

## THE EFFECT OF THE COOPERATIVE INTEGRATED READING AND COMPOSITION MODEL ON STUDENTS' LEARNING OUTCOMES IN ISLAMIC CULTURAL HISTORY

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### Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui pengaruh penerapan model pembelajaran *Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition* (CIRC) terhadap hasil belajar siswa pada mata pelajaran Sejarah Kebudayaan Islam kelas X di MAS Miftahussalam Medan Tahun Ajaran 2025/2026. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan metode *quasi experiment* dan desain *Posttest-Only Control Group Design*. Populasi penelitian berjumlah 75 siswa, sedangkan sampel penelitian terdiri atas 64 siswa yang hadir saat pelaksanaan *post-test*, dengan masing-masing 32 siswa pada kelas eksperimen dan kelas kontrol. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui observasi, tes, dan dokumentasi. Instrumen tes terlebih dahulu diuji validitas dan reliabilitas, dengan 20 dari 40 butir soal dinyatakan valid dan nilai Cronbach's Alpha sebesar 0,821. Analisis data dilakukan melalui statistik deskriptif, uji normalitas, uji homogenitas, dan *independent sample t-test*. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa nilai rata-rata kelas eksperimen sebesar 63,28, sedangkan kelas kontrol sebesar 57,66. Hasil uji-t memperoleh nilai signifikansi sebesar  $0,001 < 0,05$  dengan nilai *t* sebesar 3,360. Dengan demikian,  $H_0$  ditolak dan  $H_a$  diterima. Artinya, penerapan model CIRC berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap hasil belajar siswa pada mata pelajaran Sejarah kebudayaan Islam.

**Kata kunci:** CIRC, Hasil Belajar, Sejarah Kebudayaan Islam

### Abstract

This study aims to examine the effect of the *Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition* (CIRC) learning model on students' learning outcomes in Islamic Cultural History (SKI) among Grade X students at MAS Miftahussalam Medan in the 2025/2026 academic year. This study employed a quantitative approach using a quasi-experimental method with a *Posttest-Only Control Group Design*. The population consisted of 75 students, while the sample included 64 students who attended the post-test, with 32 students in the experimental group and 32 students in the control group. Data were collected through observation, tests, and documentation. The test instrument was examined for validity and reliability, resulting in 20 valid items out of 40 items and a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.821. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, normality and homogeneity tests, and an independent-samples *t-test*. The results showed that the experimental group obtained a mean score of 63.28, while the control group obtained 57.66. The independent-samples *t-test* yielded a significance value of  $0.001 < 0.05$  and a *t*-value of 3.360. Therefore,  $H_0$  was rejected and  $H_a$  was accepted, indicating that the CIRC learning model had a positive and significant effect on students' learning outcomes in Islamic Cultural History.

**Keywords:** CIRC, learning outcomes, Islamic Cultural History

## INTRODUCTION

Education is a planned process aimed at developing students' potential in terms of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and personality. Education is not merely oriented toward academic achievement but also toward developing individuals who are capable of thinking, interacting, and making responsible decisions. In the context of learning, the achievement of these objectives is strongly influenced by how the learning process is designed and implemented. Learning that provides students with opportunities to actively process information, interact with others, and construct understanding is more likely to create meaningful learning experiences than learning that relies primarily on the transmission of information from teachers. Cooperative learning approaches, for example, provide opportunities for students to engage actively in learning through interaction and collaboration, thereby supporting the development of their understanding and academic achievement (Slavin et al., 1988; Stevens et al., 1995). Therefore, the selection of an appropriate learning model is an important aspect in determining the quality of both the learning process and students' learning outcomes.

