

## Assessment Methods of Personal Learning Outcomes in Subject Areas according to Special Basic Educational Program of Primary Education for Students with Mental Retardation

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Federal State Educational Standard for students with disabilities regulates three kinds of development results of a special educational program. To verify the achievements of students' knowledge and skills, the traditional forms of control are used. The development of procedures for assessing the achievement of personal learning outcomes is rather difficult. According to Federal State Educational Standard, personal learning outcomes are defined within all structural components of special basic educational program of primary education: different subject areas, programs of formation of universal educational actions, spiritual and moral development, the formation of ecological culture, healthy and safe lifestyle, extracurricular activities, and remediation. Personal learning outcomes in every subject area depend on the specific character of each subject: philology, mathematics and computer science, social science and natural science, religion, art, technology, physical education. Personal learning outcomes in every subject area depend on the specific character of each subject. The article presents methods for assessment of personal learning outcomes in subject areas within special basic educational program of primary education for students with mental retardation.

**Key words:** Personal learning outcomes; subject area; children with mental retardation; special basic educational program of primary education; federal state educational standard of primary education for students with disabilities.

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A distinctive feature of the new Federal State Educational Standard for students with mental retardation is a focus on educational outcomes as a system component of the Standard, in which cultural and personal development of a student with mental retardation is the goal and the main result of primary education (FSES, 2014; Prospects for the development of education, 2014).

Mastering (at school and at home) of Federal State Educational Standard of primary education for students with disabilities should ensure personal, meta-subject and subject

achievements of students with mental retardation (Conception of FSES, 2014; Zvoleyko and Kalashnikova, 2014).

*Personal outcomes* include personality traits and social competence of students, important value judgments, which are necessary to achieve the main goal of modern education. For students with mental retardation this is the introduction to the culture and socio-cultural experience (FSES, 2014).

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healthy and safe lifestyle, extracurricular activities, and remediation. Personal outcomes have subject specificity: each type of educational activity provides specific personal outcomes (Guschin, 2015).

Personal learning outcomes in every subject area depend on the specific character of each subject: philology, mathematics and computer science, social science and natural science, religion, art, technology, physical education. Training in every subject area involves the formation of academic competence (knowledge, skills) and life competence (personal educational outcomes).

The general approach to interim and final knowledge and skills assessment is surveys, examinations and so on. Personal assessment of achievement of learning outcomes in a given subject area is rather complex, because traditional methods of assessment often do not work. Personal outcomes often cannot be easily and clearly detected, because “they refer to the inner, deep feelings of a student” (Potashnik, 2000), and reflect long-term results of educational process (Bilck and Kadnar, 2011).

Comprehensive and special schools implementing the new Federal State Educational Standard for children with mental retardation have difficulties with providing ways of personal learning outcomes assessing. Experts in the field of special education developed requirements for assessment process and methods. Assessment of learning outcomes should identify whether a student is able to master the next stage of training or not; and direction to help the child (British Columbia, 2013); to identify the strengths and needs of the child (NASSET Assessment in Special Education Series, 2015). The assessment procedure should be positive and non-threatening; a threatening atmosphere establishes a negative relation between assessment and learning process at school (National council for curriculum and assessment, 2004). Methods of assessment should correspond to the age and child development stages; be efficient and convenient, be able to provide information in a short time, and be included in school lessons (NSW Department of Education and Training, 2008).

#### **Technique**

Every educational institution works out its own program to assess personal outcomes

taking into account personality and individual typological features of students (for example, for children with mental retardation). This program is approved by local acts of an institution. When designing the assessment system of personal achievements of students in subject areas it is necessary to focus on the list of planned results of Federal State Educational Standard.

Assessment of personal outcomes in subject areas involves, first of all, the attitude of the individual to these subject areas. In addition, the assessment system should allow the student to trace the progress in mastering the social competences. Personal outcomes evaluation in subject areas is made by the end of 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> grades in order to determine the dynamics of personal learning outcomes.

The method of expert judgement is used to evaluate the progress in mastering social skills. The main form of work of the participants of an expert group is psychological, medical and pedagogical consultation (Kalashnikova, 2013; Semago, 2000).

The results of the analysis of the individual attitude to the various subject areas (by the end of 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> grades) should be presented in points, which are understandable to all members of an expert group: 0 points - the quality is not shown; 1 point – low level; 2 points - quality is shown in some cases; 3 points – high level.

