

# DEVELOPMENT OF EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE OF PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN THROUGH ARTISTIC ACTIVITY

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## Abstract

In this article we saw the rapid technological changes of modern society significantly influence children's socialization and emotional development. For primary school students, emotional competence becomes essential, as this age marks the beginning of forming communication skills, self-regulation, and emotional awareness. Artistic activity plays an important role in this process by enabling children to express their inner experiences and understand the emotions of others. The study examines how different types of visual arts contribute to the development of emotional competence among younger schoolchildren, taking into account individual psychological characteristics and gender differences.

**Keywords:** Emotional competence, primary school children, artistic activity, emotional development, empathy, self-regulation, visual arts, corrective work.

## Introduction

Modern society is characterized by rapid technological changes that significantly affect various aspects of human life, including the processes of socialization and emotional development of the child. In the context of the information environment, where digital technologies, virtual communication, and social networks play a leading role, such qualities as the ability to understand one's own emotions, regulate them, and build constructive relationships with others become particularly important. This is especially relevant for primary school children, since it is at this age that initial communication skills, self-regulation, and emotional perception of the world begin to develop.

Emotional competence is interpreted as a child's ability to recognize and comprehend his or her emotional states, express them adequately, and take into account the emotional expressions of other people. At the early stages of schooling, this component becomes the basis for successful socialization, establishing positive contacts, and developing emotional maturity.

An important role in the development of emotional competence is played by artistic activity. It serves as a natural way of expressing the child's inner world and helps him convey his experiences in artistic form. The creative process stimulates the ability to notice the emotional states of others, interpret them and reflect them in visual images. Drawing, modeling and other types of artistic creativity allow children not only to show their feelings but also to better understand the emotions of others, which contributes to the growth of empathy.



### Emotional competence of primary school children and its essential characteristics

Emotional competence in primary school age represents a complex personal formation that includes a child's ability to notice emotional states, comprehend them, and express them in ways consistent with social norms. The formation of this quality is based on the accumulated emotional experience of the child, the characteristics of interaction with others, and age-related psychological changes occurring at the beginning of schooling.

Emotional competence is commonly understood as a set of knowledge about emotions, the ability to distinguish and name them, and also the skills of constructive application of emotional experiences in communication and activity. At primary school age, the child begins to better understand the causes of his feelings, learns to distinguish emotional shades and foresee the possible consequences of emotional reactions.

Primary school age is considered a sensitive period for the development of the emotional sphere. During this stage, the child faces new roles, responsibilities, an expanding circle of communication, and school requirements. Entering school requires regulating behavior, taking into account the emotions of others, and mastering social interaction norms.

Interest in emotional competence among primary school students is actively reflected in the works of domestic and foreign researchers. L. Vygotsky emphasized that a child's emotional life is formed in close connection with social experience and develops in the context of interaction with adults. He noted that emotions perform an important regulatory function and participate in the formation of higher mental processes. Based on his approach, emotional competence can be considered as a child's ability to understand his own experiences and manage them in accordance with situational requirements.

D. Goleman, who developed the concept of emotional intelligence, defined emotional competence as a system of skills including the ability to recognize one's emotions, control them, understand the feelings of others and build social relationships. According to him, the success of primary school children often depends not only on intellectual development but also on emotional maturity. Children with a more developed emotional sphere adapt more easily to school conditions, cope more successfully with stress, and establish contact with peers.

J. Piaget linked the development of emotional processes with cognitive growth. He pointed out that at the age of 6 to 10 the child reaches the stage of concrete operations, which allows him to meaningfully analyze causes of events, perceive relationships in a new way and regulate emotional reactions. This forms the basis for the development of empathy and socially acceptable behavior.

E. Erikson argued that primary school age corresponds to the stage of "industry vs. inferiority", in which emotional support of adults plays a key role. The ability to regulate emotions helps the child confidently master educational activities, while difficulties in this area can reduce self-esteem and lead to negative attitudes towards school.

From the point of view of humanistic psychology, C. Rogers highlighted the importance of emotional openness and understanding of personal feelings for harmonious personality development. For a primary school child this is expressed in the need to create a safe educational environment where he or she can freely express emotions and receive empathic support.



Modern research in the field of social-emotional learning by organizations and scholars such as CASEL, J. Durlak and R. Weissberg shows that programs aimed at developing children's emotional competence have a noticeable positive effect on academic motivation, reduce aggression, and contribute to better social adaptation. Their data emphasize that emotional competence occupies a central place in the development of a child's personality and should be considered as one of the priorities of the education system.

### **Components of emotional competence**

Emotional competence includes several key components, among which emotional awareness—the ability to recognize, differentiate, and label emotions—is particularly important.

#### **1. Recognition of one's own emotions**

Children learn to:

- distinguish basic emotions,
- relate feelings to physiological reactions,
- understand the causes of emotional experiences.

#### **2. Verbalization of emotions**

The ability to express feelings in words becomes a key step toward awareness.

#### **3. Understanding causes of emotions**

Children begin to reflect on emotional reactions rather than simply experience them.

#### **4. Understanding emotional dynamics**

A primary school child begins to understand that emotions change, can be controlled, and may coexist.

#### **5. Social aspect of emotional awareness**

Children learn that emotions are visible to others and influence the social environment.

#### **Emotional awareness contributes to:**

- reducing conflict,
- improving communication,
- increasing academic success,
- building self-esteem,
- coping with stress.

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