

Participant 11 – River of experience

River-related depictions

Panel 1: top left

LIFE PHILOSOPHY

My beliefs:

The teacher is a child's friend

Learning at school - an outstanding moment in a child's life

My life credo:

'Give others a tiny bit of yourself. In return, your soul will be filled with light.' (Lina Kostenko*)

(*poetess and former Soviet dissident - UP)

My pedagogical credo:

To help children realize the joy of work, the joy of academic success, to awaken in their hearts a sense of pride and self-esteem - this is the first commandment of an educator. V. O. Sukhomlynsky

Panel 2: top right

Learning through play

(participant notes: Investigative and methodological problem: play as a means of activating interest and developing the cognitive abilities of elementary school pupils.

Modern psychology recognizes that play encompasses all periods of a person's life and is an important form of life activity, and not an age-limited feature. One does not part with play during one's life, only one's motives, forms of performance, degree of manifestation of feelings and emotions change.

In order to manage play activities, to reveal their full educational and developmental potential, it is necessary to know their structure and consider the characteristics and age of individual pupils.

Our learning is learning through play. We used everything at hand - from clothespins, cubes, mom's buttons, stones from the seashore to a LEGO borrowed from my son for the lesson, children's magazine and newspaper activities, The Magic Book of Nature set by Daria Bida, websites, educational games on various topics, and personally developed teaching aids.)

Panel 3: bottom left

Pupil participation in contests and projects (over the last 3 years)

Educational projects:

'The Red Book of Ukraine'

'Illustrating our work'

'A bird's dining room'

'My family'

'Easter traditions in my family'

Educational activities, projects:

'Me and our class'

'My safety'

'Safe and nutritious food' (mini-project)

'My Ukraine' (on the basis of materials from the magazine 'Dzhmil' (Bumblebee)

'Getting to know myself and others' (based on tasks from the website 'Child Development')

eTwinning Plus (*In eTwinning, teachers organize and run on-site and online activities with their students along with colleagues from countries participating in the Erasmus+ program. eTwinning Plus extends the eTwinning program for schools to certain countries of the eastern and southern neighbourhood: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Jordan, Lebanon, the Republic of Moldova, Tunisia, Ukraine - UP).

Panel 4: bottom right

New Ukrainian School (NUS) training, Lutsk region. When learning is a joy. (Participant notes: The importance of face-to-face sessions and refresher training for professional continuity. I started working with primary school teachers in Lutsk region as a teacher-trainer in October 2018. If at first you saw frightened and outraged teachers (and you, yourself, were no less worried), and encountered misunderstanding of the essence of the New Ukrainian School as such, then at the end of the training you saw happy, grateful eyes of a friendly team-family (in their questionnaires, colleagues thanked me for my work, positive emotions; they said 'You showed us how to work with children in a different way', 'Oh, you have taught in the NUS way for a long time!'). I won't say that I've been with NUS for a long time, but I'm interested in new educational products, trying new things in practice, and trying to create something new myself. I would like to thank the teachers for their willingness to learn, interact, their positive communication and the friendly atmosphere in our sessions.)



*(*translation of notes to the river as provided by the participant, in lieu of river artifact which she was unable to complete under the circumstances)*

So, while studying at school, I didn't even think about entering teacher's college. I really liked the profession of a doctor (pediatrician). I liked to observe doctors and their actions in a hospital or clinic, I liked to examine medical instruments, I was interested in what they were needed for (my only fear was of dentists and their 'drills'). And I considered surgeons to be wizards...

But, apparently, fate itself determined who I should be. It is from here that a small stream originated...

I learned to read at the age of 5 and even in kindergarten I read fairy tales to my friends when we were in a group (we especially liked the fairy tale about Cinderella). Later, when I went to school, my parents gave me a HUGE BOOK (or so it seemed to me at the time; it was A4 format). It was 'Fairy Tales'. The fairy tale 'OH!' (the name turned out to be interesting) and others fascinated me and my friends (neighbour children) who listened to them in the improvised school that we set up at my house. We also had such subjects as 'mathematics', 'Ukrainian language', 'work'. Our 'blackboard' was an insert panel from a folding table (we took it so that my mother would not know, because at first, she scolded us, but then we reconciled); pieces of chalk were found in a pile of sand that was brought for construction work (my parents were building a house). Even then, I noticed that one pile of these chalk pieces was greater than the other, one was harder, and the other more brittle and wrote better. And when relatives brought pieces of coloured chalk from Poland (beautiful, smooth, and so fragrant!), it was a real 'Wow!' moment. True, it was more difficult to wipe off this chalk from the board.

After 9th grade (1995), I entered the Lutsk (Halan) Teachers College. During my studies, I really enjoyed mastering teaching methods, creating lesson plans and educational schedules, and then conducting them.

I got married while in my 4th year of college. My husband was in his last year at a technical university.

We lived at my house, learning to combine family life with education.

In 1999, I graduated from the college and went to work as a teacher of elementary grades at the Lavriv Village School I-III.

The first time I crossed the threshold of the school where I was supposed to work, I thought that it was a fairy tale, that this was not happening to me (and in the classroom, when there were no children yet, I spun around the room, like a little girl). And then – the inquisitive, clear, deep eyes of schoolchildren (4th graders), first smiles, questions, first lesson.

And that's how, from then until today (and it's been 22 years), I live for school and family (I thank my beloved husband who tolerates (LOVES) me the way I am, together with my, now New Ukrainian School; my own children, to two wonderful sons.) A lot has changed.... We had time to build a house, buy a car, 'survive' several attestations... Now, looking back, I still don't understand why I was so afraid of those attestations....

- 'Lives in the village. And what, she doesn't have any hectares?' - the members of the commission once asked during one of my attestations.

- 'Does she sleep at home? Does she have a family?'

- 'What else did she invent?'

- 'Where are you rushing to, again?'

- 'Yes, she smiles mysteriously.... What have you concocted?'

Yes, yes. All these questions were also about me and my love for diverse activities. I like this kind of thing and I try to interest my pupils to show such inquisitiveness. After all, it is about development, self-knowledge, motivation, communication, and positive emotions. Of course, not everything succeeds 100 percent at once, but this is not the main thing, the main thing is the process itself, and the ability to analyze, evaluate, and improve, is formed gradually. And also - it is important to believe in what you are doing, confidently go towards your goal and then everything will be OK!

And today, when children say, 'You are the best teacher in the world, I love you so much....', I can't accept these words without tears, a grateful smile, and hugs (I also love them ALL very much), but in response I always say, 'I am not the best, you are my best!' It is during such moments that I understand that to some extent I am responsible for the fate of these children. After all, it depends on me who they will become in the future, what values will be embedded in each of them.

I love children.... Their success is their victory, and for me it is joy. Their failures are their right to make a mistake, and for me it is an opportunity to support the child and find ways to correct these failures collaboratively. I like to achieve the goals that I set before myself and I try to teach this same approach to my pupils. I lead them along the paths of friendship, love, goodness, honesty, and humanity.

TOGETHER we discover the interesting world around us.