

УДК 378.015.3:159.923.2+159.98:7

DOI [HTTPS://DOI.ORG/10.33989/2075-146X.2023.31.283380](https://doi.org/10.33989/2075-146X.2023.31.283380)

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## **ART THERAPY FOR IMPROVING THE PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING OF STUDENTS TRAUMATIZED DURING THE WAR**

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The article is aimed at the study and development of art methods for restoring the stability of students who suffered during the war. The research was divided into the following stages: a survey on the perception of war and own "war experience" among secondary school students; fixation of "pain points" (problematic) and "support points" (useful knowledge, skills) in students' answers; development of an effective method of art therapy in the conditions of war for students to overcome losses and gain a new life and spiritual perspective.

**Key words:** *art therapy, B. Bloom's taxonomy, art hub, art techniques, the psychological well-being of students*

This research deals with the analysis of questionnaire on perception of war and spiritual needs of Ukrainian youth. The data includes the results of questioning students 10-17 years old and their estimation of war in Ukraine, risks of unstable world. The objective of the article is to discuss the possible positive effect of art-therapy on the psychological well-being of Ukrainian students during the war.

The authors of the article studies the effective methods of art therapy during the war in Ukraine.

February 24, 2022 influenced not only on the history of Ukraine and its territory. This date has changed the whole world. It has changed dramatically and will change in the future. We've all changed ourselves as well. Ukrainian children have also changed themselves. We all have different facial expressions and inner state, because every day we go through destruction, darkness, cold, death, loss. We cannot live as before. We can't smile like we used to. We cannot be the same people as it was before, because this war plays with our destinies. Now we and our children are getting a difficult experience of war, which brings another worldview and values.

1. War in Ukraine: risks of unstable world for Ukrainian students.

According to the UN, more than 18.5 million Ukrainians have suffered from the war. Tens of thousands of Ukrainians died from Russian aggression, the number of victims is growing daily. About 8.5 million Ukrainians have gone abroad. About 13 million are forced to move from the combat zone to other territories of Ukraine.

Children suffer most from war. Since the beginning of the war, more than 1,600 Ukrainian children have been killed. Tens of thousands of Ukrainian children were forcibly taken to the Russian Federation by the invaders, tens of thousands of Ukrainian children disappeared and could not be found or might stay in the occupied territories. Exact numbers cannot be estimated for now.

According to the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, about 500,000 Ukrainian school-age children are abroad.

According to the UN (published at a meeting of the UN Security Council on January 13, 2023) 5.7 million schoolchildren have been directly affected by the war, of which 3.7 million have not been able to attend school since the beginning of the Russian aggression.

What are the risks caused by the war for Ukrainian children?

The risks of war can be divided into two groups - external and internal.

The first group of risks is caused by external circumstances that have changed as a result of the war. These are the risks:

1. A fundamental change in the world, when the rule of force demonstrates a desire to replace the rule of law.
2. War and uncertainty of further global processes.
3. Prolonged stress such as constant missile attacks, occupation, threat of violence, etc.

4. Significant deterioration of living conditions such as destruction of houses and schools; moving to other territories; lack of electricity, heat, water, bad Internet connection, etc.

5. Changing learning environment such as inability to attend schools; lack of Internet; difficulty to have face-to-face communication with peers, etc.

6. Terrible crimes and atrocities of the army of the aggressor country, which all children of the world witness.

The second group of risks deal with the complex mental states and feelings which Ukrainian students experience during the war. These are the risks:

1. Destruction of previous ideas about the world and the system of moral values.

2. Fear of dangers and severe trials.

3. Gradual emotional exhaustion such as mental instability, emotional reduction, etc.

4. Unpreparedness for perception of prolonged stressful situations during the war time.

5. Painful experience of being separated from family, relatives, friends.

6. Being out of the safety and comfort zone.

2. Is it possible to enhance the psychological well-being of Ukrainian students in war?

All Ukrainian children to the certain degree have suffered deep psychological trauma from February 24, 2022 and some children experience physical trauma. The war continues and inflicts physical and psychological trauma on children. Every month and every day of the war, the deep physical and psychological wounds became deeper.

