such as promoting reading enjoyment among boys, could address observed disparities in supplementary assessments.

On a broader level, these findings have implications for teaching strategies and policy-making in similar educational contexts. Schools and educators could consider implementing enrichment programs with a focus on teacher training to maximize pedagogical impact and on designing culturally relevant materials to address diverse learning needs. Future research could explore the long-term effects of such programs, investigate their scalability across different cultural and educational settings, and evaluate their integration with mainstream curricula to optimize language proficiency outcomes

## Limitations

Despite the valuable insights gained from this study, it is essential to acknowledge certain limitations that may have influenced the findings. Firstly, the study was conducted within the specific context of Wadi Al-Salt Mixed Elementary School in Al-Salt City, Jordan. Therefore, generalizing the results to different educational settings or diverse student populations should be approached with caution. Secondly, the duration of the enrichment reading program spanned three months during the second semester. A more extended intervention period might yield different results and offer a more comprehensive understanding of the program's long-term effects. Additionally, the study relied on final grades in the Arabic language and the third assessment's side mark for reading and comprehension items as the primary measures of students' performance. Further research could incorporate a broader range of assessment tools and consider qualitative measures to provide a more comprehensive evaluation of the program's impact. Despite these limitations, the study provides valuable insights and encourages further exploration into the potential benefits of interactive non-classroom activities for enhancing language proficiency and academic achievement among elementary school students.

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## Appendix

### Enrichment Reading Program

The enrichment reading program consists of two separate programs (We Love Reading 1 and 2), implemented in close intervals with support from different sources, including Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), school supervisors, parents, and students.

“We Love Reading 1” Program. As the school director, the researcher engaged with a representative from the “Change Association” to comprehend the nature and requirements of the program. After securing necessary approval from the Ministry of Education, the researcher engaged volunteers, including parents and teachers, in a two-day training workshop on oral reading techniques, the use of puppets, and effective story presentation. Subsequently, the volunteers autonomously selected classes, expressing a preference for those where their children are enrolled. In the initial phase of the program, each volunteer received a book bag containing (25) meticulously chosen illustrated stories by Jordanian authors and illustrators, courtesy of the “Change Association.” An agreement was established for the volunteers to read one story per week or every two weeks, with the flexibility to join at the conclusion of art, sports, or other sessions for the storytelling. For research purposes, pre- and post-surveys were distributed by the association. The program underwent comprehensive monitoring through repeated field visits conducted by the association. The school administration extended moral support to the volunteers and facilitated all necessary arrangements for the initiative. A WhatsApp group was also created to stay updated on any rapid changes in the program. The researcher actively participated in significant portions of these reading sessions, recording and sharing them on the school’s Facebook page as a means to disseminate innovative ideas to a wider audience.

### Reading Presentation Protocol:

1. The volunteer gives necessary instructions to the students, including allowing the students the freedom to sit wherever they prefer.
2. The volunteer uses puppet play to welcome the students or start the story.
3. The volunteer begins by introducing the story’s title and displays the cover image to all students.
4. The volunteer reads the story with expression and appropriate intonation while

looking at the students.

5. After finishing the reading, the volunteer displays the page that was read to the students immediately.
6. The volunteer continues reading the story in this manner until it is finished and concludes with a specific statement to ensure that the students enjoy the story.
7. Asking questions about the story or discussing it is not allowed.
8. The reading session is for listening, enjoyment, and fostering imagination.

A total of 25 stories were read in the first stage, concluding in early March. Then, the second stage began, consisting of 10 new stories, extending from mid-March to mid-May for the academic year 2016/2017-. Therefore, the total number of readings reached 35.

