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## **STUDY ALPHABET OF UKRAINIAN LANGUAGE IN FOREIGN AUDIENCE FOR EDUCATIONAL COURSE “MY FRIENDS”**

*The article is devoted to the study of the alphabet of the Ukrainian language according to the educational course «My Friends» for children abroad (4–6 years old), which is intended for learning the Ukrainian language at the elementary level (according to the «Standardized requirements for the levels of proficiency in the Ukrainian language as a foreign language A1–C2»): A1 – Beginner + Elementary, which certifies a partial acquaintance with the structure and system of the Ukrainian language and the possibility of simple, short and thematically limited communication in predicted everyday situations. The article states that the «My Friends» manual is an educational complex that includes: 1. «My Friends». Educational book. Workbook, part 1; 2. «My friends». Educational book. Workbook, part 2 and 3. «My friends». Help for the teacher, online. The focus is on the fact that the educational manual «My Friends» was created in accordance with the New Ukrainian School – a key reform of the Ministry of Education and Science from September 2017 and from February 2018 in accordance with the new Law «On Education». The manual is intended to help children (aged 4–6 years) familiarize themselves with the Ukrainian alphabet, understand and consolidate the acquired skills of oral and written communication, learn new grammatical models, as well as facilitate the child's pronunciation of each letter and bring it closer to Ukrainian proper, in general, contribute to the pupil's development as competent, versatile person. In order for classes to be quite easy and fun, as well as beneficial, the author of the article emphasizes the need to develop a certain strategy and follow it in everything. The educational complex «My Friends» consists of 17 topics and 34 lessons. A separate lesson is developed for each letter in alphabetical order. Each lesson begins with brief information for the teacher: 1. Lesson topic. 2. Determination of the level. 3. The proposed letter. 4. Important words. 5. Situational dictionary. 6. Tasks of the lesson (lexical and grammatical component). 7. Exercises for writing, listening, repeating, speaking and learning letters. We offer to get to know the study guide together with interesting characters (boy Андрій (Andriy), girl Юлія (Yulia) and their pets – Левко (Levko) the lion and Мудрик (Mudryk) the robot).*

**Key words:** *alphabet, Ukrainian as a foreign language, level A1, foreign language audience, communicative competence.*

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## **ВИВЧЕННЯ АБЕТКИ УКРАЇНСЬКОЇ МОВИ В ІНШОМОВНІЙ АУДИТОРІЇ ЗА НАВЧАЛЬНИМ ПОСІБНИКОМ «МОЇ ДРУЗІ»**

*Статтю присвячено вивченню абетки української мови за навчальним посібником «Мої друзі» для дітей за кордоном (4-6 років), який призначений для вивчення української мови на початковому рівні (згідно зі «Стандартизованими вимогами до рівнів володіння українською мовою як іноземною A1-C2»): A1 – початковий рівень, що засвідчує часткове ознайомлення зі структурою і системою української мови та можливість простого, короткого і тематично обмеженого спілкування в прогнозованих повсякденних ситуаціях. У статті зазначено, що посібник «Мої друзі» – це навчальний комплекс, до якого входять: 1. «Мої друзі». Навчальна книга. Робочий зошит, частина 1 (А-М); 2. «Мої друзі». Навчальна книга. Робочий зошит, частина 2 (Н-Я) та 3. «Мої друзі». Допомога вчителю, онлайн. Скеровано погляд на те, що навчальний посібник «Мої друзі» створено відповідно до Нової української школи (НУШ) – ключової реформи Міністерства освіти і науки від вересня 2017 року та від лютого 2018 року згідно з новим Законом «Про освіту». Посібник призначено допомогти дітям (віком 4–6 років) ознайомитися з українською абеткою, зрозуміти і закріпити набуті навички усного та писемного мовлення, вивчити нові граматичні моделі, а також полегшити вимову дитиною кожної літери та наблизити її до власне української, загалом посприяти розвитку учня як грамотної, різнобічно обізнаної особистості. Для того, щоб заняття проходили досить легко і весело, а також приносили користь, авторка статті наголошує на необхід-*

