



## Thematic Curriculum Design of Integrating Labor Education into Kindergarten Classes

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**Abstract:** In China, labor education is an important part of the all-round development of the education system and an important part of educational practice activities. The main purpose is to enable students to establish a correct concept of labor, correct their working attitude, love labor and the working people, and develop good working habits. Early childhood education is an important stage in the process of basic education in China. Labor education should be included in its viewing vision and become an important content. It is of great significance to integrate labor education into the theme teaching of large-class children. It can enable children to cultivate good labor literacy, exercise effective practical skills, promote their formation of a sound personality, and promote the development of early childhood education. Through literature research, investigation and interviews, we found that there are some shortcomings in the theme teaching of large classes of children, including that preschool teachers do not pay enough attention to it and do not have a comprehensive understanding; the theme teaching has a single form and the effect is not good; the content tends to be similar, and the evaluation is lagging. In order to effectively solve these problems, preschool teachers should fully focus on the goal of labor education, follow the law of early childhood growth and development, and carry out targeted thematic teaching in combination with children's daily life. These are also effective strategies for integrating labor education into the theme teaching of large-scale children.

**Keywords:** Kindergarten; Labor Education; Theme Teaching; Curriculum Design

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### Introduction

Labor is an important way for human society to survive and develop. It has created human beings, society, and rich spiritual civilization, with profound connotations and educational value. Labor is one of the origins and important means of education. The world is created by labor. No matter which ethnic group stops working, it goes without saying that it will perish in a year or a few weeks. This is enough to illustrate the importance, necessity and irreplaceability of labor for human development. The combination of education and labor is the basic connotation of materialism on the free and all-round development of human beings, and it is also an objective law that education should follow.

Labor education plays an important role in the growth of young children. Ancient Chinese educators said, Cultivating the quality of integrity and innocence in childhood is the only way to create saints. Liang Qichao also said, "In this life, the achievements in life are based on the education you received when you were young." In November 2020, General Secretary Xi Jinping delivered an important speech at the National Labor Model and Advanced Worker Commendation Conference, proposing to include labor education in the educational activities of universities, primary and secondary schools, guide young people to establish and advocate labor values of advocating hard work, and cultivate their love of labor, diligent work, Good at labor and become a new generation of high-quality and high-level mental and physical workers. [1] Kindergarten, as an important part of China's education and teaching system, should be included in the viewing vision of labor education.

The theme teaching activity of large-class children has its unique connotation. From the perspective of normative documents, it refers to the teaching activities carried out by preschool teachers in accordance with the requirements of the Kindergarten Education Guidance Outline (Trial) and the Learning and Development Guide for Children aged 3-6 and other relevant documents. From the perspective of organization and implementation, it refers to preschool teachers according to With



educational and teaching experience, a series of teacher-led and student-oriented dual-subject and comprehensive curriculum organization activities have been carried out. Starting from the individual interests and actual needs of young children, combined with their physical and mental development characteristics, it is carried out in a planned and purposeful way. It is an important form of kindergarten education and teaching. At the same time, the theme teaching activities optimize traditional sub-subject teaching and closely integrate educational activities around a central theme, with distinctive themes, rich content, flexible forms and wide participation. It is generally carried out in the form of collective activities, maximizing the enthusiasm of young children to participate, which is one of their favorite educational activities. In view of the natural bridge and link between labor education and early childhood theme teaching, it is of great significance to integrate it into thematic teaching.

## **Literature Review**

### **1. Research on early childhood labor education**

Labor education is an important part of the all-round development of the education system. Research on labor education at home and abroad can be traced back to the 16th century. Moore, a famous British writer, deeply described the importance of labor in his masterpiece *Utopia*. He pointed out that labor is the fundamental skill of everyone's survival, and students should learn to work. Move knowledge and participate in practical activities.

