

Participant 2 - River of experience

(translation of the participant's notes to their river)

1985-1987 The beginning of my teaching career at the Zaporizhzhia general education school №78. Perhaps I did not have enough experience to start with, but I had a great desire to teach, and an endless love for children.

1988-1994 Birth of my daughter, move to the city of Shostka. I tried to keep working, designing my own visual support materials, motivational stickers, didactic materials, but I lacked knowledge and experience. I entered the Hlukhiv State Pedagogical Institute. Work, childcare, institutional studies. It was difficult but I was very diligent - and ashamed if I did not know how to do something.

1994-1995 The most difficult years - my mother was ill. I needed to pay more attention to her, but there was still my child, family, work, state exams at the institute. While I did not receive a red diploma, I did gain knowledge and precious experience.

1996-2006 I was one of the first to start working with the innovative integrated Environmental Studies course according to Ilchenko's model of integration of natural science education in a general education school. Not everything was suited to my setting, so I made improvements: I developed my own system of models that simplify work. I conducted a series of open lessons, proving by example the feasibility of using modeling in lessons. I became the winner of the professional competitions 'Teacher of the Year - 2000', and 'Home Room Teacher of the Year - 2005'.

2007-2009 In co-authorship with creative teachers from around the city we developed a curriculum as part of the course 'Ukraine and me. The Environment', for work with gifted students from grades 1-4, along with methodological support for this program.

Ukrainian schools were increasingly adopting computer technologies – so I completed a computer technologist and programming course through the Intel Training for the Future program. An opportunity to make a dream come true came my way: I embarked upon systematizing my experience with iconic models.

2010-2011 I developed a methodological guide 'Know the World through the Model'. I gave presentations at diverse scholarly and practitioner seminars, national conferences - I shared my experience of working on the effective use of different types of modeling in elementary schools and the effective incorporation of multimedia in learning.

2012-2013 I taught a course at the Oleksandr Dovzhenko Hlukhiv National Pedagogical University, entitled 'Actual problems of elementary education'. This was a challenge because I had to work without days off. During a seminar I became acquainted with the author of humanist pedagogy, Sh. O. Amonashvili. This meeting changed my outlook. I partnered with V. O. Martynenko and M. S. Vashulenko to formulate reading competence approaches. In order to improve students' oral technique, I began to work under the direction of the V. O. Naumenko

‘Rhetoric’ program. I published articles in the highly prestigious professional journal *Elementary School*. I presented at regional scholarly and practitioner seminars.

2014-2015 I developed a collection of models and tasks, along with a methodological manual called ‘Modeling as a means of forming the natural science competence of elementary school students’. I conducted a workshop for teachers on how to evaluate manuals. I became head of the methodological association of my school, and later, for the whole city. Now, I not only taught elementary pupils, but also trained teachers in my school and in schools throughout the city. Together with a group of teachers, we conducted televised lessons and subsequently developed a series of training presentations about how to teach during quarantine. I presented my experiences of working on the formation of natural science competences at a national conference.

2016-2021 A flurry of speeches at conferences, seminars, articles in collections. A new challenge - I participated in the National Innovative Education Project ‘I am a Researcher’, implementing STEM education. Every step was a new experience. I summarized my experience with the topic ‘The formation of research skills of elementary school pupils according to the New Ukrainian School concept’.

I became head of the methodological association of teachers of the Shostka community. I coordinated the work of other teachers, as well as continuing to teach. I organized and led a festival of innovative lessons.

Another challenge that arose was distance learning. I learned to teach in an online environment, using different platforms and services.

2022 - The war destroyed our faith in the ‘brotherly people’, turning all stereotypes upside down. The present demanded new things of us: how to ensure a quality learning process during threats of air raids, the enemy killing children, destroying schools, homes, when children must spend most of their time hiding in cellars without the Internet. But I am sure that everything will be fine. Ukraine will win and students will go on to receive quality education.

