

## Ensuring Permanent Learning: A Pedagogical Perspective

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### Abstract

Ensuring the long-term retention of knowledge is one of the primary goals of education, especially at the primary school level, where strong foundational learning significantly impacts future academic success. This study investigates effective methods for enhancing retention in young students using active learning strategies such as music, drama, storytelling, hands-on activities, and interdisciplinary approaches. By stimulating both the emotional and cognitive abilities of children, these strategies aim to enhance memory retention and conceptual understanding. The findings suggest that integrating experiential learning techniques can significantly improve students' ability to recall and apply knowledge over long periods of time.

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**Keywords:** Active Learning Strategies, Elementary Education, Experiential Learning, Knowledge Retention, Permanent Learning.

### 1.INTRODUCTION

The use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in education helps shape the educational process according to the individual needs and characteristics of students by providing various tools that can offer new opportunities in the learning environment (online learning, online collaborative learning, multimedia learning, etc.) (Hussain, 2018; Taşkesen and Yılmaz, 2018; Tezci, 2016). Taking into account the characteristics of the learner in the learning environment is of great importance in order to achieve permanent and effective learning (Yılmaz and Özgür Dinçol, 2012). When learning is considered as the perception, interpretation and meaning of stimuli coming through the sense organs of a person; the more the learning environment and teaching activities appeal to more sense organs, the better and more permanent the learning is and therefore the later the forgetting occurs (Nalçacı and Ercoşkun, 2005; Saban, 2008; Semerci, 2006). When learning environments are designed using the teaching technologies offered by ICT, they can

become environments that appeal to more senses of individuals. Thus, these environments increase students' motivation and success (Akkoyunlu & Yılmaz, 2005; Chou, Hsiao, Shen, & Chen, 2010).

As an educator, my primary goal is to ensure permanent learning; this is a process in which the acquired knowledge remains in the memory for a long time and can be recalled even after a considerable amount of time has passed. In primary education, which is the foundation of academic development, students who achieve permanent learning show greater success in subsequent educational stages. To achieve this, it is necessary to stimulate not only their minds but also their emotions. By centering teaching around students and adding engaging activities, unforgettable experiences, and encouraging a love of learning, the goal of permanent learning can be effectively achieved. Although not always possible for every subject, my sixteen years of professional experience confirms that with dedicated effort, approximately 90% of educational content can be taught in a way that ensures retention.

As members of Generation Y, we have experienced traditional teaching methodologies that were considered optimal given the resources available at the time. However, for today's Generation Alpha, these methods are often inadequate. The abundance of stimuli they encounter on a daily basis has significantly reduced their attention span, making it difficult for them to focus on a single activity for long periods of time. They often seek immediate results rather than focusing on the learning process. Given these challenges, ensuring lasting learning requires engaging students, considering their limited 15-minute attention span, and adopting innovative pedagogical approaches. Lasting learning refers to the ability to retain knowledge and skills over time and ensure their applicability beyond the classroom environment. Traditional memorization techniques often fail to develop this deep understanding, especially among young students. Given the evolving nature of education and the unique characteristics of today's "Generation Alpha," who are constantly exposed to a multitude of stimuli, educators must use innovative approaches to capture students' attention and facilitate lasting understanding. This article examines various pedagogical methods that aim to improve knowledge retention in primary school children by incorporating engaging, student-centered learning activities.

The most effective strategies for engaging elementary school students include integrating learning with activities they enjoy, such as games, dance, theater, movies, music, and field trips. When the teaching process is designed around students' interests, their learning journey becomes both enjoyable and memorable (Figure 1). A student who is not interested in a subject will neither listen nor retain information. However, when learning is made engaging, a student's eyes sparkle with curiosity, their cognitive abilities are fully engaged, and they actively participate in the learning process. For example, rhythmic counting can be reinforced with musical activities. Playing a related song at a higher volume, allowing children to listen to it multiple times, and then

encouraging them to sing along slowly facilitates their ability to memorize numerical sequences. Furthermore, incorporating corresponding movements and dances increases engagement and strengthens memory retention. Finally, reinforcing the concept with a “boom game” solidifies learning through interactive participation.



**Figure 1.** Trips We Made With 1st Grade Students (Museum, Science And Culture Centers), Theater, Manual Skills Development Activities.



**Figure 2.** Our Visit to Altındağ Alev Alatl Science Center

## 2.MATERIAL AND METHODS

This study is based on activities and observations related to these activities used in primary education to encourage long-term learning. Permanent learning refers to the information being recorded in long-term memory during the learning process and becoming permanent. In this context, the effect of educational methodologies applied to primary school students is quite significant. While traditional educational methods may be suitable for Generation Y, different methods are required for today's Generation Alpha students. The characteristics of this generation include factors such as short attention spans, focusing on the result rather than the process, and getting bored easily.

