

CHILDREN'S SPEECH AND MENTAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CULTURE

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In the course of the “Kindergarten as a model of environmental culture” experiment we turned our attention to how widespread speech and mental development problems have become in preschool children compared to recently and decided to help children by following Ushinsky's advice: *“If the child's attention is weak, speech is very abrupt and incoherent and pronunciation is bad, it is better not to start formal education yet and prepare the child for it by talking about objects that around or described in pictures...”* We explored the opportunities of speech and mental development in modern city children by introducing them to environmental culture with the help of special texts, tests and pictures on paper and digital media. The experiment fully proved the modern science findings about human speech development patterns. By introducing children to environmental culture through conversations about the phenomena and objects of nature, teachers from the kindergarten №1820 proved that indeed it wasn't necessary to force children to learn language and thinking: children were eager to explain everything around them, discuss their notions with teachers and other children. Children who didn't show much interest in hearing and understanding speech on other lessons during speech lessons in the context of environmental culture were eager to learn names of objects and phenomena, sometimes demonstrating remarkable mental work. In the morning right after entering the kindergarten children were asking: “Will we be answering the questions today?”, “Do you remember that it's my turn next?”

The success of this experiment proved that interesting and exciting activities on exploring nature with children play an important role in children's speech and mental development providing there is meaningful communication between the child and the mentor. The goal of such communication is to bring child's attention to the fact that usual surrounding objects and phenomena can have different ecological states. In order to tell good from bad in ecological terms one must have necessary knowledge. And one must know how to search for it. This is why it is important to have special guidebooks for conducting information search together with children on the topic of environmental culture.