One subject with distinctive characteristics in Islamic education is Islamic Cultural History. Learning Islamic Cultural History is not merely intended to provide information about historical events, figures, and the development of Islamic civilization, but also to encourage students to understand values, causal relationships, and lessons that can be derived from historical events. The subject encompasses a broad range of materials that are narrative and chronological in nature and are associated with various dimensions of life, including social, political, economic, educational, and cultural aspects. These characteristics require students not only to memorize historical facts but also to understand, connect, analyze, and interpret the information they encounter. Such learning characteristics make reading comprehension and the ability to organize information important components of the learning process. Research on the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) model has demonstrated that integrating reading and writing activities can support students' comprehension and academic performance (Durukan, 2011; Hayatina & Fajrina, 2018).

This problem was also identified through an initial observation conducted at MAS Miftahussalam Medan on November 12, 2025. The learning process of Islamic Cultural History in Grade X was still dominated by lecturing, with student worksheets serving as one of the primary learning resources. This condition resulted in classroom interaction occurring predominantly in one direction, while students tended to function mainly as recipients of information. At the beginning of the lesson, most students paid attention to the teacher's explanation; however, as the lesson continued for a considerable period, several students began to lose concentration, talk with their peers, daydream, or engage in activities unrelated to learning. This condition indicates that students' involvement in the learning process needs to be strengthened. Midterm examination data also showed that 8% of students had not achieved the minimum mastery criterion of 80. These findings indicate that the problem is not limited to students' learning engagement but also concerns their learning achievement.

Learning that is excessively teacher-centered may limit students' opportunities to develop their ability to understand and process information independently. Effective learning should provide students with opportunities to participate actively in constructing knowledge and developing understanding. The CIRC model is particularly relevant to this need because it integrates reading, discussion, and writing activities within cooperative learning groups. Stevens et al. (1987) demonstrated the potential of CIRC as a cooperative approach that integrates reading and composition activities, while Stevens and Slavin (1995) found that cooperative approaches to reading and writing could contribute to improved academic outcomes. In the context of Islamic Cultural History, active participation is increasingly important because students need to read historical information, identify main ideas, understand chronology, recognize cause-and-effect relationships, discuss the significance of historical events, and communicate their understanding. Therefore, a learning model that systematically integrates reading, comprehension, discussion, and writing is needed.

One model that corresponds to these characteristics is Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC). CIRC is a cooperative learning model that integrates reading and writing activities through group work. The model provides students with opportunities to read learning materials, identify main ideas, discuss information, exchange responses, and reconstruct their understanding in written form. Stevens et al. (1987) established CIRC as an instructional approach that combines cooperative learning with reading and writing activities. Similarly, Slavin et al. (1988) emphasized the importance of cooperative approaches in accommodating student diversity through integrated reading and writing instruction. These characteristics make CIRC relevant to subjects that require students to process substantial amounts of narrative and informational material, including Islamic Cultural History. In addition, research has indicated that CIRC can improve students' reading comprehension and motivation, demonstrating the potential of collaborative reading activities to strengthen students' engagement with learning materials (Hayatina & Fajrina, 2018).

Empirically, a number of studies have demonstrated the potential of CIRC to improve various aspects of learning. Durukan (2011) found that the CIRC technique had a positive contribution to students' reading and writing skills. Mustafa and Samad (2015) similarly reported the usefulness of CIRC in improving students' writing content and organization. Research by Niliawati et al. (2018) also demonstrated that CIRC could improve students' reading comprehension, while Yasmin (2018) reported improvements in students' reading comprehension learning outcomes following the implementation of CIRC. These findings suggest that the integration of reading, discussion, and writing activities in CIRC can support students in processing and understanding learning materials.

The effectiveness of CIRC is also evident in research focusing on learning outcomes. Kondoalumang et al. (2022) found that the implementation of CIRC could improve students' learning outcomes. More specifically, Saragih et al. (2023) examined the influence of CIRC on the learning outcomes of Grade X students in history and reported a significant contribution of the

model to students' historical learning achievement. Similarly, Samsiah and Kusmarni (2021) examined the use of CIRC in history learning and its relationship with students' learning outcomes and information literacy. Wahida (2018) also reported improvements in students' activity and learning outcomes in history through the implementation of CIRC. These findings are particularly relevant to Islamic Cultural History because the subject similarly requires students to engage with historical narratives, process information, understand chronological sequences, and interpret the meaning of historical events.

