

DIDACTIC GAMES AS A TOOL OF ECOLOGICAL EDUCATION AND UPBRINGING OF PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN

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Currently, environmental education is one of the urgent problems of pedagogy. The solution of problems of ecological education should be started from preschool age. It is at this age that a child develops an emotional-value attitude to nature, and the foundations of moral and environmental position are formed. The most effective means of environmental education is a didactic game.

Introduction. Interest in ecology and ecological education has increased in modern society. People are part of nature: we cannot live outside of it; we cannot break natural laws of the world around us.

The ecological education of children is a new area in pedagogy, which has appeared in recent years. It has replaced the traditional acquaintance of children with nature that was presented in educational programmes.

Ecological education is understood as the upbringing of a child with conscious perception of the environment and awareness of need to preserve nature.

The ecological education of pre-school children is understood as a continuous process of education, upbringing and development of a child, aimed at shaping their ecological culture. Ecological culture is manifested in an emotionally positive attitude towards nature and the world, in a responsible attitude towards the health and the environment, and in observance of the moral norms, in the system of values [3].

There are four main components in the content of ecological education of preschoolers. They are similar to components of ecological education of schoolchildren. They are cognitive, value, normative and activity orientated components [4].

Task formation. The aim of our study was to determine the importance of didactic games for environmental education of preschool children.

Methods of research.

We used a comparative analysis of scientific and scientific-methodical literature, a formative experiment, a test of Gocharovoj and E. V. Moiseeva, L.V. [1].

Results, their discussion and perspectives.

Our study on the formation of environmental education through didactic games showed that purposeful work in this direction with the use of special didactic games is effective. The study involved two groups of senior preschool children, 20 boys and girls (a control and an experimental group).

We studied levels of knowledge about permissible and unacceptable actions with plants, an ability to evaluate the results of human interaction with nature. The results of the ascertaining experiment are presented in figures 1 and 2.

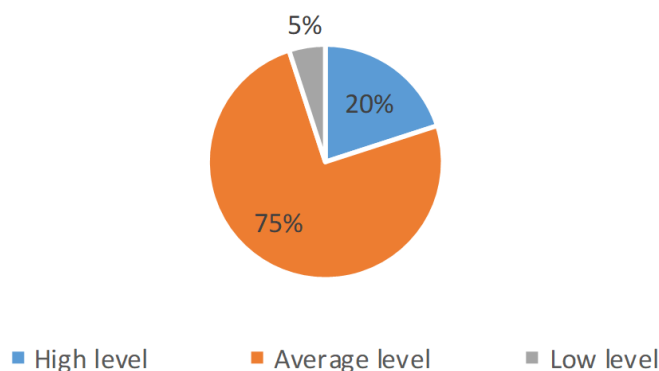


Figure 1. – The level of knowledge about the permissible and unacceptable actions with plants of children of the control group at the ascertaining stage

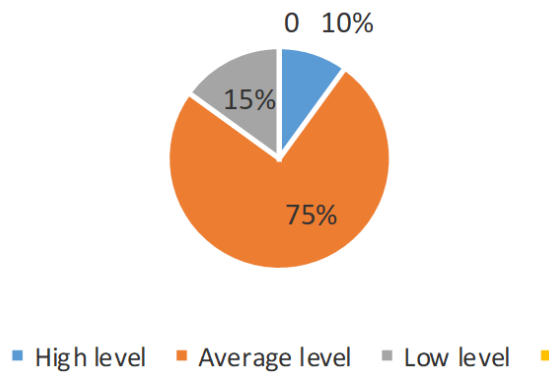


Figure 2. – The level of knowledge about the permissible and unacceptable actions with plants of children of the experimental group at the ascertaining stage

The results of the control experiment are shown in figure 3 and figure 4.

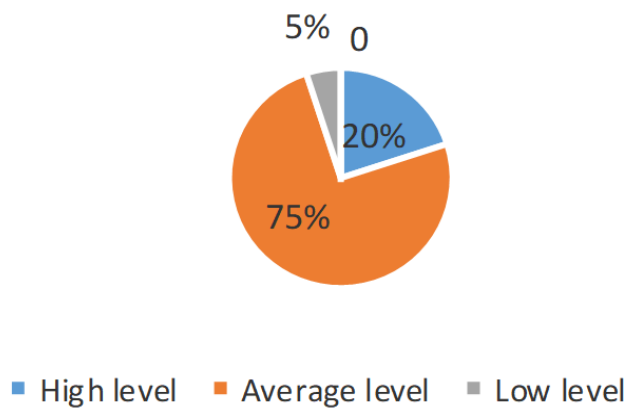


Figure 3. – The level of knowledge about the permissible and unacceptable actions with plants of children of the control group at the control stage

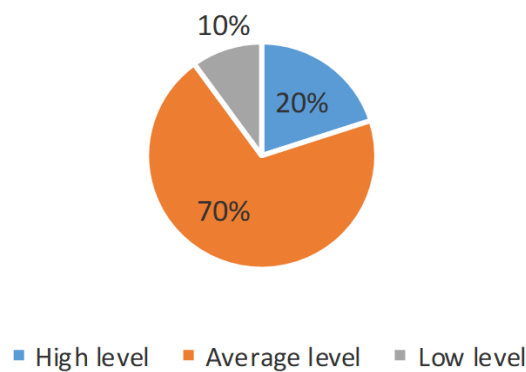


Figure 3. – The level of knowledge about the permissible and unacceptable actions with plants of children of the experimental group at the control stage

It can be concluded that there is a positive dynamics in the formation of environmental perceptions and attitudes of children. However, it is necessary to continue work in this direction, as the maximum result has not yet been achieved.

