



## Teaching the Story of Prophet Noah With a Live Story Box APE for Early Childhood

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the potential of the *live story box* educational game tool (APE) as an innovative medium for teaching the story of Prophet Noah to early childhood learners. The live story box APE is designed by combining elements of story, game, and direct interaction to create a deep, fun, and meaningful learning experience. This media is specifically designed to introduce the story of the Prophet Noah with a creative approach that actively involves children, while instilling religious values such as obedience, perseverance, and gratitude to Allah SWT. This study uses a qualitative approach with data collection techniques in the form of participatory observation, documentation, and in-depth interviews. Data were analyzed narratively to identify children's learning experiences and responses to the live story box APE. The results of the study show that the live story box is able to create contextual, relevant, and interactive learning. Children show high interest in the story conveyed through this media. In addition, the live story box also helps stimulate children's imagination, enriches their understanding of the story of the Prophet Noah, and instills values of faith in a way that is easy for early childhood to understand. This study provides an important contribution to the development of story-based educational game devices that can be integrated into religious learning for early childhood. Thus, live story box APE offers a creative approach that not only supports learning objectives but also inspires the development of innovative strategies in Islamic religious education.

### INTRODUCTION

Early childhood religious education plays a vital role in developing children's character and instilling moral values. (Akin, 2018). By introducing religious values from an early age, a strong foundation can be built for children's moral and spiritual development (Salimah, Al-Kautsar, Aisya, & Al-Kautsar, 2023). Religious education helps children distinguish between good and bad, and develops empathy and a sense of caring for others (Romlah & Rusdi, 2023). This is expected to encourage children to grow into individuals who are noble, responsible, and useful to their surroundings. Comprehensive and structured religious education can be an effective tool in shaping a generation with strong character and solid values (Bucky Wibawa Karya Guna, Sri Endah Yuwantiningrum, Firmansyah, Muh. Dzihab Aminudin S, & Aslan, 2024). Early religious education faces unique challenges in the modern era, especially with the rapid development of technology and information (Madaan & Singh, 2022). Children today are exposed to various influences and diverse flows of information, which can obscure religious and moral values (Safarina, 2023). Thus, a creative

and innovative approach is essential to impart religious values to children, ensuring they remain relevant and meaningful in their lives.

The stories of the prophets, such as the story of the Prophet Noah, are a rich source of inspiration with noble values and deep moral lessons for children. Through these stories, children can develop strong character, including strong faith, patience, courage and obedience to Allah SWT. Apart from that, the stories of the prophets also teach moral values such as honesty, compassion and tolerance (Jannah, 2023). Thus, these stories are not only entertaining, but also serve as valuable life guides for children in shaping their character and morality, as well as preparing them to face future challenges.

To attract children's interest in learning, learning media is needed that is not only informative but also fun (Najahah & Agus; Eko, 2016). Children tend to remember and understand material presented in an interesting way, such as through games, stories, or pictures (Pereira & Atal, 2019). By using creative and interactive learning media, the learning process will feel more fun and not boring. In addition, interesting learning media can also help children develop various skills, such as critical thinking skills (Luh Made Indria Dewi & Ni Luh Rimpiati, 2016), creativity (Kartini & Susilawati, 2018), and communication. Previous studies have tended to focus on conventional methods, such as books (Yusnita Sinaga, Habibih Hasibuan, & Habibah Sembiring, 2022), static images, or digital storytelling (Haryaningrum, Reza, Setyowati, & Ningrum, 2023), to teach religious and moral values to early childhood. While these methods are effective in certain contexts, they often fail to engage children interactively and do not fully stimulate their imagination. This study offers an innovation by using an educational game called the *live story box*. Live story box is an innovation in the world of education that offers an interactive and interesting learning approach. Unlike conventional methods that are limited to books and static images, live story box allows children to learn while playing and exploring their imaginary world. By using live story box, children can engage actively in the learning process, enhancing their motivation and involvement. This learning media creates an immersive learning experience, where children can interact with interesting stories, characters, and environments. Live story box has the potential to increase reading interest, develop imagination, and enrich children's understanding of various topics.

This study aims to assess the potential of using educational game media to teach children the story of Noah in an engaging and interactive way. By utilizing educational game media, this study seeks to improve the effectiveness of religious learning, especially in instilling values and lessons from the story of Noah. Educational game media can provide an engaging and interactive learning experience, allowing children to actively participate in the learning process. This study will analyze various aspects and benefits of using educational game media in religious learning, as well as identify the best strategies for teaching the story of Noah in a fun and meaningful way for children.

This study is anticipated to significantly contribute to the advancement of more innovative and interactive religious learning models. The findings in this study can be a valuable resource for teachers in designing engaging and effective learning activities. By implementing strategies and approaches inspired by this study, educators can establish a more stimulating and engaging learning environment for students. In addition, the outcomes of this

study are also expected to inspire further research in the field of religious education, which will enrich our knowledge and understanding of the best ways to teach religion to the younger generation. Thus, this study has the potential to provide a sustainable positive impact in the world of religious education.

