

## The Influence of the Cornell Note-Taking Method on Students' Reading Comprehension of Explanation Text

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### Abstrak

*The Cornell note-taking method is a method of note-taking that helps students organize important information from a text systematically to support reading comprehension. The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of the Cornell note-taking method on students' reading comprehension skills before and after instruction using this Note-taking method. This study employed a quantitative with a quasi-experimental design. The research subjects consisted of 62 eleventh-grade students at SMA Negeri 12 Bandar Lampung, divided into an experimental class and a control class. Data were collected through pre-tests and post-tests and subsequently analyzed using statistical procedures. The results revealed a significant difference between the two groups. The experimental class, which applied the Cornell note-taking method, scored an average of 55.32 on the pre-test and increased to 76.61 on the post-test, showing an increase of 21.29 points. Meanwhile, the control class, which did not receive the same treatment, showed a modest improvement from 57.90 to 63.55, an increase of 5.65 points. based on the scores obtained, the Cornell note-taking method showed a positive influence on students' reading comprehension. Therefore, this method can be considered a useful method to support reading instruction, especially for explanation texts at the high school level.*

**Keywords:** Cornell note-taking method, Explanation text, Reading comprehension

### INTRODUCTION

Having good reading comprehension skills is very important in education. Students will find it easier to understand the meaning of the text they are reading, making it easier for students to learn everything in written form. This is in line with the view of (Mustofa et al., 2024), who state that The future of the younger generation is one of the keys to the success of a nation. The future of a nation will be determined by its younger generation. By having good reading skills, the younger generation can be better prepared to participate in the learning process and develop their potential in an educational environment. According to (Brown, 2004), reading is a process of constructing meaning from written texts. It is not a passive skill but an interactive

process that involves both bottom-up and top-down processing. Bottom-up processing refers to decoding linguistic elements such as words, phrases, and grammatical structures, while top-down processing involves using background knowledge and expectations to interpret meaning. In this view, reading is seen as an active interaction between the reader and the text, in which meaning is built through the combination of textual information and the reader's prior knowledge. According to snow (2002, as cited in Saputri, 2020) Reading comprehension is a continuous process in which meaning is created and evaluated through active interaction between the reader and the written material. This process includes the ability to connect and consider the information

received, as well as a deep understanding of the information and its basic meaning. Furthermore, Bujaya (2022, as cited in Siti Tri Ulfani et al., 2023) explains that a person must be accustomed to reflecting, thinking, and reading. Reading can help students learn new topics and get better grades.

However, reading alone is not always enough to achieve deep understanding. Deep understanding requires active engagement from the reader, including the ability to analyze, critique, and reflect on what has been read. Simply reading a text without thinking critically or questioning its content can lead to superficial understanding. Based on the results of interviews with teachers at SMA Negeri 12 Bandar Lampung, it was found that many students have a low interest in reading, limited vocabulary, and often experience confusion when encountering new grammar or unfamiliar vocabulary. These obstacles have an impact on students' ability to understand text content effectively.

In an effort to overcome the problems described in the previous paragraph, researcher applied the Cornell note-taking method as a student learning method. According to (Nuraeni, 2019) Cornell Note-taking is one technique and learning skill in recording and composing a read note to facilitate students' understanding. This technique has been used extensively to record the difficult and lengthy subject matter to make it more concise and easy to understand. In addition, according to (Evans & Shively, 2019) Cornell notes is one of the strategies that can be used in the teaching reading process. This strategy encourages the students

to read a text and create a summary about the topic. Furthermore, according to (sholikhah, S.A, sumani, S., & rahmasari, 2019) Cornell notes is one of the strategies that can be used in the teaching reading process. This strategy encourages the students to read a text and create a summary about the topic. Moreover, (Agustian, 2023) explain that Cornell Note-taking is a method and skill for documenting and producing reading notes to enhance students' comprehension. This method has been widely utilized to record complex and lengthy topic matter in a more compact and understandable format. Based on previous studies, researchers have viewed Cornell Note-Taking from various angles. Some refer to it as a method, while others consider it a strategy, technique, or even a system in learning. In this study, the researcher define Cornell Note-Taking as a method.

