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Students' Perceptions of Using Canva as a Learning Media in Reading Argumentative

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate students' perceptions of using Canva as a learning media in reading argumentative texts. A descriptive qualitative design was employed, involving ten twelfth-grade students of MAN 3 Langkat who had prior experience with Canva in English lessons. Data were collected through an open-ended questionnaire distributed via Google Form and analyzed using Miles (2014) framework of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings revealed that students' perceptions were divided into positive and negative categories. Seven students (70%) expressed positive perceptions, describing Canva as attractive, motivating, and effective in clarifying argumentative structures such as claims, reasons, and evidence. They explained that Canva's visuals and templates helped them stay engaged and organize ideas more clearly during reading activities. Three students (30%) expressed negative perceptions, mainly due to slow loading, restrictions caused by premium features, and readability problems when color contrasts between text and background were weak. In terms of reasons for these perceptions, the analysis showed that Canva captured students' attention through its colorful design (35.7%) and maintained relevance by connecting visuals with their academic needs (28.6%). Confidence (14.3%) was fostered when Canva's templates supported systematic thinking, but was reduced when poor design made comprehension difficult. Satisfaction (21.4%) was achieved when Canva functioned smoothly, but was undermined when technical problems disrupted learning. These findings imply the importance of balancing Canva's strengths with its limitations and maximizing its pedagogical potential to support students in reading argumentative texts effectively.

Kata Kunci

Students' Perception, Canva, Learning Media, Reading

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INTRODUCTION

Reading is a fundamental skill in English language learning because it provides access to vocabulary, grammar, and ideas that shape both language proficiency and academic achievement (Grabe & Stoller, 2020). In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings, reading takes on an even greater role since it

serves as the primary channel for acquiring knowledge from written sources across disciplines. Without adequate reading competence, students often struggle to comprehend academic content, which negatively affects their performance in higher education (Grabe & Stoller, 2020; Kirsch et al., 2002; Samarajeewa, 2023). Scholars emphasize that reading involves complex processes of constructing meaning, connecting prior knowledge, and applying comprehension strategies, which are essential for lifelong learning (Diakidoy, Ioannou, & Christodoulou, 2017; Grabe & Stoller, 2020). Extensive reading is often encouraged as a way to build fluency and motivation, while intensive reading helps develop analytical skills needed for academic purposes (Day & Bamford, 1998; Nakanishi, 2015; Moku, Oroh, & Tuerah, 2021; Maili, 2025). The importance of reading is further highlighted by studies who argue that comprehension is the gateway to other skills and to academic achievement overall (Afflerbach, Pearson, & Paris, 2015; Kucer, 2014).

Among the many genres taught in schools, argumentative texts are among the most demanding due to their cognitive and linguistic complexity. Unlike descriptive or narrative texts that simply recount events or describe objects, argumentative texts require readers to identify claims, evaluate evidence, and consider counterarguments (Nejmaoui, 2019). This process engages higher-order thinking skills, including reasoning, analysis, and critical evaluation. Some studies argue that this type of text promotes cognitive engagement by training students to assess validity, coherence, and persuasiveness of ideas (Alonso et al., 2020). For senior high school students, mastering argumentative reading is crucial, as it not only supports academic literacy but also prepares them for broader intellectual participation (Dastjerdi, 2020; Al Roomy, 2022). However, studies in EFL contexts indicate that many students struggle with these tasks because of limited vocabulary, insufficient background knowledge, and lack of familiarity with rhetorical structures (Nejmaoui, 2019; Dastjerdi, 2020). These difficulties often result in low confidence and reduced motivation, making argumentative reading less meaningful for learners.

This contrast between the expected role of argumentative texts and students' real struggles creates the need for innovative pedagogical approaches that can support both comprehension and motivation. One approach that has gained traction is the integration of media into reading instruction. Media is generally defined as any tool that delivers messages and facilitates learning. Traditional media such as textbooks and visual aids have now been complemented by digital platforms that offer interactive and multimodal learning experiences (Mayer, 2020; Hutchison & Woodward, 2012). Research has shown that digital resources capture students' attention more effectively,

sustain engagement, and support comprehension by presenting information in diverse formats (Hutchison et al., 2021). For example, videos, infographics, and simulations can simplify abstract concepts and help learners connect ideas more easily (Sari, Astrid, & Salsabila, 2023). The shift toward digital media has also been associated with the need to prepare learners for the 21st century, where digital literacy is essential for both academic and professional life.

