

# TEACHING WRITING A RECOUNT TEXT AT JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL BY USING STORYBIRD MEDIA

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## Abstrak

Siswa Sekolah Menengah Pertama (SMP) pada umumnya mengalami kesulitan dalam menulis sebuah *recount text*. Hal ini disebabkan karena siswa Sekolah Menengah Pertama (SMP) kesulitan mencari ide yang akan dikembangkan menjadi sebuah teks. Tidak adanya aktivitas dan media pembelajaran yang menuntun dan memotivasi siswa untuk menggunakan imajinasi dalam menemukan dan menyusun ide-ide tersebut juga menjadi penghalang dalam menulis *recount text*. Maka dari itu penulis mengusulkan penggunaan *Storybird web 2.0 tool* untuk membantu siswa mengumpulkan ide-ide dan meningkatkan motivasi siswa dalam menulis *recount text*. *Storybird* adalah salah satu media online yang difokuskan pada kegiatan membaca dan menulis. *Storybird* dilengkapi dengan gambar-gambar yang menarik sehingga siswa akan termotivasi untuk menulis. Dengan memanfaatkan *Storybird* sebagai media pembelajaran menulis *recount text*, siswa akan tertantang untuk membuat sebuah *online story book* berkolaborasi dengan siswa lain. Selain itu guru dapat membuat *recount text* sendiri sebagai materi pembelajaran dengan menggunakan *Storybird* sehingga pembelajaran akan lebih menarik. *Storybird* juga menyediakan *virtual classroom* sehingga guru dapat memantau kegiatan siswa, memberikan tugas dan menilai hasil kerja siswa.

Kata kunci: *Recount text*, *Storybird*, *Story book*.

## A. INTRODUCTION

Writing and reading skill are the skills that lead to written language. The ability to read will be affected to writing skill, while reading and writing are two distinctive skills in English language learning. Durukan (2011) showed the effectiveness of “Cooperative Integrated Reading Composition” approach in his research paper, in which reading activities are integrated with writing activities for students during acquisition of English.

Based on curriculum 2013, recount text includes into one of the texts that have to be mastered by Junior High School students. It is taught in the first semester of the second grade students. As the beginner, they usually get difficulties in writing a recount text because can not generate ideas about the text

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that they are going to write. In this case, reading skill is important to develop student's ability in writing a recount text. By reading and criticizing other student's writing, they can express their thought and feeling freely. Beside that, it makes them aware of what a good recount text consist of and assess whether the text interesting and attract the readers.

There are some problems in teaching writing a recount text. The first problem is the student's lack of motivation to write. It is due to most of students felt that it is hard for them to start writing. The strategy and activity used by the teachers is not interesting and challenging them to develop their writing ability. Then, the students stuck in finding and organizing their ideas. As the beginner, the teachers have to know that the junior high school student's lack of vocabulary. So, they do not know how to express the ideas and write it in correct generic structure. Then, teachers did not provide interesting classroom media in teaching and learning process. Most of teachers used traditional media in teaching writing.

There are several definitions of writing. Crimmon (1983) says that writing is the skill of arranging words to form sentences and paragraph into the larger units so that those ideas, facts, and feeling can be communicated to others. A little bit different, Nunan (2003) stated that writing is the mental framework of inventing ideas, thinking about how to express them, and organizing the paragraph in order to be clear to the reader. It means that writing is one of the tools to communicate that delivered through the activities of expressing and sharing the idea, thought, and feeling in written form. It means that writing is one of the tools to communicate that delivered through the activities of expressing and sharing the idea, thought, and feeling in written form.

Furthermore, the definition of writing also states by Caroline (2003). She states that writing is producing something in written form so that the people can read, perform and use it. It means that writing can be a worthwhile activity. The people can use it in accordance with the writer's purpose whether it is to give information, persuade or entertain the readers.

Writing is found to be the most difficult skills compared to the others, like, listening, speaking, and reading skill. Flynn and Stainthorp (2006) state that writing is a complex process that allows writers to explore thoughts and ideas, and make them visible. Writing encourages thinking and learning for it motivates communication and makes thought available for reflection. When thought is written down, the ideas can be examined, reconsidered, added to, rearranged, and changed.