CIRC has also been applied in the context of Islamic education. Rasmuin and Islamiyah (2020) reported that the CIRC learning model could improve learning outcomes in the subject of Islamic Creed and Ethics. Aminah (2019) demonstrated the application of CIRC in improving students' Qur'anic reading and writing skills, while Kusumi (2024) examined the application of CIRC in Islamic Education. Sofiana et al. (2024) likewise investigated the implementation of CIRC in Islamic Religious Education. These studies indicate that CIRC is not limited to language-oriented learning but can also be adapted to subjects within the broader field of Islamic education. Therefore, applying CIRC to Islamic Cultural History provides an opportunity to extend the use of this model to a subject characterized by historical narratives and Islamic values.

Nevertheless, research on CIRC still leaves room for further development. Many previous studies have focused on Indonesian language learning, reading comprehension, writing skills, elementary education, or general history learning. Although several studies have investigated CIRC in history and Islamic education, research specifically examining the influence of CIRC on learning outcomes in Islamic Cultural History at the Madrasah Aliyah level remains limited. This limitation is important because the characteristics of Islamic Cultural History materials, which are narrative, chronological, and rich in historical information, are closely related to activities involving reading, comprehension, discussion, information processing, and written reconstruction of understanding. The findings of Saragih et al. (2023), Samsiah and Kusmarni (2021), and Wahida (2018) provide an important foundation for extending CIRC research into the specific context of Islamic Cultural History.

In addition, this study employs a posttest-only control group design to compare the learning outcomes of students who receive CIRC-based instruction with those who receive conventional instruction. This design provides an opportunity to obtain empirical evidence concerning differences in learning outcomes between the two instructional approaches. The use of a control group is particularly important for examining whether differences in students' learning outcomes can be associated with the implementation of CIRC rather than merely with the learning process itself. Previous studies demonstrating the positive contribution of CIRC to learning outcomes provide a theoretical and empirical basis for conducting such a comparison (Kondaluman et al., 2022; Saragih et al., 2023).

Accordingly, the novelty of this study lies in the application of the CIRC model to Islamic Cultural History learning at the Madrasah Aliyah level, with learning outcomes as the primary dependent variable and a comparison between an experimental class and a control class as the basis for testing the effectiveness of the model. This study is important because it not only seeks

to provide an alternative to Islamic Cultural History instruction that remains relatively teacher-centered but also empirically examines whether the integration of reading, discussion, and writing activities through CIRC can produce better learning outcomes than conventional instruction. Based on these problems and research gaps, this study aims to analyze the influence of the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition model on the learning outcomes of Grade X students in Islamic Cultural History at MAS Miftahussalam Medan and to determine the difference in learning outcomes between students who receive CIRC-based instruction and those who receive conventional instruction.

## **METHOD**

This study employed a quantitative approach using a quasi-experimental method because it aimed to examine the effect of implementing the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) learning model on students' learning outcomes in the Islamic Cultural History subject. A quantitative approach was selected because the research data were expressed in the form of scores and statistically analyzed to test the formulated hypothesis. The study employed a Posttest-Only Control Group Design, involving two pre-existing groups without individual randomization. The experimental class received instruction using the CIRC model, while the control class received conventional instruction. After the treatment was completed, both groups were administered the same posttest instrument to determine differences in their learning outcomes.

The study was conducted at MAS Miftahussalam Medan involving Grade X students during the 2025/2026 academic year. The research population consisted of 75 students distributed across two classes. The sample was selected using cluster purposive sampling by considering the similarity of class characteristics, learning materials, and teaching personnel. Group-based sampling can be employed when the research units have already been naturally formed, while purposive considerations are used to ensure that the selected groups are consistent with the objectives of the study. The research sample consisted of Grade X-2 as the experimental class and Grade X-1 as the control class.