Among such platforms, Canva has attracted attention for its accessibility and versatility in education. Initially designed for visual communication, Canva has increasingly been used in classrooms to design posters, infographics, and presentations (Nanda & Fatimah, 2023). With features like customizable templates, drag-and-drop functions, and collaborative options, Canva can be used to visually map out argumentative structures, making claims, reasons, and evidence more comprehensible (Nanda & Fatimah, 2023; Pinandhita & Yasin, 2025; Retrimika, 2023). Studies have found that Canva can enhance students' motivation and participation in learning activities, since it transforms reading into a more visual and engaging task (Pratama & Hikmat, 2024; Puspita, Wardani, & Rabbani, 2022; Lisa & Pariyanto, 2025). In reading instruction, Canva allows students to map argumentative structures, clarify relationships between claims and evidence, and present analysis collaboratively, supporting not only comprehension but also communication and teamwork, which are crucial in academic learning.

Ideally, digital media such as Canva should bridge students' learning challenges, but in reality, its effectiveness in classroom practice is not always straightforward. Some students perceive Canva as engaging and helpful in clarifying arguments, while others encounter barriers such as limited free features, technical issues, or readability problems caused by design choices. These mixed responses demonstrate that the success of digital media depends not only on its pedagogical potential but also on how students perceive and experience it. As Bączek et al. (2021) point out, perceptions of digital platforms are often divided: flexibility and autonomy are valued, but technological constraints may limit effectiveness. Similarly, Chan and Hu (2023) show that learners' evaluations of online tools are shaped by relevance, usefulness, and satisfaction in achieving their learning goals.

To explain such variations, this study employs two theoretical perspectives. Irwanto (1994) distinguishes between positive and negative perceptions, emphasizing that individuals interpret an object as either beneficial and supportive or obstructive and disappointing. Complementing this, Keller's (1987) ARCS model highlights four factors: Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction that influence how learners view the use of Canva as a digital

learning media (Al-Samarraie & Saeed, 2021; Al-Marroof et al., 2021; Rojabi, 2020; Scheuermann, 2021; Setiawati, Firdos, & Santoso, 2024). Together, these frameworks provide a comprehensive lens to analyze both the types of perceptions and the reasons for them.

This study focuses on the perceptions of Grade 12 students at MAN 3 Langkat toward the use of Canva as a learning medium in reading argumentative texts. It addresses two main questions: (1) What are students' perceptions of using Canva in learning English reading argumentative text? and (2) Why do students perceive the use of Canva in reading as the way they do? By answering these questions, the study is expected not only to contribute to the theoretical discussion of perception in digital learning but also to offer practical insights for teachers and schools in integrating Canva more effectively into EFL classrooms.

RESEARCH METHODE

This study applied a descriptive qualitative design, as suggested by Creswell (2014), which is suitable for exploring participants' experiences and interpreting their perspectives. The research was carried out at MAN 3 Langkat with ten twelfth-grade students who had prior exposure to Canva in their learning activities. Participants were selected purposively to ensure that they were familiar with both argumentative texts and the digital platform under investigation. Data were collected through an open-ended questionnaire distributed via Google Form. The instrument consisted of questions that encouraged students to express their views regarding the use of Canva in reading argumentative texts. The open-ended format allowed participants to provide more detailed and personal responses.

The data were analyzed using two theoretical lenses. First, Irwanto's (1994) concept of perception was employed to classify responses into positive and negative categories. Second, Keller's (1987) ARCS model was applied to interpret the reasons for students' perceptions, focusing on the four components: attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction. Through this process, the students' responses were categorized, patterns were identified, and representative quotations were used to illustrate the findings.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Types of Students' Perception

The analysis of the students' responses shows that their perceptions of using Canva as a learning media in reading argumentative texts can be divided into two main categories, namely positive perceptions and negative

perceptions. This classification is based on Irwanto's (1994) concept that perception may be either positive, when students respond with acceptance and appreciation, or negative, when they respond with rejection, dissatisfaction, or criticism.

