

Improving Handwriting Neatness Through Guided Writing In Grade Iv Students Of SDN 2 Pansor

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Abstract

This study aimed to improve the handwriting neatness of fourth-grade students at SDN 2 Pansor through the implementation of the guided writing method. This research employed Classroom Action Research (CAR), conducted in two cycles, with each cycle consisting of planning, action, observation, and reflection stages. The participants were thirteen fourth-grade students. Data were collected through tests, observations, and documentation. The data were analyzed using descriptive quantitative and qualitative methods by calculating the mean score, the percentage of classical learning mastery, and describing the results of student activity observations. The findings revealed that the implementation of the guided writing method improved students' handwriting neatness. The mean score increased from 62.69 in the pre-action stage to 67.31 in Cycle I and further increased to 76.92 in Cycle II. Classical learning mastery improved from 38.46% in the pre-action stage to 61.54% in Cycle I and reached 84.62% in Cycle II. In addition, the observation results indicated that students became more active, focused, and able to participate in guided writing activities more effectively throughout the learning process. Therefore, the guided writing method was effective in improving the handwriting neatness of fourth-grade students at SDN 2 Pansor.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Writing skills are one of the most essential basic skills for elementary school students. Through writing, students not only learn to string words together but also develop the ability to express their ideas and thoughts in written form (Syifaiah et al., 2022). Writing skills are not only needed in Indonesian language lessons but are also crucial in other subjects as an instrument of academic communication. Therefore, writing skills are important to practice from an early age so that students can write well, clearly, and be easily understood by readers. This aligns with the mandate of Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, which emphasizes that education aims to optimally develop students' potential so that they become faithful, knowledgeable, creative, independent, and responsible individuals.

In reality, many problems related to this basic skill remain, one of which is the difficulty many elementary school students have in writing neatly. Untidy handwriting often makes students' work difficult to read, both for teachers who will be assessing them and for the students themselves when reviewing. This situation is a crucial concern because writing is a fundamental skill that students will continue to use in subsequent levels of education. Neat handwriting is an important indicator of writing skills because neat writing can help students convey ideas more clearly and in a more structured way (Pratiwi et al., 2023; Ping, 2024).

Based on the results of initial observations conducted on fourth-grade students at SD Negeri 2 Pansor, it was found that students' writing skills were still relatively low, especially in the aspect of handwriting neatness. Pre-cycle data showed that out of 13 students, only 5 students had achieved learning mastery, while the other 8 students had not achieved mastery (classical mastery only reached 38.46%). The average class score obtained was only 62.69. Some students had inconsistent letter sizes, too-close spacing between words, and unclear letter shapes, making the writing very difficult to read. This problem is strongly suspected to be caused by a lack of directed writing practice and minimal teacher guidance during the writing process. Teachers often only focus on cognitive outcomes, without providing intensive guidance on the psychomotor aspects of writing, such as how to hold a pencil correctly, how to arrange the position of the book, and the placement of writing on the book line.

To address these issues, appropriate learning improvement efforts are needed. One innovative solution that can be implemented is the guided writing method. According to Semi (2020), guided writing is a writing activity carried out with the assistance and guidance of a teacher in stages so that students are able to write better. In its implementation, the teacher provides examples of correct writing, guides students as they practice the writing process, and provides direct feedback to help students correct their writing errors. This approach is relevant to the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) theory proposed by Lev Vygotsky, where students can reach their maximum learning potential if provided with appropriate and proportional scaffolding (assistance) from the teacher, which is then gradually reduced as the students' independence increases (Recha, 2026; Yusril, 2024).

