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## **ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION OF PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THE PROCESS OF EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

The implementation of environmental education in elementary school through extracurricular activities is a big step in promoting nature conservation and preparing the future generation to solve environmental challenges. The role of extracurricular activities in the formation of environmental awareness and consciousness of elementary school students is important for the following reasons:

1. Nature Enthusiasm and Hands-On Experience: Extracurricular activities include nature field trips, research projects, and work in the natural environment. This gives students the opportunity not only to hear about environmental problems, but also to feel them on their own skin and gain practical experience in interacting with nature.

2. Developing critical thinking: Extracurricular activities help students develop critical thinking as they explore different aspects of environmental issues [1:44]

A wide range of scientists helped to form an approach that has a positive impact on students and increase understanding of the importance of nature and its preservation: O. Dmytrieva, E. Girusov, M. Kalinnikov, N. Kondratiev, N. Pavlenko, A. Semenov, L. Zhrebintseva, O. Savchenko, N. Ryzhova, V. L. Saleev, O. Solomennikov, V. Sukhomlynskyi, V. Yasvin.

**The purpose of the article is** to educate students in environmental awareness and an appropriate attitude towards nature.

Creating a new generation that is more familiar and capable of making positive changes in the global environmental situation. To form values in children, such as caring for nature, responsibility for one's own actions and actions towards the environment, as well as understanding the need to preserve natural resources for future generations. Stimulate the active participation of students in various environmental protection measures and projects aimed at improving the environment, reducing environmental impact and preserving natural resources. Environmental education for primary school students during extracurricular activities is a vital aspect of their holistic development [2: 39]. It not only imparts knowledge about the environment but also fosters a sense of responsibility and a connection with nature [3:238].

Organizing nature walks or hikes can be a great way to let students explore the environment firsthand. This can include identification of plants and animals, understanding ecosystems, and observing natural processes. Establishing a school garden where students can grow vegetables and flowers helps them understand plant life cycles, soil science, and the importance of biodiversity. It also teaches responsibility and the value of hard work. Encouraging students to collect recyclable materials and use them in creative projects helps them understand waste management and resource conservation. Simple experiments that relate to environmental science,

like water filtration, studying local weather patterns, or observing the growth of plants, can be both educational and engaging. Visits to botanical gardens, nature reserves, recycling centers, or science museums can provide experiential learning opportunities.

Through these extracurricular activities, students not only learn about environmental science and sustainability but also develop a sense of responsibility towards the planet. It's important that these activities are age-appropriate, engaging, and provide hands-on learning experiences. The goal is to cultivate environmentally conscious individuals who respect and care for the natural world [4: 35]

Environmental education in elementary school through extracurricular activities is based on a number of basic principles and methods that contribute to the achievement of a complete environmental education and the formation of an attitude towards nature. This is interactive learning, practical orientation, interdisciplinary, cultural diversity, involvement of parents and the public. They help to form in students a deep understanding of environmental issues and motivate them to participate in nature conservation for the benefit of the environment and future generations.

The use of interactive learning methods in extracurricular environmental activities is an effective means of engaging students and increasing learning effectiveness. They allow students to actively participate in research and discovery, which makes them curious about ecology. It is work in groups, joint discussion, exchange of ideas and mutual teaching. Students learn to interact and develop communication skills. The inclusion of interactive technologies such as virtual tours, web platforms and mobile applications creates new opportunities for learning and engaging today's learners. Interactive methods allow students to acquire practical skills that they can use in real life. This helps increase interest and preparation for participation in environmental projects. They encourage students to ask questions, analyze information, and make informed decisions about environmental issues [4:59].

The role of the teacher and the teaching staff in the development of students' environmental awareness through extracurricular activities is important and decisive. Teachers and pedagogues should be an example for students in matters of environmental behavior. They play a key role in planning, organizing and conducting extracurricular environmental activities. It is necessary to develop programs, produce methodical materials, determine the place and time of events and provide the necessary support. Actively cooperate with parents and public organizations to organize joint environmental events and projects. This cooperation strengthens the impact of environmental education on students and expands its boundaries.

Therefore, with the help of extracurricular environmental activities, teachers can support students' interests in ecology, develop their ability to analyze and draw conclusions about natural problems, and also promote their sense of responsibility for the state of the environment [5:48] Cooperation between teachers, parents and community organizations is an important component for the successful organization and support of extracurricular environmental initiatives.

In general, environmental education of elementary school students in the process of extracurricular activities has great potential for the formation of environmental awareness and the development of important skills for future citizens who understand the importance of nature and are ready to take responsibility for its preservation.

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