This study is based on constructivism theory that emphasizes the importance of students' active role in constructing their own knowledge. Thus, this study aims to analyze how the live story box can foster an interactive educational setting and motivate children to actively participate in the learning process.

This study employs a qualitative approach, with combining participatory observation and in-depth interview techniques. Participatory observation was carried out to directly monitor children's interactions with live story box in a natural learning setting, so that rich data can be obtained regarding their behavior and responses. Meanwhile, In-depth interviews were carried out with teachers to explore their understanding perceptions and experiences related to the use of live story box. By combining these two methods, it is hoped that a more comprehensive picture can be obtained regarding the effectiveness of live story box in facilitating learning the story of the Prophet Noah in early childhood.

## **METHODS**

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive research design to examine the use of live story box APE in religious education. Data collection was carried out through three main methods: participant observation, documentation, and in-depth interviews. Observation Participatory observation was conducted to observe the interaction of children aged 4-5 years with the live story box in religious learning activities at RA Nurul Ulum. Documentation includes collecting various relevant documents, such as lesson plans, children's work, and photos of activities. In-depth interviews were carried out with teachers to gain a better understanding of how live story box APE are used.

Data obtained from in-depth interviews with teachers will be analyzed using narrative analysis techniques. The focus of the analysis will be directed at the narratives that emerge in children's personal experiences in interacting with the live story box. By using a narrative analysis approach, researchers will trace the storyline, characters, and meanings contained in the narrative. This analysis aims to understand in depth how the live story box affects children's learning experiences, as well as how the narrative reflects children's perceptions, emotions, and understanding of religious learning.

By analyzing these narratives, researchers can identify emerging themes, such as how the live story box increases children's interest and engagement, or how the narratives describe children's spiritual and emotional experiences in the learning process. This narrative analysis will provide valuable insights into the impact of the live story box in religious learning, as well as its contribution to forming meaningful learning experiences for children. With a qualitative approach and comprehensive data collection methods, the goal is to provide an in-depth understanding of the use of the live story box in religious learning, as well as its contribution to the development of an innovative and interactive religious learning model.

## RESULT

In an effort to present more interesting and interactive religious learning for early childhood, this study developed an innovative educational prop, namely a live story box with the theme of the story of the Prophet Noah.

### 1.1 Design of the Live Story Box of the Prophet Noah



**Figure 1.** This is a picture of the parts of the ape side. (a) the first side of the story, (b) the second side of the story, (c) the third side of the story, and (d) the fourth side of the story

This educational game tool (APE) is designed by forming a box with four sides, each side has a story about Prophet Noah. Figure 1. shows each side of the live story box. Side one tells the story of Prophet Noah who was God's messenger to his people. Side two shows the story of God's command to build a ship. Side three tells the story of the great flood and salvation for believers. Finally, side four contains a moral message that can be taken from the story of Prophet Noah.

The Prophet Noah's live story box is designed with a simple but effective concept, namely combining visual and kinesthetic elements through a lever mechanism to create a multisensory learning experience. By turning the lever, children can actively move visual elements such as miniature ships sailing, animals entering the ship, or the sky turning dark when it rains. Figure 2. shows the lever section more clearly. Levers, provided on all four sides of the live story box, these lever parts can be disassembled, allowing for economical storage. This physical interaction not only makes learning more fun, but also helps children understand the sequence of events in the story of Prophet Nuh (AS).



**Figure 2.** Lever section for rotating image elements

Physically, the live story box of Prophet Nuh a.s. consists of several main components that are interrelated, namely: a sturdy wooden box as the main frame, illustrated story panels, a lever, a miniature ship, animal figures, and elements as a moving background. Each component has a specific function, the lever is used to produce visual effects so that the image elements can move.



**Figure 3.** Drawer as a place for questions and rewards

Figure 3. shows another part of the educational game tool (APE) live story box, namely the drawer as a place for questions and rewards. The drawer section is on all sides of the live story box and is located under the story panel. The questions given are specific to the story on that side. If the child answers correctly, the teacher will give a reward, which can be in the form of goods or stickers indicating that the child participated.



**Figure 4.** Supporting tools for ship demonstrations for practice

This educational game tool (APE) is also accompanied by supporting tools for practice during a flood. This supporting tool is made of cloth, which is then sewn to form a

brown ship and white waves using lace. This activity is used to strengthen children's understanding by practicing so that it is more effective and meaningful.

The live story box of the Prophet Nuh a.s. has several advantages compared to conventional learning methods, namely, it is based on educational game tools for religious learning, where this tool can not only hone children's understanding of religion and morals but can also hone children's motor skills, both fine and gross. Other skills that can be stimulated are children's social-emotional aspects.

### 1.2 Implementation at RA Nurul Ulum

Before implementing the live story box of Prophet Nuh a.s. at RA Nurul Ulum, several thorough preparations were made. First, an initial survey was conducted on children's interest and understanding of the story of Prophet Nuh a.s. Next, the live story box was assembled and thoroughly checked to ensure all components were functioning properly. Finally, the learning environment in the classroom was adequately prepared, such as providing a large enough space to play and interact with the live story box. All of these preparations were aimed at ensuring the success of the implementation and providing an optimal learning experience for the children.