ності виробити певну стратегію і дотримуватися її у всьому. Навчальний посібник «Мої друзі» складається з 17 тем та 34 уроків. На кожен літеру розроблений окремий урок у порядку абетки. Кожен урок розпочинається короткою інформацією для вчителя: 1. Тема уроку. 2. Визначення рівня. 3. Пропонована літера. 4. Важливі слова. 5. Ситуативний словник. 6. Завдання уроку (лексико-граматичний компонент). 7. Вправи для письма, слухання, повторення, говоріння і вивчення літер. Пізнавати навчальний посібник пропонуємо разом із цікавими героями (хлопчик Андрій, дівчинка Юлія та їхні улюбленці – лев Левко та робот Мудрик).

**Ключові слова:** абетка, українська мова як іноземна, рівень А1, ініціативна аудиторія, комунікативна компетенція.

**Formulation of the problem.** The Ukrainian language in Ukraine is intended to perform various governmental functions: to ensure the consolidation, unity and free cultural development of the Ukrainian people, to stand guard over the preservation of its identity and healthy spiritual and mental development. In view of this, the Ukrainian nation and the state must ensure the revival and protection of the Ukrainian language, the qualitative development of the Ukrainian language space. National linguistic consciousness and linguistic dignity are of crucial and fundamental importance for the future of the Ukrainian language and the Ukrainian state. In their formation, the leading role should be played by the Ukrainian intellectual elite, the top leadership of the state, as well as all conscious Ukrainians who left the territory of Ukraine and did not lose their connection and closeness to their homeland. Every Ukrainian, raising the next generation, should not forget his roots and language, but on the contrary, pass on his skills to children and develop them.

Learning the Ukrainian language actually begins with the alphabet and a sincere conversation between mom or dad and the child in their native language. Learning the alphabet is not a boring drudgery, but a fun and exciting introduction to the Ukrainian language. A successfully learned alphabet allows you to quickly navigate dictionaries and indexes that are built according to the alphabetic principle, understand abbreviations and confidently spell your name.

That is why such a question as the formation of skills of Ukrainian language study abroad at the initial stage became important, which determines the relevance of future research and study of the alphabet of the Ukrainian language according to the educational manual «My Friends».

**Research analysis.** Special research has proven that early school learning of any foreign language as a means of intercultural communication is an effective tool for stimulating cognition, revealing the creative potential of the student's personality and strengthening the humanization of primary education. Methodological science has a significant potential for researching the problem of learning a foreign language in general (I, Kochan, O. Antoniv, D, Mazurik, O. Palinska, O. Turkevich, I. Zozulya).

However, the question often arises: at what age is it best for students to start learning a foreign language? After researching this question, it turned out that it is worth starting to learn speaking from an early age. «The critical period for language learning can vary. After all, language is a whole series of skills. Grammar, for example, we can learn even in adulthood. It is believed that the first best time to learn a language is the period from birth to 3 years. The next one is between 4-7 years old», – Patricia Kathryn Kuhl, professor of speech and hearing and co-director of the Institute for Learning and Brain Sciences at the University of Washington) (Kuhl, 2019: 6). If there is an intention to teach a child a foreign language at the native level, then the most acceptable method is simple, casual communication in a playful way. «Children learn best when they are motivated, encouraged and challenged», – says Catherine Stewart, director of early childhood development at the British Council in Madrid, for the English in Early Childhood online course. Course experts emphasize that the main activity of young children is play. Therefore, learning a foreign language should be done in this way. This applies to learning any language, if we are talking about young children. You should pay attention to the game presentation when you choose courses, an English-speaking kindergarten or a teacher.