At the end of primary school learners have a final assessment test of the personal learning outcomes in subject areas. A group of experts determines the promotion in mastering social skills in the subject areas. Experts use this assessment system: 0 points - no promotion; 1 point - low promotion; 2 points - average promotion; 3 points - a significant promotion. This assessment is necessary for experts to provide guidance when describing social competence development of a child (Peculiarities of state control, 2013).

## **RESULTS**

The program of the personal outcomes assessment in subject areas include: 1) a list of personal outcomes given by Federal State Educational Standard; 2) a list of characteristics and indicators for assessing of every outcome; 3) ways of outcomes assessment.

The indicators and methods of assessment of personal learning outcomes in some subject areas are presented below.

### **Subject area, methods of assessment**

#### **The Russian language**

A learner knows about linguistic and cultural diversity of Russia.

#### **Creative Task**

A learner is given an outline map of Russia. *Instructions:* Russia is home to many different peoples that speak both Russian and their native languages. Which of these languages do you know? Write the names of the languages on an outline map of Russia.

#### **Assessment**

3 points: more than 5 languages; 2 points: less than 5 languages; 1 point: 2 languages; 0 points: failed the task.

A learner is interested in studying the Russian (native) language.

A learner wants to master the correct spoken and written language.

An assessment is made by teachers who teach the Russian (native) language. The level of cognitive activity in the Russian (native) language class is assessed.

3 points: high level of cognitive activity in class, inquisitiveness, effort;

2 points: average level of cognitive activity, selective inquisitiveness to certain topics;

1 point: the level of cognitive activity is low, selective inquisitiveness;

0 points: no cognitive activity.

#### **Reading**

A learner has the idea of literature as a form of art.

#### **Creative Task**

A learner is given a task to classify the arts into three groups: decorative arts, plastic arts, performing arts. (Arts: painting, architecture, arts and crafts, design; music, literature; cinema, theater, circus).

#### **A learner understands the importance of literature and reading.**

Task 1. Listen to the text. It is well known, books serve two main functions: informational and aesthetic. Long before the invention of printing people valued books as treasure troves of the human knowledge and experience. In difficult situations people resort to books and take wisdom,

strength and inspiration from them. After all, a book is universal and every person can find answers to any questions. Implementing its aesthetic function, literature teaches the beautiful, the good, and creates moral principles. Books form not only moral ideals, but ideals of appearance and behavior. Book characters become role models. Therefore, it is important to read good books during the personality formation that will give you the right direction.

Thus, the role of literature is to help a person perceive himself/herself and the world, to awaken a desire for truth, happiness, to teach respect for the past, knowledge and morality of every generation.

#### **Answer the question**

What role does literature play in human life?

#### **Assessment**

- 3 points: correct classification of arts;
- 2 points: 1-2 mistakes in the classification of arts; only one function of literature is explained;
- 1 point: 3-4 mistakes in the classification of arts; a general unstructured discussion of literature is presented;
- 0 points: failed the tasks.

#### **Task 2. Listen to the poem:**

It is very good if you can read! It is not necessary to ask the mother,

It is not necessary to ask the grandmother: "Read, please! Read! "

It is not necessary to plead the sister: "Please, read one more page."

It is not necessary to call, to wait, but you can take a book and read!

#### **Answer the question**

Why is it important to be able to read?

#### **Assessment**

- 3 points: 3 arguments in favor of the ability to read;
  - 2 points: 2 arguments in favor of the ability to read;
  - 1 point: general unstructured discussion about reading;
  - 0 points: failed the task.
- A learner needs a systematic reading.
  - A learner can choose books for reading.

An assessment is made by a form-master. Level of reading activity and independence is

estimated.

#### Assessment

- a) 3 points: a learner systematically borrows books in the school library; has reading sphere (preferred genres or themes);
- b) 2 points: a learner periodically borrows books in the school library; has favorite genres;
- c) 1 point: a learner rarely borrows books in the school library; selection of books is random;
- d) 0 points: a learner does not like reading.
- e) 3. Foreign languages
- f) Positive perceptions of speakers of other languages are formed.

#### Creative Task

A learner has a paper flower with 5 petals.

*Instructions:* You know that there are many different countries and peoples in the world. What countries do you know? Write wishes for the peoples of the world on the petals of the flower.

#### Assessment

- a) 3 points: more than 5 countries, the wishes on all 5 petals;
- b) 2 points: less than 5 countries, the wishes on 3-4 petals;
- c) 1 point: 3 countries, wishes on 1-2 petals;
- d) 0 points: failed the task.
- e) 4. Social studies and science
- f) A learner can determine the consequences of his/her own actions.

#### Task 1

*Equipment:* two cards with the words "Bad for your health", "Bad for your house"; pictures with images of electrical appliances, matches, water, gas, medicine, needle, knife, scissors.

