METHODS OF LITERARY ANALYSIS IN 4TH GRADE READING LESSONS

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Abstract

This article examines the scientific and methodological foundations of applying literary analysis methods in 4th grade reading lessons. Taking into account the age-related and psychological characteristics of primary school students, the study identifies effective approaches to analyzing literary texts. Literary analysis is considered as a pedagogical tool for developing reading literacy, speech competence, independent thinking, and moral-aesthetic values among learners. The article also presents a sample lesson structure and methodological recommendations aimed at improving the effectiveness of reading instruction in primary education.

Keywords

primary education, reading lessons, literary analysis, literary text, character analysis, plot, teaching methods.

Introduction

In the primary education system, reading instruction plays a crucial role in shaping students' reading literacy, cognitive development, and moral education. One of the key objectives of reading lessons is to develop learners' ability to consciously perceive literary texts, understand their content, and evaluate characters and events.

The 4th grade represents a transitional stage in which students move from basic reading techniques toward elementary literary analysis. At this stage, the use of appropriate literary analysis methods becomes particularly important. Within the framework of a competency-based educational approach, literary analysis contributes to the development of students' personal, communicative, and social competencies.

Theoretical Framework: Literary Analysis in Primary Education

Literary analysis is defined as a process aimed at understanding the content, idea, plot structure, and system of characters in a literary work. In literary studies, analysis serves to interpret a text holistically, whereas in primary education it primarily fulfills educational, developmental, and moral functions.

In 4th grade reading lessons, literary analysis focuses on:

a)   identifying the main plot and sequence of events;

b)   evaluating characters' actions and motivations;

c)   understanding the central idea of the text through simple conclusions;

d)   fostering moral and ethical reflection.

Thus, literary analysis serves not only as a cognitive activity but also as a means of personality development in young learners.

Age Characteristics of 4th Grade Students

and Methodological Implications

Students aged 9–10 are characterized by vivid imagination, emotional sensitivity, and a tendency toward imitation. These developmental features require the use of literary analysis methods that are:

a)   simple and accessible;

b)   closely related to real-life experiences;

c)   based on dialogue, discussion, and guided reflection.

Consequently, the teacher's role is to facilitate analysis through age-appropriate questions and interactive methods rather than abstract theoretical explanations.

Methods of Literary Analysis in 4th Grade Reading Lessons

1. Conversation-Based Method. The conversation method encourages active student participation and comprehension of the text. Questions are designed to explore characters' actions, motives, and cause-and-effect relationships within the narrative.

2. Character Analysis. Character analysis involves examining a character's personality through their behavior, speech, and relationships with other characters. This method is closely linked to moral education, as students learn to evaluate ethical choices and personal qualities.

3. Plot-Based Analysis. Plot-based analysis focuses on identifying the sequence of events in a literary work. This approach contributes to the development of logical thinking and narrative understanding.

4. Expressive Reading. Expressive reading enhances the emotional perception of the text and supports students' understanding of characters' inner states and moods. It also improves reading fluency and intonation skills.

5. Comparative Method. The comparative method involves comparing characters or events within a text. This method helps students develop analytical thinking and the ability to draw reasoned conclusions.

Practical Implementation: Sample Lesson Structure

Topic: Identifying Character Traits in a Literary Text

Grade: 4

Lesson Type: Introduction of new material

Objectives:

•   to develop students' skills in analyzing character traits;

•   to foster independent thinking and oral communication.

Lesson Stages:

1.   Introductory discussion

2.   Expressive reading of the text

3.   Identification of characters' actions

4.   Guided discussion and question–answer session

5.   Drawing conclusions

6. Methodological Recommendations

Based on the analysis, the following methodological recommendations are proposed:

•   avoid the use of complex literary terminology;

•   formulate questions appropriate to students' age and cognitive level;

•   connect literary characters with real-life situations;

•   integrate literary analysis with moral and educational objectives.

Conclusion

The purposeful and systematic use of literary analysis methods in 4th grade reading lessons significantly contributes to the development of students' reading literacy, speech competence, analytical thinking, and moral values. Literary analysis functions as an effective pedagogical tool for holistic personality development in primary education.

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