The success of the guided writing method in improving writing skills has also been proven by several previous studies. Research conducted by Sholikhah, Salimi, and Susiani (2024) proved that guided writing strategies can improve students' writing skills. Likewise, research by Kartikasari (2020) and Nurlatifah et al. (2020) showed a significant increase in students' descriptive writing skills through the guided writing method. However, several of these studies were conducted with lower-grade students (mostly grade II) or focused on cursive writing, descriptive writing, or narrative composition (Hasanah et al., 2023; Khoerunnisa et al., 2023; Mustari et al., 2023; Anriani et al., 2023). The use of guided writing to improve handwriting neatness itself, defined by the clarity of letter shape, the consistency of letter size, the spacing between words, and readability, in upper-grade students has received less attention in the studies reviewed here. This study addresses that gap by applying guided writing to improve the handwriting neatness of fourth-grade students, using Classroom Action Research in which the Cycle I reflection is used to design intensive small-group guidance (scaffolding) for students who have not yet reached mastery in Cycle II. Based on the background and literature review, the researcher is interested in conducting Classroom Action Research (CAR) with the title "Improving Handwriting Neatness Through Guided Writing in Grade IV Students of SDN 2 Pansor in the 2025/2026 Academic Year". This study aims to identify the level of students' handwriting neatness and prove the effectiveness of the guided writing method in classically improving students' handwriting neatness.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This research is a Classroom Action Research (CAR) designed to solve classroom learning problems practically and collaboratively. The CAR model used in this study is the model proposed by Arikunto, Suhardjono, and Supardi (2021), which consists of four main stages that form a continuous cycle: (1) planning, (2) acting, (3) observing, and (4) reflecting. This research was planned and implemented in two cycles, each consisting of two meetings.

This research was conducted at SDN 2 Pansor, located in Pansor Daya Hamlet, Pansor Village, Kayangan District, North Lombok Regency. The research was conducted during the even semester of the 2025/2026 academic year (July 2026). The subjects were all 13 fourth-grade students at SDN 2 Pansor, consisting of 6 female students and 7 male students.

The data sources in this study include primary and secondary data (Sugiyono, 2022). Primary data were obtained directly through observations of teacher and student activities, as well as handwriting neatness tests at the end of each cycle. Secondary data consisted of school documents, grade lists, and photographic documentation during the learning process. Data collection techniques included observations using activity observation sheets, performance tests (copying text) assessed using a special handwriting neatness rubric, and documentation.

Data analysis used quantitative and qualitative descriptive approaches. Quantitative analysis was used to calculate the average class score and the percentage of classical learning completion. The classical completion formula was calculated by dividing the number of students who completed the course by the total number of students, then multiplying by 100%. Qualitative analysis was used to describe student and teacher activities from the observation sheets. The success indicators for this study were determined by whether the average class score increased, at least 75% of the total students achieved the learning completion criteria (KKM), and positive changes were observed in student learning activities (Arikunto, 2021).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Description of Initial Conditions (Precycle)

Before implementing the guided writing method, the researcher first conducted a baseline test to determine the actual condition (baseline) of the neatness of the handwriting of fourth-grade students at SDN 2 Pansor. In this initial test, students were asked to copy a simple text independently without any specific guidance regarding writing techniques. The results of observations and pre-action assessments showed that the average student writing ability was still at a low level. Based on assessment aspects including clarity of letter shape, consistency of letter size, spacing between words, and readability, the average class score was only 62.69. Of the 13 students, only 5 students (38.46%) successfully achieved the completion criteria, while the other 8 students (61.54%) were still below the minimum completion criteria. The main problems identified were inconsistent letter size (too large or too small), spacing between words that were stuck together, and difficult-to-read letters (not perfectly formed). This initial condition indicates the urgency of the need for comprehensive corrective action through the guided writing method.

Results of Cycle I Implementation

The first cycle of action was implemented in two meetings, focusing on introducing the basics of guided writing. The teacher explained and demonstrated how to hold a pencil correctly, how to sit ergonomically, and provided examples of how to form letters of the alphabet on the lines of a book. Students were then trained to write syllables and simple sentences under the teacher's guidance. The teacher circulated to monitor the writing process and provided direct corrections if any students made errors in letter formation or failed to include spaces between words.