Data were collected through observation, testing, and documentation. Observation was used to examine the implementation of the learning process, while a test consisting of 20 multiple-choice questions with four answer options was administered to measure students' cognitive learning outcomes at the C1 to C4 levels. Documentation was used as supporting data, including school documents, student records, learning scores, and documentation of the research implementation. Before being administered, the test instrument was subjected to validity and reliability testing. Item validity was analyzed using the Product Moment correlation, while instrument reliability was examined using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. Validity and reliability testing was conducted to ensure that the instrument measured the intended construct accurately and consistently.

The research data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Before hypothesis testing, normality and homogeneity tests were conducted as prerequisites for parametric analysis. The research hypothesis was subsequently tested using an independent-samples t-test at a 5% significance level to determine the difference in mean learning outcomes between the experimental and control

classes. This test was selected because the two groups were independent and were not paired observations. Therefore, the results of the analysis could be used to determine whether the implementation of the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition model had a statistically significant effect on students' learning outcomes in Islamic Cultural History.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **Implementation of Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition in Islamic Cultural History Learning**

The implementation of the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) model in Islamic Cultural History learning at MAS Miftahussalam Medan demonstrated a learning process that emphasized students' active involvement in processing information. The study was conducted during the second semester of the 2025/2026 academic year and involved two Grade X classes. Grade X-1 was assigned as the experimental class and received instruction using the CIRC model, while Grade X-2 served as the control class and received conventional instruction. The learning process was conducted in four meetings for each class. In the experimental class, CIRC was implemented through heterogeneous group formation, reading learning materials, identifying important information, discussing the content, organizing the results of group discussions in written form, presenting the results, and receiving clarification and reinforcement from the researcher.

The sequence of activities illustrates the essential characteristics of CIRC, which integrates reading and writing within a cooperative learning structure. Stevens et al. (1987) established CIRC as an instructional approach that combines cooperative learning with systematic reading and composition activities. Through this model, students are not positioned merely as recipients of information but are encouraged to interact with learning materials and peers while constructing their understanding. Slavin et al. (1988) similarly emphasized the importance of cooperative approaches in integrating reading and writing instruction while accommodating differences among learners. Therefore, the implementation of CIRC provides a learning environment in which students have greater opportunities to process information collaboratively.

The reading activity in the experimental class was particularly relevant to Islamic Cultural History because historical learning requires students to engage with narrative information concerning events, figures, developments, and relationships among historical phenomena. Rather than receiving all information directly from the teacher, students were required to read the material and identify essential information before discussing it with their group members. This activity encouraged students to distinguish important information from supporting details and to organize historical information in a more structured manner. Hayatina and Fajrina (2018) found that CIRC could support reading comprehension achievement and students' motivation, indicating that collaborative reading activities can contribute to students' engagement with learning materials. Similar findings were reported by Niliawati et al. (2018), who showed that CIRC could improve students' reading comprehension.

The discussion and writing stages further strengthened the learning process. Students were required to exchange interpretations, clarify information, and formulate their understanding collectively before presenting it. Writing the results of the discussion encouraged students to reconstruct

information using their own words, while presentation provided an opportunity to communicate their understanding systematically. Mustafa and Samad (2015) demonstrated that CIRC could support improvement in the content and organization of students' writing. Durukan (2011) likewise found positive effects of CIRC on reading and writing skills. Thus, the implementation of CIRC in this study created an integrated sequence of reading, comprehension, discussion, writing, and presentation activities.

In contrast, the control class received conventional instruction dominated by teacher explanations and lectures. The difference in learning activities indicates that students in the experimental class received more opportunities to participate directly in processing learning materials. This distinction is important because learning outcomes are not only influenced by the amount of information delivered but also by how students engage with, process, and reconstruct that information. The implementation of CIRC therefore provided a more participatory learning experience that was consistent with the narrative and information-rich characteristics of Islamic Cultural History.

