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## OPTIMIZING CREATIVE POETRY WRITING THROUGH THE PICTURE-TO-PICTURE METHOD : INTEGRATING LOCAL WISDOM IN MALAYSIAN ISLAMIC EDUCATION

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### ABSTRACT

This community service activity aims to optimize the poetry writing creativity of students through the application of the Picture to Picture method combined with local wisdom values. The service was carried out at the Guidance Studio of the An-Nahdloh Islamic Boarding School, Selangor, Malaysia, on July 29, 2025. The method of implementation of the activity was a workshop that included providing materials, an introduction to the Picture to Picture method, poetry writing exercises, presentations of works, and reflections. The results of the activity showed that students were able to improve their creative writing skills by being more imaginative, communicative, and contextual. The poems produced were full of nuances of religiosity, Islamic boarding school life, and local Malay culture. Thus, the Picture to Picture method has proven effective in developing writing skills based on local wisdom and is suitable for implementation in various educational institutions.

Keywords: Islamic Boarding School, Local Wisdom, Picture to Picture Method, Writing Creativity, Writing Poetry

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## INTRODUCTION

Writing skills are a key pillar in language and literature learning. Among various forms of creative writing, poetry holds a special place because it allows writers to express ideas, feelings, and experiences aesthetically. However, many students, particularly in Islamic boarding schools (pesantren), experience obstacles in writing poetry. These obstacles include difficulty starting writing, limited poetic vocabulary, and a lack of imagination (Rahmawati, 2021). This situation results in less than optimal development of students' creative writing skills.

One of the key issues in creative writing instruction in educational institutions is the lack of innovative learning strategies that can motivate students. According to Nugroho & Lestari (2020), poetry writing instruction is often monotonous and emphasizes theory, making it difficult for students to explore their creativity. Therefore, methods are needed that can provide real-world stimuli, stimulate imagination, and relate to students' lives.

The Picture-to-Picture method presents an innovative solution because it relies on visual media to stimulate creative ideas. Arsyad (2019) emphasized that the use of visual media in learning can increase motivation, facilitate understanding, and help students express ideas more focused. In the context of writing poetry, visual media serves as a bridge between real-life experiences and students' creative imaginations.

Furthermore, learning to write poetry will be more meaningful if integrated with local wisdom. Local wisdom is not only a cultural heritage but also an authentic source of inspiration for creating literary works (Sartini, 2016). Research by Sari

(2022) shows that integrating local wisdom into language learning can increase student engagement and enrich the content of their writing. Therefore, teaching poetry writing based on local wisdom can be a solution for improving writing skills while strengthening cultural identity.

Several previous community service activities have also demonstrated the effectiveness of visual-based creative strategies. For example, a community service conducted by Hidayat & Kusuma (2021) in a middle school demonstrated that implementing an image-based method improved the quality of students' poetry by up to 70% compared to conventional methods. This reinforces the importance of innovative writing learning through visual media.

Based on the background and study, the community service team of Nahdlatul Ulama University Surabaya carried out the activity Optimizing creative poetry writing through the picture-to-picture method: integrating local wisdom in malaysian islamic education, on July 29, 2025.

The objectives of this community service activity are: (1) To optimize the poetry writing skills of students through the Picture to Picture Method . (2) To increase writing creativity by integrating local wisdom values. (3) To provide a fun, contextual, and applicable literary learning experience. (4) To foster participants' love for local culture through literary works.