Table 1.
Types of Students' Perceptions

Types of Perception	Responses	Key Points
POSITIVE	"Dengan canva, saya dapat membaca dengan mudah dan juga tidak gampang bosan karena desainnya yang menarik" ("With Canva, I can read easily and it's not boring because of its attractive design.") from CNR	Engaging, not boring
	"the visuals and layouts make the structure of the arguments clearer and less confusing" from HA	Supports comprehension
	"Saya lebih senang memakai canva karena bisa mendesain sendiri alur teks argumentatif dan bisa lebih paham karena fleksibel untuk dibaca" ("I prefer using Canva because I can design my own argumentative text flow and understand it better since it is flexible to read.") from KA	Builds confidence
	"bisa diskusi bareng, saling nambahin ide, jadi lebih gampang ngerti" ("We can discuss things together, share ideas, and understand things more easily.") from IY	Encourages collaboration
	"I feel more confident since I can break down the arguments into visuals, and it makes everything clearer." from VG	Builds confidence, Clarifies arguments, and Supports comprehension
	"Belajar dengan Canva membuat saya lebih termotivasi untuk membaca dengan aktif." ("Learning with Canva has made me more motivated to read actively.") from NSAH	Increases motivation, Encourages active reading, and Enhances engagement
	"Canva can make the structure clearer"	Clarifies text structure,

	from WA	Supports comprehension, and Simplifies organization
NEGATIVE	"Terkadang lama untuk memuat" ("Sometimes takes a long time to load") from NDJ	Technical limitation
	"Ada beberapa pilihan dari canva yang harus premium, itu membuat saya tidak bisa menggunakan nya jika canva saya tidak premium" ("There are several options from Canva that require a premium account, which means I cannot use them if my Canva account is not premium.") from ZFAN	Limited free features
	"Sometimes, the color of the font and the background look similar so it's kinda difficult to read" from JGS	Design issue

1) Positive perceptions

Several participants stated that Canva made learning more interesting and enjoyable, as it provided visual designs that helped them stay motivated. For example, one student wrote, "*Dengan canva, saya dapat membaca dengan mudah dan juga tidak gampang bosan karena desainnya yang menarik*" ("With Canva, I can read easily and it's not boring because of its attractive design.") from CNR. Another student explained that Canva helped them to understand argumentative text structures, saying, "the visuals and layouts make the structure of the arguments clearer and less confusing" from HA. Students also highlighted the role of Canva in building confidence, as expressed by KA: "*Saya lebih senang memakai canva karena bisa mendesain sendiri alur teks argumentatif dan bisa lebih paham karena fleksibel untuk dibaca*" ("I prefer using Canva because I can design my own argumentative text flow and understand it better since it is flexible to read."). Furthermore, collaborative features were appreciated, as IY noted: "*bisa diskusi bareng, saling nambahin ide, jadi lebih gampang ngerti*" ("We can discuss things together, share ideas, and understand things more easily.").

2) Negative perceptions

These mostly related to technical and design issues. For instance, one student mentioned, "*Kadang Canva error dan butuh koneksi internet yang stabil*" ("Sometimes Canva has errors and requires a stable internet connection") from NDJ. Another problem was the limitation of free features, as ZFAN stated:

"Fitur premium membuat terbatas, jadi tidak semua bisa digunakan" ("The premium features create limitations, so not everything can be used"). A few students also pointed out design-related distractions, such as poor color contrast that made reading difficult. As JGS expressed: "Sometimes, the color of the font and the background look similar so it's kinda difficult to read".

In this case, the analysis shows that 70% of the responses reflected positive perceptions, while 30% represented negative perceptions. This percentage indicates the overall tendency of students toward Canva as a learning media in reading argumentative texts.