Foreign scholars have rich research content and achievements on the connotation, model and guarantee mechanism of labor education. Conceptually, Western scholars mostly focus on the definition of labor education and trade union education. In terms of the model adopted, different countries have built a unique, comprehensive and systematic labor education system according to their national conditions and training goals. Among them, some countries attach great importance to the relationship between labor education and economic, production, vocational and other aspects, and emphasize the establishment of separate labor education courses, while some countries advocate integrating labor education into various educational and teaching activities in schools. Generally speaking, Western countries have strong similarities in the definition of the connotation of labor education, but the choice of models is slightly different.

In China, scholars' research on labor education can be roughly divided into four stages, namely, the exploration stage (1957-1977), the remodeling stage (1978-1999), the deepening stage (2000-2012) and the comprehensive construction stage (2013-present). In these four stages, labor education mainly exists in two forms. At the beginning of the first to third stages, labor education has always existed as an additional object, integrated into other curriculum education, and has no independent status matching other curricula. From the third stage to the fourth stage, in June 2000, the Ministry of Education promulgated the *Outline for the Reform of the Basic Education Curriculum (Trial)* as a watershed, so that labor education enjoys an independent status and is listed as a compulsory course, playing in basic education side by side with the "four education" of morality, intelligence, physique and beauty.[2]

In July 2015, the Ministry of Education of China and the Youth Organization jointly issued the *Opinions on Strengthening Labor Education in Primary and Secondary Schools* named after "Labor Education", pointing out that labor education is the basic requirement for the full implementation of China's education policy, an important part of quality education, and the core price for cultivating and practicing socialism. An effective way to view the value. [3] In March 2020, the Chinese government issued the *Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening Labor Education in Universities, Primary and Secondary Schools in the New Era*, from fully understanding the significance of labor education in the new era, comprehensively building a labor education system with the characteristics of the new era, carrying out extensive labor education practice activities, focusing on improving the support and guarantee of labor education. Five aspects, such as strengthening the implementation of labor education organizations, put forward specific requirements for strengthening labor education at all levels and types of education in the new era. [4] In order to implement the spirit of the *Opinions*, in July of the same year, the Ministry of Education of China issued the *Notice of the Guiding Outline for Labor Education in Universities, Primary and Secondary Schools (Trial)*, which integrates labor education into the construction of the socialist education system with Chinese characteristics, and puts forward a series of requirements for the implementation strategy of labor education.

The *Kindergarten Education Guidance Outline (Trial)* emphasizes direct perception, hands-on practice, and the development of multiple capabilities in hands-on experience. Through personal work, children can experience the hard work and value of labor, enhance their sense of happiness, develop the habit of perseverance and fear of hardship, and improve their ability to solve problems. The reason for strengthening labor education in the new era is that labor education is needed in the new era. Labor education can promote the all-round development of children, learn to use brains and hands, and make children's lives more dignified, valuable and meaningful.[5]

### **2. Research on children's thematic teaching activities**

At present, kindergartens generally carry out themed teaching activities. It is a comprehensive course, which mainly integrates the teaching content of society, life, language, science, art and other fields into a network theme and carries out a series of

educational activities around a certain theme. It can be determined by the teacher to determine the objectives and content of the activity, or it can be initiated by young children based on the learning experience related to the topic.

In kindergartens abroad, teachers often use comprehensive activities to connect various knowledge and skills through a variety of methods and integrate them into one theme. Preschool teachers select the centers of comprehensive thematic activities through an in-depth understanding and observation of children's interest characteristics, developmental ability and the ecological relationship that affect children's life and learning, and design a series of teaching activities around these centers. The theme teaching activities focus on the real life experience of children, which is in line with the existing level of children and meets the needs of children.

Reggio's educational thought in Italy has had a great impact on the theme teaching of Chinese children. Under its influence, the theme teaching of Chinese children is built around the theme network, not divided according to the knowledge system and knowledge points. According to children's physical, mental, age characteristics and experience system, it integrates children's familiar, curious and common sense knowledge into the theme, so that children can master knowledge in continuous exploration and apply it. In this process, young children express and demonstrate their results in ways that they are interested in. Theme teaching activities can not only help children obtain key experience in various fields, but also help children to successfully use key experiences in their strong fields, solve practical problems, and experience the joy of success and self-confidence in future learning. In summary, carrying out children's theme teaching activities can fully demonstrate children's wisdom and personality, promote children's proactive exploration and performance, stimulate children's interest, and develop children's various potentials.