Observations of student activity in Cycle I showed a change in attitude; students began to pay attention to the form of writing, although some still often forgot to maintain spacing between words. At the end of Cycle I, an evaluation test was conducted on copying text. The results of the Cycle I test showed an improvement, where the class average score rose to 67.31. The percentage of classical completion also increased to 61.54% (8 students completed, 5 students did not complete). Although there was an improvement compared to the pre-cycle, this result did not meet the success indicator, which requires a minimum classical completion of 75%. Therefore, the researcher conducted a reflection and decided to continue to Cycle II with improved strategies, namely providing more intensive individual guidance to small groups of students who had not completed.

Results of Cycle II Implementation

The actions in Cycle II were a follow-up to the reflections in Cycle I. In this cycle, learning improvements focused on providing intensive guidance to five students who had not yet achieved mastery. These students were grouped into a circle (small group) so that the teacher could directly monitor their fine motor skills and provide immediate feedback (scaffolding). The teacher also

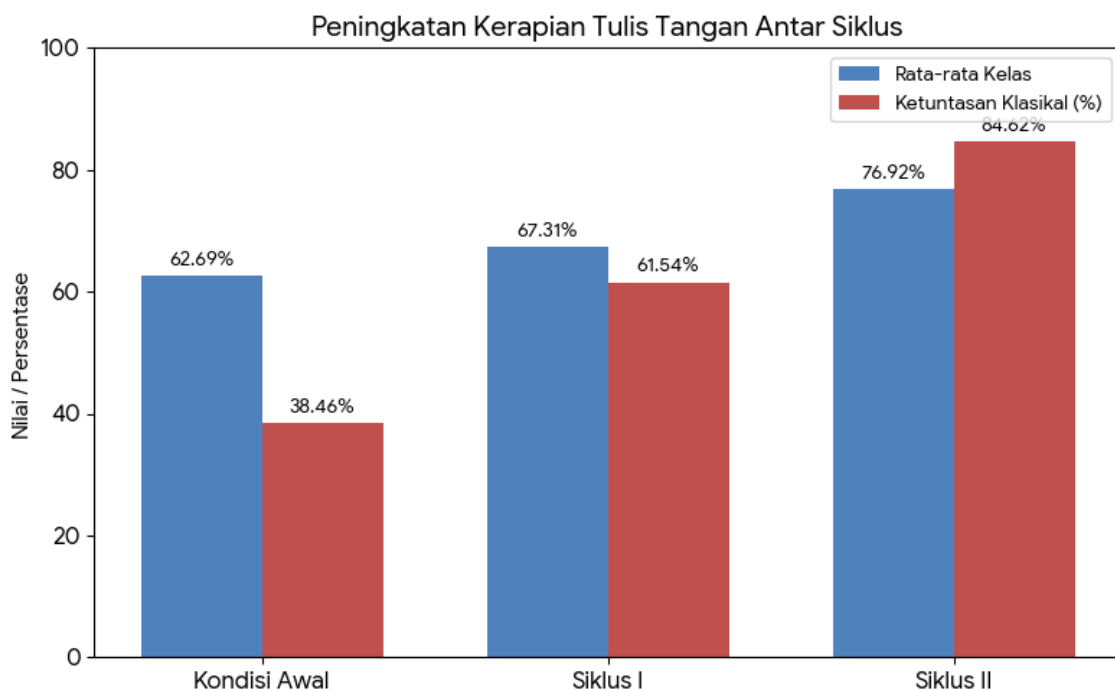
provided positive reinforcement (rewards) in the form of stationery to students who showed progress in improving neatness to stimulate their learning motivation.

The results of the implementation of Cycle II showed very satisfactory progress. Activity observations noted that students became very enthusiastic, more careful in copying texts, and their concentration levels during writing activities increased drastically. Based on the performance test at the end of Cycle II, the class average score jumped to 76.92. The percentage of learning completion by class also increased sharply to 84.62%, which means that 11 of the 13 students had achieved the completion score, and only 2 students still needed continuous practice outside the research cycle. Because the learning outcomes had exceeded the success indicator ($\geq 75\%$), this classroom action research was stopped in Cycle II.

