

# The practical significance of integrating prose works in developing students' literary-aesthetic competencies

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**Abstract:** This article discusses the practical importance of teaching prose works in an integrated manner to develop students' literary-aesthetic competencies in general secondary schools. It examines how an interdisciplinary approach to teaching literature can nurture spiritually mature and aesthetically sensitive individuals, thereby contributing to holistic education.

**Keywords:** Conceptual thinking, types of perception, individual differences, experimental teaching, conceptual approach, educational integration, cognitive activity, literary-aesthetic education.

**Introduction:** The knowledge and experience of educated, enlightened individuals are vital for internalizing the content of art and for sensing the author's ideas and the characters' emotions. Scientific (conceptual) and artistic (figurative) thinking are closely interwoven with cognitive activity, influencing each other in the learning process. Establishing interdisciplinary integration when teaching literature is one of the most pressing issues in educational methodology today. Just as all phenomena in the world exist in harmony and interconnection, the education system—which shapes our understanding of that world—must integrate the teaching of all academic subjects. Literary education is no exception.

Literature profoundly impacts the human psyche, worldview, behavior, speech development, and one's role in the family and society. It is therefore necessary to examine it extensively, including integrating literary progress into the broader concept of artistic-aesthetic education as a "constituent part." The structure and teaching methods of literature courses in general secondary schools—specifically, how and why national and world literature are taught and how texts are selected—determine the substance of the lessons. The repeated emphasis on the goal of literary education underscores the objective of nurturing a morally developed, aesthetically sensitive individual. In this regard, the point is not merely to "educate the reader"

but also to embrace the spiritual richness at the heart of literary works and to use that richness to guide students toward deeper engagement.

Although it is widely recognized that literature is a form of "human studies," the term implies not only the understanding of the world and humankind but also the redirection of one's consciousness toward a more progressive outlook—shaping one's attitude toward the surrounding world and the discovery of self. As the scholar D. Quronov states: "Because creative writing is essentially a cognitive process, artistic literature is also a phenomenon linked to consciousness. Yet, it realizes knowledge through an approach unique to art—literature expresses itself through artistic images. Therefore, literature is a dual phenomenon, equally connected to art and social consciousness." [1; 33-b].

## METHODOLOGY

In many developed countries, the objectives of teaching literature in schools emerge through a specialized study of how art impacts the younger generation. This involves focusing on students' aesthetic education and the active, in-depth perception of literary texts; moral and social development; mental "hygiene"; introduction to poetic language; the cultivation of logical thinking; and even the practical integration of manual labor, physical education, and meeting social needs. In countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Turkey, the

primary goal of a literature curriculum is to help students master the native language in all its functions and styles, gain active communication skills, and understand the specific characteristics of artistic expression conveyed through language. Inevitably, this leads to a focus on the interrelationship between education, instruction, and personal development in the study of literature. One can also illustrate this by examining how literature is taught in conjunction with other academic subjects.

The content of literary education must include all elements that can be explored through specific instructional methods, including activities that promote creative engagement. However, today's rapidly changing environment, with its intensified individual differences, varied modes of perception, and natural aptitudes, requires more precise and well-founded solutions. As early as the late 19th century, French schools implemented a methodological system known as "explication de texte" (textual commentary), aimed at achieving this fundamental goal of literary education. A similar approach can be found in the German gymnasium programs, where the study of literature centers on close textual work, primarily to develop students' speech and writing skills.

## RESULTS

Some contemporary methodologists and literary scholars recommend enhancing national education by drawing on foreign practices related to analyzing and interpreting literary texts. They focus on complex, synthetic literary-theoretical concepts such as the figure of the author, authorial perspective, reader response, and active reading [2; 160-b]. In determining how to introduce students to a conscious and aesthetic appreciation of literature, research in developmental and personality psychology is particularly relevant. Children's worldview starts to form rapidly and deeply in early adolescence; this is when they develop a system of ethical beliefs, refine their literary tastes, and discover specific interests in art and science. Their general and specialized abilities grow intensively, as does their capacity for critical thinking about themselves and their surroundings, gradually becoming responsible and active citizens.