### **The main method of research**

The methods used in this paper are mainly literature, interview, observation and action research. Based on the need to solve practical problems, kindergarten teachers cooperate with experts, scholars or members of organizations to develop problems into research topics, carry out systematic research, and obtain solutions to practical problems.

**1.Documentation method:** mainly by consulting the literature on relevant websites and publications, we can understand the origin, purpose and important role of labor education in human social development. In particular, understand the origin and development of labor education in China, including different attitudes towards labor education in different periods, documents and policies issued by the national education department, etc. On this basis, consult the development of labor education in early childhood education to understand the main methods, important opinions and effects of integrating it into the curriculum design of large-class preschool theme teaching.

**2.Interview method and observation method:** The place of interview and observation is the kindergarten near the researcher's workplace. Interviewees included kindergarten teachers and administrators. The observation method is mainly used to observe the organization and implementation of the theme teaching activities of kindergarten classes. Through interviews and observations, they discussed the specific problems existing in the current thematic teaching activities of kindergartens in China, such as what do preschool teachers think the role of thematic teaching and how to treat it? How is it organized? What does it include? How is the enthusiasm for young children to participate? What are the ways to evaluate? Why should labor education be integrated into the theme teaching of large-class children? How to implement it? Wait a minute. The interviewees expressed their opinions and concerns based on their actual experience. Observe the specific situation of the child-themed activities, mainly looking for answers to these questions from another aspect. Through interviews and observations, the answers we are looking for are consistent. At the same time, it is consistent with the conclusions drawn from the literature. It can be seen that these answers are very trustworthy.

**3. Action research method:** Based on the contents of relevant documents such as the Learning and Development Guide for Children aged 3-6, Kindergarten Education Guidance Outline (Trial) and other relevant documents, it is mainly discussed with kindergarten teachers and designed an effective and feasible activity implementation plan. In the process of carrying out the activity, through video review and mutual discussion between teams, specific improvement measures are proposed, and another evaluation and reflection will be carried out in the next round of implementation, so as to draw conclusions.

### **Research results and discussion**

The above research methods are effective, and the answers obtained through these methods are reliable. It provides very useful information for the smooth development of this paper and also helps to draw conclusions.

#### **1.It is of great significance to integrate labor education into the theme teaching of large-scale children.**

First, it can cultivate children's good working quality. Suhomlinsky said: "Labor education should be a harmonious unity of the three concepts of labor, hard work and good work. If a person wants to achieve all-round development, it needs to be reflected not only in intellectual education, moral education, aesthetic education and sports literacy, but also in labor

literacy." [6] Establishing a correct concept of labor is the primary indicator of good labor literacy, which is very important for large-class children and other school students at all levels. Early childhood is the foundation stage of life development, a key period for habit formation, and should also become the beginning of labor education. In the guidance document on early childhood education of the Learning and Development Guide for Children aged 3-6, it is clearly mentioned that "the workers should be respected and their labor results should be cherished." [7] Consciously integrating the content of labor education in large-class early childhood education and teaching activities is conducive to guiding them to establish a correct concept of labor purposefully and consciously, cultivate a correct labor attitude, obtain correct labor knowledge, and generate an active labor awareness. In essence, it is to cultivate children to love and respect labor. Move the people and cherish the quality of labor achievements, so as to form a good labor quality.