Specialists and teachers from abroad advise to start learning the alphabet in different ways and at different age periods. Galina Barlyak / Halina Barlyak (Barlyak, 2018: 1) (teacher of primary classes of Saturday school in Italy) asks: «Learning letters and reading is better either before the beginning of education in the 1st grade or after a year. Don't rush. Children are interested in being pupils, but it is important that the desire does not disappear immediately. It's no secret that most children learn Ukrainian against their own will. But you can try to learn to write in different ways. This question is individual. It is possible to simultaneously learn the letters – classically, as in a Ukrainian school in Ukraine, it is possible after learning the entire alphabet, because the most important thing for our children is the development of speech. When children know how to make words from letters, and this is where the split alphabet will

come in handy, they will learn and write with great pleasure. There is a third option. The best results are shown by 8-9 years old children. They have their own experience from the Italian school, that is, the mechanism of composing and reading words, writing them with letters. They are old enough to understand the motivation. Children's ambitions, thirst for leadership work wonders. But the issue of oral communication always remains relevant» (Barlyak, 2018: 1).

**The purpose of the article.** The urgency of the problem – teaching preschool children the alphabet in a foreign-language classroom made us aim to help teachers and children learn Ukrainian letters quickly and easily by creating the «My Friends» study guide, which presents the methodology of learning the Ukrainian alphabet for children of the diaspora aged 4-6 years, which is based on the use of educational cards, songs, poems, writings, coloring pages, etc. It is important that getting to know the Ukrainian alphabet is effective and creates interest in further learning the language. This is especially true for children. From my own experience, it has been noted that the presentation of the Ukrainian alphabet to children who are starting to learn the language «from scratch» should be, on the one hand, bright, and on the other, productive.

**Presenting main material.** The educational course (alphabet) of the Ukrainian language for children abroad «My friends» is intended for learning the Ukrainian language at the elementary level (according to the All-European recommendations for language education - level A1): A1 – Beginner + Elementary, which certifies a partial familiarization with the structure and system the Ukrainian language and the possibility of simple, short and topically limited communication in predicted everyday situations.

The course «My friends» is an educational complex, which includes: 1. «My friends». Educational book. Workbook, part 1; 2. «My friends». Educational book. Workbook, part 2 and 3. «My friends». Help for the teacher, online. The purpose of the manual is to help children (aged 4-6 years) familiarize themselves with the Ukrainian alphabet, to understand and consolidate acquired oral and written communication skills, to learn new grammatical models, as well as to facilitate the child's pronunciation of each letter and bring it closer to Ukrainian proper, in general to contribute to the development of the student as a competent, versatile person. In order for classes to be quite easy and fun, as well as beneficial, it is necessary to develop a certain strategy and follow it in everything: 1. Regularity and systematicity in

learning the alphabet (2-3 hours per week). 2. Pay attention to the readiness of the child (psychological and physiological state) and timeliness of education (not earlier than 4-5 years). 3. Tactility in the child's development in relation to learning the alphabet (from fine motor skills to large motor skills) and diversity. 4. Interactivity (cards, mobile applications, etc.). 5. Activity and fun in learning.

The methodological basis for the development of the Ukrainian language textbook was: 1. Textbooks on Polish, English, German, and French as a second language, which are studied by Ukrainians in kindergartens and elementary grades of high school. 2. Educational sites, online courses and videos on learning Ukrainian as a native language. 3. Video lessons and courses for learning Italian, English, Polish, French, etc. as. 4. Attending English language classes for children aged 4-6 in kindergartens, schools and specialized courses.

The structure of the educational course (alphabet) «My Friends»:

1. The course «My friends» consists of 17 topics: 1. Acquaintance (Lesson\_1-2); 2. In the classroom (Lesson\_3-6); 3. Toys (Lesson\_7-8); 4. My things (Lesson\_9-10); 5. Colors (Lesson\_11-12); 6. Zoo (Lesson\_13-15); 7. Farm (Lesson\_16-18); 8. Clothes (Lesson\_19-21); 9. My body (Lesson\_22-23); 10. Birthday (Lesson\_24); 11. Ukraine (Lesson\_25); 12. Football (Lesson\_26); 13. My family (Lesson\_27); 14. Food (Lesson\_28-29); 15. In the closet (Lesson\_30); 16. Happiness (Lesson\_31-32); 17. Rest (Lesson\_33-34).