(a)

(b)

**Figure 5.** Application of Live Story Box Educational Game Tools (APE). (a) Application of live story box for children, (b) use of ship demonstration tools

## DISCUSSION

The implementation of the live story box of Prophet Nuh a.s. in the classroom was carried out in stages by following several steps. First, the teacher began the activity by telling the story of Prophet Nuh a.s. briefly and interestingly. Then, the live story box was introduced to the children, then they were invited to observe each of its components. Next, the children interacted in pairs with the live story box, moved the lever, and observed the changes that occurred. The teacher facilitated a discussion to explore the children's understanding of the story of Prophet Nuh a.s. and the values contained therein. Finally, the children were invited to demonstrate boarding a ship using supporting tools.

This structured approach is in line with the concept of scaffolding (Hariana, 2021), where children receive temporary support that is gradually removed as they become more independent or competent. By actively involving children in the storytelling process, teachers provide a framework for them to connect the story to their own experiences. As suggested in Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), learning is most effective when tasks are

within the child's ZPD, where they can complete the task with the help of someone more experienced (Insani, 2024). The use of the Live Story Box serves as a tool in this zone, helping children to internalize abstract moral concepts such as obedience and patience through hands-on learning.

The children's responses to the use of the live story box of Prophet Nuh a.s. showed interesting variations. Some children looked very enthusiastic, actively interacted with the props, and asked questions that showed their interest and involvement in learning. Meanwhile, there were also children who were quieter, but still paid close attention to every detail in the live story box. This behavior showed that they were mentally involved and trying to understand the story of Prophet Nuh a.s. in their own way. These variations in responses demonstrate the importance of individual differences in learning. According to Gardner's (1983) theory of multiple intelligences, children have different strengths in areas such as linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, and bodily-kinesthetic intelligence (Suarca, Soetjingsih, & Ardjana, 2016). These varying levels of engagement suggest that the live story box appeals to a range of intelligences, providing opportunities for each child to engage according to their individual learning style.

Some children even tried to retell the story of Prophet Nuh a.s. in their own style, which is an indication that they have absorbed the messages and values of the story. This shows the children's ability to internalize and reflect on the story in unique and creative ways. The ability to retell a story shows children's cognitive and language development (Herawati & Katoningsih, 2023). Retelling is a form of cognitive exercise that allows children to process information deeply and reflect on the lessons taught.

This variation in responses provides valuable insights into how the live story box can influence children's learning experiences, and how they can interpret and reflect on the story of Prophet Nuh (AS) in different ways. According to Piaget's (1952) theory of cognitive development, children in early childhood are in the pre-concrete operational period, where they are able to think symbolically but may not fully understand abstract concepts (Mu'min, 2013). Live Story Box, with its concrete and interactive elements, helps bridge the gap between abstract moral teachings and children's developmental stages, allowing them to understand complex ideas such as obedience and patience through direct and real-life experiences.

During the implementation process of the live story box of Prophet Nuh (AS), the researcher found several pedagogical challenges. One of the main challenges was how to adapt the story of Prophet Nuh (AS) which is religious in nature into interesting and relevant learning material for early childhood. This challenge is in line with Vygotsky's Constructivism concept, which emphasizes the importance of social interaction in learning and knowledge development. According to this theory, children construct their understanding through interactions with the environment and others, which helps them connect new knowledge to existing experiences (Sunanik, 2014). The researcher tried to overcome this by using simple language, attractive visuals, and concrete examples that are close to children's daily lives. This solution supports the Scaffolding theory, where learning materials are adapted to support children's development according to their level of understanding. In

addition, the researcher also tried to connect the story of Prophet Nuh (AS) with universal moral values such as patience, obedience, and caring for others.

The use of live story boxes has been proven to improve early childhood understanding of the story of the Prophet Noah, especially in terms of the concept of obedience, patience, and the importance of following Allah's commands. This approach is supported by Vygotsky's Social Constructivist Theory, which emphasizes the importance of social interaction in building knowledge (Hariana, 2021). In addition, live story boxes are also effective in developing children's imagination, vocabulary, and storytelling skills. In addition to improving understanding, live story boxes have also succeeded in increasing children's interest in learning Islamic religious material, especially the stories of the prophets.

## CONCLUSION

The use of live story box APE in Islamic religious learning has proven its ability to create an interactive learning environment, encourage active student participation, and foster a deeper understanding. Through the manipulation of objects in the story box, students are invited to actively participate in the reconstruction of the story of the Prophet Noah. This not only increases interest in learning, but also strengthens their memory and understanding of abstract religious concepts. In addition, social interactions that occur during learning activities using live story boxes also contribute to the development of students' social and emotional skills. The use of ship aids in learning practices is not only a visual demonstration, but also provides direct experience by touching, observing, and even interacting with the ship model.

## DECLARATIONS

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