

# Efforts To Improve Indonesian Language Learning Outcomes in Reading Short Stories Using The Reading Guide Strategy for Students SDN 105308 Namo Bintang Deli Serdang

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## ABSTRACT

*This study aims to improve Indonesian language learning outcomes in short story reading through the implementation of the Reading Guide strategy among fourth-grade students at SDN 105308 Namo Bintang, Deli Serdang Regency, in the 2025-2026 academic year. The research questions addressed are how the Reading Guide strategy is implemented in short story reading instruction and whether this strategy can enhance students' learning outcomes. This study employed Classroom Action Research (CAR) using the Kemmis and McTaggart model, consisting of two cycles. Each cycle included planning, action implementation, observation, and reflection. The research subjects comprised 20 fourth-grade students, including seven boys and 13 girls. The data collection techniques included observation, documentation, and learning outcome tests. Data were analyzed using descriptive quantitative techniques to assess improvements in students' learning outcomes. The findings indicate a significant improvement in students' learning outcomes following the implementation of the Reading Guide strategy. In the pre-cycle phase, only 20% of the students achieved a score of  $\geq 70$ . After the first cycle, this increased to 50%, and by the second cycle, 80% of the students achieved the good and excellent categories. Student engagement in learning also increased from 50% in the first cycle to 85% in the second. These results demonstrate that the Reading Guide strategy not only enhances students' comprehension of short story texts but also encourages active participation in learning. Thus, this study confirms that the Reading Guide strategy is effective in improving students' learning outcomes in short story reading. This strategy can be an alternative in Indonesian language instruction to help students understand reading materials more structured and in-depth.*

*Keywords: Reading Guide, Learning Outcomes, Short Story Reading, Learning Strategies*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Indonesian plays a central role in the intellectual, social, and emotional development of students and is essential for success in all areas of study. Language learning is expected to help students understand themselves, their culture, and the culture of others, express ideas and feelings, participate in society, and discover and use analytical and imaginative skills (Lahap et al., 2025). Indonesian language learning aims to improve students' ability to communicate well and correctly in Indonesian, both orally and in writing, and to foster an appreciation for Indonesian literary works. This communication ability is supported by four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Regulation of the Minister of National Education No. 22, 2006).

Indonesian plays a crucial role in education in Indonesia. As the national language, it serves as the primary means of communication in the learning process in schools. Reading is one of the most crucial language skills for elementary school students to master. Through reading, students can acquire a broad range of information, knowledge, and experiences. Reading is a key foundation for developing student literacy. Good reading skills enable students to comprehend various types of texts, including literary texts such as short stories (Nurlaila et al., 2025).

Reading skills are fundamental to mastering various disciplines. If elementary school students do not develop reading skills early on, they will have difficulty learning other subjects in subsequent grades. Therefore, students must learn to read to learn, expand their knowledge, enrich their experiences, and enrich their vocabulary (Nugroho et al., 2025). Unfortunately, many students still struggle with reading, particularly in understanding the content and identifying important information within texts.

Reading short stories is one of the materials in Indonesian language learning in fourth grade elementary schools. This material aims to develop students' abilities to understand the content of the story, identify the

intrinsic elements of the story, and increase students' interest in reading. However, the reality in the field shows that student learning outcomes in reading short stories are still low (Noveliana & Ghani, 2022). This is evident from the many students who still have difficulty understanding the content of the story, answering questions related to it, and identifying its intrinsic elements. Factors that influence low student learning outcomes in reading short stories include a lack of student motivation, poor vocabulary understanding, and less varied learning methods (Monipo et al., 2025).

One of the reading learning materials in fourth grade elementary school is reading short stories. This material aims to develop students' abilities to understand story content, identify intrinsic elements, and increase reading interest (Primayana & Dewi, 2025). However, based on initial observations at SDN 105308 Namo Bintang, it was found that students' learning outcomes in reading short stories were still low. Students experienced difficulty in understanding vocabulary, identifying intrinsic elements, and lacked motivation in reading. Furthermore, many students tend to be passive during the learning process, resulting in less than optimal comprehension of the story content.