2. The manual contains 34 lessons. A separate lesson is developed for each letter in alphabetical order. Each lesson begins with brief information for the teacher: 1. Lesson topic. 2. Determination of the level. 3. The proposed letter. 4. Important words. 5. Situational dictionary. 6. Tasks of the lesson (lexical and grammatical component). 7. Exercises for the elements of writing, listening, repeating, speaking and studying letters.

The structure of the lessons of the educational complex is quite simple and systematized. Remember, the proposed materials do not limit you in the presentation of only them, but aim at finding new ones and using the acquired ones, so we offer, and you supplement and improve.

1. It is necessary to start the lessons by looking at the illustrated dictionary for each letter (page\_1), which will help you to orient yourself more quickly when learning a new letter and hear it several times as the teacher pronounces it in unknown words. It should impress children with its ease and brightness. They should not feel that they have started learning,



this is a kind of interesting knowledge and a friendly conversation that will help the teacher organize the children, reduce their fear of something new and, of course, interest them. Children may ask about new words or pictures in a foreign (native) language, so help them by translating their questions and answers. After several translations, try to use the words from the picture dictionary in Ukrainian so that you remember them better. Say new words clearly, slowly, very easily and with a smile. Set them up to the fact that learning the Ukrainian language is a sincere conversation with a relative or friend, the language is very clear and at the same time very melodious.

2. The next page (page\_2) is the brief information for the teacher that we mentioned above. It should be colorful and illustrative, with which students would like to work and learn. Here you need to write clear tasks for both the teacher and the child, namely: 1) lesson topic, 2) lesson number, 3) letter, 4) level (A1), 5) dictionary (suggested important words), 6) task of the lesson (lexical-grammatical component), 7) written words with accents and illustrations to them, 8) situational drawing for the proposed letter. On this page, children visually familiarize themselves with a certain (printed) letter, both upper and lower case. For them, we offer to complete only two tasks. In the first task, they paint a letter and spell it according to the indicated marks, and also paint one of the objects for this letter. In task number two, they look at the pictures, study them, identify the word with the picture, remember the spelling of the word and pronounce it correctly, according to the rules of emphasis. They learn to orally describe a situational picture in Ukrainian, using new words, ask questions and give answers.

3. On page number three (page\_3) we also offer two tasks. Task 3 is repetition of the letter (writing) and sound (sounding). Spend a few minutes on this exercise. Do it together and separately, listen to each one and help to pronounce it as best as possible. Say each word from the picture dictionary and use the flashcards, say the words with them, do not interrupt or insist on speaking if the student is not ready. Use a card game. Task 4 is a short video clip or song using this letter and already known words. Children can only look and listen, but they can also repeat words and learn new ones for the letter they are learning. After viewing, again, use the cards and repeat the heard words and new ones. If there are no viewing devices in your room, then just read the poem to them and emphasize the words of this letter.

4. In the «My Friends» educational course, in addition to letters, we also suggest studying numbers and pronouncing them correctly in Ukrainian.

Therefore, the next page (page\_4) is a situational picture task for memorizing numbers or letters. Here you need to count and connect, find the specified object and circle it, make a letter from small particles, etc. Such tasks will help the child better and faster to reveal his abilities to communicate and concentrate, and the teacher will clearly trace who likes to communicate, and who will calmly and carefully paint and write.

5. Page number 6 also contains two tasks and gives children the opportunity to learn and repeat the alphabet (task\_6), sing or pronounce in verse form. You can use materials from your own possessions and see and circle it in the proposed written alphabet (task\_7). Children name each learned letter and speak and circle a new letter, both uppercase and lowercase. In the table with letters, we provide both printed and written letters, for faster memorization and familiarization.

