



ENHANCING NEWS WRITING SKILLS THROUGH GAMIFICATION AMONG GRADE 11 STUDENTS

Ika Zulianti¹, Azzahro Fitri Luhuringtyas², Efa Yunita Sari³, Dini Restiyanti Pratiwi⁴,
Muhammad Supriyanto⁵

^{1,2,3,4}Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, Surakarta

⁵Muhammadiyah 1 Senior High School Surakarta, Surakarta

*Corresponding Author e-mail: ikazulianti16@gmail.com

Abstract

This study was motivated by the low interest and persistent difficulties students face in producing well-structured news texts that adhere to linguistic conventions. Consequently, there is a pressing need to implement innovative learning strategies capable of directly enhancing student engagement. To address this issue, a Classroom Action Research design was employed using the Kemmis and McTaggart spiral model, conducted over two cycles. The purpose of this study was to improve the news-writing skills of 11th-grade students at Muhammadiyah 1 Surakarta Senior High School through a gamification-based learning approach utilizing Wordwall, Quizizz, Canva, Padlet, and Google Forms. Data were collected through classroom observations and writing assessments using student worksheets and project task sheets. The findings indicate that all students (100%) demonstrated improvement, with the average score increasing from 70 in Cycle I to 84.2 in Cycle II. Students exhibited better comprehension of news-text structure, more effective language use, and clearer sentence construction. Overall, the results confirm that gamification can significantly enhance student motivation and competence in news-writing tasks.

Keywords: Gamification, News Texts, Writing Skills, Classroom Action Research

INTRODUCTION

Language skills comprise four primary components: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among these, writing is considered the most challenging and requires greater attention, as it involves a complex cognitive process. In writing, students are not only expected to construct coherent texts but also to articulate ideas, concepts, emotions, and intentions effectively. According to Tarigan in (Rachma et al., 2023) writing skills require a long time and intensive practice. This skill can be considered one of the characteristics of educated people or an educated nation.

Writing skills refer to the ability to formulate and convey ideas, information, or emotions in written form clearly, effectively, and in alignment with communicative purposes. These skills are essential in academic, professional, and everyday contexts. Writing requires not only technical competencies such as grammar and spelling but also creativity and the capacity to organize arguments or information in a coherent and comprehensible manner.

At the high school level, students are introduced to various genres of texts, including news texts. Writing news texts demands strong linguistic abilities and the capacity to present information that is current, credible, objective, and engaging. However, initial observations indicate that 11th-grade students continue to experience difficulties in producing news texts that align with the required characteristics, structure, elements, and linguistic conventions. Moreover, students exhibit low motivation and interest in writing, which hinders their ability to construct logical and systematic sentences based on the information they gather.

The lack of motivation and interest in writing among students requires a new approach. To improve students' writing skills, it is essential to implement creative and engaging learning approaches. One such approach is gamification. Gamification refers to a learning strategy that integrates game-based elements, such as challenges, rewards, levels, and competition into non-game contexts, including educational settings. This approach can enhance students' curiosity and interest in the learning material through appealing visualizations and interactive features (Al-Sindi et al.,

2023). Meanwhile, according to Srimuliyani (2023) the purpose of implementing gamification is to create a fun and engaging learning experience, thereby fostering students' interest in learning, encouraging their active participation in the learning process, and increasing their motivation and concentration on the tasks assigned.

Gamification was implemented by the researchers in the Indonesian language learning process for Class XI-4 students at Muhammadiyah 1 Surakarta High School. The use of gamification is expected to enhance students' writing skills particularly in composing news texts, and to increase their motivation to engage actively throughout the entire learning process. This is in line with what was stated by Mumpuni and Sagoro (2018), that gamification is a learning concept that minimizes the use of lectures by teachers on the material being taught and prioritizes learning through play so that students' cognitive abilities improve and a pleasant learning atmosphere is created. Understanding technology can improve teachers' ability to create creative, innovative, and enjoyable learning models so that the quality of education in Indonesia can progress and develop. Furthermore, according to Hanikmah, et al. (2024), teachers are a key element in the success of education, as they can increase students' interest in learning and writing skills. Therefore, teachers need to develop and prepare collaborative, interesting, and enjoyable learning strategies for students so that this success can be achieved and students can be active in the learning process in the classroom. Therefore, teachers must be able to use technology in the learning process, such as gamification, which can be integrated with technology-based learning media, such as Wordwall, Quizizz, Padlet, and Google Form.