The study showed that the children of the experimental group have the level of knowledge about the permissible and unacceptable actions with plants slightly lower than in the control group. In general, the majority of the children are at the average level.

Education, Social Studies, Law

The main criteria for the selection of methods in the process of ecological education are:

- Providing opportunities for learning of a system of ecological ideas, moral-ecological concepts, intellectual and practical skills.
- -Providing a scientific approach to the consideration and analysis of modern environmental problems.
- Aiming at the formation of new ecologically conscious behaviour and at activities in the natural environment, and their introduction into daily practice of interaction with nature.
- Involving preschoolers into the process of their active learning, providing opportunities for independence, cooperation, responsibility and an ability to make ecologically conscious decisions.
- Development of willingness and ability to constantly discover and explore the environment, providing contribution to maintaining its ecologically friendly state.
- Ensuring direct contacts of preschool children with the natural environment of their emotional communication with nature [2].

The most effective activity of preschool children is a didactic game; it is through it we can lay the foundations for ecological education.

A. N. Leontiev gave an axiological analysis of the value of didactic games for the development of the child's personality. The scientist points to two aspects that determine the role of this type of gaming activity. The first aspect is that the games create the conditions in which "a child's independent conscious assessment of its specific capabilities and abilities" appears for the first time. The second aspect relates to the moral concept contained in games with a double task (didactic and educational). "And there ... it is important that this moral concept appears in the child's activity, actively and practically for him, and not in the form of an abstract morality." G.V. Shchedrovitskaya emphasizes that the value of didactic games noted by A. N. Leontiev, gives the possibility of using them to educate preschoolers [7].

A didactic game is a means of education, which affects an emotional, intellectual sphere of children. It stimulates their activity, in the process of which independent decision-making process is formed and received knowledge is acquired. Cooperation skills are developed, and important social personal traits are formed [6].

The analysis of the literature during the study of didactic games allowed us to single out several areas that were leading at certain stages in the development of the theory of preschool pedagogy. These areas include the following- the study of a didactic game as a means of educational work, as a special form of education, as a means of stimulating creative activity of children, providing personal development, as a method of comprehensive education of children, as a means of forming a need for validation.

Understanding the meaning of didactic games implies the following requirements for them.

Each didactic game should give exercises that are useful for mental development of children and their upbringing.

It is necessary to have an exciting challenge in didactic games, where a solution requires some mental effort, overcoming some difficulties. A. S. Makarenko said the following words about didactic games "A game without an effort, a game without an intensive activity is always a poor game" [3].

Didactic elements in a game should be combined with entertaining, some jokes and humor. Interest in the game mobilizes mental activity, facilitates tasks.

A didactic game is a multifaceted pedagogical phenomenon, which also serves as a play method for children education at preschool age, as a form of learning, as an independent play activity, and as a means of harmoniously comprehensive development of the personality of a preschool child. The main components of the structure of didactic games are a plan, a purpose, content, rules of the game, game actions and the result.

The following types of didactic games are used in the process of ecological education of preschool children:

- Subject games;
- Board and print games;
- Verbal games;
- Creative games.

A didactic game contributes to the full development of preschool children.

Firstly, it contributes to cognitive development of a person: children obtain new knowledge, summarize and consolidate it; this type of a game assimilates socially developed means and methods of mental activity. There are many complex phenomena (including natural phenomena) in the process of didactic games. They are divided into simple ones and vice versa, individual games are generalized; therefore, analytical and synthetic activities are carried out. Some didactic games do not seem to bring new knowledge to children, but they are

beneficial for teaching children to apply existing knowledge in new conditions. During such games, children refine, consolidate and expand their ideas about objects and natural phenomena, plants and animals. At the same time, games contribute to the development of memory, attention, and observation; they give an opportunity for children to operate with the objects of nature, to compare them. In addition, they help to see changes in individual external signs.

Secondly, didactic games cause a certain emotional attitude to nature, so, in other words, they enrich sensual experience.

Thirdly, they develop children's speech: didactic games increase and intensify vocabulary, a coherent speech develops. A number of games are successfully used to develop the phonemic side of the language. For example, an exciting play action encourages children to repeat the same sound combination many times. The repetition of sounds does not get boring, because children are interested in the game, they play the role of a bird, the role of a moving car, and the more passionate the child is, the more actively he reproduces the necessary sounds, the more effective the pedagogical effect is.

It should be added that such games provide social and moral development of a preschooler. They develop relationships between children, adults, objects of wildlife and lifeless nature. Children shows a sensitive attitude to each other, learns to be fair, to yield if necessary, to help in difficult situations, to feel sorry for other people, etc.

Fourthly, games promote an artistic and aesthetic education. During the performing of an action, children thinks how beautiful it is, how correct it is and whether it is appropriate in a particular situation. They follow expressiveness of their speech and speech of others, their creative fantasy develops when bright artistic image is transferred.

Didactic games can be held with children both collectively and individually, making them more difficult due to the age of the children. Complications depend on expansion of knowledge and developing mental operations and actions. Didactic games are organized in leisure time, in the classroom and outside.

Conclusion. Thus, ecological education is the education of morality, spirituality, and intelligence. Preschool age is an optimal age for learning the basics of ecological knowledge, since children perceive nature more emotionally.

Preschool age is the first stage in the development of the ecological culture of an individual. At this age, a child begins to separate himself from the environment; he develops an emotional-value attitude to the environment. Moral and ecological positions are formed with the help of interactions with nature. Taking into account the specifics of the preschool age, it is necessary to conclude that the most effective means of promoting a more complete and successful solution of the tasks of the ecological education of the preschool children is a didactic game.

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