1. Classify the pictures of objects into two groups "Bad for your health" and "Bad for your house".
2. What dangerous situations are caused by incorrect use of these items? What items can be dangerous for people, and cause damage to property?

#### Task 2

Where to call in case of fire, assault, injury, gas leak?

#### Assessment

- a) 3 points: all cards are correctly classified; six dangerous situations are listed; a learner

knows the phone numbers of emergency calls;

- b) 2 points: all cards are correctly classified; six dangerous situations are listed; a learner knows 2-3 emergency phone numbers;
- c) 1 point: all cards are classified with the help of an adult; one or two dangerous situations are listed; a learner knows 1-2 emergency phone numbers;
- d) 0 points: failed the tasks.

A learner can determine the consequences of actions committed by other people.

#### Case-study

Listen to the story. Children were home alone. They decided to scare passers-by; they opened the window and threw out different subjects. What are the consequences of these actions?

#### Assessment

- a) 3 points: three consequences (passer-by' trauma, falling out of the window, spoiling things) are correctly identified;
- b) 2 points: two consequences are correctly identified;
- c) 1 point: one consequence is correctly identified;
- d) 0 points: failed the task.

A learner can determine human impact on the environment.

#### Case-study

Listen to the story. Spring came. It was warm and dry. The boys went for a walk in the field near the forest. They decided to set fire to the dry grass. What are the consequences of these actions?

#### Assessment

- a) 3 points: the impact of burning grass (fire), two possible threats (wildfire, village fire) are correctly identified;
- b) 2 points: the impact of burning grass, one possible threat are correctly identified;
- c) 1 point: the impact of burning grass is correctly identified, threats are not defined;
- d) 0 points: failed the task.

#### Art

A learner understands the importance of art in human life.

#### Task 1

*Equipment:* colored pictures with the

images of some art forms. There are several art forms: sculpture, painting, drawing, engraving, photography, arts and crafts. Look at these pictures, and define art forms.

### Task 2

What role does art play for a person and for a society? Explain educational, informative, aesthetic and expressive functions of art.

### Assessment

- 3 points: all art forms are correctly identified; the functions of art are explained with the help of a teacher;
- 2 points: most kinds of art forms are correctly identified; the functions of art are partially explained;
- 1 point: some types of art are identified; a learner has difficulties in discovering the arts;
- 0 points: failed the tasks.

A learner can notice and understand the beautiful and evaluate works of art.

### Task 1

What kinds of visual arts do you like? What is art for you? Now I'll show you the copies of some paintings. Look very attentively at them and answer the questions: What is the idea of these paintings? Why do you like them? (Copies of paintings "Bogatyr" by V. Vasnetsov, "In the wild North" by I. Shishkin, etc.).

### Assessment

- 3 points: a learner can make value judgments that reveal the emotional relation to works of art; define favorite art forms; prove the position;
- 2 points: a learner can define favorite art forms without proving his/her position; has difficulties in expressing his/her attitude to works of art;
- 1 point: a learner can define favorite art forms without proving his/her position;
- 0 points: failed the task.

### e) 6. Music

A learner understands an important role of music.

### Task 1

Musical instruments. *Equipment*: pictures of musical instruments; four cards with the words: string instruments, wind instruments, keyboard instruments, folk instruments. A musical instrument is an instrument created or adapted to

make musical sounds. Instruments can be classified by their effective range, their material composition, their size, etc.

### Instructions

Classify musical instruments (wooden spoons, harp, trumpet, saxophone, accordion, harp, domra, bass, piano, cello, balalaika, clarinet, accordion, flute, violin) into four groups: string instruments, wind instruments, keyboard instruments, folk instruments.

### Task 2

Music genres. A music genre is a conventional category that identifies pieces of music as belonging to a shared tradition or set of conventions.

### Instructions

Match the name of the musical genre with its definition:

Anthem is a song (or composition) of celebration, usually acting as a symbol for a distinct group of people.

A march is a piece of music with a strong regular rhythm which in origin was expressly written for marching to and most frequently performed by a military band.

Choral music is the music written specifically for musical ensemble of singers to perform.

An étude is an instrumental musical composition, usually short, of considerable difficulty, and designed to provide practice material for perfecting a particular musical skill.

A song is an artistic form of expression based on sound, with distinct pitches, pattern and form, generally considered a complete work, whether musically or lyrically.

Romance is a vocal music composition, usually written for one voice with piano accompaniment, and usually in the classical tradition.