Second, it can help young children exercise effective practical skills. Labor is one of the most important ways for people to receive education. Through labor, people can not only improve their intelligence, but also benefit a lot from practical skills. The Learning and Development Guide for Children aged 3-6 points out that children can cultivate their self-care ability in life by letting them do what they can. The infiltration of labor education in the theme teaching of large-class children mainly includes two aspects. From the perspective of preschool teachers, it is necessary to adopt effective teaching methods to widely attract children to participate in activities, so that they can have a pleasant emotional experience, so as to stimulate their interest in loving and participating in labor at a deeper level, and cultivate good working habits. [8] From the perspective of the theme education activity itself, its theme setting should fully integrate the physical and mental reality of young children, cultivate them to establish a correct concept of labor, enhance their sense of independent thinking and independence, and improve their love for the collective and a better life. They should exercise their hands-on ability in a targeted manner and improve their reality. Use skills to prepare for the connection between young children.

Third, it can promote young children to develop a sound personality. Stellozzi pointed out that "labor education is a different form of education according to the characteristics of the physical and mental development of educatees. Its ultimate goal is to achieve the balanced development between personal physical quality, emotional attitude, psychological state, moral concepts and aesthetic values." [9] The integration of labor education into the theme teaching of large classes can promote the all-round development of children's intellectual education, intellectual education, sports, aesthetic education, etc., and help them play a good foundation for life. For example, by integrating labor education into teaching, digging the elements of thematic activities, creating various types of thematic activities, and designing different modes of activities, preschool teachers can guide and cultivate children's hands-on and brain-working ability to help them find ways to deal with specific problems and deal with relevant emergencies.

Fourth, it can promote the comprehensive development of early childhood education. The talent training model that forms and promotes the all-round development of individuals is an important evaluation index of early childhood education. Labor education, as an important component, plays a very important role in promoting the all-round and healthy development of people. Therefore, integrating labor education into the theme teaching of large-class children is bound to make early childhood education more in line with the requirements of social development and the law of human growth, and promote the healthier and orderly development of early childhood education. At the same time, it can also expand the theory of labor education in early childhood education, attract the attention of society and families to early childhood education, better promote home-school co-education, and promote home-school cooperation.

## **2. Questions from the interview**

The vast majority of interviewees believe that there are some problems in the current thematic teaching activities of Chinese children, including not only the problems of preschool teachers themselves and kindergartens. They believe that these problems need to be improved urgently.

First, in terms of ideological understanding, kindergartens and preschool teachers do not pay enough attention to integrating labor education into the theme teaching of children, and their cognition is not comprehensive. This is mainly manifested in the fact that some preschool teachers believe that labor education is optional, the concept of labor education is not clearly defined, and the positioning of how to effectively carry out labor education is not accurate. Some preschool teachers have a narrow understanding of labor education, believing that it is only simple manual labor, and even as a way of punishment, rarely combining it with early childhood-themed teaching activities. This not only does not mention the interest of young children in participating in labor education activities, but also impossible to achieve the teaching goal of labor education.

Second, the form of children's theme teaching is single, and the effect is not good. Colorful forms are an important guarantee for labor education to achieve good results. In carrying out large-class children's themed teaching activities, some preschool teachers attach importance to the mastery of children's labor skills, ignore the cultivation of labor awareness, attach importance

to the indoctrination of theoretical knowledge, and ignore the cultivation of practical ability; some passively complete labor education only according to the requirements of their superiors, value the number of labor education, but not pay attention to reality. International effect; although labor education is combined with thematic teaching, it still takes teachers as the main body. Students are only passive recipients, not active participants, and do not achieve the real integration of labor education and thematic teaching activities. [10]

Third, when kindergartens and preschool teachers organize thematic teaching activities, the content is similar and the evaluation is lagging behind. Rich content should be an important guarantee for the effective development of early childhood labor education, but at present, the content of labor education carried out by many kindergartens is single and lacks diversity, interest and effectiveness. For example, the labor education content of many kindergartens is mainly based on children's self-service, embedded in children's teaching in a pattern and slate manner, lacking new ideas and creativity. Some people are mainly required by the competent departments of labor and education at the higher level. They only stipulate actions, do not start from the essential needs of large-class children in combination with the actual situation, let alone the physical and mental development characteristics of children and the background characteristics of different regions and times. Although the labor education carried out in this way has completed the task, the actual effect is not good. At the same time, the effective evaluation of the implementation of the activity is not timely, and some even directly ignore the evaluation link, leading to the fragmentation and randomization of labor education.

