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ECOLOGICAL EDUCATION OF PRESCHOOL CHILDREN THROUGH DIDACTIC GAME

Problem statement. Modern socio-ecological transformations necessitate the formation of an ecological culture of the individual from an early age. According to the Basic Component of Preschool Education (2021), one of the priorities of the educational process is the formation of a value-based attitude towards nature in children, awareness of the relationship between man and the environment, and acquisition of primary experience of environmentally appropriate behavior [1, pp. 12–15].

Preschool age is a sensitive period for the development of the emotional and value sphere, the formation of the foundations of environmental consciousness. In this context, special attention is required to find effective pedagogical tools that combine cognitive, emotional and activity components. One of such tools is a didactic game that corresponds to the age characteristics of children and ensures active interaction with the natural environment.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The theoretical foundations of preschool education and the need to integrate various educational areas are thoroughly covered in the works of A. Bogush [2, pp. 214–218]. The issue of systematic familiarization of children with nature and the formation of environmentally appropriate behavior is revealed in the studies of N. Gavrish and O. Reypolska [3, pp. 25–30].

K. Krutiy considers modern approaches to the organization of the educational space of a preschooler, emphasizing the active position of the child in the process of cognition [5, pp. 97–103].

In comprehensive educational programs, in particular “Child in Preschool Years” and “Ukrainian Preschool”, the content of environmental education is determined, which involves the formation of an emotionally positive attitude towards nature in children [4, pp. 145–150; 8, pp. 88–92].

Psychological and pedagogical aspects of the development of a preschool child are highlighted in the works of T. Pirozhenko, who emphasizes the role of an activity approach in the formation of personal qualities [7, pp. 54–60].

At the same time, the problem of using didactic games as the leading means of environmental education requires further methodological justification, which determines the relevance of the study.

Highlighting unresolved aspects of the problem. Analysis of scientific sources indicates insufficient specification of:

– pedagogical conditions for the effective use of didactic games with ecological content;

- criteria for the formation of ecological ideas in children;
- methodological recommendations for integrating the game into the system of ecological education.

Although monographic studies emphasize the importance of the game as a leading activity of a preschooler [10, pp. 112–118], the issue of its systematic use in the field of ecological education requires further scientific understanding.

The purpose of the article is to theoretically substantiate and determine the pedagogical conditions for the ecological education of preschool children using the didactic game.

Presentation of the main material.

Environmental education in a preschool educational institution is aimed at forming in children elementary ideas about nature, its relationships, as well as skills of environmentally appropriate behavior [3, pp. 41–45].

According to modern methodological recommendations of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, the educational process should ensure the integration of cognitive, game and practical activities of children [6, pp. 7–9]. It is the didactic game that creates conditions for active assimilation of knowledge through action that corresponds to the age characteristics of preschoolers.

A didactic game is defined as an activity specially organized by a teacher that combines an educational goal with a game form. Its structure assumes the presence of a didactic task, game rules and a result. This approach ensures the emotional involvement of the child and contributes to better assimilation of environmental knowledge [2, pp. 302–305].

Within the framework of the programs “Child in Preschool Years” and “Ukrainian Preschool”, it is recommended to use ecological games that form in children an idea of seasonal changes, rules of behavior in nature, and a careful attitude towards plants and animals [4, pp. 152–156; 8, pp. 94–98].

As K. Krutiy notes, the organization of a developmental educational space should provide for the active interaction of the child with the environment [5, pp. 128–130]. At the same time, T. Pirozhenko emphasizes that it is the activity approach that contributes to the formation of a value-based attitude towards nature [7, pp. 73–76].

Summarizing the provisions of the Basic Component of Preschool Education, it should be noted that ecological competence is formed through a combination of knowledge, emotional attitude, and practical experience [1, pp. 18–20]. It is the didactic game that acts as an effective mechanism for integrating these components.

Conclusions.

Ecological education of preschool children by means of didactic games is an effective direction of educational activity that meets the modern requirements of preschool education. Didactic games ensure active assimilation of knowledge, formation of a positive attitude towards nature and development of environmentally appropriate behavior. Its systematic use contributes to the formation of the foundations of the ecological culture of a preschooler.

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