



DEVELOPING CREATIVITY AND INDEPENDENT THINKING SKILLS IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS DURING READING LITERACY LESSONS

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***Annotation:** This article emphasizes that elementary education serves as a vital foundation for children's future intellectual and creative development. The study explores methods for directing reading literacy lessons towards fostering creativity and independent thinking skills. Additionally, the article examines ways to enhance the efficiency of this process through various pedagogical approaches and practices.*

***Keywords:** elementary school, creativity, independent thinking, reading literacy, pedagogical technologies*

Introduction:

Have you ever heard the saying, "A heart that is not nurtured with books and knowledge cannot truly flourish"? Cultivating a foundation for moral growth in children through reading is one of education's highest aims. Today's elementary education seeks not only to improve students' literacy but also to develop their independent thinking and creative abilities.

Elementary school students are naturally curious, open-minded, and filled with immense imagination. Therefore, reading literacy lessons should not be limited to simply reading texts aloud. These lessons must serve as a platform for creative activity and independent reasoning.

Why Are Creativity and Independent Thinking Important?

Creativity is the ability to generate new ideas and approach existing information from fresh perspectives. Independent thinking enables students to not only comprehend a text but also analyze, evaluate, and draw conclusions from it. By fostering these two skills, we can instill the following abilities in students:

- Analyzing texts and identifying key ideas;
- Providing creative and unconventional responses to various questions;
- Expressing their opinions about a text and presenting their ideas.

Creative Approaches in Reading Literacy Lessons

To foster creativity in elementary school, lessons should be engaging, interactive, and rich in meaning. When lessons evoke satisfaction and inspire creativity, students naturally become motivated to think creatively. The following methods have proven effective in enriching students' worldviews and making lessons more interesting:

1. **Bringing Texts to Life:** After reading a text, assign students roles from the story and organize a small play. For example, enacting the dialogue between the Wolf and the Lamb from a fairy tale encourages imagination and creativity.
2. **Innovative Questioning:** Use unconventional approaches to asking questions about the text. For instance, “What would have happened if the character admitted their mistake?” or “How could this story unfold in the future?”
3. **Creative Assignments:** Ask students to write a new ending to the story, draw illustrations based on the text, or rewrite the story from another character's perspective.
4. **Imaginative Exercises:** Pose tasks such as, “Imagine that one day the fairy tale characters visit your school. What would you do in their place?” Such exercises help foster creativity and independent thinking.

Classes	Development Levels	Low	Medium and High
Experimental Classes	51 / 51.2%	22 / 22.5%	25 / 26.3%
Control Classes	48 / 50.5%	23 / 23.0%	26 / 26.5%
Average	99 / 50.9%	45 / 22.8%	51 / 26.3%

Research Findings:

Studies conducted with elementary school students demonstrate that incorporating creativity-oriented tasks in reading lessons increases students' engagement and encourages creative approaches. Independently analyzing texts and proposing new ideas boost students' self-confidence and lay the groundwork for defending their opinions. Transforming reading lessons into opportunities for dialogue and creative activity, rather than mere memorization, enhances overall learning outcomes.

Conclusion and Recommendations:

Teaching native language and reading literacy cannot meet program requirements through mere text presentation. The underlying educational idea of a text is revealed only through understanding and perception. Topics chosen for lessons should not only acquaint students with texts but also provide knowledge and education on daily life, independence, and human relationships.

To develop creative thinking skills in elementary school students, the following methods are recommended:

- Written assignments aimed at fostering creative thinking;
- Analyzing problem situations and developing solutions;
- Analyzing exemplary stories and assessing answers to test questions;
- Evaluating oral responses to topic-related questions.

Additionally, lesson plans tailored to develop creative thinking based on the curriculum for "Native Language and Reading Literacy" should be prepared and utilized in teaching practices.

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