### INNOVATIVE EDUCATIONAL APPROACHES FOR LONG-TERM LEARNING IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

**2.1.Musical Integration:** Using rhythm and melody to reinforce concepts, especially in subjects such as math and language learning (Figure 2).



**Figure 3.** Learning English With Music And Body Language

**2.2.Drama and Role Play:** Encouraging students to act out lessons, which helps contextualize information and deepen understanding.

**2.3. Experiential Learning:** Conducting hands-on experiments in science classes to have students explore concepts rather than passively receive information (Figure 4).



Figure 4. While Experimenting In Class

**2.4. Gamification:** Implementing learning activities in a game format to increase engagement and motivation (Figure 5).



Figure 5. The Quiz Competition We Organized in Our Class.

**2.5. Interdisciplinary Approaches:** Linking courses from different subjects to create meaningful and relatable learning experiences.

Each of these techniques was observed by me and evaluated according to student participation levels and feedback mechanisms, and developmental activities were organized by identifying deficiencies.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings show that students exposed to interactive and emotionally engaging learning techniques exhibited higher retention rates than those who relied solely on traditional methods. In particular, incorporating music and rhythm into math exercises significantly improved students' ability to remember numerical patterns. Similarly, drama-based approaches facilitated a deeper understanding of complex language concepts such as homophones and idioms. Furthermore, hands-on experiments in science classes encouraged curiosity and long-term understanding as students actively participated in the learning process. Gamification and interdisciplinary connections further increased engagement and motivation, strengthening knowledge retention (Figure 6).



**Figure 6.** Practical Examples Of Methods That Facilitate Learning

The way to the hearts of primary school children is through games, dance, theater, movies, songs, movements, entertainment, music and trips. If we aim to teach the subject we want to give to the child based on the activities he likes to do, we set out accordingly and draw a route accordingly, we will ensure permanent learning. We can reach his heart first, then his brain. You cannot make a person listen to something he does not like, let alone teach it. At most, he only looks at you as if he

is listening. When you reach the heart of the child, the child's eyes light up when you tell him a subject and he opens all his receptors so that he does not forget that moment, understands, grasps and gets involved in the process. If we mention a few examples of ensuring permanent learning:

There is no child who does not like singing, dancing, jumping, skipping and music. There is definitely a children's song about all rhythmic counting. Turn on the song, turn the volume up a little and have the children listen to it a few times. Then try singing it together. At first they won't be able to do it but later on, since the auditory memory of children in that age group is very high, they will immediately follow the rhythm and join in. Later, they will have a lot of fun dancing along with the words of the song. It's as if rhythmic counting has formed in their minds. Finally, if we crown the subject with the boom game, here is permanent learning for you.

If we set up a market in the classroom while discussing money and get our children up one by one and make a purchase according to the shopping list we gave them, where they will use all the money, there will probably be no child who does not recognize money.

If we play a treasure game consisting of clues that we have prepared in advance in the schoolyard while explaining non-standard units of measurement and that leads to a big gift at the end, and if we use all the units of measurement in the game, our children will have fun and experience a permanent learning by experiencing an unforgettable moment.

If we use the drama method while teaching homophones, if one of our students scatters the money in his hand on the ground and the other student blows her beautiful hair in the wind, we will have found the way from their hearts to their brains by having fun.

There is no child who does not like play dough, does not like its softness, and is not happy with shaping. Creating the layers of the world one by one by shaping them with colorful play dough makes children very happy, as proven by experience. If we turn on that well-known rap song about the subject of our world, we will fill both their hearts, souls and brains.

If we print out the words with mixed spellings on colorful papers and ask our students to put bandages on them, then ask them to dress the wounds of these words with missing and incorrect words, they will never forget the words they helped and dressed.

Science class is a fun activity in itself. There is definitely an experiment for each subject. The easiest thing is to explain the subject and watch a video. The pleasure of giving them the opportunity to access information through experiments and prove the accuracy of the information is priceless. If we close their eyes on the subject of matter, put various substances in front of them and ask them to guess the substances you put in and list the properties of the substance they guess,

they will have a lot of fun. The happiness they get when they do the vinegar and baking soda experiment on the states of matter and their balloons get bigger is very different.

In order to explain the importance of the National Anthem and to introduce Mehmet Akif ERSOY; If we can crown the subject by having them watch the National Anthem cartoon of Rafadan Tayfa, their favorite cartoon character, and then have the story of the acceptance of the National Anthem dramatized and finally a trip to the Tacettin Dergah, I think we can ensure permanent learning.