Some factors that cause low student learning outcomes in reading short stories include:

1. **Lack of Motivation to Read:** Many students lack interest in reading because they find it boring and uninteresting. This is exacerbated by the lack of engaging reading material.
2. **Vocabulary Limitations:** Students have difficulty understanding the meaning of words in short stories, so they have difficulty capturing the message the text wants to convey.
3. **Lack of Varied Learning Methods:** Teachers still use conventional learning methods, such as lectures and reading texts individually, without providing strategies that facilitate student understanding.
4. **Lack of Understanding of Intrinsic Story Elements:** Many students are not yet able to identify the intrinsic elements of a story, such as characters, setting, plot, theme, and moral in a short story.

Innovative and effective learning strategies are needed to address this issue. One strategy that can be used is the Reading Guide strategy. This strategy actively engages students in the reading process by providing guidance in the form of questions that guide them towards a deeper understanding of the story's content. By using the Reading Guide strategy, students can focus more on reading and understanding the story's content, and it is easier to identify the story's intrinsic elements. This strategy can also increase the interaction between students and the text, thus increasing their motivation to read (Omega, 2025).

The Reading Guide strategy is a technique designed to help students comprehend reading by providing systematic structured guides or questions before, during, and after reading the text. This guide makes it easier for students to connect the information they learn with their understanding. This strategy can also help students develop critical and analytical thinking skills. Some of the benefits of using the Reading Guide strategy in teaching short stories include the following:

1. Help students understand the contents of the reading more deeply.
2. Direct students' attention to important information in the text.
3. Improve critical and analytical thinking skills.
4. Motivate students to be more active in the reading process.
5. Makes it easier for students to identify the intrinsic elements of the story.

Based on initial observations at SDN 105308 Namo Bintang, Deli Serdang Regency, several problems were identified among students in reading short stories. First, students lacked motivation to read short stories due to a lack of variety in the teaching methods used by teachers. Second, students experienced difficulty in understanding vocabulary in short stories. Third, students were less able to identify intrinsic elements of the story, such as characters, setting, and moral. These problems need to be addressed immediately so that students' reading skills can improve and they can achieve better learning outcomes (Awago Atumo, 2025).

Considering these issues, this study aims to improve students' learning outcomes in reading short stories through the application of the Reading Guide strategy. It is hoped that with this strategy, students will be able to understand the texts they read more easily, be more motivated to read, and be better able to identify the intrinsic elements of the story. Furthermore, this study is expected to contribute to the development of more effective and engaging learning methods for elementary school students.

## **II. METHODS**

### *A. Research Design*

This study used the Classroom Action Research (CAR) method. This research model refers to the concept developed by Kemmis and McTaggart (1988:14), which consists of four stages in each cycle (Sriyanto et al., 2025), namely:

1. **Planning** – Developing an action plan based on the problems identified.
2. **Implementation (Acting)** – Applying the Reading Guide strategy to learning to read short stories.

3. Observation – Observing the learning process and recording student development.
  4. Reflection – Evaluating the results of actions and determining improvements for the next cycle.
- This study was conducted in two or more cycles, depending on the results obtained from each cycle.

### B. Research Collaborators

Collaboration is a collaboration between practitioners (teachers), principals, students, and researchers in understanding and agreeing on problems, making decisions, and implementing actions. Through this collaboration, they can explore and examine the real-world problems they face, particularly in diagnosing problems, developing proposals, implementing actions, analyzing data, disseminating results, and compiling final reports (Arikunto, 2017).

This collaboration is expected to provide valuable information and contributions to achieve the research objectives. The collaborator in this study is a fourth-grade teacher at SDN 105308 Namo Bintang, Deli Serdang Regency, for the 2025/2026 academic year, whose task is to assist the researcher in observing student activity and providing input on the strengths and weaknesses of the learning process that has been carried out as material for reflection in each cycle.

### C. Data Collection Technique

Observation can be defined as an observation that includes focusing attention on the subject using all senses (Giustina, 2025). This observation method is performed by going directly into the field to observe the object being studied. In this study, the observation method was used to observe student activities in implementing the Reading Guide strategy in Indonesian language learning on short story reading material in grade IV of SDN 105308 Namo Bintang, Deli Serdang Regency. The forms of activity observed included:

1. Students actively listen to the teacher's reading.
2. Students actively ask questions to the teacher.
3. Students actively read aloud.
4. Students actively comment on their friends' reading.