### **Differences in Learning Outcomes between the CIRC and Conventional Learning Groups**

The findings of the study indicate a difference in learning outcomes between students who received CIRC-based instruction and those who received conventional instruction. The posttest was administered to 64 students, consisting of 32 students from the experimental class and 32 students from the control class. The descriptive analysis showed that the control class obtained a minimum score of 40, a maximum score of 70, a mean of 57.66, and a standard deviation of 7.512. Meanwhile, the experimental class obtained a minimum score of 50, a maximum score of 75, a mean of 63.28, and a standard deviation of 5.765. The difference in mean scores was therefore 5.62 points in favor of the experimental class. In addition, the higher minimum score obtained by the experimental class suggests that the learning outcomes of students in this group were relatively more evenly distributed.

These descriptive findings provide an initial indication that the CIRC model contributed to better learning outcomes than conventional instruction. However, the difference in mean scores alone cannot establish whether the difference was statistically significant. Therefore, the data were subjected to prerequisite testing before hypothesis testing. The Shapiro-Wilk test produced significance values of 0.061 for the control class and 0.053 for the experimental class. Both values were above 0.05, indicating that the posttest scores of the two groups met the assumption of normality. The Levene's Test for equality of variances produced a significance value of 0.163, which was also greater than 0.05. Thus, the two groups could be considered homogeneous in terms of variance. The fulfillment of these assumptions provided an appropriate basis for applying the independent-samples t-test.

The hypothesis testing produced a t-value of -3.360 with 62 degrees of freedom and a two-tailed significance value of 0.001. Since the significance value was lower than 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. This result demonstrates that there was a statistically significant difference in learning outcomes between students who received CIRC-based instruction and those who received conventional instruction. Because the experimental class had a

higher mean score, the direction of the difference indicates that students who learned through CIRC achieved better learning outcomes than those who experienced conventional learning.

This finding is consistent with previous empirical evidence concerning the effectiveness of CIRC in improving learning outcomes. Kondoalumang et al. (2022) reported that implementing CIRC could improve students' learning outcomes, demonstrating the potential of the model beyond reading and writing activities alone. More specifically, Saragih et al. (2023) examined CIRC in history learning among Grade X students and found that the model had a significant effect on students' learning outcomes. This finding is particularly important because it shares similarities with the present study in terms of the instructional model, historical content, grade level, and learning outcome variable.

Research by Samsiah and Kusmarni (2021) also provides relevant evidence regarding the application of CIRC in history learning. Their study connected the use of CIRC with information literacy and history learning outcomes, highlighting the importance of students' ability to process historical information. Wahida (2018) similarly reported improvements in student activity and learning outcomes in history through the application of CIRC. These studies strengthen the interpretation that CIRC can be effectively applied to history-oriented subjects because its learning procedures require students to actively read, process, discuss, and communicate information.

The present findings also extend previous research into the specific context of Islamic Cultural History at the Madrasah Aliyah level. While earlier studies have examined CIRC in general history, language learning, reading comprehension, and other Islamic education subjects, the current study demonstrates its relevance to Islamic Cultural History. The statistically significant difference of 0.001 and the 5.62-point difference in mean scores provide empirical evidence that CIRC can produce better learning outcomes than conventional instruction in this particular learning context.

### **The Pedagogical Contribution of CIRC to Islamic Cultural History Learning**

The significant difference in learning outcomes between the experimental and control classes can be understood from the pedagogical characteristics of the CIRC model. The central strength of CIRC in this study was not merely the use of group work but the integration of several learning activities into a coherent instructional sequence. Students were required to read learning materials, identify important information, discuss their understanding, organize information in written form, and present the results of their work. This sequence transformed learning from a predominantly receptive activity into a process involving information acquisition, interpretation, collaboration, reconstruction, and communication.