Wordwall is an online platform that allows users to create and share interactive educational games (Salsabila et al., 2023). This platform is designed to help teachers, students, and parents create fun and effective learning experiences through various types of word-based activities. Wordwall can be used as a learning resource, teaching aid, and assessment tool for teachers and students. The application contains images, sounds, animations, and games, so that can stimulate students' interest and desire to learn (Annisaul Mutmainnah & Refiona Andika, 2024). In addition to Wordwall, there are also Quizizz, Padlet, and Google Forms.

Quizizz is a quiz-based learning platform that allows teachers and students to create, share, and participate in quizzes online. This platform is very popular in the world of education because of its ability to combine game elements with learning, making it a fun way to test students' understanding of lesson material. Meanwhile, Padlet is a web-based collaborative platform that allows users to create interactive boards (or "walls") to share ideas, images, videos, documents, and various other types of content. Padlet is often used in educational contexts to support collaborative learning, discussions, or group projects. Overcoming and improving writing skills requires an engaging and innovative learning approach.

Padlet, along with Blendspace, Slideshare, Voki, Storybird, and other Web 2.0 applications, is one of the most popular today (Bogy Restu Ilahi et al., 2023). Padlet resembles a virtual wall online that can be accessed by teachers and students, and students can post comments there. Padlet media can facilitate interaction between teachers and students to achieve the learning objectives expected to be attained in the learning process (Haris et al., 2021). One of the advantages of Padlet as a learning medium is its customizable appearance with various themes and attractive colors to capture students' interest in learning. In line with the research by Ulinuha & Suryaman (2024), Padlet is one of the applications that can facilitate thinking, opinions, and arguments with the same purpose through a virtual platform, making it easier to understand and use anytime and anywhere via electronic media such as laptops, computers, smartphones, and gadgets.

Google Forms is a web-based application from Google that allows users to easily and effectively create online forms, quizzes, or surveys (Sunarya et al., 2019). This application is part of Google Docs, and the input results can be automatically compiled into a spreadsheet. According to Wasana (2021), Google Forms is a Google product that can be used to create web-based forms and collect responses online. The advantage of Google Forms is that it can be accessed for free by anyone without needing a special account, and it can be used on laptops, computers, or smartphones (Andyansyah, 2018). Additionally, this application supports real-time collaboration for up to 50 people simultaneously, automatically saves changes, and is secure from the risk of data loss (Andyansyah, 2018). Pratama, Boeriswati, and Murtado (2019) state that Google Forms is very suitable for use by students, lecturers, teachers, and professionals due to its ease and flexibility in

online data collection.

Based on the results of observations conducted by the researcher during the Field Experience Practice (PPL) at SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Surakarta for 34 days starting from September 19 to December 7, 2024, the results of the author's observations on the Indonesian language learning process in class XI-4 are as follows: (1) Most students in class IX 3 were busy playing with their cell phones and did not follow the learning process properly, (2) Students were bored during Indonesian language lessons in class, (3) The method often used in the learning process was lecturing, (4) Students were lazy to read and write short or long texts, and (5) The learning model lacked variety. Based on these findings, the researcher conducted a study entitled *Writing News Text Skills with the Help of Gamification for Grade XI Students*. The purpose of this study was to determine how to improve students' writing skills, especially in writing news texts, with the help of gamification for grade XI students. In line with the research conducted by Pratomo et al., (2025), the use of a gamification approach in teaching observational report writing at SMPN 23 Malang City was carried out in two cycles, each of which had four stages, namely planning, implementation, observation, and reflection, in accordance with results research and discussion. In cycles 1 to 2, students at SMPN 23 Malang City who were taught to write observational reports using gamification techniques were able to do so more easily, achieving 100% learning completeness with a very good category.

Theoretically, this study will produce data on the improvement of news writing skills aided by gamification for 11th grade students. In addition, the results of this study can be used as a source of knowledge and can be developed by researchers in the future. In practical terms, this research can be utilized by schools to improve the quality of learning conducted by students, by teachers as a reference for the use of active, creative, and innovative learning media, and by researchers as a source of knowledge for other research and to expand creative and innovative learning that is student-centered.