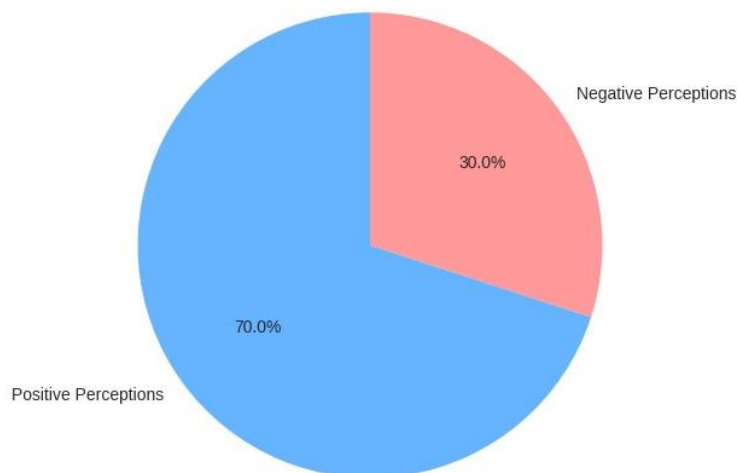


Figure 1.
Percentage of Types of Students' Perceptions

Positive perceptions were dominant (70%). Students explained that Canva made reading more engaging and enjoyable because of its attractive design and visual features. They also felt that Canva clarified the structure of argumentative texts, helped them understand the flow of ideas, and allowed them to be more confident in analyzing arguments. Some students appreciated the collaborative features, saying that Canva supported group work and idea sharing. In general, these students considered Canva a helpful and motivating tool for learning.

Negative perceptions were less frequent (30%) but still important. A few students reported that Canva sometimes took a long time to load, which disturbed their focus. Others mentioned limitations in the free version, as some features were available only to premium users. One student also found that certain design choices, such as color contrast, made the text harder to read. These issues reduced their comfort and willingness to rely on Canva during learning.

Reasons for Students' Perceptions

The reasons why students perceive Canva positively or negatively in reading argumentative texts can be understood through the ARCS model by Keller (1987), which includes four components: Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction. Students' responses reflect how these components influence their learning experiences.

Table 2.
Reasons for Students' Perceptions

Responden	ARCS Category	Students' Responses	Interpretation
CNR	Attention	<i>"desain yang enak di pandang dan juga rapi"</i> ("the design that is pleasing to the eye and neat")	The student finds Canva visually attractive and simple, which captures attention and increases willingness to engage.
VG	Attention	"Canva make the reading activity more interesting because I can be creative while learning, not just read plain words"	The student perceives Canva as making reading more engaging because its creative features capture attention and reduce boredom compared to plain text.
HA	Confidence and Attention	"The templates and charts help me organize the main ideas, reasons, and evidence clearly"	The student feels that Canva's templates and charts increase their confidence in handling argumentative texts by making the organization of claims, reasons, and evidence clearer.
ZFAN	Relevance and Satisfaction	<i>"Ada beberapa pilihan dari canva yang harus premium, itu membuat"</i>	The student perceives Canva as limited in

		<p><i>saya tidak bisa menggunakan nya jika canva saya tidak premium"</i></p> <p>("There are several options from Canva that require a premium account, which means I cannot use them if my Canva account is not premium.")</p>	<p>meeting their learning needs due to premium-only features, reducing its relevance and usefulness in practice.</p>
IY	Attention	<p><i>"Canva jelas lebih menarik, soalnya tampilannya beda dari buku biasa yang kadang bikin ngantuk"</i></p> <p>("Canva is definitely more interesting because it looks different from ordinary books, which can sometimes make you sleepy.")</p>	<p>The student perceives Canva as engaging and refreshing compared to traditional books, showing that visual differences help sustain attention during reading activities.</p>
NDJ	Satisfaction	<p><i>"Terkadang lama untuk memuat"</i></p> <p>("Sometimes takes a long time to load")</p>	<p>The student feels less satisfied when using Canva because slow loading reduces efficiency and disrupts the learning flow.</p>
NSAH	Attention and Relevance	<p><i>"Canva membuat kegiatan membaca teks argumentative lebih menarik sebab ada gambar dan infografis yang membantu memahami isi teks."</i></p> <p>("Canva makes reading argumentative texts more interesting because there are images and infographics that help</p>	<p>The student perceives Canva as both engaging and supportive. The visual elements capture attention by making the reading activity more interesting, while at the same time these visuals are seen as</p>