## OBJECTIVES

The community service activity titled "Optimizing creative poetry writing through the picture-to-picture method: integrating local wisdom in malaysian islamic education, aims to achieve the following objectives: (1) To enhance students' ability in creative poetry writing

through the application of the Picture-to-Picture method, which utilizes visual media to stimulate ideas, imagination, and emotional expression. (2) To integrate local wisdom values into poetry writing, enabling students to produce literary works that reflect cultural identity, moral values, and the richness of local traditions. (3) To increase students' motivation and engagement in learning poetry by providing an innovative, enjoyable, and interactive learning experience that differs from conventional theoretical approaches. (4) To develop teachers' capacity at the An-Nahdloh Islamic Boarding School in implementing creative learning models particularly visual-based and culture-oriented strategies for language and literature instruction. (5) To strengthen cultural appreciation and awareness among students by encouraging them to explore local stories, symbols, and values as sources of inspiration for poetic expression. (6) To promote the sustainability of culturally responsive education, by fostering collaboration between higher education institutions and Islamic boarding schools in developing contextual and locally grounded teaching practices.

## PLAN OF ACTION

This community service activity was carried out using a training method (participatory workshop) designed to develop the poetry writing skills of students through the application of the Picture to Picture Method based on local wisdom.

### 1. Activity Partners

The activity partner is the An-Nahdloh Islamic Boarding School in Selangor, Malaysia, a non-formal educational institution for students aged 9–15. The partner faced major challenges in developing creative writing skills,

particularly poetry, due to limited innovative learning methods and a lack of supporting media.

### 2. Implementation Time

This activity was held on July 29, 2025, with a total duration of 1 day (6 effective hours) in the meeting room of the An-Nahdloh Islamic Boarding School Guidance Center.

### 3. Activity Method

The training method used is a participatory workshop approach. Participants not only receive material but also practice writing poetry, discuss their work, and reflect together. This approach was chosen to develop writing skills through practical experience and active interaction among participants.

### 4. Implementation Stages

#### a. Activity Preparation

Coordination with Islamic boarding school administrators regarding needs and technical implementation. Development of training modules containing poetry writing theory, examples of poetry based on local wisdom, and worksheets. Selection of visual media that represent local wisdom, such as Malay traditions, the lives of Islamic boarding school students, and the natural panorama of Selangor.

#### b. Implementation of the Workshop

Introduction to the elements of poetry (diction, figures of speech, rhyme, theme), as well as an explanation of the advantages of the Picture To Picture Method in stimulating creativity. Introduction to the Picture To Picture Method Participants are shown a series of pictures, asked to observe, describe, and express the meaning contained in them. (Poetry Writing Practice), participants are asked to write poetry based on the pictures of their choice. The facilitator assists in the use of diction, selection of figures of speech, and

development of ideas. (Work Presentation), participants read poetry in front of friends, followed by appreciation and group discussion. (Joint Reflection), the facilitator invites participants to reflect on their writing experiences, challenges faced, and the benefits of the Picture To Picture Method in helping them be creative.

### 5. Activity Evaluation

Evaluation was conducted through observation to assess participants' active involvement in each stage. Analysis of the resulting poetry to examine aspects of creativity, language use, and reinforcement of local values. A short questionnaire was distributed to assess participants' responses regarding their understanding of the material, their writing experience, and their impressions of the learning method.

Through this workshop-based training method, students not only gain a theoretical understanding of writing poetry, but also practical skills to express ideas creatively through image media that is close to their lives.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

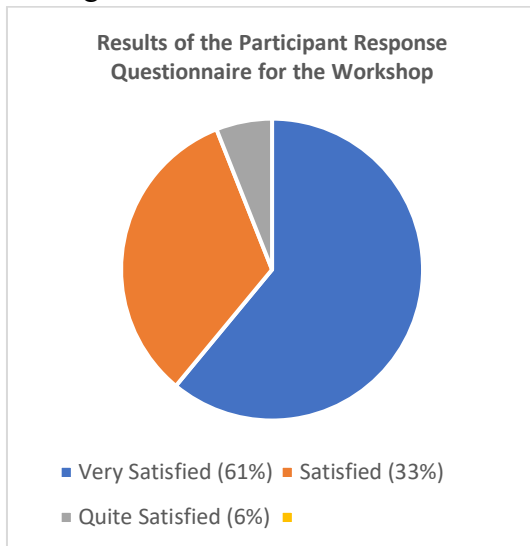
The community service activity at the An-Nahdloh Islamic Boarding School in Selangor, Malaysia, proceeded smoothly and received a positive response from both participants and partners. The 18 students who participated in the activity demonstrated high enthusiasm in every session, from the presentation of the material to the poetry readings. Based on evaluations through observation, work analysis, and a short questionnaire, the following results were obtained:

**Table 1.** Achievements from the Poetry Writing Workshop Using *the Picture to Picture Method*

Rated aspect	Achievement Indicators	Results (%)	Information
Active participation	Students are involved in discussions, asking questions, and taking part in writing exercises.	90%	16 of the 18 students actively participated
Ability to write poetry	Poetry fulfills the aspects of theme, diction, figures of speech, and rhyme.	72%	13 of the 18 students produced good quality poetry
Courage to read works	Students read poetry in front of the group	83%	15 of the 18 students appeared confident
Positive response to the method	Students feel that <i>the Picture to Picture Method</i> helps them in finding ideas.	94%	Based on participant satisfaction questionnaire

Table 1 shows that the majority of students at An-Nahdloh Islamic Boarding School were able to produce poetry that met the assessment criteria quite well. Most participants demonstrated increased creativity, characterized by their ability to develop themes, use more varied diction, and rhyme that aligned with the poem's content. However, a small number of students still experienced difficulties, particularly in selecting appropriate words (diction) and building the power of poetic imagery in their poems. This demonstrates that the process of learning to write poetry using *the Picture to Picture Method* not only encouraged students' courage to write but also provided direct experience in expressing ideas through beautiful

language. The limitations still experienced by some participants were more directed towards technical abilities in processing poetic language, so that continued ongoing mentoring was needed.



Meanwhile, the questionnaire results displayed in the chart above show the tendency of participant responses to the workshop activities. As many as 61% of participants stated that they were very satisfied, 33% stated that they were satisfied, and 6% stated that they were quite satisfied. Interestingly, not a single participant stated that they were dissatisfied. This picture confirms that the activities carried out were not only well received but also provided a meaningful learning experience for the students. The high level of satisfaction indicates that *the Picture to Picture Method* applied has proven effective in developing creativity in writing poetry. Visualization of images can trigger imagination, so that participants find it easier to express their ideas and experiences into literary works.

Furthermore, these positive results also demonstrate the relevance of writing learning to the participants' lives. Many of the poems they wrote addressed themes close to their daily lives, such as life in

Islamic boarding schools, Malay traditions, the natural beauty of Selangor, and their religious values. Thus, this activity not only improved writing skills but also strengthened the students' sense of cultural and religious identity.

Overall, the quantitative data, including the students' work and questionnaire responses, combined with the qualitative findings of the poetry themes produced, demonstrate that this community service activity has achieved its objectives. *The Picture to Picture method* has proven to be not only a creative strategy for writing poetry, but also an effective means of integrating literary learning with local wisdom.

This activity produced several important findings: (1) Increased imagination and creativity of students. Students who previously had difficulty writing poetry were able to develop ideas based on image stimuli. (2) Poetry works have a local nuance. The themes of the poems often raise the life of Islamic boarding schools, Malay traditions, and the nature of Selangor, thus demonstrating the internalization of cultural values. (3) Increased self-confidence. The poetry reading session trains participants' courage to appear in public. (4) The learning atmosphere is more enjoyable. Participants feel that learning to write poetry is not just theory, but through creative practical experiences.

### Discussion

The results of this community service activity demonstrate that the application of the *Picture to Picture Method* has proven effective as a learning strategy in developing poetry writing skills among students. The image media presented in the workshop not only serves as a visual illustration that beautifies the learning

process, but also has a far more strategic function, namely as an imaginative stimulus that encourages the birth of creative ideas. Through this visual stimulus, students are able to build a bridge between personal experiences, prior knowledge, and aesthetic expression manifested in the form of poetry. Thus, the creative process does not only rely on abstract imagination alone, but also receives support from a concrete visual context. This is in line with the view of Arsyad (2019) who emphasized that visual media can strengthen learning motivation while making it easier for students to understand, remember, and develop new knowledge.