METHOD

Classroom Action Research (CAR) was used as the research approach in this study. According to Arikunto (2019). Classroom Action Research (CAR) is a research approach used to examine conflicts in the classroom that occur during the learning process. The subjects of this study were 29 students in grade XI at Muhammadiyah 1 Surakarta High School in the 2024/2025 academic year. The object of this research is the learning activity of news text material through the use of gamification in the form of Wordwall, Quizizz, Canva, Padlet, and Google Form. The data collection methods are observation and tests on students in the form of student worksheets and project sheets. The data produced is analyzed using descriptive techniques on variables.

In Classroom Action Research (CAR), it is necessary to use a research model so that educators can systematically improve and enhance classroom learning practices with innovative and sustainable strategies (2019). Therefore, a learning model that provides a systematic and iterative cycle is needed to improve news-writing skills, which require complex and repeated practice. The application of gamification within the learning process serves as an adaptive strategy that responds to reflections from previous instructional sessions. Its effectiveness in enhancing student performance can be assessed directly through structured observations and planned reflections. In this context, the Kemmis and McTaggart model aligns not only with the objectives of Classroom Action Research but also provides a solid methodological foundation for achieving measurable and sustainable improvements in learning, particularly in developing the news-writing skills of Grade XI students at SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Surakarta. The Kemmis and McTaggart action research model includes the following stages: planning, action implementation, observation, and reflection, all of which are designed to systematically address instructional problems.

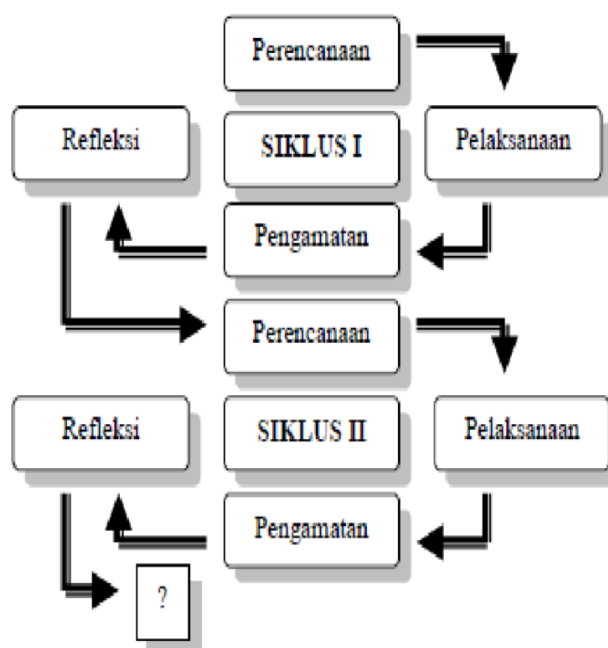


Figure 1. Frequency histogram of PTK Cycle Writing skill
Kemmis dan Mc. Taggart Model (Arikunto, 2019)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

This study was conducted in two cycles with the objective of improving students' news-writing skills through a gamification-based approach. Data were obtained from the assessment of students' news-writing products in Cycle I and Cycle II. A total of 29 Grade XI students from Muhammadiyah 1 Surakarta High School participated in this research. In Cycle I, most students scored below the minimum passing grade (KKM) of 75, indicating that they had not yet mastered the structure of news texts and were still lacking in linguistic accuracy and the application of the 5W+1H elements.

Following the implementation of Cycle II, which incorporated gamification tools such as Wordwall, Quizizz, and Padlet, a significant improvement was observed. All students (100%) showed an increase in their scores, with 25 of the 29 students achieving scores of ≥ 85 in Cycle II. The class average also rose substantially, from 70 in Cycle I to 84.2 in Cycle II.