Comparison and Discussion of Results Between Cycles

The improvement in the neatness of students' handwriting from the initial conditions to Cycle II can be seen in the table and graph below.

Stage / Condition	Class Average Grade	Classical Completion Percentage (%)
Precycle / Initial Conditions	62,69	38,46
Cycle I	67,31	61,54
Cycle II	76,92	84,62



Graph 1. Improvement in Handwriting Neatness Between Cycles

Based on the data above, it can be analyzed that the implementation of the guided writing method has a positive impact on the quality of students' writing. Initially, the lack of direct guidance led students to write with incorrect posture and technique. Learning that focuses solely on results led students to repeat their mistakes.

The success of Cycle I and its peak in Cycle II aligns with Lev Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) theory. Within this theoretical framework, a child's potential abilities can be maximized through assistance or scaffolding from a more expert—in this case, the teacher. The mentoring provided by the teacher in small groups in Cycle II is a concrete form of scaffolding, where the teacher provides intensive guidance, then gradually releases

responsibility to the students once they are able to form letters independently and neatly (Recha & Hidayati, 2026; Yusril, 2024).

The increase in Cycle II was larger than in Cycle I. The mean score rose by 4.62 points from the pre-cycle to Cycle I (62.69 to 67.31) and by 9.61 points from Cycle I to Cycle II (67.31 to 76.92), while classical completion rose by 23.08 percentage points in each step. In Cycle II, 3 of the 5 students who had not completed in Cycle I reached the completion criteria (8 students completed in Cycle I, 11 in Cycle II). Based on the teacher's reflection and the observations, several factors seem to explain this improvement. First, the basic techniques introduced in Cycle I (holding the pencil, sitting posture, forming letters, and keeping spaces between words) had already been practiced, so Cycle II built on a foundation that students had started to develop. Second, the teacher changed the strategy from classical guidance to intensive guidance in a small group for the five students who had not completed, so that fine motor skills could be monitored directly and errors corrected immediately. Third, the immediate feedback and gradual release of responsibility strengthened students' independence in forming letters. Fourth, the rewards in the form of stationery increased motivation, which was seen in students' enthusiasm, carefulness in copying, and concentration during writing. These factors were inferred from the observations and the reflection, and this study was not designed to separate the contribution of each one. The repeated copying tests may also have given students more familiarity with the task, so the improvement should be interpreted as the combined result of the actions in the two cycles.

These findings are highly relevant and corroborate the research findings of Sholikhah, Salimi, and Susiani (2024) and Kartikasari (2020), which confirmed that the Guided Writing method has proven highly effective in improving elementary school students' writing skills. Providing structured guidance, direct correction, repetition (practice), and rewards creates a conducive learning environment. Students' writing, which was previously disproportionate and without spaces, gradually becomes organized, has clear word spacing, and ultimately has excellent readability. This confirms that psychomotor skills such as handwriting cannot be developed instantly but require a process of directed and continuous practice (Cahyani et al., 2024; Dalman, 2021).

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the Classroom Action Research conducted in two cycles in grade IV of SDN 2 Pansor, it can be concluded that, first, the students' initial handwriting neatness was low, with a mean score of 62.69 and classical completion of 38.46% (5 of 13 students). Second, the guided writing method improved the students' handwriting neatness: the mean score rose to 67.31 in Cycle I and 76.92 in Cycle II, and classical completion rose to 61.54% and 84.62%, exceeding the success indicator of 75% in Cycle II. The improvement was supported by direct guidance, correction of writing posture, intensive small-group guidance for students who had not yet completed, and positive reinforcement. Elementary school teachers are therefore advised to apply guided writing, accompanied by individual or small-group guidance, in teaching the mechanical aspects of writing.

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