### **3.Preschool teachers put forward the views and opinions**

They believe that labor education is an important part of early childhood education. Combining labor education with thematic teaching activities plays an important role in the exercise of young children's ability and the improvement of self-confidence. In terms of organizational methods, content arrangements, activity evaluation, etc., they believe that they can first organize large classes of children to watch typical deeds about labor models, commendation conferences, etc., so that they can further understand and understand labor, plant the seeds of the most glorious and advocating labor in their hearts, and then they can organize them to carry out specific The labor allows them to experience the labor process, and finally summarize and evaluate it in time, such as precautions in labor, labor methods, labor harvest, how to better carry out labor, etc., so that labor and education can be fully integrated, so that children can develop their intellectual and physical strength in work, and also exercise their thinking ability and practical ability.

According to the different family situations of young children, they believe that measures to integrate labor education into thematic teaching can be determined according to the actual situation. For example, the parents of some children are doctors, so children can understand the daily work of doctors through videos or on-site visits to the hospital, so that they can experience the hard work of their parents' work, further improve their labor awareness, and cultivate their labor feelings. For children's different hobbies, they can be encouraged and guided to actively participate in specific activities through games, theme activity area settings, etc., and find a sense of experience and gain from their participation.

At the same time, preschool teachers believe that thematic education activities should be closely related to the daily life of children, and the cultivation of living habits and the mastering of life skills should be an important content. For example, the ability to take care of yourself, civilized and polite habits, and the habit of obeying discipline and rules. In response to these contents, preschool teachers can carry out a certain abilities and habits education in the form of a series of thematic activities, and can also carry out multi-compleabilities and habits education in an integrated manner through the same activity. The form of education is unrestrained. It can be not only for them to play games and listen to stories, but also for on-the-spot experience and hands-on practice.

### **4.Put forward the effective strategy of integrating labor education into theme teaching curriculum design**

First, preschool teachers should carry out thematic teaching around the goals of early childhood labor education. For large-class children, establishing a correct concept of work and developing good working habits is the primary goal of labor education. Thematic teaching should actively focus on this goal and set it in a targeted way. Preschool teachers should be fully prepared for curriculum content setting, organizational form, curriculum evaluation, etc. Second, preschool teachers should carry out thematic teaching according to the law of early childhood growth and development. Different children will have different understandings and preferences for the forms of labor education due to their different growth environment and personality characteristics. Preschool teachers should respect this difference. When designing theme teaching, they should design activities according to the professional situation of different parents and children's interests and preferences, which is very effective. Third, preschool teachers should rely on the actual daily life of young children to carry out thematic teaching. Labor education is a kind of cultivation education that runs through daily life. The labor education of large-class children mainly focuses on daily life, so the theme teaching activities should also focus on daily life. Preschool teachers should teach according to the overall development characteristics of large-class children, combined with the personality

## The conclusion

In children's theme teaching activities, young children are the main body, active explorers and independent learners. The role of preschool teachers is to guide them to harvest emotions, knowledge and abilities in thematic teaching activities. The theme teaching curriculum design of large-class children should follow the principles from simple to complex, from special to general, from local to overall, from micro to macro. Generally speaking, it should be gradual and in-depth. The content of early childhood labor education should be fully realistic, so that early childhood labor education should truly penetrate into daily life, and make full use of various resources to carry out labor education, so that every child can have the opportunity to experience the fun of labor, improve his or her ability to work, and develop good working habits. Integrating labor education into children's thematic teaching activities is not only a favorable way to help children acquire knowledge and skills and experience conducive to physical and mental development, but also an effective way to improve children's emotions, attitudes and abilities to meet their interests and needs. This integration not only promotes the development of labor education, but also promotes the development of early childhood education.

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