Reading constitutes an important component because Islamic Cultural History contains extensive narrative and historical information. Students need to understand events, figures, chronology, developments, and relationships between historical phenomena. CIRC encourages students to interact directly with reading materials rather than relying exclusively on explanations provided by the teacher. Hayatina and Fajrina (2018) demonstrated that CIRC can improve reading comprehension achievement and motivation, while Niliawati et al. (2018) found that the model could strengthen students' reading comprehension. These findings support the interpretation that

reading activities embedded within CIRC can facilitate students' engagement with content and help them process information more effectively.

The cooperative dimension of CIRC also provides an important pedagogical contribution. When students work in heterogeneous groups, they encounter different interpretations and levels of understanding. Interaction among group members creates opportunities to clarify concepts, correct misunderstandings, and develop shared interpretations of historical information. Slavin et al. (1988) emphasized the potential of cooperative learning to accommodate student diversity through collaborative reading and writing activities. Stevens and Slavin (1995) likewise demonstrated the contribution of cooperative approaches to reading and writing for students with different academic characteristics. Thus, cooperation within CIRC can function as a mechanism through which students support one another during the learning process.

Writing represents another important component. After reading and discussing historical information, students were required to formulate the results of their understanding in written form. This activity required them to select relevant information, organize ideas, and express their understanding using their own language. Mustafa and Samad (2015) found that CIRC could improve the content and organization of students' writing, while Durukan (2011) demonstrated its positive contribution to reading and writing skills. In the context of Islamic Cultural History, writing is therefore not merely a language exercise but also a process of consolidating historical understanding.

The presentation stage further required students to communicate the results of their group's thinking. Students had to explain their conclusions systematically and respond to clarification or reinforcement from the researcher. This activity provided an additional opportunity for students to review and strengthen their understanding. The combination of reading, discussion, writing, and presentation may explain why the experimental class obtained a higher mean score than the control class.

The relevance of CIRC to Islamic education is also supported by previous studies. Rasmuin and Islamiyah (2020) found that CIRC could improve learning outcomes in Islamic Creed and Ethics, while Aminah (2019) demonstrated its usefulness in developing Qur'anic reading and writing skills. Kusumi (2024) and Sofiana et al. (2024) likewise examined the application of CIRC in Islamic Education. These findings indicate that CIRC can be adapted beyond language-oriented subjects to learning contexts containing religious knowledge and values.

Consequently, the findings of this study suggest that CIRC provides a pedagogically meaningful alternative for Islamic Cultural History learning. Its contribution lies in creating an integrated learning process in which students actively encounter, interpret, discuss, reconstruct, and communicate historical information. The significant difference found through the independent-samples t-test, together with the higher mean score of the experimental class, demonstrates that this integrated learning process can support better learning outcomes than conventional teacher-centered instruction.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study concludes that the implementation of the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) model has a significant positive effect on students' learning outcomes in Islamic Cultural History at Grade X of MAS Miftahussalam Medan. The implementation of CIRC provided students with a more active and collaborative learning experience through integrated activities involving reading, identifying important information, discussion, writing, and presentation. These activities enabled students to process historical information more actively and construct their understanding through interaction with learning materials and peers. The empirical findings demonstrate that the experimental class achieved a higher mean posttest score of 63.28 than the control class, which obtained a mean score of 57.66. The difference of 5.62 points indicates better learning achievement among students who received CIRC-based instruction. The prerequisite tests confirmed that the data met the assumptions of normality and homogeneity. Furthermore, the independent-samples t-test produced a t-value of -3.360 with 62 degrees of freedom and a significance value of 0.001, which was lower than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, confirming a statistically significant difference between the two groups. These findings indicate that CIRC can serve as an effective alternative to conventional instruction for improving learning outcomes in Islamic Cultural History, particularly by strengthening students' active engagement in understanding and processing historical information.

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