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THE ROLE OF HOMEWORK IN TEACHING STUDENTS TO THINK INDEPENDENTLY FROM PRIMARY CLASS READING LITERACY LESSONS

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ABSTRACT

This article highlights the types of home-based tasks that are taught in primary school classes and the theoretical aspects of homework management. The role of homework in teaching elementary students to think independently is justified. The didactic and methodological aspects of the development of logical thinking of elementary school students are thoroughly analyzed. Didactic conditions for planning and teaching of home tasks are revealed.

KEYWORDS

Primary education, reading, education, upbringing, teacher, homework, task, independent thinking, question-task, activity, systematic approach, text, logical thinking, retelling, effectiveness.

INTRODUCTION

In the framework of the Development Concept of the Public Education System of the Republic of Uzbekistan until 2030, fostering ongoing participation of Uzbekistan in the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) is highlighted as a key priority goal. It emphasizes the significance of providing

support for students' involvement in this international assessment, which evaluates their reading comprehension levels. The crucial role of homework, structured around reading literacy lessons in primary classes, is underscored in facilitating students'

engagement in the PIRLS study and in attaining favorable outcomes.

Students typically approach homework by anticipating what the teacher might cover in the upcoming lesson. While preparing oral assignments, many students simply re-read the provided text once or twice. Some may even skip reading altogether and instead rely on retelling the story as presented in the textbook. The readiness for the lesson is often gauged solely by the ability to recount the text without deeply reflecting on its content. Instead of engaging with the material in a meaningful way, students tend to focus on memorizing the text's content.

Preparing homework according to a structured plan also enhances students' active intellectual independence. Students who know how to approach homework effectively tend to participate confidently in tasks that require independent thinking. Following a specific homework plan encourages children to engage with the learning material consciously. A well-designed plan helps organize students' activities, teaches them to identify essential information, prompts them to uncover important aspects, and guides them in drawing accurate conclusions. It also fosters the ability to articulate one's opinions within a systematic framework.

During oral homework assignments, students often do not consult the textbook's questions regarding the

text or engage with them. Unfortunately, teachers frequently overlook this aspect when evaluating homework. When assessing students' homework, it is crucial not only to gauge their acquired knowledge but also to evaluate their efforts in expanding, deepening, and organizing this knowledge further. This approach creates ample opportunities for students to work independently and reflect on their reading comprehension.

The biography of any writer unfolds in distinct periods, each contributing to a unique narrative. These periods often serve as topics for discussion or homework assignments, facilitated by specific questions. When tasked with extracting independent segments from a writer's biography and presenting them in a new format, students are compelled to engage deeply with the material and contemplate the provided questions. This process encourages them to move beyond mere memorization and instead prompts them to think critically about the content, fostering independence of thought [1].

When oral homework assignments are structured such that students are solely required to respond from memory, it often results in a conversation limited to the teacher and one student, excluding other students from active participation. However, when homework is designed around the central question discussed in the lesson, it teaches students to independently organize the knowledge acquired during the class, distinguish

the important points, and find evidence that aligns with the teacher's criteria. This approach prompts students to encounter new questions that demand independent thought.

In their quest to provide evidence, students not only search for facts but also strive to articulate them in their own words. This dynamic is crucial both academically and pedagogically. When students express their thoughts in their own language, it fosters independence of thinking—an essential skill in education [2].

Integrating creative elements into the process of assigning homework during classes, which involves considering students' interests and their ability to analyze events and generalize related facts, can significantly enhance the effectiveness of the homework process. Often, when students are asked to describe an event for homework, they may not provide an evaluation of it. This suggests that the teacher has never explicitly demanded such assessment and perspective from them, possibly because the teacher themselves might not possess this skill.

Students may not have developed the ability to evaluate events and express their reactions to them. However, by posing questions that require independent reasoning during homework assignments, teachers can stimulate students' mental activity. When students respond with well-chosen

evidence, these types of questions have a profoundly positive impact on their development.

In elementary grade "Reading Literacy" textbooks, students are frequently tasked with creating a plan based on a given text and then retelling what they read using that plan. In this context, it's essential for teachers to focus on developing students' planning skills and assessing their ability to understand the logical connections within a text [2].