Table 1. Summary of Scores for Cycle I and II

No	Indicator	Cycle I Score	Cycle II Score	Description
1.	Highest Value	80	86	Increased
2.	Lowest Score	55	84	Increased
3.	Average	70	84,2	Increased
4.	Number of Students	29	29	Increased

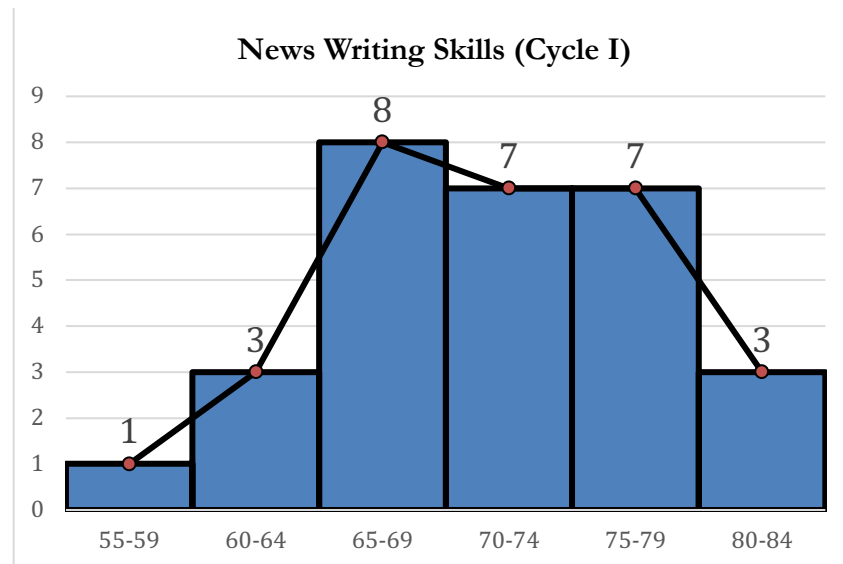


Figure 2. Histogram of writing skill scores for Cycle I

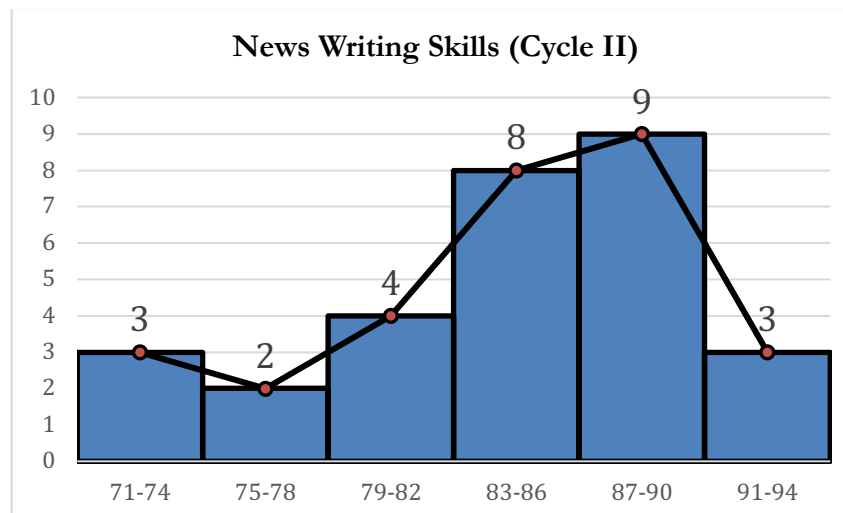


Figure 3. Frequency histogram of writing skill scores in Cycle II

Based on the histograms in Figures 1 and 2, there was a significant shift in the distribution of student scores from Cycle I to Cycle II. In Cycle I, the majority of students were in the low to moderate score category. A total of 11 out of 29 students (38%) scored below 70, indicating that they had not met the Minimum Passing Criteria (KKM). Based on the available data, it can be seen that the weaknesses of students in Cycle I were in writing news articles with unclear structures, such as in the title, lead, and body of the story; ineffective and verbose sentences; incomplete use of the 5W+1H elements; numerous spelling and punctuation errors; and low student motivation to learn. This can be seen from the fact that many students did not submit the assignments given independently. Based on the above weaknesses, there are several influencing factors, including: students' initial ability to write news texts is still low, especially in understanding the structure of news texts, choosing effective sentences, and using the 5W+1H elements completely to convey information logically and systematically. This finding is in line with Tarigan's statement (Rachma et al., 2023) which states that writing skills are a complex process that requires intensive practice and a deep understanding of structural and language concepts. Thus, students who have not mastered the basic concepts tend to have difficulty producing coherent texts that follow the rules.