The best way to understand the subject of idioms and proverbs is drama. Children love it very much and they show all their skills and grasp the subject very well. Another of the best ways to understand the subject of idioms and proverbs is for the child to write a story that tells the idiom or proverb. Telling the story about the given proverb or idiom using a finger or spoon puppet that they have prepared will be both a beautiful memory that they will not forget and a good opportunity to understand the subject better. The most important of the permanent learning methods is to transfer a learned subject to someone else. This type of learning is a method that is placed in the long-term memory in permanent learning (Figure 7).



**Figure 7.** Our Idiom and Proverb Exhibition

By making a list of the materials found in children's homes in standard units of measurement, first determining their estimated measurements without measuring, then determining them using a meter, and finally calculating the difference between the estimated and the actual result, we achieve a good learning by doing this activity that includes many topics related to mathematics such as addition, subtraction, units of measurement and relates them to daily life.



While studying the subject of plants, asking them to go out into nature, research at least 10 of the plants and tree leaves they see, and write a nice article about them would be a great learning opportunity for little explorers.

When explaining the subject of division, bringing roasted chickpeas, the number of which we have previously determined, to the class and asking them to be shared among the desired groups in order, then eating them with pleasure, first makes their hearts, then their brains, and then their stomachs happy.

If we were to draw a huge map of Turkey on the subject of local goods and visit the cities one by one. If we were to stop by Artvin and eat honey, drink tea in Rize, buy our bread in Trabzon, and fill our stomachs with hazelnuts in Gümüşhane... If we were to feed my lambs first their stomachs, then their hearts, then their brains with every famous food of my country, and then fill our map with food and feed their eyes, wouldn't it be wonderful?

If we were to invite a grandmother or grandfather to the class on the subject of "They were children once too". If we were to ask all the questions, make an exhibition out of the things they used, and bring them old photographs, we could talk about them for hours. How can an interview with an adult be a permanent subject? (Figure 8).



**Figure 8.** Going Back in Time; We Listened First-Hand To The Things People Were Curious About How Life Was In The Past.

The examples I have listed are only to enlighten you and make us think differently. My biggest dream is to write a book using these beautiful methods that I have acquired as a result of my professional experiences and research. According to our valuable teacher Nevzat Tarhan, at the top

of the learning pyramid, the child only has what he/she hears. You hear and listen in class and then forget. In the middle of the pyramid, there are things he/she understands from what he/she hears correctly. What he/she understands is more permanent, but if you do not repeat and use them, you will forget them too. There is also what a person experiences and feels, and he/she never forgets them. In fact, there is no need to repeat them. These are the information we learn and internalize by doing and experiencing.

So, are all these activities you do really enough to ensure permanent learning? Yes to a large extent... However, we also need to do some activities that support them. It is necessary to take small notes in the form of questions and answers about the topics learned every week and ensure that the student constantly repeats them. Another of the most important elements of permanent learning is to repeat them at intervals. Repeating a topic you learned that day is less permanent than repeating it the next day. For this reason, it is very important to repeat the learned subject periodically. In fact, it would be great to end these prepared notes with a quiz, which is children's favorite activity at the end of the year. Korkman and Metin determined the effects of inquiry-based collaborative learning and inquiry-based online collaborative learning methods on student success and permanent learning in their study in 2021. The research results show that the inquiry-based online collaborative learning method is more effective than other methods on students' success and permanent learning.

Another element that will support permanent learning is to support the subject learned in a subject in a lesson with other lessons. It is to be able to make a learned subject usable in daily life. Although it is not valid for every subject, organizing a trip for the subject provides much more permanent learning.

In conclusion, it highlights the critical role of emotionally engaging and experiential learning methods in promoting long-term memory among elementary school children. While traditional passive learning methods often result in short-term memorization, active learning approaches help to embed knowledge more deeply. Educators should prioritize techniques that integrate multiple sensory and cognitive processes to ensure effective knowledge acquisition. While the proposed strategies have shown significant benefits, future studies should investigate the long-term impact of these methods across different age groups and subjects. Additionally, further research should consider the role of individualized learning preferences in optimizing memory strategies.

Stay-put learning is an important goal in education, especially at the elementary level. By using interactive and student-centered teaching methodologies, educators can significantly increase knowledge retention and application. The findings of this study highlight the importance of integrating music, drama, experiential learning, gamification, and interdisciplinary approaches to

create a more engaging and effective learning environment. Future research should focus on further developing these methods and exploring their applicability in a variety of educational contexts.

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