Often, teachers tend to emphasize the second part of the task—the retelling of the text based on the plan. Consequently, students may struggle with generating a plan for writing an essay, even as they progress to higher grades. While retelling text, particularly in the upper grades, can enhance students' verbal skills, it alone cannot suffice for their intellectual development. Its utility is mainly in improving students' speech proficiency during their early education.

The true objective of teaching planning is to stimulate students' imagination and critical thinking abilities, guiding them in distinguishing between important and unimportant details, and aiding in the organization of their knowledge [2].

Such types of work that activate the minds of students not only ensure deep learning of the text of the work, but also educate the reader who is able to independently discuss any artistic work. In addition, the plan made by the students creates an opportunity

for deep and solid assimilation of the educational material by them, and relatively conscious learning of knowledge is achieved.

As homework assignments for literature education at the initial stages, the following activities can be implemented:

Re-reading the material covered in class at home.

Creating a plan outlining the key points of what was read, followed by reconstructing the story based on the plan.

Generating and responding to logical questions about the work that encourage independent reflection and the expression of personal opinions rather than mere repetition of the text.

- Assigning tasks related to works read outside the classroom.
- Engaging in independent work.
- Utilizing a dictionary for vocabulary expansion.
- Writing both oral and written essays.
- Segmenting the text into parts and devising suitable titles for each segment based on their content.
- Suggesting titles for different parts of the text and requiring students to segment the existing text accordingly, aligning with these titles.
- Developing a plan for each section and preparing to present based on this plan.

- Crafting fairy tales, riddles, poems, dreams, and stories inspired by the text.
- Analyzing and interpreting illustrations based on the text.
- Assigning both oral and written tasks revolving around questions and activities related to the text.

Implementing such assignments both in the classroom and at home fosters students' independence of thought and activity while enriching their intellectual and spiritual development [2].

In the reading literacy curriculum and textbooks, the name and quantity of homework assignments for memorization are clearly defined. According to pedagogical principles, the amount of material assigned for memorization varies based on grade level: in 1st grade, it ranges from four to eight lines; in 2nd grade, from eight to ten lines; and in grades 3-4, around 16 verses are recommended [2]. Before assigning the memorization of a complete work or a fragment, students must thoroughly comprehend its content. It's essential that the poem's text is understandable to students before they begin memorization. The level of proficiency in memorization and expressive reading serves as an indicator of their comprehension.

All students are expected to memorize the works required by the state standards of literary education. However, the curriculum also includes supplementary

materials for memorization to facilitate engagement with the textbook questions. It wouldn't be appropriate to demand simultaneous memorization of all prescribed poetic works from every student. In this regard, it's important to consider students' preferences and capabilities.

Homework involving the analysis of photos serves as a valuable tool in elementary reading literacy classes, aiding students in developing a clearer visualization of the characters depicted in literary works. However, the current educational practice often falls short in effectively organizing activities related to working with pictures. Teachers typically focus solely on surface-level aspects of the images, neglecting deeper analysis. Yet, engaging with pictures based on the text can significantly enhance students' spiritual maturity [3].

Homework tasks for working with photos delve into various aspects, including the role of colors, their significance within the photo, their proportions, the rationale behind their selection, the impact of illuminated objects, and their contribution to the overall image. As students progress to higher grades, attention is directed towards analyzing facial expressions, eye movements, body language, and the color palette used to depict characters.

These assignments cultivate students' sensitivity to color, their ability to interpret visual imagery, and an appreciation for the musicality of colors. Tasks may

involve dissecting each object within the picture, elucidating its role, crafting narratives based on the depicted scene, and evaluating the emotional nuances conveyed through facial expressions and body language. Such activities instill discipline in narrative coherence and train students to assess the world and human emotions through the lens of color. Analyzing the eyes, facial expressions, and posture of characters familiarizes students with the distinction between portraiture and narrative illustration.

Homework for working with questions and assignments. Certain questions are given to work on the literary texts presented in the book "Reading Literacy" for primary classes. It is known that in the 3rd and 4th grades of primary school, the number of questions given to students as homework on the text of the work should not exceed four.