When developing literary-aesthetic competencies, educators must account for the works (both classroom and independent reading) that students will study according to the curriculum. These may include classical, modern, lyric, philosophical prose, civic poetry, love poetry, as well as various genres of classic and contemporary drama. The depiction of complex personal experiences, relative fluidity in time and space, and unique portrayals of reality—all rich in

psychological depth and stylistic forms—serve as essential material for elevating young readers' literary awareness.

In both oral and written artistic expression, words not only refer to objects and ideas but also establish broad contextual relationships that convey extensive artistic generalizations. Therefore, students can truly perceive and interpret an artistic image only if they possess sufficient language proficiency and the ability to abstract and generalize at a high level. Particularly during early adolescence—when perception is most sensitive—a scientifically grounded approach and carefully structured learning phases are essential. In the past decade, the teaching of literature in secondary schools has become a recurring topic in newspapers, journals, television, and radio programs. Debates range from questions about direct engagement with texts and curriculum requirements to the very need for literary education. Literary scholar Z. Mirzayeva explains why Uzbek literature education struggles to align with international standards:

**1. Lack of a theoretical foundation** for specific conceptual approaches aimed at teaching or studying literary works;

**2. Superficial implementation of integration** between subjects, with many research findings in methodology not being systematically applied in practice, leading to a disconnect between literary education and pragmatism;

**3. Limited scope of current studies**, which focus only on internal possibilities within literary education, neglecting the advanced pedagogical practices and theoretical insights from developed foreign countries. In some cases, outdated teaching methods remain entrenched, with no progress toward more effective strategies [3; 26-34-b].

One might add that promising methods for interpreting literary texts, currently employed by a handful of expert teachers, have yet to be widely adopted. Many students view literature mainly as a path to entering prestigious universities or, nowadays, as a source of potential financial reward. In reality, however, the core goal is to help students refine their emotional lives through reading, gain moral and aesthetic satisfaction from texts, draw lessons from depicted events, and thereby prepare themselves for life.

## CONCLUSION

In a presentation on the "Leading Principles of Modern Philological Education," the noted literary scholar Professor Q. Yo'ldoshev identifies root issues in teaching. He concludes:

"Students should not be treated merely as objects who

absorb a certain amount of ‘truths’ in different subjects; rather, they must be guided to become individuals capable of evaluating any event or situation in society with a healthy, independent perspective. In selecting literature for schools, the importance is not the literary status or popularity of a particular author or work but the extent to which it can foster the moral qualities that should be cultivated in the student’s spiritual development.” [4; 12-13-b].

Indeed, in every era, acquiring systematic knowledge about the development and uniqueness of literature as an art form has been a critical issue. There is growing advocacy for building stronger skills in reading, analyzing, and evaluating literary texts—encouraging empathy toward authors and their characters as a result of deeper reading, rather than merely accepting first impressions. According to methodologists, analyzing a literary work immediately after students’ initial, often unprepared reading primarily serves to correct misunderstandings and fill in the gaps in comprehension. Yet achieving true independence of thought in students is impossible without building on the experiences of past generations and cultivating the ability to evaluate both the literary and social dimensions of a work. Such independence develops only in harmony with the growth of emotional and psychological maturity. As the philosopher Al-Farabi noted: “A child possesses a heart capable of great potential, endowed with the faculties of perception through feeling and intellect. Through these faculties, one comes to understand physical entities.” [5; 79-b]. Methodologist R. Keldiyorov echoes these sentiments, urging caution and awareness of students’ inner emotional world: “Be careful—there is a heart there.” [6; 52-b].

As students’ language skills grow, their ability to perceive and understand artistic speech is honed through reading and studying works of literature. Artistic thinking prioritizes the personal, individual character of psychological processes (figurative generalization and specification), heightened emotional coloring, and a drive to uncover truth. Figurative generalization and concrete realization are specific cognitive processes involving a kind of “self-transference”: the process of understanding a literary work becomes, in part, a process of self-discovery.

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