Documentation comes from the word "document," meaning written objects (Arikunto, 2004:23). Documentation sources are any form of information source related to documents, both official and unofficial. This method was used to obtain data on student names and various supporting information needed for this study.

The test method is a set of stimuli given to a person to obtain answers that can be used as a basis for determining a numerical score (Arikunto, 2017). In this study, a test method was used to obtain students' learning outcomes in reading short stories, with the following assessment aspects:

- 1) Understanding the content of short stories.
- 2) The ability to find the main idea of a story.
- 3) Ability to identify intrinsic elements of a story.
- 4) Active participation in discussions about the content of the story

This classroom action research used Kemmis and Taggart's spiral model, which consists of several cycles of learning actions based on reflection on the results of actions in the previous cycle. Each cycle consists of four stages: planning, implementation, observation and reflection.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Research Result

In this pre-cycle research, the researchers conducted learning using lectures and question-and-answer methods. The learning process began with the teacher greeting and inviting students to pray together, followed by apperception with the teacher asking probing questions about what students knew about the short story "The Consequences of Lying".

The activity continued with the teacher calling several students to read short stories, followed by the teacher explaining the meaning of the short story, "The Consequences of Lying."

Next, the teacher invited students to ask questions about the material that had been explained, and the teacher answered all the questions given by the students. After the question and answer session, the teacher instructed the students to read the short story "The Consequences of Lying" assessment. The learning activity ended with the teacher inviting students to recite a prayer and the teacher greeting them. The results of the students' reading of the short story "The Consequences of Lying" are shown in the following table:

Table 1. Pre-Cycle Student Learning Outcomes Values Student Reading Outcomes on Short Stories

Mark	Category	Student	%
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90-100	Very good	1	5%
70-89	Good	2	10%
50-69	Enough	10	50%
<49	Not enough	7	35%
Amount		20	100%

From the results above, it can be seen that many students did not fully understand the reading "The Consequences of Lying." The student completion rate only reached 50%, or approximately 10 out of 20 students.

1. There was 1 student (5%) who got a score of 90-100
2. There were 2 students (10%) who got a score of 70-89.
3. There were 10 students (50%) who got a score of 50-69.
4. There were 7 students (35%) who got a score <49

This learning process begins with greetings and asking students to read prayers together so that the learning process runs solemnly, then the researcher invites students to read the short story "The Consequences of Lying."

Next, the teacher cuts and gives the students copies of the text. The interesting points for discussion and reading aloud by students are highlighted. Next, the teacher gives students sheets of text with paragraphs and other information. Each text given to students is assigned to complete.

The next step is for the teacher to invite several students to read parts of the text they have received, in front of the class. While reading is in progress, the teacher stops at several words to emphasize the importance of certain points.

The teacher asked students questions and provided examples. The teacher then gives students time to discuss with their group members if they have questions about the reading material. Next, the teacher asks several students what the meaning of the text is.

The activity continued with the teacher asking students one by one to read the short story "The Consequences of Lying" to the front for assessment purposes. The learning activity ended with the teacher inviting students to read a prayer and the teacher said hello. The results of the students' reading of the short story "The Consequences of Lying" are depicted in the following table.

Table 2. Student Reading Results on the Short Story "The Consequences of Lying" Using the Cycle I Reading Guide Strategy

Mark	Category	Student	%
90-100	Very good	2	10%
70-89	Good	10	50%
50-69	Enough	8	40%
<49	Not enough	0	0%
Amount		20	100%

These results show an increase in reading ability, with completion reaching 60%, that is, 12 out of 20 students.

1. There were 2 students (10%) who got a score of 90-100.
2. There were 10 students (50%) who got a score of 70-89.
3. There were 8 students (40%) who got a score of 50-69.
4. There were 0 students (0%) who got a score <49

During the implementation process, the collaborator observed the students' learning activities using an observation sheet. This observation aims to assess student learning engagement, particularly in the following aspects.

