

USING FAIRY TALE THERAPY IN PRESCHOOL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract: This article examines the pedagogical, psychological, and developmental significance of using fairy tale therapy in preschool educational institutions. Fairy tale therapy is considered an effective method for improving children's emotional well-being, developing imagination, overcoming fears, and forming social skills. The paper analyzes theoretical foundations, methodological approaches, and the practical value of therapeutic storytelling within modern early childhood education.

Keywords: fairy tale therapy, preschool education, emotional development, storytelling methods, child psychology, early childhood pedagogy.

Introduction

Preschool age is a sensitive period for the formation of children's personality, imagination, emotional stability, and communication skills. In this context, the use of psychological and pedagogical technologies that correspond to children's natural cognitive and emotional processes is of great importance. One of the most effective and child-friendly approaches is fairy tale therapy, a method of influencing emotional states and behavior through specially selected or created stories.

Fairy tale therapy supports the development of moral understanding, helps children cope with fears, facilitates the expression of emotions, and encourages positive behavioral patterns. These qualities make it a valuable tool for preschool educators.

Theoretical Foundations of Fairy Tale Therapy. Fairy tale therapy is grounded in the works of L. Vygotsky, B. Bettelheim, K. Jung, and contemporary child psychologists. Fairy tales act as symbolic models that allow children to reflect on their

own experiences through metaphorical characters and events. Core psychological principles include:

1. Symbolic mediation: Children identify their emotions and inner conflicts through characters and magical situations.
2. Safe emotional expression: The fairy tale world provides a non-threatening space to process fears and worries.
3. Development of imagination: Fairy tales activate cognitive creativity and narrative thinking.
4. Formation of moral values: Through story plots, children understand concepts such as kindness, honesty, courage, and cooperation.

Fairy tale therapy helps children manage anxiety and fear, recognize and express emotions, develop empathy and compassion, build emotional resilience. After listening to therapeutic stories, children are more willing to share their thoughts, express concerns, and engage in discussions. Fairy tales enrich children's vocabulary, improve coherent speech, stimulate memory, and develop logical thinking. Retelling stories and creating new endings improve linguistic skills and narrative competence. Fairy tale characters model appropriate behavior, showing children how to resolve conflicts, cooperate, and make responsible choices. Educators may use specially designed stories to correct aggressive behavior, teach communication norms, or encourage positive habits.

Creative development. Through drawing, dramatization, puppet theater, and storytelling activities, children express creativity and strengthen fine motor and artistic skills. Reading and discussing therapeutic stories - Educators read stories that correspond to children's emotional needs (e.g., overcoming fear of darkness, jealousy, loneliness). Creative storytelling-Children are encouraged to invent stories with guidance, which strengthens self-confidence and imagination. Dramatization and role-play- Acting out fairy tales helps children embody emotions and explore solutions to internal conflicts. Illustration and art-based reflection- Drawing characters or fairy tale scenes promotes emotional expression and relaxation.

Puppet therapy - Puppet characters become safe mediators for communication, especially for shy or anxious children. Efficient integration of fairy tale therapy requires identifying children's psychological needs, selecting appropriate therapeutic tales, preparing visual materials and puppets, creating a supportive environment for storytelling, involving parents for extended home-based reinforcement. Educators should observe children's reactions, conduct reflective discussions, and document developmental progress. Research and pedagogical observations show that regular use of fairy tale therapy in preschools leads to reduced anxiety and emotional tension, improved behavior and social interactions, enhanced verbal expression and communication skills, increased motivation for learning activities, better adaptation to preschool conditions. Fairy tale therapy becomes not only a psychological support tool but also an integral part of the holistic development of preschool children.

Conclusion. Fairy tale therapy is a powerful pedagogical method that aligns with the natural interests and emotional needs of preschool children. Its systematic use in preschool educational institutions promotes emotional well-being, enriches cognitive skills, develops social competence, and nurtures creativity. By incorporating therapeutic storytelling into daily educational practice, preschool educators can significantly enhance the quality of early childhood education and support children's harmonious development. Moreover, the integration of fairy tale therapy into preschool educational practice strengthens the holistic nature of child development by addressing emotional, cognitive, social, and moral dimensions simultaneously. It enables educators to create a psychologically safe and supportive environment where children can explore complex feelings, understand social roles, and internalize positive behavioral patterns through symbolic narratives. The method is highly flexible and can be adapted to diverse educational needs, cultural contexts, and individual developmental differences. As the demand for child-centered and emotionally supportive pedagogical approaches continues to grow, fairy tale therapy stands out as a valuable, scientifically grounded, and developmentally appropriate tool that contributes to the overall well-being and harmonious growth of preschool children. Its

relevance in modern early childhood education highlights the importance of further methodological research, educator training, and the creation of culturally sensitive therapeutic stories tailored to the unique needs of young learners.

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