According to (Rinel et al., 2025), Learning strategies or approaches are essential for conveying information and material effectively. In this way, the learning process and outcomes of students can be improved. Koumachi 2025, as cited in Asrini Bakri et al., n.d.) explain that Professor Walter Pauk of Cornell University created a system for gathering, classifying, and assessing notes in the 1950s. The Cornell note-taking Method is the name of this method. This method was created to assist students in more efficiently and effectively recording knowledge or lecture material. Furthermore, (Saran et al., 2022) explain that a sheet of paper is divided into three sections by a unique pattern used in the Cornell note-taking method. These sections are referred to

as the "summary area," "note area," and "cue column." Compared to taking notes on a regular basis, this method is more thorough. It is a method used to enhance learning. Divesta & gray (2019, as cited in rahma bennia, 2023) explain that Taking notes allows students to "process incoming information, filter relevant material, and organize important content," which can aid in the long-term retention of new information. In the book *How to Study in College*, (Pauk & Owens, 2011) state that Making notes involves more than merely writing down or highlighting anything that grab your attention. It entails being well-prepared for lecture notes, beginning with a particular system, then rapidly and effectively obtaining information before compiling everything.

In applying the Cornell note-taking method, students must go through several steps in using this method. According to Broe, (2013, as cited by saputri 2019) Use the six-step Cornell Note-Taking method to take notes from teachers or texts. Teachers request that pupils use this method. Taking notes, summarizing, reading, reflecting, and reviewing are all steps in the process. (1) Recording, Readers should record crucial details that will aid in the organization of their thoughts in this step. Students should arrange ideas and data in the six-inch Cornell note-taking format according to the teacher's instruction. Stated differently, taking notes on the right side is part of the recording stage. Students should carefully read each sentence, decide which information is important, and then write that information down. A streamlined version of the textbook should be

included in the notes. (2) Reducing, Consolidating the notes into a recall or cueing portion is part of the subtraction stage. The Cornell notes' left side, which displays the research question, is the recall stage (Yayang Anjarsit & A., 2017). Students can use WH questions to help them formulate questions, or they can ask any questions they have about the material they are unfamiliar with. (3) Reciting, In order for everyone to hear the students' statements without disturbing the precise notes, the reading stage involves using the data from the recall portion to explain the data. After finishing their notes, they should make connections between the cue columns and respond to any questions they may have in order to better comprehend the material. They should be able to describe the material by connecting essential words. Teachers require students to review their notes and attempt to respond to questions using the knowledge they have in order to assess their comprehension. This is to create accurate information and a lasting, vivid image. (4) Reflecting, Thinking critically, comprehending, and applying elaborative practice approaches to engage with material in novel ways are all part of the reflection process. Due to the creative and highly customized nature of the reflection process, each learner will produce the same learning resources or practice exercises. Students should use this time to determine what suits them best. One major benefit of the reflection step is its flexibility. It stimulates the reader's imagination. The students can use the text whenever they want after reflecting on it in any setting. However, this flexibility

may work against pupils who are unsure of where to begin. Some students choose to completely skip the reflection process because of this vulnerability. Despite the fact that there is no specific reflection step like the other steps, readers can use various strategies to reflect the mindset easily. (5) Recapitulating, The text will be condensed into one or two phrases using the summary or recapitulation step. Teachers ask students to rewrite their comprehension in words solely in order to prevent the thought of copying. In the space they designated, they can write an outline regarding the remarks at the bottom of the page. The summary stage, which comes at the end of the note-taking process, can aid students in recalling the text and going over all the information in their notes. (6) Reviewing, Students get the chance to better grasp the subject and possibly even memorize it by going over their notes. Before they set it aside and go on to something else, this review helps them establish a better impression of the material. Reinforcing the reader's comprehension of what they have recently read or heard is the goal of instant review, according to Walter.

