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STORYTELLING IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION OF THE PRESCHOOLERS

The problem of ecological education of preschoolers is one of the fundamental problems in the theory of upbringing and education. All prominent scientists and pedagogues attributed a great importance to nature as a means of children's upbringing. A. Komenskiy saw nature as a source of knowledge, a tool for the development of mind, feelings and will. K. D. Ushinsky was in favour of «leading children into nature» in order to provide them with everything available and useful for their mental and verbal development.[1: 48]. The ideas of introducing preschool children to nature were further developed in the theory and practice of preschool education.

Ecological education of preschoolers is a continuous process of training, education and development of the child, aimed at the formation of its ecological culture, which is manifested in an emotionally positive attitude towards nature, the surrounding world, in a responsible attitude towards the health and the environment, in compliance with certain moral standards, in the system of value orientations.

Solving the problem of «education of ecological culture of preschoolers using Ukrainian folk traditions and customs», we have highlighted such a direction, as an ecological fairy tale, analyzing it from the position of environmental education. This approach implies a view on the ecological tale as a means of teaching, education, development of the child, attracting his/her attention to the studied material, activation of knowledge and creative abilities. A small child cannot distinguish between good and evil. Both can coexist in his/her soul. Whether your child learns to love and protect all living beings depend on us, on the ability to present complex phenomena of nature in an entertaining way.

The magical world of fairy tales introduces children to unusual characters: Droplet, Spring, Spruce Seed and their amazing adventures: «The Droplet's Journey», «The Springspring Calls for Help», «The Forest is Full of Tales and Wonders» and «A Journey to the Land of Blue Sky». It opens up an unknown world for children with its surprises and mysteries. A simple plot, familiar and comprehensible characters – grasshopper, snail, piglet, road.... Teachers can play with them, you can make up stories about them – these will be the steps that help our children to immerse themselves in the semantic essence of a fairy tale [2: 31].

From the fairy tale's hero a child learns about the mysteries of fauna and flora, about the seasonal phenomena of nature, the seasons, or how a drenched grasshopper warms the heart of a flower that is freezing in the cold wind with its song, and a flower, having opened its umbrella, hides the grasshopper from the rain. How much kindness and humanity in this little tale. As a result, a children's fairy tale about

Kolobok, Hen Ryaba or The turnip is transformed into a performance, where one actor in different voices can not only depict the wolf, bear, hare or fox, but also tries to depict trickery, guile, deceit or vice versa, friendliness, kindness and tenderness. The children's easy inclusion in play dialogues with the characters of fairy tales – develops self-confidence, the ability to take the position of the other, to carry on a dialogue, to sympathize and empathize.

Children, apart from interesting and useful knowledge, can get vivid impressions of the depth, beauty, wisdom and emotional richness of ecological fairy tales. Using them in the work, it helps the teacher to enrich the children with knowledge, teaches them to look deeper into the world around them, to find answers to many questions: How was the world created? How did people and animals appear? What happens in winter? What do different animals do in winter?

The ecological tale suggests various activities for the child. On the basis of the knowledge which children receive through an ecological fairy tale, the initial forms of a consciously correct attitude towards nature, an interest in its knowledge, sympathy for all animals, the ability to see the beauty of nature in its different forms and manifestations, to express their emotional attitude towards it can be laid.

Proceeding from the general purpose of the ecological education and peculiarities of the mental development of children, at the preschool age the basis of the ecological culture is laid by means of fairy tales, because during this very period bright and imaginative emotional impressions, first natural ideas are accumulated, the basis of the correct attitude to the surrounding world and value orientation in it is laid.

On the professionals' opinion, fairy tales are the most effective means of emotional influence on children. They instill not only a love for nature, but also an awareness of the need to protect it. Ecological fairy tales help spread scientific knowledge about nature. One of the authors of articles devoted to fairy tales, including ecological ones, E.V. Shikov, candidate of biological sciences, defines the purpose of ecological fairy tales – «...to teach children to understand and protect the nature». «Ecological education must begin in early childhood and continue throughout the period of schooling. For pre-school children the most comprehensible presentation is in the form of fairy tales, which awaken not only the mind but also the senses. Children should not learn basic ecological concepts so much, they should be imbued with respect for all living things and fall in love with nature» [3: 115].

«In nature itself, many things are akin to a miracle. A glimpse of a ray, a flower, a dewdrop on it are real, but in their union suddenly gives birth to what one calls 'fairy-tale beauty'. The dry scientific words hide a whole magic world behind them: metamorphosis reminds us of the transformations of fairytale heroes; the anatomy, when a captive lizard flings off its tail, is like cutting off a dragon's head and bringing up new ones. How could one not honor mimicry, the ability to change one's appearance overnight! That is why it is so natural to want to tell children about the world around us through a fairy tale.

Environmental fairy tales are informative, especially when we talk about young children. Ecological fairy tales must be informative, but they should not be overloaded either. Sometimes one or two sentences are enough to show an interesting fact. All experts agree that fairy tales should be accessible to children and expressive.

It is recommended to use traditional fairy tale techniques and attributes to which children are already accustomed. [4: 76]. Among the many fairy tales for children there are some that meet the requirements of environmental literature. These are many fairy tales by B. Zahoder, stories by V. Bianki, V. Tanasichuk, V. Sukhomlinskiy, G. Prishvin – many ecological programs for young children are based on them. Ukrainian fairy tales are also very useful.

According to Sukhomlinsky, the tale is inseparable from the beauty. Thanks to the fairy tale the child learns the world not only by mind but also by heart. It's not just a way of getting to know the world, it's also a way of reacting to the events and phenomena in the world around us, it expresses your feelings about good and evil [5: 134].

During the excursions in the open air, in the countryside with their parents, in the cottage houses, while observing the animals and plants, children discover the beauty and uniqueness of their native environment. At the same time children notice the unreasonable and destructive person's influence on nature. To teach your child to see these contrasts and to empathize and reflect, you can also use environmental fairy tales, like «There is no sadder tale in the world», «A very frightening story» and others.

One indicator of the level of understanding of environmental issues and empathy is the fairy tales composed by the children themselves. If a child created a fairy tale, «has connected in his or her imagination several objects of the surrounding world, then we can say that he or she has learned to think» (Sukhomlinsky).

Shifting the focus of children's attention in fairy tales from the person to the living nature creates and supports the environment of people, allows forming respect to the nature, responsibility for it. As the main thing in any fairy tale is morality, a fairy tale must teach morality and kindness. That's why, this should be the basis of children's ecological education.

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