The goal of teaching writing at Junior High School based on Curriculum 2013 is to develop student's communicative competence in written form to achieve functional literacy standard. Teaching writing at Junior High School is sometimes not an easy work, it is due to the students often difficult in getting started to write. So, the unwillingness of the students to write appears. Tran (2007) said that most of students consider that writing is difficult and unrewarding, so that they lack of interest and motivation. Here, the teachers have a very important role to increase student's motivation supported by an interesting media.

Furthermore, the development of ICT (Information Communication Technology) has provided a new way for the teacher to create interesting classroom activity by using web tools. In this case, the students do the digital writing; it means that the students do the writing by using a computer, word processing software and web tool. The newest Curriculum in Indonesia gives the possibilities for the teachers in using the ICT in teaching writing. In Curriculum 2013 for Junior High School, the teaching of ICT has been removed, but it is used integrated as the media for other subjects such as English.

Recount text is one of the texts that should be learned by the Junior High School students. According to Anderson (2002), recount text is a text which list and describe past experiences by retelling events in the order. The purpose of the recounts text is to retell events with the purpose of either informing or entertaining their audience.

In addition, the generic structure recount consists of three parts. The first part is orientation, this part is about background information by answering who, what, when, and where the story happened. The second part is series of events which identified and described in chronological order. The last part is reorientation. In this part, the writer is concluding comments to express a personal opinion regarding the events described.

Storybird is a one of website 2.0 tools where the users can select artwork and write the text to create digital books that can be shared to others. This website is free, so the users only need to become their members and sign up to the website. The account in this web tool has three types, personal (regular and parent), school/edu (students and educator), and professional (professional artist and professional writer). Storybird provides many theme categories of pictures such as life experience, including adventure, holiday, diary, family, friends, travelling, hiking, camping, shopping, scary, and school life. Each theme has random picture that can be dragged and removed. Avery (2011) summarizes that "Storybird is an extremely engaging site that allows students to focus more on the content of their writing rather than drawing pictures."

## **B. DISCUSSION**

The teachers have to do the preparation and plan before doing the classroom activity. The good preparation will determine the success of teaching learning process. This preparation includes material and media in order to make an effective teaching learning process. In teaching writing a recount text by using Storybird as media, the teacher can write their own material assisted by Storybird web tool. The teachers can write example or model of recount text by using the artworks or pictures in Storybird. Besides that, many kinds of recount text available in this web tool. The teachers have to be able to choose appropriate, interesting and familiar text to the students. Therefore, a lesson plan also has to be prepared to guide teacher in teaching writing.

The procedure of teaching and learning consists of three phases: pre-teaching activity, whilst-teaching activity, and post-teaching activity. The first phase is pre-teaching activity. In this stage, the teacher and students do some activities to overview the lesson that going to be learned. It is for activating and

stimulating the students understanding. Then, the teacher recall students' background knowledge about the material that has given in the previous meeting.

In whilst-teaching activity, it is the main part of teaching writing activities. Teacher begins to teach writing through Storybird media. After activating the students' background knowledge in pre-teaching, it will be easier for teacher to teach students. Based on curriculum 2013, whilst teaching activity is divided into five stages, they are observing, questioning, experimenting, associating and networking.