- 1) Student activity in listening to readings read by the teacher.
- 2) Student activity in asking questions to the teacher.
- 3) Student activity in reading aloud.
- 4) Student activity in providing comments on friends' reading

Classroom action research in Cycle II was conducted on August 26, 2025. In this second cycle, the solutions obtained from the reflection stage in Cycle I were implemented as actions in Cycle II.

The actions in Cycle II were the same as those in Cycle I, with only improvements in the implementation process. The learning process began with greetings and asking students to recite a prayer together to ensure a

solemn learning environment. Next, the researcher invited the students to read the short story "The Greedy Stork" together.

The teacher divides the students into several groups, each consisting of two students. The activity continues with the teacher explaining the material by reading the short story "The Greedy Stork." The teacher uses media to clarify the material of the events in the short story and uses facial expressions to demonstrate scenes in the story so that all students can understand it. After listening, the teacher clarifies the media images of important points in the story that have been posted on the board.

Next, the teacher cuts out a stanza from the short story "The Greedy Stork" written on paper for the students to read aloud, emphasizing reading each letter, each word, each sentence, pronouncing the consonants, and pronouncing the intonation correctly. Next, the teacher gives the groups copies of the text, each with a task for the students to complete individually.

The teacher invites the groups to discuss and read aloud to find the correct reading and answer the questions on the cards. Next, the teacher invites the groups to read the sections of the text they obtained in front of the class. As the reading progresses, the teacher pauses at several words to emphasize certain points. Next, the teacher asks the groups questions about the meaning of the reading in the paused text, thus encouraging class discussion.

The activity continued with The teacher then asked students to read the short story "The Greedy Stork" one by one in front of the class for assessment. The learning activity concluded with the teacher inviting students to recite a prayer and greet each other.

The results of the students' reading of the short story "The Greedy Stork" are depicted in the following table.

Table 3. Category of Student Reading Ability Result Values Using the Reading Guide Strategy Cycle II

Mark	Number of Students	Percentage	Category
90 - 100	4	20%	Very good
70 - 89	10	50%	Good
50 - 69	6	30%	Enough
< 49	0	0%	Not enough
Amount	20	100%	

The results above show that in Cycle II, the level of students' reading ability showed the following results:

- There were four students (20%) who got a score of 90-100, this result was an increase from Cycle I, namely two students (10%).
- There were 10 students (50%) who got a score of 70 – 89, this result was an increase from Cycle I, namely 8 students (40%).
- There were six students (30%) who got a score of 50 – 69, which was a decrease from Cycle I, namely 10 students (50%).
- There were no students who scored < 49 (0%), and the results were the same as those in cycle I.

These results show that the less category no longer exists, as was the case in Cycle I, and this increase has reached the specified indicator, namely 80%.

Based on the research results from the reading ability test and the observations outlined above, we can identify changes in students' reading abilities and learning styles through the implementation of the Reading Guide strategy. The following is a more complete explanation.

Student learning outcomes were primarily measured using quizzes administered after the intervention. The results increased in each cycle, with four students (20%) in the pre-cycle, ten students (50%) in the first cycle, and 16 students (80%) in the second cycle.

Table 4. Comparison of Students' Reading Ability Scores In Pre-Cycle, Cycle I, and Cycle II

Mark	Pre Cycle	Percentage	Cycle I	Percentage	Cycle II	Percentage
90-100	2	10%	4	20%	6	30%
70-89	2	10%	6	30%	10	50%
50-69	10	50%	8	40%	4	20%
<49	6	30%	2	10%	0	0%
Amount	20	100%	20	100%	20	100%

These results indicate that after implementing the Reading Guide strategy, there was a significant improvement in the students' learning outcomes. This proves that the strategy used was effective in improving students' reading comprehension.

The observed activities included students listening to the teacher read, asking questions of the teacher, reading aloud, and commenting on friends' reading. There was an increase in student activity during each cycle. In

Cycle I, the good and very good categories reached 10 students (50%) and increased to 17 students (85%) in Cycle II.

