

DEVELOPING ECOLOGICAL LITERACY AMONG CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT

Today mankind faces numerous problems related to physical, emotional and social aspects. One of the major causes is moving away from our mother nature. We face deforestation, climatic changes, biodiversity, environmental degradation, inequitable access to natural resources and the movement of hazardous materials in different parts of the world and many other issues. Ecological literacy is the ability to understand the natural systems that make life on earth possible. To be an ecoliterate means understanding the ecosystem and using this knowledge for creating sustainable human community. In simple terms, ecoliteracy is being aware of this beautiful, bountiful and mysterious environment. This sense of loving nature has to start from the childhood stage. The children should be reconnected to the natural environment and many activities can be designed with this view. This paper deals with the various ways of developing ecological literacy among children.

Keywords: Ecological literacy, Eco literate.

"I speak for the trees, for the trees have no tongues.....Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not."

- Dr.Seussthe.

Today mankind is facing numerous problems related to physical, emotional and social aspects. One of the major causes is moving away from our mother nature. In today's world human beings are running behind the money and they lack the awareness of the problem that surrounds them and the future consequences of their every action towards nature. In order to overcome the problems like ozone depletion, global warming, depletion of resources, natural disasters, climate change, etc and to manage the present situation it is necessary to make every child understand about ecoliteracy.

Ecoliteracy is the ability to understand the nature that makes life on the earth possible. To be ecoliterate means understanding the principles of organization of ecological communities and using these principles for creating sustainable human communities. Educator David Orr defines the ecologically literate person as someone with "the knowledge necessary to comprehend interrelatedness, and an attitude of care or stewardship" and additionally with "the practical competence required to act on the basis of knowledge and feeling" (92).

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consequences of their every action towards nature. One such problem is the environmental problem which includes ozone depletion, global warming, depletion of resources, natural disasters, climate change, etc. In order to overcome these problems and to manage the present situation it is necessary to make every child understand about ecoliteracy.

1. STEPS IN DEVELOPING ECOLITERACY IN CHILDREN

1.1. Widening the eyes on all forms of the life

It is necessary to create a view on every human being that nature belongs to all forms of life. So it is always easy to mould a child than a matured adult. Educating a child from the beginning about ecoliteracy will create a future generation in which the environmental problems will be reduced.

1.2. Hands together for Sustainability

We know that organisms do not survive in isolation; all the living things in this world are interconnected. Children should be made clear about the role of interconnectedness within their communities and they should know the value in strengthening these relationships by thinking and acting cooperatively. Projects can be given to the students that give opportunity to start building a community that values diverse perspectives towards a common good with a strong network of relationships and resiliency.

1.3. Seeing the consequences

Human beings were unaware of the consequences for their own actions. For example, if for construction purposes the forest area is cleared; it would soon cause flooding, erosion, loss of biodiversity, etc. We can make the children sense the consequences by making a field trip to an area which has been destructed but which is the source of all energies.

1.4. Nature as a Teacher

Organisms are members of systems nested within other systems, from the micro level to the macro level. Each level supports the others to sustain life. Everyone should learn from the nature to take only what they need and to adjust their behavior in times of boom (or) bust. They should also learn not to abuse the resources which they need in order to survive.

2. ACTIVITIES WHICH WOULD BE INCLUDED IN CURRICULUM TO DEVELOP ECOLITERACY AMONG CHILDREN

2.1. Celebrating nature

We should make celebrations of Earth day, Environmental day, Water day, etc. and also make the children to participate in celebrations and arouse their interest towards nature.

2.2. Enacting the nature

We could make them to enact dramas which depicts about the nature and its impact on human beings and other living things. This would make them realize about the facts related to nature and they get a closeness towards nature.

2.3. Making a Green Blanket

We can ask them to make a kitchen garden or plant tress and can make them involve in ecological activities.

2.4. Zooming in on Nature

Teach the children every aspect towards a small change in nature. Give them a book with instructions and ask them to find a rock or a tree with the instructions given. This kindles the interest among the students.

2.5. Goggling the Earth

We can ask them to goggle Earth and view about different landscapes and different regions and can create a love towards nature in them.

2.6. Click nature

We can ask them to prepare a photo album on the themes related to nature and could also ask them to make a collage and from this activity we could also make them appreciate the beauty of nature.

2.7. Live with nature

We can arrange camps for children in natural habitat and Make them to love nature, live with the nature and admire the nature.

2.8. Ecoposters

We would ask them to collect various seed and we can ask them to make a seed collage and form Ecoposters to make them involved in ecological activities.

2.9. Designing outdoor play

Outdoor play can help reconnect children to their surroundings and lead to a more environmentally minded generation. In addition to helping kids acquire factual knowledge, outdoor play spaces should cultivate a sense of wonder and delight and an emotional appreciation of the living world.

2.10. Allow for Direct Experience with Elements of Nature

Children can be given opportunity to interact with nature on a regular basis like working with soil which may make their hands dirty but still enjoy, they can be made to plant different saplings, grow flowers and vegetables, make compost, identify and remove weed, and more. Teachers should be encouraged to make use of the outside teaching environment as frequently as possible.

By bringing out certain changes in the curriculum by incorporating ecological activities we can develop a greener future generation and also save our mother nature.

SAVE EARTH! SAVE LIFE!

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