“We Love Reading 2” Program. The inception of this program traces back to the receipt of the official book from the King Hussein Box and the National Culture and Arts Conference regarding the “Every Step Makes a Difference” initiative in November 2016. This competition encourages students to execute bright and creative ideas within their schools across the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The researcher, inspired by the success of the first program (We Love Reading 1), aspired to extend its benefits to all students in the school. A meeting was held with school volunteers, where various suggestions for the second program were presented. Following this, potential student volunteers were identified. The researcher, along with the program committee, met with these students to introduce and discuss the program. Selection criteria included the students’ reading abilities, their passion for the Arabic language, and their eagerness for voluntary work. Subsequently, the researcher reached out to the National Center for Culture and Arts for Youth, completed the participation form, and gained acceptance for the program at the national level in January 2017. Implementation of the program commenced in February 2017 and concluded in May 2017, and Table 3 outlines the stages of the “We Love Reading 2” program.

**Table 3. The Stages of the “We Love Reading 2” Program**

Stages	Activities
1	This phase lasted for two weeks, with an average of 1-3 readings per week. The students conducted their reading sessions during break periods or in the last 10 minutes of art or vocational education classes. The listening students were only required to listen to the stories.

2	the students moved on to asking questions to the listening students and engaging them in discussions to test comprehension and understanding. This phase lasted for two weeks.
3	This phase started with oral reading, gradually presenting story images, then asking questions and initiating discussions. Following that, the listening students were asked to read one of the stories using the same approach. The researcher noted the eagerness of the students to read during this stage, particularly observing a third-grade student who showed enthusiasm. This student was later enlisted in Phase 6.
4	The focus shifted to the lending program in this phase. A lending record was prepared following ISO standards, with each student assigned responsibility and the requirement to monitor her class. This phase progressed concurrently with the other stages, and the work was systematic. The students in the program disseminated the idea within the local community.
5	This phase, characterized by reading during the morning assembly, became the most distinguished stage. It started after about a month and a half from the beginning of the program, so all the students in the school knew about the program (We Love Reading 1 and 2). While the program received positive feedback overall, the storytelling sessions during the morning assembly held a distinct allure. The readings precisely followed the sequence of stages: listening only, reading with questions and discussion the next day, followed by reading with performance and acting, and then using puppetry, which was a major surprise. This continued for two weeks, with students eagerly anticipating each new day.
6	This stage involved honoring the readers. It coincided with the morning reading phase to save time. It is worth mentioning that the National Center for Culture and Arts provided financial support for the program, allowing the school to provide stories, prepare costumes for cartoon characters, purchase puppet theaters, and gifts for the reading students. Every Thursday, the students who read the most were honored.
7	Puppet theaters were distributed among the three first-grade classes. The researcher read the story using puppets for the first time for all classes, with the students present as a form of training. The researcher also conducted a training session for the teachers. Over the course of two weeks, many students had the opportunity to wear the puppets and create stories from their imagination.
8	After reviewing numerous story models, the researcher chose a short story as the concluding stage of the program. She conducted training sessions for the students to select the most suitable actors. Despite the program's continuity, the researcher continued to train the acting team on performance, providing special costumes. The play was titled "Leila Complains to the Wolf" and was presented during the morning assembly on April 12, 2017. It was later showcased at the school's Childhood Festival in front of students and guests. This stage allowed for the discovery of hidden talents among the students. Additionally, the school also participated in the second Childhood Festival competition.

9	The work continued through all the previous stages with a focus on borrowing books from the library. The program had a positive impact on everyone, with many students eagerly engaging in reading during free periods. It became common to see students reading stories in the schoolyards and classrooms. These observations and results align with the findings of the study by Nusair and Majid (2010).
10	Princess Iman bint Hussein, on behalf of Her Majesty Queen Noor, honored all schools that successfully implemented their initiatives. The supervisory committee and the four students were honored on May 4, 2017.
11	Under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor, the school was honored for the second time. One student from the four students was selected to participate in the National Youth Conference in September 2017.

These stages of the second program lasted for approximately 11 weeks in parallel with the first program, with students in the first-three grades undergoing a total of 45 reading sessions within the classrooms, in addition to the morning assembly presentations.