### Assessment

- 3 points: 13-15 musical instruments are correctly classified; 6-7 music genres are correctly identified;
- 2 points: 9-12 musical instruments are correctly classified; 4-5 music genres are correctly identified;
- 1 point: 5-8 musical instruments are correctly classified; 2-3 music genres are correctly identified;

d) 0 points: failed the task.

A learner understands the importance of music in human life.

A learner can give can make value judgments of musical compositions.

### Task 1

*Equipment:* musical compositions of various genres. *Listen to the text.* Music is an art form whose medium is sound and depending on what kind of music you listen to, the nervous system reacts either positively or negatively. Music is able to create and maintain the right mood. Some musical pieces help us to relax after work; exciting music can improve productivity of people. Some musical pieces can cause aggression. Music provides a stimulus for expressive behavior in many social contexts, such as concerts, dances, and ceremonies. People report personally feeling a certain emotion in response to hearing a musical piece. Listening to the rhythm of music can stimulate your brain to forget all the complicated thoughts. Music is the treatment for your soul. It helps you to release your sorrow when you have a bad day. It gives you the inspiration to live a good life.

### Instructions

listen to a musical piece and define its genre (anthem, march, choral music, étude, song, romance).

What do you feel when listening to a song? an anthem? and so on. What are your favorite pieces of music? Why do you like them? What role does music play in our life?

### Assessment

- a) 3 points: 5-7 genres of music are correctly identified; a learner can make value judgments about music;
- b) 2 points: 4-5 genres of music are correctly identified; a learner can express value judgments about the impact and significance of music;
- c) 1 point: 2-3 genres of music are correctly identified; a learner has difficulties to express value judgments about the impact and significance of music;
- d) 0 points: failed the tasks.

### Technology

A learner understands the role of labor in human life.

### Task 1

Listen to the text. Labor is the basis of life and human development. The history of mankind shows that the labor separated a human being from the animal world. People influence environment and change it; as the human needs increase, people develop their abilities to work, enrich their knowledge, and enlarge the scope of their employment.

We know mental work and manual labor. *Give examples of mental work* (e.g. to write a book, to do homework). *Give examples of manual labor:* (e.g. to build, to pick up fruit and vegetables, to dig).

### Task 2

Explain saying: "A man needs labor like food; it should be regular and systematic" (V. Sukhomlinsky). Explain the importance of labor in human life.

### Assessment

- a) 3 points: examples of mental work and manual labor are given; a learner can express value judgments about the role of labor in people's lives;
- b) 2 points: gave examples of mental work and manual labor; a learner can express fragmentary judgments about the role of labor in human life;
- c) 1 point: a learner can not give examples of mental work and manual labor; a learner expresses fragmentary judgments about the role of labor in human life;
- d) 0 point: failed the task.

A learner has self-service skills, does household chores, environmental skills.

A learner can use the acquired knowledge and skills to solve practical tasks.

An assessment is made by a form-master. A form-master assesses the level of self-service skills (ability to dress and undress, to eat, to wash, etc.); household chores skills (washing-up, cleaning, washing, etc.); environmental skills (care for plants and animals).

A practical task may be given to assess the level of environmental skills: A teacher gives a houseplant to a learner and asks questions - How to care for this plant? What tools do you need for it?

**Assessment**

- a) 3 points: an adequate level of self-service skills (all skills are formed, does not need any help from adults); a learner can do domestic chores at a sufficient level, has a desire to perform various kinds of work; a learner has environmental skills (correctly identified the means and forms of care for plants);
- b) 2 points: a sufficient level of self-service skills (the majority of skills are formed); a learner can do domestic chores at a sufficient level; a learner has some environmental skills (correctly identified the means and forms of care for plants);
- c) 1 point: insufficient level of self-service skills (a child should be controlled); a learner can do some domestic chores; a learner has some environmental skills;
- d) **0 points: all skills are formed at a very low level.**

**Physical Education**

A learner understands the importance of physical education for life.

**Task 1**

Listen to the text. Sport is very important in our life. It is popular among young and old people. Many people do morning exercises, jog in the morning, work out in gyms, and take part in sport competitions. Sport helps people be healthy. If you go in for sports, you have good health and don't catch cold. There are 6 signs of a healthy person: 1. A person rarely gets sick. 2. A person has a healthy skin, bright eyes and shiny hair. 3. A person sleeps well. 4. Life expectancy is about 80 years. 5. A person can easily run one kilometer. 6. A person gets well very quickly.

**Answer the questions**

What do you know about the magical power of physical training, sports? What should you do to be strong, agile and enduring? What does the physical training give to a person?

