

## THE IMPORTANCE AND METHODS OF IMPROVING INDEPENDENT LEARNING SKILLS AMONG STUDENTS OF SCHOOLS AND ACADEMIC LYCEUMS

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Today, in our rapidly developing age, the role of science, continuous study, and, especially, independent research is extremely important. It is pivotal for each person to work independently on himself in order to achieve high results in every sphere of our life, to develop those spheres, and thereby serve society. Therefore, much research has been conducted by scientists and specialists in order to form autonomous learning skills among the young generation studying in schools and academic lyceums and to increase their interest in extracurricular studies. That is why new methods and techniques are being come up and implemented increasingly day by day. ‘In the organization of independent learning, preparing the ground for the mental development of students and forming critical and creative thinking in this process is considered a priority’[1].

An independent additional approach to science and any studied objects during extracurricular time leads to better learning in this field. That’s why nowadays it is very important to encourage self-study, especially among students, because only the skills acquired in classes are not always enough, during one lesson, usually, students cannot look through every resource appropriate to their learning potential. Therefore, in the lessons, the teacher, first of all, along with explaining the topic, should give the students resources and interesting materials related to the studied topic and encourage them to apply what they are interested in. At the same time, a little control should be

established, especially when teaching school and lyceum students for independent education.

I conducted a month-long experiment on the same issue among academic lyceum students. Two groups took part in it, and their level was almost the same. The first group was taught in a traditional way and students were given the same type of tasks as always. The second group of students simply explained the topic, but in order to strengthen this topic, they were told to independently choose a task based on their interests. This method was well received by almost all the students and the interest among the students in the studied subject increased even more. At the end of the month, control work was taken from both groups, according to the results, it was found that the students of the second group mastered and strengthened the topics covered much better than the students of the first group. The experiment shows that encouraging students and creating conditions for independent learning is very important for their effective learning.

“Encouraging your students to be independent learners is important because this directly affects their academic performance. But independent learning also equips students with soft skills that help them be more successful in other areas of their lives, such as:

- Better time management
- Initiative and activity
- Organization and discipline
- Independence” [2].

As mentioned above, it is very important to train students for independent learning. For this, teachers are required to use several methods and techniques. The handbook for teachers, developed by Saskatchewan Education, says that teachers can promote Independent Learning by the following:

- use different methods to understand students’ abilities, needs and interests;
- adaptation of education to the needs and interests of students;

- teaching and modeling independent learning skills;
- to give students the opportunity to choose assignments and topics within the framework of various competitions;
- increasing the decision-making responsibility of students in the process of independent education;
- use of cooperative teaching methods[3].

Many experiments and research have been carried out by scientists and specialists about independent education and its types, methods of development, and implementation. To develop ways to encourage independent learning, we can start with a definition of independent learning. "Independent learning is learning in which the learner, together with other relevant individuals, can make decisions necessary to meet the learning needs of the learner." (Kesten) Kesten states that self-directed learning "is not individual learning or isolated learning. Self-directed learning encourages collaboration and self-interested inquiry." [4]. As Watkin states, "... independent learning involves problem-solving, interpersonal skills, diligence, self-motivation, creativity, and judgment[5].

In short, to further develop education and increase the interest of young people in learning, independent learning and its methods are very important for both teachers and students.

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