6. On page number 7, we suggest taking a break from the letters and listening to a song with movements about an object or character of the proposed letter. You can perform this task while sitting at the desks and clap your hands, repeating a single word or letter combination, you can stand in a circle and perform certain movements. The choice is yours, but use only the Ukrainian language. If the class is very active and quick to learn, learn a new rhyme or little skit with them. If not, then consolidate the new words well.

These few pages of introduction to the new letter in the «Teacher's Book» and in the textbook «Teacher's Aid» will open up a convenient and interesting way for you in further work to study the necessary material. Therefore, we offer the next stage of work with the «Workbook». The materials contained in this manual are compiled and collected from many sources for a better and easier study of the Ukrainian alphabet. These are mainly exercise for writing and coloring, composed for children of different age groups and different levels of training. Only the teacher will be able to correctly select or choose from the offered materials those that will help the student to reveal his potential, learn something new, and not provoke a lack of love for the language and a negative attitude. Therefore, we offer a wide variety of exercises: 1. The first task is the opportunity to write or circle a printed letter in upper and lower case, shade and color the image for this letter. The second task is to find the letters in the pictures and color them. 2. On the next page, there is a task for repeating numbers, where you need to count, color, name and circle the objects on the board. 3. The task of the next page will be similar, where students will search for objects or characters by a given letter and

also color, name and circle everything. 4. Next, we offer, once again, the prescriptions of printed letters for better writing and consolidation of what has been learned. And also an interesting maze, where pupils look for a letter and paint a hidden object and name it. 5. For older and more active children, we now offer uppercase and lowercase letters. They must be written slowly and, in accordance with the rules of spelling, try to write accurately and clearly. And for young students, we have prepared the following exercise, made up of pictures, in which they look for letters and connect them according to the task. 6. The next page is coloring by numbers. The children rest a little and repeat the colors and numbers, naming each of them. Like the next task, aimed at repeating the previous letters and new ones and finding them in the table. Students must name them, find them and circle them. 7. Since children have to learn a lot of new and interesting things in Ukrainian language classes, we also offer a little drawing on the given topic of the lesson or the proposed letter. 8. Also, for writing practice, we provide a separate page of spellings for the written letter for both older and younger children. Of course, the teacher decides whether children are ready for written letters and whether they will be able to learn both printed and written at the same time, and whether they need it at all. Learning requirements are managed by the class, and the teacher helps to realize and fulfill all the needs of students in learning, developing in them only positive and good intentions towards learning and the Ukrainian language. 9. Creative tasks complete our educational course. It can be vytinanki, or creative works with colored paper, or folding origami, and even just eating

delicious fruits or sweets while watching a cartoon, a theatrical performance or a fairy tale. Choose beautiful and instructive Ukrainian fairy tales for them, repeat the heroes or characters with them. 10. We are sure that the proposed materials are not all that you can read and find in our manuals, but they will help you in the learning process to make your lessons more interesting and informative. 11. We also offer many sites and additional links where you will find new and important materials for studying the Ukrainian language, we hope you will be interested in them and use them to deepen your lessons.

It is suggested to get to know the study guide together with the interesting characters, the boy Andriy, the girl Yulia and their pets – the lion Levko and the robot Mudryk). «My friends» is an interesting adventure into the land of the Ukrainian alphabet, songs, fairy tales and cartoons, where every child will be able to discover the fascinating world of letters, sounds and new words. She will learn to play new games, solve interesting mazes and riddles. He will be able to feel and compare the language of his mother and father, will be enriched and will become more confident.

Conclusions. We hope that the alphabet will enable children not only to improve their knowledge of the Ukrainian language, but also to discover something new and unknown about Ukraine, to help them get to know our country better and to love it.

For a better familiarization with the manual, we recommend that you take an interest in other educational projects of the International Institute of Education, Culture and Diaspora Relations of Lviv Polytechnic University: <https://miok.lviv.ua>

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