Table 5. Comparison of Student Learning Activity Values in Cycle I and Cycle II

Mark	Cycle I		Cycle II		Category
	Student	%	Student	%	
14 - 16	3	15%	5	25%	Very good
11 - 13	7	35%	12	60%	Good
8 - 10	6	30%	3	15%	Enough
4 - 7	4	20%	0	0%	Not enough
Amount	20	100%	20	100%	

### B. Discussion

The table above proves that with several actions carried out by teachers, especially in guiding students and motivating them to be active in implementing the reading guide strategy in learning Indonesian language material reading short stories in grade IV SDN 105308 Namo Bintang Deli Serdang Regency in the 2025-2026 Academic Year, there was an increase in student learning activity. This also had an impact on increasing students' reading abilities to reach the expected level of completeness. The indicator of this increase was marked by an average reading score reaching 70 for 80% of the total number of students and an increase in student learning activity in the good and very good categories to reach 80% (Wang et al., 2025).

These results align with the theory that a conducive school environment, where teachers effectively manage learning through the use of effective strategies to enhance student learning engagement, plays a key role in improving student learning engagement.

According to Renaldi et al. (2025), the reading guide strategy can help students concentrate, ask questions, and stimulate discussion (Renaldi et al., 2025). 1 By using the reading guide strategy, students are not only actively listening and reading but also involved in the entire learning process. Students become subjects, not just objects, learning. They have full time to learn, think and speak. 2 Thus, both directly and indirectly, this strategy can improve learning outcomes and student motivation both directly and indirectly because students understand the learning material after going through an active process themselves.

According to Maqbulin (2022), reading a text aloud can help students focus on their thoughts, raise questions, and stimulate discussion. This strategy is similar to the method of studying scripture, which has a positive impact on creating focus and togetherness in study groups.3 This has been proven in this study by increasing students' learning outcomes and learning activity (Maqbulin, 2022).

Based on the research results, there was a significant increase in student learning outcomes from the pre-cycle to the second cycle. In the pre-cycle stage, the lecture and question-and-answer method showed that only 15% of students obtained grades in the good and excellent categories. The majority of students (50%) obtained grades in the sufficient category, while the remaining 35% were in the poor category. This indicates that the method used was not optimal for improving students' understanding of the reading "The Consequences of Lying."

In Cycle I, the learning strategy changed with the implementation of the Reading Guide method. As a result, there was an increase in the number of students receiving good and excellent grades, reaching 60% of the total number of students. No students received grades in the poor category, although 40% received grades in the fair category. This improvement indicates that the Reading Guide strategy is more effective in helping students understand reading texts.

Student learning activity also increased in Cycle I. Data obtained showed that 50% of students were in the good and excellent learning activity categories, while the remainder were in the adequate and poor categories. Although there was an improvement compared to the pre-cycle, these results still indicate that most students have not yet reached an optimal level of activity. Therefore, additional strategies are needed to increase student engagement.

The reflection on Cycle I resulted in various improvements being implemented in Cycle II. These included forming study groups, emphasizing reading skills in stages, providing reading cards, and rearranging student seating into a U-shape for optimal interaction. Furthermore, teachers were more active in providing guidance and motivation, and they combine the Reading Guide strategy with expository strategies to make learning more varied and engaging for students.

In Cycle II, the learning outcomes experienced a more significant improvement. The student learning outcomes showed that the majority of students (80%) achieved good and excellent categories, with only 20% still in the adequate category. No students received scores in the poor category, indicating that all students had achieved a better level of understanding than in the previous cycle. Student engagement also experienced a significant increase, with the majority of students in the good and excellent categories of engagement. This indicates that the improvements made in Cycle II succeeded in increasing student engagement in learning.

The success of Cycle II can be attributed to several key factors. First, the use of a more systematic Reading Guide strategy tailored to students' comprehension levels enabled them to more easily comprehend the reading material. Second, the implementation of a group-based learning model facilitated student discussions and mutual support in understanding the material. Third, the use of learning media, such as reading cards and U-shaped seating arrangements, increased student interaction and engagement during learning. Fourth, teachers who are more active in providing guidance and motivation play a significant role in improving student learning outcomes.