Explanation text is a type of text that students will use in applying the Cornell note-taking method. Explanation text is a type of text used to explain how and why an event occurred. It usually discusses things such as natural, social, or scientific events. According to hardianto et al (2024, as cited in Novitasari & Misela, 2025), In order to construct a strong paragraph when discussing a material, students typically want a general framework. Explanation literature go into great depth

about a process and the causes of specific phenomena. These texts use straightforward language to describe the procedures involved and offer explanations for these occurrences. An introduction, a list of instructions, and a conclusion are common formats for explanation texts. Furthermore, peter & megan (2005, as cited in Pulungan, 2018) explain that an essential linguistic function for comprehending the world and how it functions is the use of explanation texts. The process of explanation is employed to comprehend and interpret the reasons behind the dominance of cultural and intellectual ideas and concepts, as well as to logically arrange the physical functioning of humans and our surroundings.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a quantitative with a quasi-experimental design to examine the Influence of the Cornell note-taking method on students' reading comprehension of explanation text, The experimental class will be taught using the Cornell note-taking method, while the control class will be taught using the method commonly used by teacher. The study was conducted at SMA Negeri 12 Bandar Lampung in eleventh grade, involving two classes as research subjects, namely the control class and the experimental class. The sampling technique used simple random sampling, so that each student had an equal chance of being selected. The total number of samples was 62 students, divided into two groups, namely the experimental group and the control group. The main instrument in this study was a written test consisting of a pre-

test and post-test in the form of multiple-choice questions. The pre-test was administered before the treatment to measure the students' initial level of reading comprehension of explanation texts. The multiple-choice questions on the pre-test had two explanation text titles, namely "Why do we need water?" and "Why do humans need sleep?" Each title has 10 multiple-choice questions, so the total number of questions on the pre-test is 20. After that, the experimental group underwent a learning process by applying the Cornell note-taking method, while the control group followed conventional learning without any specific note-taking strategy.

The post-test was administered after the treatment to measure students' reading comprehension of explanation texts after being given treatment using the Cornell note-taking method. The text used in the post-test was different from the previous text, but had the same number of questions, namely 20 questions with two explanation text titles, namely "How is rain formed?" and "Why do traffic jams happen in big cities?" The results of the post-test were used to measure students' reading comprehension of explanatory texts after being given treatment using the Cornell note-taking method in the experimental class and the control class, which was not given the same treatment.

The data obtained from the pre-test and post-test were analyzed using statistical techniques appropriate for quasi-experimental designs. The analysis began with descriptive statistics to examine the distribution of scores, followed by normality and homogeneity tests

to ensure data validity. If the data met the parametric assumptions, the t-test was used to compare scores between the control and experimental groups, as well as to examine the increase in scores in each group. If not, the analysis continued with the relevant non-parametric test.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study was conducted in four meetings. In the first meeting, a pretest was conducted to measure students' initial reading comprehension skills on explanation texts. Next, the second and third meetings focused on providing treatment to the experimental group through the implementation of the Cornell Note-Taking method. After the treatment was given, the fourth meeting were used to conduct a post test to determine changes in students' reading skills after the treatment. Meanwhile, the control group participated in learning activities as usual without any special treatment.

**Table 1.** Calculation of descriptive statistical test results

Group	Min	Max	Mean	SD	
PreCont	31	30	80	57,90	13,526
PostCont	31	35	90	63,55	17,282
preExp	31	25	90	55,32	17,556
PostExp	31	40	100	76,61	16,093

After obtaining pre-test and post-test data. based on Table 1, descriptive statistics show that the average pre-test score in the control group was 57.90 and increased to 63.55 in the post-test. Meanwhile, the experimental group had a pre-test average of 55.32 and experienced a more significant increase in the post-test, namely to 76.61. The increase in scores in the experimental group showed a greater change compared to the

control group after the intervention. This shows that the Cornell Note-Taking method has the potential to have a positive impact on students' reading comprehension skills in explanation texts.

This result indicates that structured note-taking can significantly support students in processing and retaining information from explanation texts. The Cornell format, which includes cues, notes, and summaries, likely helped students identify key ideas and organize them meaningfully. This aligns with Nuraeni (2019), who emphasized that Cornell Note-Taking facilitates understanding through systematic documentation. The increase in the control group may reflect natural learning progression, but the sharper rise in the experimental group highlights the added value of the method.