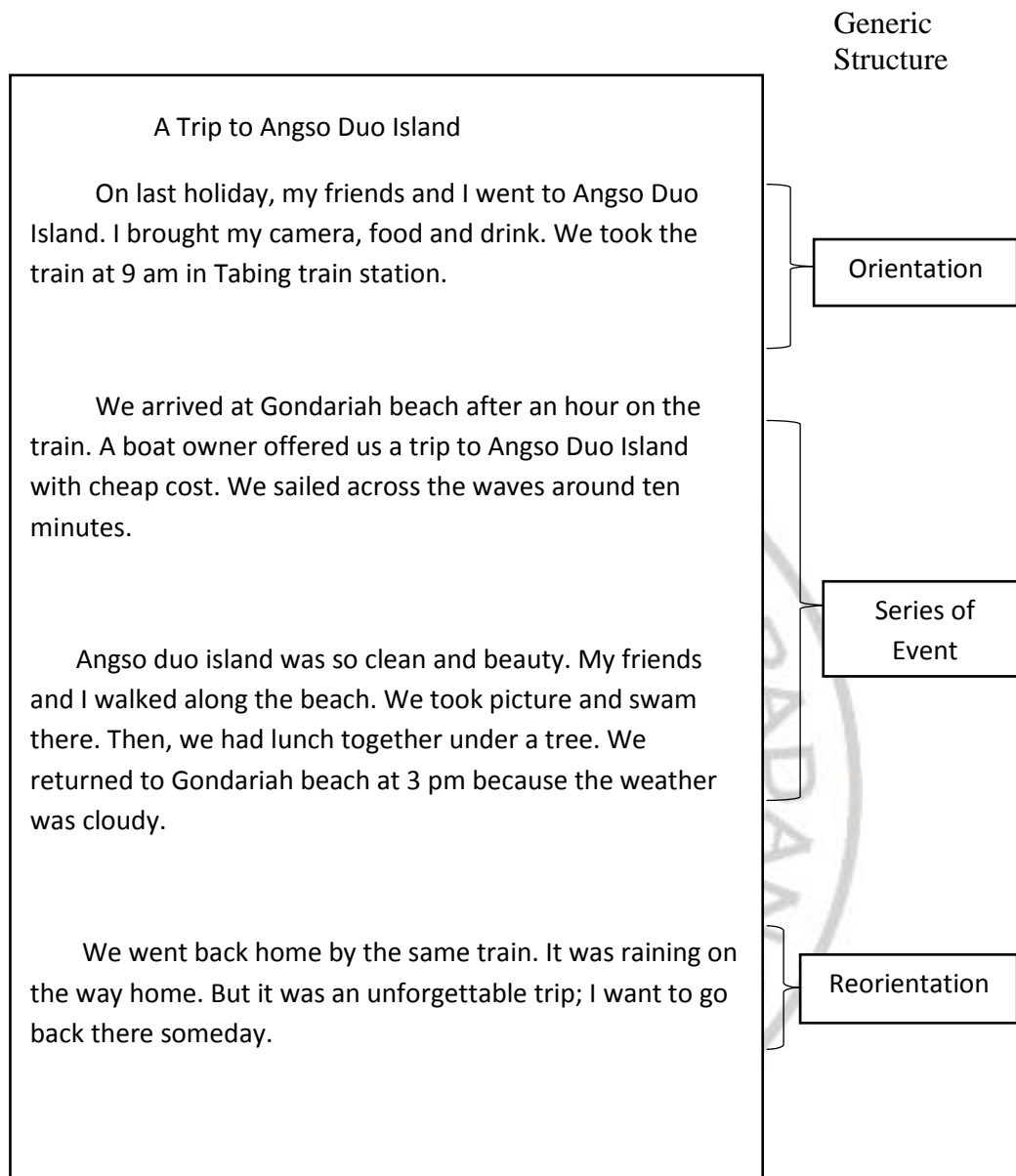
In observing, the teacher shows a picture related to the model of recount text. The teacher brainstorms student's ideas by asking their past experiences to travelling to Angso duo islands or another islands. Below is an example of Angso Duo Island's picture.



Source: <http://www.pksmarpoyan.org/2014/05/sepenggal-firdaus-di-pantai-angso-duo.html>

After that, the teacher shows the model of a recount text. The text given will be equipped with the generic structure of a recount text. The task that teacher might give to the students are identifying the time sequence, the use of sentences in the text and the content of each stage of a recount text. The following is an example of a recount text.

Next, the teacher shows a model of digital story book in Storybird web tool based on the text given to motivate the students and make them easier to remember the chronological order of the text. The teacher asks the students to open their Storybird account and allows students to give comments in written form on the comments part of this digital Storybook



<https://storybird.com/books/a-trip-to-angso-duo-island/?token=j56kerhfep>

In questioning activity, the teacher gives the chance for the students to ask about the generic structure and linguistic features of the text that they still do not understand. This activity is to build student's curiosity, interest and attention. For example, the student still confused about simple past tense. So, the teacher will explain about simple past tense briefly. Beside that, questioning section will build students openness in giving and accepting the opinion and make their vocabulary becomes richer.