Furthermore, previous learning habits still used conventional learning strategies, such as lectures and one-way assignments, so that students were not accustomed to thinking critically and working independently to produce meaningful writing that complied with the rules of news writing.

Finally, students' low motivation to learn meant that they did not complete the writing assignments given by their teachers independently. According to Ryan and Deci (2000) a student's intrinsic motivation increases when they feel competent and actively involved in the learning process, but this condition has not been established in cycle I. In addition, the application of the gamification approach in cycle I is still in the adaptation process because previously teachers used conventional methods. As a result, students do not yet fully understand the flow of activities carried out and have not had a truly engaging learning experience. Therefore, the weaknesses that occurred in cycle I can be seen from the students' initial inability to understand the skills of writing news articles, their low motivation to learn, and the transition process from conventional learning methods to a new learning model that was being implemented for the first time in the classroom and had not yet been running optimally.

After implementing Cycle II, which included a gamification approach using Wordwall, Quizizz, Padlet, Canva, and Google Forms, there was a significant increase in both student scores and engagement. All students (100%) experienced improvement, and 86% of students achieved scores of ≥ 85 . There were even several students who initially scored < 65 in Cycle I but were able to jump to > 85 in Cycle II, such as Ahmad Daud Sulaiman ($55 \rightarrow 86$) and Azzahra Salsabila ($60 \rightarrow 84$). The average score increased from 70 to 84.2, with a more even distribution of scores in Cycle II in the excellent category. This improvement was driven by several factors:

1. Visualizing interesting material through Wordwall and Quizizz can stimulate students' understanding of news text components in a fun way (Salsabila et al., 2023).
2. Collaboration and active discussion through Padlet and Canva provide a space for students to share ideas, compose texts together, and give each other feedback (Muhyidin et al., 2022).
3. Reflection and self-assessment through Google Forms help students understand the weaknesses in their writing, while also fostering metacognitive awareness about the quality of their work (Pratama et al., 2019).

Gamification not only adds an element of fun to the learning process, but also provides a sense of achievement that motivates students to continue improving their learning outcomes (Al-Sindi et al., 2023). This is in line with *Self-Determination Theory*, which states that students' intrinsic motivation increases when they feel they have control, competence, and social connectedness in learning activities (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Furthermore, Mumpuni & Sagoro (2018) state that the gamification approach helps shift the role of teachers from being the center of information to being creative facilitators, which allows for more interactive and *student-centered learning*. This approach is very suitable for 21st-century learning, where communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking skills are highly needed. Thus, it can be concluded that the results of Cycles I and II show the real effectiveness of using gamification in improving students' news writing skills. Not only was there a quantitative increase in scores, but there was also an improvement in the quality of the learning process, which became more active, collaborative, and reflective. The application of interactive media that supports gamification is worthy of being used as an alternative learning strategy for Indonesian language, especially in writing skills, which have long been considered difficult and less appealing to students.

DISCUSSION

Cycle I

At the initial meeting, the researchers implemented a gamification-based approach to introduce students to the concept of news texts and provide relevant examples. In addition, the researchers taught the structure, linguistic features, and essential elements of news texts. After receiving the material, students were asked to analyze the structure and linguistic aspects of several news texts prepared by the researchers, all of which contained information from the Solo area. To enhance the quality of the learning process, the researchers conducted observations to identify weaknesses that emerged during Cycle I and used these findings to plan improvements for Cycle II. Both students and researchers contributed to observing and evaluating the learning activities.

Reflections from Cycle I revealed several issues on the part of the researcher, including the need to motivate students more effectively, to deliver the content in a more systematic manner,

and to provide clearer explanations regarding the gamification approach. From the student perspective, the reflection showed that learners required better guidance in responding to questions, maintaining their answers, and adhering to agreed-upon rules. The researchers also noted the importance of ensuring that students were able to reinforce and recall the knowledge they had acquired.

Cycle II

If cycle I has been completed and the learning outcomes have not shown signs of success as indicated to the teacher, then PTK must be carried out again in cycle II. Teachers must more concentrate on the problems that arose in cycle I compared to cycle II. This is the main difference between the PTK stages in cycle I and cycle II. In cycle II, there are two learning meetings. Each meeting utilized a gamification approach. Similar research by Ramli (2024) revealed the success of gamification in increasing learning outcomes from 22.86% (pre-cycle) to 77.14% (cycle II). Therefore, the researcher used this approach because it was in line with the research objectives that had been formulated. The researcher used the gamification approach in the second session to help students recognize the structure, characteristics, and elements of news text.