		understand the content of the text.")	directly useful for understanding argumentative texts.
KA	Relevance	<p>"Saya lebih senang memakai canva karena bisa mendesain sendiri alur teks argumentatif dan bisa lebih paham karena fleksibel untuk dibaca"</p> <p>("I prefer using Canva because I can design my own argumentative text flow and understand it better since it is flexible to read.")</p>	<p>This response shows that Canva is not only attractive as a digital tool but also relevant to students' learning goals. By allowing them to design their own argumentative text flow, Canva provides flexibility and personalization that support deeper comprehension. This indicates that students perceive Canva as a media that makes learning more meaningful and aligned with their academic tasks.</p>
JGS	Confidence and Satisfaction	<p>"Sometimes, the color of the font and the background look similar so it's kinda difficult to read"</p>	<p>The student experiences difficulty in reading due to poor color contrast, which decreases their confidence in understanding the text. This shows that Canva's design choices can sometimes hinder learning instead of</p>

			supporting it, reducing satisfaction with the tool.
WA	Relevance	"Canva can make the structure clearer "	The student perceives Canva as helpful in clarifying the structure of argumentative texts, which makes the learning material more relevant and easier to understand. This indicates that Canva contributes to making reading tasks more meaningful and aligned with students' learning needs.

1) Attention

Many participants, such as CNR, VG, IY, and NSAH, mentioned that Canva's attractive design, use of images, infographics, and creative features made the reading process more interesting compared to plain texts or traditional books. This suggests that Canva successfully captures students' attention, which is an essential element in maintaining focus and reducing boredom during reading tasks.

2) Relevance

Students recognized Canva as useful for clarifying the structure of argumentative texts and supporting comprehension. For example, WA explained that Canva made the structure clearer, while NSAH noted that visuals such as infographics directly helped in understanding the content. These responses indicate that students view Canva not only as engaging but also as practically supportive of their learning needs.

3) Confidence

HA reported that templates and charts in Canva helped in organizing main ideas and evidence, which increased confidence in handling

argumentative texts. However, negative perceptions were also found, such as JGS, who mentioned that poor color contrast between text and background made reading more difficult and decreased confidence.

4) Satisfaction

Lastly, the category of Satisfaction appears in responses about practical limitations. ZFAN pointed out the issue of premium features, which reduced the usefulness of Canva for non-premium users, while NDJ reported slow loading time that disrupted the learning flow. These limitations lowered students' satisfaction, showing that despite Canva's strengths, technical or access-related issues can negatively influence perceptions.

In this case, the analysis shows that Attention was the most dominant factor, appearing in 35,7% of the responses. Relevance accounted for 28,6%, while Satisfaction made up 21,4%, and Confidence was the least mentioned with 14,3%. These percentages indicate that Canva is mainly valued for its ability to capture students' attention, though its relevance, satisfaction, and confidence factors also play significant roles.

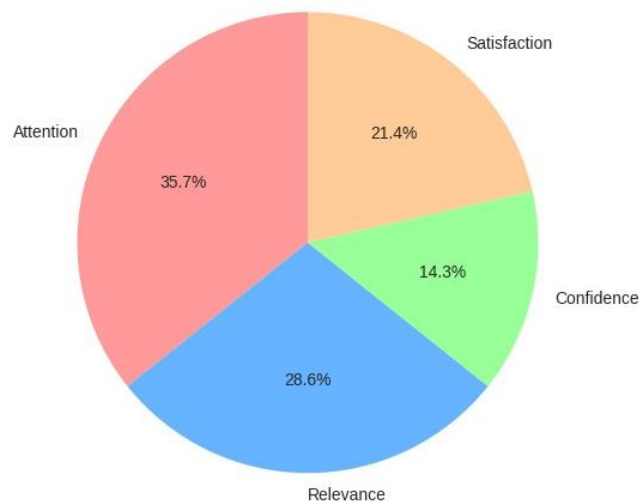


Figure 2.
Percentage of Reasons for Students' Perceptions

Attention: Most students (35,7%) emphasized Canva's ability to capture attention. They stated that its visuals, colors, and creative layouts made reading more interesting than plain text. This helped them stay focused and reduced boredom during reading tasks.

Relevance: Four responses (28,6%) found Canva relevant to their academic needs. By clarifying the structure of arguments and presenting ideas visually, Canva made reading tasks more meaningful and connected to their learning goals.

Confidence: Two responses (14,3%) reported that Canva's templates and charts gave them confidence in organizing ideas and analyzing texts. However, one student experienced reduced confidence due to poor readability caused by weak color contrast.