**Assessment**

- a) 3 points: five judgments about the importance of physical education and sports;
- b) 2 points: less than five judgments;
- c) 1 point: 1-2 judgments;
- d) 0 points: failed the task.

A learner can organize and leads a healthy lifestyle.

**Task 1**

Listen to the text. A healthy lifestyle means maintaining a balanced and nutritious diet as well as engaging in sports or other fitness related activities. A healthy diet alone however is inadequate to ensure a healthy body as physical activity helps to keep one in shape and free of sickness and disease. Daily exercise is vital. The state of your body depends on how much time you spend doing sports. Everybody must do morning exercises every day. The healthiest kinds of sports are swimming, running and cycling. Healthy food is also a very important factor. Overeating causes many dangerous diseases. The daily menu should include meat, fruit and vegetables, milk product, which are rich in vitamins, fat, proteins, etc. Name the components of a healthy lifestyle.

**Task 2**

“Good and bad habits.” *Equipment:* a card. *Instruction:* A teacher names good and bad habits, if it is a good habit, a learner raises a card. Washing hands before having meals; eating many sweets; nail care; going to sleep late; brushing the teeth; keeping clothes and shoes clean; having meals regularly; walking without a hat in cold weather.

A form-master or a care-giver assesses ability to lead a healthy lifestyle according to following activities: a learner regularly brushes his/her teeth; washes his/her hands and face; cares for hair and nails; keeps clothes and shoes clean; cleans the room; does sport; has no bad habits.

**Assessment**

- a) 3 points: a learner knows all components of a healthy lifestyle; correctly identifies good and bad habits; leads a healthy lifestyle;
- b) 2 points: a learner knows several components of healthy lifestyles; correctly identifies good and bad habits; keeps 4-5 components of a healthy lifestyle;
- c) 1 point: a learner has difficulties in naming the components of a healthy lifestyle; correctly identified useful - bad habits; keeps 2-3 components of a healthy lifestyle;
- d) 0 points: failed tasks; keeps 1-2 components of a healthy lifestyle.

## DISCUSSION

When designing forms and content of evaluation methods, authors' efforts should be aimed at improving objectivity and reliability. Authors of assessment systems used in elementary schools worked out the general requirements for the procedure of evaluation of all learning outcomes (Bukaeva, 2015; GEF DOE; Karabanova, 2012):

- a) criteria approach to the assessment (the criteria are expected outcomes of the mastering of an educational program);
- b) system-activity approach to the assessment, which is manifested in the ability to solve educational and practical tasks;
- c) level approach to the development of rating scales with the ability to assess the dynamics of educational achievements of students;
- d) the use of standardized written or oral tests equally with projects, practical and creative work, self-awareness, self-esteem and so on.

In connection with the widespread practice of integrated education of children with disabilities (Zvoleyko, 2013; Malofeev, 2009), children with mental retardation often study in schools of general education. This confirms their equal rights and equal responsibilities. On the other hand, authors should take into account the limitations connected with features of the development of children with mental retardation.

Therefore, some other requirements to methods of evaluation can be added:

- a) examination should be made on the basis of the use of diagnostic capabilities of all available activities;
- b) during the examination it is necessary to use manipulatives, which help a learner perceive information and create visual support;
- c) fixing the results should be convenient and easy, and the description of the content of assessment levels in the evaluation scale should be detailed;
- d) forms of assessment of personal outcomes should differ from "academic" knowledge. As the methods of subjective evaluation (self-awareness, self-esteem) are largely

hindered by the existing characteristics of children, expert evaluation (observation, analysis of children's work) should be predominant;

- e) tasks should make a child discuss, analyze, which helps determine the attitude of an individual to different subject areas (this is the personal learning outcomes).

## CONCLUSION

Adoption of a new Federal State Educational Standard for students with mental retardation requires the development of training materials, including the evaluation system of personal learning outcomes. The work on the characterization and assessment indicators, procedures and means of assessment methods, interpretation and presentation of results lay ahead. When working with children with disabilities it is important to take into account their developmental peculiarities (the pace of work, peculiarities of perception, attention) (Training recommendations, 2011).

The proposed methods for assessment of the personal outcomes in subject areas are a variant of the realization of assessment activity in this area. These methods may vary depending on the variant of the special basic education program that a child masters, on the information about the conditions of realization of educational programs for every student. According to Federal State Educational Standard, "the inability of a student with mental retardation to master one or another version of special basic education program of primary education in full should not be an obstacle to the continuation of its mastering" (GEF). In some cases an individual program of assessment of personal achievements for students with mental retardation can be worked out.

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