During this stage, the researcher conducted the learning activities in accordance with the two meetings outlined in the planning phase. Each meeting consisted of introductory, core, and closing activities. At the first meeting, the researcher, acting as the teacher, initiated the lesson by greeting the students, inviting them to pray, communicating the learning objectives, highlighting the importance of Indonesian language study, motivating students, and providing an orientation to the day's activities.

In the core activity, the researcher explained how to identify news texts based on their structure and linguistic features, using the texts previously analyzed by the students. The class was divided into small groups of six to seven students. Each group was given 25–30 minutes to develop and write a news text related to recent issues in the Surakarta area using various sources. The researcher allocated five to seven minutes for each group to present their work, after which other groups were invited to provide feedback. The teacher then offered additional input and positive reinforcement. At the end of the core activity, the teacher guided students in summarizing the key points learned before transitioning to the closing phase.

Improvements in students' news-writing performance demonstrate that the implementation of gamification was effective in creating an engaging and interactive learning environment. In Cycle I, students' weaknesses were primarily evident in the areas of text structure and linguistic accuracy, which can be linked to their previous exposure to conventional teaching methods that provided limited motivation for active writing. In Cycle II, these conditions improved substantially with the integration of gamification tools, such as Wordwall and Quizizz for interactive visual learning, and Canva and Padlet for collaborative text development, along with immediate feedback from both teachers and peers.

This finding is reinforced by the opinion of Sindi et al. (2023) who state that gamification can increase students' attention and motivation to learn because it combines elements of challenge and reward. In addition, Mumpuni and Endra (2018) state that gamification minimizes lecture methods and prioritizes direct practice, so that students' cognitive processes are more active. The quality of students' writing also improved in terms of the accuracy of the news text structure (title, lead, body), use of standard language, and clarity of sentences. These improvements reflect that the use of digital media in writing instruction is highly relevant to the characteristics of today's digital generation.

Overall, the improvement in the scores of all students indicates that the gamification approach is able to respond to the main challenges in writing learning, namely low student motivation and difficulty in understanding text structure, especially news texts. Thus, the use of gamification-based media not only helps improve learning outcomes but also makes learning more effective, enjoyable, and meaningful.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the Classroom Action Research (CAR) conducted over two cycles, it can be concluded that the application of gamification in Indonesian language learning significantly enhances the news-writing skills of 11th-grade students. In Cycle I, most students still demonstrated difficulties in understanding the structure of news texts, using standard language, applying the 5W+1H elements, and presenting information coherently and systematically. The average score was only 70, and many students did not meet the minimum passing grade, indicating the need for a more innovative and engaging learning approach.

The integration of interactive media such as Wordwall, Quizizz, Canva, Padlet, and Google Forms in Cycle II resulted in substantial improvements in students' writing performance, particularly in terms of text organization, language accuracy, sentence effectiveness, and appropriate application of the 5W+1H framework. These tools also increased student engagement through visual, collaborative, and interactive activities supported by direct feedback from teachers. Consequently, the learning process, which was previously passive, became more active, constructive, and collaborative.

Improved student motivation and engagement were reflected in the quantitative results. All students showed progress in Cycle II, with the class average increasing from 70 to 84.2, and 86% of students achieving scores above 85. This improvement demonstrates that gamification not only enhances learning outcomes but also fosters students' confidence, motivation, and attentiveness in the news-writing process. Thus, the gamification approach has proven effective in achieving learning objectives, addressing common challenges in teaching writing skills, and aligning with 21st-century learning principles that promote digital literacy, creativity, and active participation.

The implementation of gamification also provides practical implications for teachers and schools by encouraging more innovative, technology-supported instructional practices. Furthermore, it opens opportunities for future research on integrating gamification with other learning models to evaluate its effectiveness across broader educational levels and contexts. Although the findings indicate significant improvements, ongoing development is still required, including more diverse media use, stronger digital support from schools, and further studies with wider scopes to analyze the long-term and comprehensive effectiveness of gamification-based learning.

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