**Table 2.** normality test results

Class	Kolmogorov-Smirnov		Shapiro-Wilk	
	df 1	Sig.	df 2	Sig.
PreCont	31	0,112	31	0,171
PostCont	31	0,200	31	0,067
PreExp	31	0,061	31	0,260
PostExp	31	0,010	31	0,031

In the second table, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was chosen because the research sample consisted of more than 50 students. The results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test showed that most of the data were normally distributed with a value  $> 0.05$ , except for the post-test data of the experimental group, which had a significance value of 0.010. Therefore, the comparison between groups was analyzed using the nonparametric Mann-Whitney test. Before testing for differences, the data were tested for homogeneity using Levene's test.

The normality test results show that most data sets meet the assumption of normal distribution, except for the post-test scores of the experimental group. This deviation suggests that the intervention Cornell Note-Taking may have caused a significant shift in student performance, so that the data distribution no longer fits the curve. The presence of non-normality in one data set justified the use of a non-parametric test Mann-Whitney, which is more appropriate for analyzing data that does not meet parametric assumptions. This decision ensured the accuracy and reliability of the statistical conclusions drawn from the intergroup comparisons.

**Table 3.** Homogeneity test results

Lavene statistic	Df 1	Df 2	Sig.
0,286	1	60	0,595

Based on the results obtained from the homogeneity of variance test in the table 3, it was found that sig. (p value) = 0,595  $>$   $\alpha = 0,05$ . This condition shows that the differences in results that emerged after treatment were not caused by initial differences between groups, but were most likely influenced by the treatment given to the experimental group. Homogeneity of variance between groups is an important basis in comparative analysis, as it ensures that the data comes from populations that are equivalent in terms of distribution. Thus, the results obtained from subsequent tests can be interpreted more objectively and are not biased by initial differences in characteristics. Although one of the data sets is not normally distributed, the homogeneity of variance still supports the continuation of the analysis

using a non-parametric approach. Therefore, hypothesis analysis was continued using a non-parametric approach, namely the Mann-Whitney test. A summary of the test results on students' reading comprehension ability after treatment is presented in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Mann-Whitney test results

Test Statistic	Value
Mann-whitney U	274,500
Z	-2,915
Asymp.Sig. (2-tailed)	0,004

Based on the Mann-Whitney test results shown in Table 4, a U value of 274.500 was obtained with a Z value of -2.915 and significance (Asymp. Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.004. This significance value is smaller than the  $\alpha = 0.05$  limit, so it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between the control group and the experimental group in their reading comprehension of explanation texts.

The significant difference found through the Mann-Whitney test shows that the treatment given to the experimental group had a real impact on students' reading comprehension abilities. These results indicate that the Cornell Note-Taking method has a positive influence on students' reading comprehension of explanation texts. In the context of this study, these differences indicate that systematic note-taking methods can help students identify important information, reorganize main ideas, and understand reading content in a more focused manner. Thus, the results of this test not only show a difference in scores, but also reflect the effectiveness of the methods used in the learning process.

To determine the extent of the treatment effect, further analysis was conducted using

effect size calculations. Based on the Mann-Whitney test results, a Z value of -2.915 and a sample size of  $N=62$  were obtained. From these results, an effect size value of  $r = 0.37$  was obtained. According to the interpretation guidelines compiled by Cohen (1992), This value falls into the moderate effect category, which indicates that the application of the Cornell note-taking method has a significant influence on students' reading comprehension of explanation text.

Based on the results of data analysis, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between the post test results of the experimental group and the control group. In addition, the effect size value of  $r = 0.37$  indicates that the Cornell Note-Taking method has a significant influence on students' reading comprehension skills. Therefore, the hypothesis in this study is accepted, namely that the Cornell Note-Taking method has an influence on students' reading comprehension of explanation texts. The results of this study are in line with the findings of Ulfani et al. (2023) entitled "The Application of the Cornell Note-Taking Method to Improve Students' Reading Comprehension," which shows that the application of the Cornell note-taking method has a positive influence on students' reading comprehension.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, it can be concluded that the Cornell note-taking method has a positive influence on students' reading comprehension skills, particularly in understanding

explanation text. The application of this method helps students organize information systematically and make their notes more structured, thereby supporting the quality of the reading process and comprehension of text content. The Cornell note-taking method makes students more active than just reading, because students must go through several steps in applying the Cornell note-taking method, so that students gain a deeper understanding of the text content. These findings indicate that proper note-taking methods can have a positive influence on student learning outcomes when using the Cornell note-taking method.

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