From a quantitative perspective, the data shows that 72% of students successfully produced high-quality poetry. This achievement indicates a significant improvement in creative writing skills. These results support the findings of Hidayat & Kusuma (2021), who demonstrated that using image-based methods in language learning can improve the quality of students' poetry by up to 70% compared to conventional lecture-based methods. In other words, the use of visual media has been shown to stimulate language sensitivity, enrich diction choices, and train students to construct more vivid poetic imagery. This demonstrates that the students' success in this activity is not incidental but aligns with various previous studies.

Meanwhile, from a qualitative perspective, the success achieved can be measured not only in terms of the technical aspects of writing poetry, but also in terms of the substance of the cultural and religious values contained in their works. The poems produced by the students not only display the beauty of language, play of

diction, and imaginative structure, but also represent the noble values that grow in their daily lives in the Islamic boarding school environment. The values of religiosity, the simplicity of daily life, and strong Malay cultural traditions appear to be dominant themes that enrich the meaning of the works. This finding supports the research of Sari (2022), which emphasized that the integration of local wisdom in language and literature learning not only enriches the content of literary works but also strengthens students' cultural identity. Thus, this activity not only develops literacy skills but also plays a vital role in maintaining and preserving local wisdom amidst the currents of globalization.

In addition, this activity also provides empirical evidence regarding the relevance of contextual learning theory in educational practice. Johnson (2011) in the concept of Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) emphasizes the importance of linking the learning process to the real experiences of students, so that the knowledge gained is not abstract and detached from the reality of everyday life. In the context of this activity, the use of visual media close to the lives of students, such as the atmosphere of Islamic boarding schools, religious traditions, and local cultural environments, has proven to be an effective bridge in helping the process of creating poetry. In this way, learning to write poetry becomes more meaningful, because students do not only copy aesthetic forms, but also pour the reality of their lives into literary works.

Therefore, it can be concluded that community service through the application of the Picture to Picture Method at the An-Nahdloh Islamic Boarding School, Selangor, Malaysia, not only provides a learning experience in writing poetry, but also becomes a vehicle for empowering

literacy based on local culture. The quantitatively measurable improvement in writing skills, combined with the strengthening of cultural identity through the resulting work, confirms that this method is relevant for continued development in literature learning, especially in Islamic boarding school-based educational institutions.

## CONCLUSION

This part can be the achievement of these activities. The community service activity entitled "Optimizing Creativity in Writing Poetry Through the Picture to Picture Method : Developing Writing Skills Based on Local Wisdom at the Guidance Studio of the An-Nahdloh Islamic Boarding School, Selangor, Malaysia" which was held on July 29, 2025, went well and provided positive results. First, the Picture to Picture Method has proven effective in increasing the creativity of students in writing poetry. The image media can be a strong stimulus to build imagination, express ideas, and enrich expression in literary works.

Second, the evaluation results showed that 72% of the students' work showed improved quality, both in terms of diction, imagery, and message. This indicates that the image-based approach is more effective than conventional methods, which tend to be monotonous.

Third, the resulting poems often highlight religious values, daily life in Islamic boarding schools, and Malay traditions. This demonstrates that integrating local wisdom can strengthen cultural identity while providing deeper meaning to literary works. Fourth, the participants' response to this activity was very positive. 61% expressed very satisfied, 33% satisfied, and 6% somewhat satisfied.

No participants expressed dissatisfaction, indicating that this activity successfully provided tangible benefits in learning to write poetry.

Overall, this activity demonstrates that the Picture to Picture Method can be used as an alternative strategy for teaching literature, particularly for writing poetry based on local wisdom. Going forward, this approach is expected to be replicated in various educational institutions, both formal and informal, to foster literacy skills, literary appreciation, and a love of local culture in the younger generation.

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