Questions presented in textbooks vary in nature, some requiring description while others call for generalization. Certain questions prompt the recall of previously learned material, while others demand comprehensive thinking and analysis. When students prepare answers at home to questions about a text, they may grasp the general principle correctly but struggle to support it with examples from the text itself. Even when they possess ample knowledge of the subject matter, they find it challenging to explain or justify their assertions when asked to do so.

The difficulty lies in the transition from simply knowing the facts to organizing them into a new framework or direction outlined by the teacher's question. Initially, this process may perplex students. However, as they recognize the task's alignment with their cognitive abilities and establish connections between facts, their thinking becomes more active. With time and practice, they become adept at articulating their understanding and reasoning.

The teacher's approach to formulating homework questions or tasks plays a crucial role in fostering students' independent thinking and mental engagement. By framing questions that are relevant to the topic at hand, the teacher creates an environment conducive to active mental participation. Encouraging students to move beyond mere repetition of material, the teacher prompts them to generalize their understanding around a central idea, extract relevant information, and express their thoughts in their own words, devoid of rote phrases. This approach compels students to analyze the underlying causes of events, construct their arguments on sound scientific and logical foundations, objectively evaluate situations, and synthesize their observations [3].

In this context, additional follow-up questions prove invaluable. They facilitate the expansion of students' knowledge by building upon previously learned concepts. Rather than regurgitating existing knowledge, follow-up questions encourage students

to explore new avenues and identify unknown aspects, thus guiding them towards discovery and deeper understanding.

Organizing students' home essays is a vital aspect of literary education, as essays serve as a catalyst for sharpening thinking, broadening worldview, solidifying thoughts and views, and nurturing spirituality. Throughout all stages of school, students are tasked with writing essays. The imagination and fantasy world of a student are often richer and more expansive than those of adults. It is essential to harness this inherent creativity in students. While a student's life experience may be limited compared to that of an adult, their perspective on the world is often simpler and more vibrant. Encouraging students to engage in creative expression becomes effortless when they are presented with topics that captivate their curiosity, evoke emotional responses, and enable them to articulate their feelings and perspectives through words [4].

It's common for a child's writing to lack the weightiness found in more formal discourse. However, the objective isn't to turn every student into a masterful writer. What truly matters is nurturing a sense of creativity in students, fostering their ability to engage with and respond to the material they've learned in class. This process lays the foundation for the development of their humanity and individuality. It's important to tailor assignments to each student's

strengths and interests. Assigning tasks on subjects they don't understand or enjoy only serves to promote dryness and superficiality in their education.

To cultivate creativity in students, it's crucial to ignite a sense of curiosity and engagement with the environment, nature, animals, plants, and people. Rather than imposing topics they dislike or are unfamiliar with, it's better to encourage exploration and expression in areas that genuinely resonate with them [4].

In primary grades literary education, when students are tasked with writing essays or statements at home, it's essential to ensure that they are not burdened with excessive workloads in other academic subjects. Crafting essays and statements demands significant mental effort and time. Even at higher levels of education, collaboration among teachers of different subjects ensures that homework assignments are coordinated, allowing for effective management of students' time. Furthermore, school schedules should be designed to limit homework to 3-4 assignments per day. As students progress to higher grades, the focus should shift towards deepening the content rather than increasing the quantity of homework. The scope of expectations will expand accordingly.

Additionally, elementary grade students can engage in essay writing based on pictures and observations,

providing them with a creative outlet for expressing their thoughts and ideas.

Instead of blindly adopting every aspect of the global education system, it's crucial to identify and integrate elements that align with the national characteristics and spiritual identity of Uzbek students. Merely importing foreign pedagogical methods without considering these factors will yield ineffective results. Experience exchanges have demonstrated that essay writing is a prominent feature of many foreign education systems.

Home essays, which encourage students to express their free and independent judgments, can play a pivotal role in nurturing independent thinking among students. By assigning essays at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year, following some initial study and analysis of literary works, teachers can monitor the development of students' independent thinking over time. This approach facilitates the cultivation of critical thinking skills and encourages students to articulate their perspectives thoughtfully.

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