Thus, this study shows that the use of the Reading Guide strategy combined with expository strategies and a group-based approach can improve students' learning outcomes in comprehending reading texts. Student engagement can also be enhanced by using appropriate learning media and classroom settings that support interaction and discussion. Therefore, this strategy can be used as an effective method for teaching reading comprehension, particularly in improving students' learning outcomes in comprehending short stories (Kimhi et al., 2023).

Overall, this study confirms that changing the learning strategy from lectures and question-and-answer methods to the Reading Guide strategy significantly improved student learning outcomes. Reflections and improvements made in Cycle II concluded that a more varied, interactive, and group-based approach created an effective learning environment. Therefore, teachers are expected to implement similar strategies in reading comprehension lessons to improve overall student learning outcomes.

#### **IV. CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the results of research that has been conducted regarding the application of the Reading Guide strategy in improving learning outcomes in reading short stories in grade IV students of SDN 105308 Namo Bintang, Deli Serdang Regency in the 2025-2026 Academic Year, several things can be concluded as follows improving Student Learning Outcomes. The implementation of the Reading Guide strategy has proven effective in improving student learning outcomes. Data shows significant improvements in each learning cycle Pre-Cycle: Only 4 students (20%) achieved the good category (score  $\geq 70$ ), while 6 students (30%) were in the poor category (score  $< 49$ ). Cycle I: The number of students who achieved the good category increased to 10 students (50%), with 2 students (10%) still in the poor category. Cycle II: A total of 16 students (80%) achieved the good and very good categories, while no students received a low score (0%). These results show that the application of the Reading Guide strategy can significantly improve students' reading comprehension. Increasing Student Activity. Student learning engagement also increased with the implementation of the Reading Guide strategy. Based on observations, the percentage of students in the very good and good engagement categories increased in each cycle: Cycle I: A total of 10 students (50%) were in the good and very good categories, while 4 students (20%) were still in the poor category. Cycle II: Students in the good and very good categories increased to 17 students (85%), while there were no students in the poor category (0%).

Thus, the Reading Guide strategy not only improves students' reading comprehension but also encourages their active involvement in learning. Effectiveness of the Reading Guide Strategy. The success of the Reading Guide strategy in improving student learning outcomes and activeness can be attributed to several main factors, including the presentation of material that is more systematic and appropriate to the level of student understanding. Implementation of group-based learning methods that encourage interaction among students. Use of interesting learning media, such as reading cards and U-shaped seating arrangements. Teachers play an active role in providing guidance and motivation to students. Learning Completion. Based on the research results, students' learning achievement increased significantly Pre-Cycle: 50% of students achieved learning completion. Cycle I: Sixty % of students achieved learning completion. Cycle II: 83.3% of students achieved learning completion, which means they met the established success indicators (minimum 75%). Thus, this study proves that the application of the Reading Guide strategy is effective in improving the learning outcomes of reading short stories of fourth grade students at SDN 105308 Namo Bintang, Deli Serdang Regency.

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### Ethical Compliance

All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

### Data Access Statement

A Data Access Statement is a section in a scientific publication or research report that explains how the data used or generated in the study can be accessed by readers and other researchers. This statement aims to promote transparency, support research reproducibility, and comply with open access policies, where applicable.

Common Elements in a Data Access Statement:

1. Data Location: Specifies where the data are stored, such as in online repositories (e.g., Zenodo, Dryad, or institutional repositories).
2. Access Instructions: Provides information on how to access the data, such as direct links, DOI (Digital Object Identifier), or contact details.
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Examples of Data Access Statements:

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  - "The data supporting this study are openly available in Zenodo at [DOI:10.xxxx/zenodo.xxxx]."
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3. No Data Available:
  - "No datasets were generated or analyzed during the current study."
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  - "The data supporting this study are available under restricted access and can be obtained upon reasonable request from the corresponding author and with the permission of the ethics committee."

Purpose of a Data Access Statement:

- Reproducibility: Enables other researchers to replicate or verify the findings.
- Collaboration: Encourages further collaboration by sharing data.
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### Conflict of Interest Declaration

The authors declare that they have no affiliations or involvement with any organization or entity with any financial interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

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