In associating activity, the teacher and students make a recount text together. The teacher gives some "keywords" to be chosen by the students.

Keywords are the vocabulary related to the activity that the students ever did in the past. For example, the keywords are: camping, travelling, picnic, hiking, fishing, swimming, shopping, jogging and playing. The teacher and students search the artworks in the Storybird web tool based on a keyword they have chosen. For instance, the teacher and students choose the word “camping”, and many artworks about “camping” will be appear.

After the students chose an artwork, the teacher asks the students to click on “use this art” and choose “picture book (multi-page)”. There will be a lot of pictures in the artwork they have chosen. Then, the teacher guides the students to choose and drag the pictures into the blank pages and write simple past tense directly by answering the questions. The sentences will be developed into a paragraph. If there is a grammar mistake in their sentence the teacher gives correction. In the last, the teacher asks the students to save and publish their first digital story book.

In experimenting activity, the students write a short recount text by using the picture book in Storybird web tool in pairs. In dividing the students in pairs, the teacher has to make equal the ability of students for each group. One student will be a story teller, telling his or her past experience based on the keyword chosen and the question given by the teacher. The other student will be type the answer in Storybird web tool. The students extend or elaborate the sentences they have made before into paragraphs, and write the title of the story book.

In networking activity, the students in groups show the result of their writing by using Storybird web tool. One of the groups present their writing in front of the class and other students give comments or question. The comments can be directly and written comments in the group’s presentation account. The teacher and students also can give “hearted” sign; it is a symbol in comment part to appreciate the writer’s story book. Then, the teacher give feed back about the result of student’s recount text writing that presented in front of the class. Finally, the teacher gives the time for the students to edit or revise their writing and publish it. Besides, the teacher tells to the students that they are going to collect the entire digital story book in printed form.

Finally, in post teaching activity, the teacher concludes or summarizing the lesson. To improve student’s ability in writing a recount text, the teacher gives individual home work that will be post in the Storybird web tool. Before closing the lesson, the teacher gives chance to the students to give feedback. Then, the teacher tells about the topic of the lesson for the next meeting so that the students have preparation in every step of teaching learning process.

There are some advantages in teaching writing recount text to junior high school students by using Storybird media. The first advantage is that Using of Storybird as media in the classroom has many advantages. The first advantage is that the students will enjoy the learning process because Storybird web tool is interesting media. Students usually love colorful picture. By using the pictures in Storybird, the students can easily write the paragraphs based on the artworks in this media. So, the students will motivate to write. Second, it can sharpen student’s critical thinking. Critical thinking means the students can value or assess others digital story book through comments part in Storybird web tool. Third, the

students can edit their work easily. As the beginner level in writing the students commonly makes mistakes. Fourth, they also can collaborate with other students. They can share their knowledge and improve their socialize each other.

On the other hand, this web tool also has disadvantages that the teachers have to know before applied it in the classroom. First, the school must have computer laboratory that has been connected with the internet. Second, the pictures in Storybird web tool sometimes can not be match with the student's story. The students have to find the artworks or picture that almost similar with their story. Besides, the picture can not be taken from Google. Last, the writer and readers have to pay for printed digital story book. So, to overcome this problem they have to screen captured and cropped each page and copied into Microsoft Word.

### C. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the discussions of the previous chapter, it can be concluded that using Storybird web tool in teaching writing a recount text at Junior High School will help the students to find and gather their ideas about a recount text that they are going to write. The students are challenged to create a digital storybook in groups and publish their writing. The students will feel satisfied when they can create a story book in this web tool.

There are some suggestions to the English teachers at Junior High School in order to improve the students' ability in writing recount text. writer expects the teacher to motivate the students in writing process by using Storybird web tool. Teacher can help the students to find the ideas of what to be written by using this media. It is suggested to the teacher to use this media for the students that are familiar or have already learned about recount text before.

**Note:** This article is written based on the the writer's paper under the supervision of her advisor, Muhd. Al Hafizh, S.S., M.A.

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