Satisfaction: Three responses (21,4%) Some faced technical problems, such as slow loading or premium-only features, felt less satisfied with Canva. These obstacles interrupted their learning process. On the other hand, students who could access Canva smoothly expressed satisfaction because it made their reading activities easier.

The findings of this study demonstrate that students' perceptions of Canva in reading argumentative texts fall into two broad categories, positive and negative, which aligns with Irwanto's (1994) classification of perception. According to Irwanto (1994), perception can be positive when an experience is interpreted as supportive and meaningful, or negative when it is judged as unhelpful or obstructive. In this study, the majority of students reported positive perceptions, emphasizing Canva's engaging visual design, its ability to clarify argumentative structures, and its potential to foster collaboration and build confidence in handling complex texts. At the same time, several students expressed negative perceptions, particularly concerning slow loading, limited access due to premium features, and readability problems such as poor color contrast. These findings show that Canva was not universally accepted; rather, students evaluated it through the balance of benefits and challenges they encountered.

The reasons underlying these perceptions can be further explained using Keller's (1987) ARCS model, which in this study was applied to interpret the factors shaping students' evaluations. Canva attracted attention through colorful layouts and creative features, and it was perceived as relevant because it helped organize ideas and clarify argumentative structures. Some students also felt greater confidence when guided by Canva's templates and charts. However, satisfaction declined when technical limitations disrupted the learning process. These findings highlight that while the ARCS model effectively explains the positive and negative reasons for students' perceptions, an additional dimension, technical reliability emerges as equally important in digital learning contexts.

The findings of this research are consistent with previous studies that discuss the role of Canva and other digital media in education. Puspita, Wardani, and Rabbani (2022) reported that Canva significantly enhanced comprehension of informational texts, while Pinandhita and Yasin (2025) showed that Canva-based microlearning improved both motivation and

reading outcomes. Retrimika (2023) further demonstrated through classroom action research that repeated use of Canva led to steady improvement in reading achievement. This study strengthens these conclusions by showing that similar benefits are also perceived in the context of argumentative reading, which is more cognitively demanding than informational texts. At the same time, it adds nuance by emphasizing the impact of technical challenges, an aspect less explored in previous studies.

Taken together, these findings underline the need to balance the strengths and weaknesses of digital media. Canva's visual clarity, flexibility, and collaborative features make it a valuable tool for supporting students' engagement with argumentative texts and for helping them build critical reading competence. However, its effectiveness depends on careful classroom integration, where teachers anticipate obstacles such as unstable internet access or limited premium features. By doing so, educators can maximize the pedagogical potential of Canva while minimizing barriers that may hinder students' learning experiences.

CONCLUSION

This study found that students' perceptions of using Canva in learning argumentative texts can be grouped into two types: positive and negative. Out of ten respondents, 70% expressed positive perceptions, while 30% expressed negative perceptions. Positive perceptions appeared because Canva was seen as attractive, motivating, and helpful in arranging claims, evidence, and counterarguments in a clearer way, which made learning more engaging. Negative perceptions, however, came from technical problems, limited familiarity with digital features, and the extra effort needed to adjust, which sometimes made students feel burdened. In terms of reasons for these perceptions, Attention (35,7%) and Relevance (28,6%) were the most influential factors, as students highlighted Canva's ability to make reading more interesting and meaningful to their learning goals. Confidence (14,3%) and Satisfaction (21,4%) also played a role but were less dominant. These findings show that while many students enjoyed and benefited from Canva, others still faced challenges that limited their experience. Overall, Canva has the potential to support argumentative text learning effectively, as long as students are ready and the learning environment provides adequate support.

The findings of this study point to several practical implications. For teachers, Canva should be introduced gradually into argumentative text instruction through step-by-step guidance and modeling. Classroom workshops or demonstrations can reduce students' unfamiliarity, while

collaborative projects using Canva may foster engagement and alleviate the burden on individual learners. For students, Canva can serve not only as a classroom tool but also as a media for independent practice, such as designing posters, infographics, or mind maps of argumentative structures. These activities can strengthen both comprehension and digital literacy, making students more adaptable to modern learning environments. For schools and policymakers, providing stable internet access, sufficient facilities, and continuous training for teachers and students is essential to minimize technical barriers. Incorporating Canva and similar platforms into institutional support systems would ensure that the advantages of digital media are maximized across disciplines, not limited to English instruction.

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