Wounds on the body hurt much, but are possible to heal, but the pain in children's souls becomes stronger, because students have not been able to return to normal life and safe learning environment for more than a year.

Even if children are not in the zone of active hostilities or under occupation, but in quieter regions of Ukraine, they still experience constant danger, shelling, violation of the infrastructure of a city or village. Children constantly hear the sounds of sirens, are must hide in shelters, and because of the lack of electricity and heat are not able to study and communicate with peers.

Those Ukrainian students who went abroad, to a safe territory, also suffer and experience deep psychological trauma. Because of the war, children are separated from their relatives, they live in foreign homes, and most importantly - they are not sure of their future, do not know when they will return home and whether they will return to their city/village, whether their school will exist, whether they will be able to continue to live and study in Ukraine.

Hence the question arises – is it possible to enhance the psychological well-being during the war? Can psychotrauma be treated if the war has not yet ended and children experience more and more trauma every day? Should we as teachers do it? Maybe we should wait for the end of the war, and then begin to work on enhancing children's psychological well-being?

We all know that if a person breaks his arm or leg, treatment will be effective when the person is at rest and safe.

However, if there are no safe physical or psychological environment? Will this treatment be effective? What can be done for this person, in particular for the child? How to help in the process of regaining the physical and psychological health of children who continue to suffer constant psychological and physical trauma, live in stress for a long time? How much is possible in a war time?

The specificity of our time is that we and Ukrainian children live in a war time that has not yet ended.

This is life when you constantly suffer long-lasting psychological and physical trauma, which have delayed effects. Today, no one knows when and how this war will be finished, what other tests Ukrainian children will have to endure.

However, we believe that today it is necessary to act, to save not only physically but also psychologically Ukrainian children in the conditions of this terrible unfinished war.

We must use effective technologies and methods to enhance the psychological well-being of children in conditions of prolonged instability of society.

It is known from history that during war doctors often find productive ways to treat physical wounds. Similarly, teachers and lecturers must find effective ways of psychological assistance to Ukrainian students during the war, and then after its completion.

Art therapy is one of the ways to enhance the psychological well-being of Ukrainian students during the war, and then after the war - as a means of combating post-traumatic phenomena.

In order to resist war, it is necessary to find appropriate resources. Of course, the important resource is energy (electricity, heat, water), military (weapons), but no less important is the resource of emotional value, which can give Ukrainian students art. Therefore, art therapy contains a great potential for enhancing the psychological well-being of students.

We work at a pedagogical university and prepare teachers for work in schools. But with the outbreak of war in Ukraine, it is necessary to make significant adjustments to the training of Ukrainian teachers, because it should not only be teachers who know and teach their subject well, it should be teachers who should be able to work with students who have suffered severe psychological (often physical) injuries during the war. Now it is necessary to teach future teachers not only to teach subjects, but to enhance the inner balance of students, to improve their inner state, so that they receive emotional strength to survive in difficult conditions, not to be afraid of difficulties, to learn further, not to lose faith in people and justice, to confidently build their better future.

3. Perception of War and Spiritual Needs of Ukrainian Youth (results of a survey of students aged 10-17).

In January-February 2023, a year after the war began, we conducted a survey among secondary school students from different regions of Ukraine, which allows us to trace certain trends and problems in the process of enhancing the psychological well-being of children affected by the war.

The survey involved 3547 secondary school students aged 10-17 from 8 regions of Ukraine: Kherson, Dnipropetrovs'k, Luhansk, Kyiv, Poltava, Zakarpattia, Khmelnytsky and Lviv regions.

The survey was based on B. Bloom's taxonomy, which, as we know, identified three domains of educational activity:

- 1) the cognitive domain (knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, evaluation, synthesis);
- 2) the affective domain (receiving, responding, valuing, organization, dissemination, characterization);
- 3) the psychomotor domain (imitation, manipulation, precision, articulation, correction, naturalization).

Based on B. Bloom's taxonomy, we developed a questionnaire for Ukrainian students. There were 18 questions in total (6 for each domain).

The main goals of the questionnaire are:

- 1) to determine how the war in Ukraine (a factor of destabilization in global and local aspects, a cause of physical and psychological trauma) has affected the worldview and internal state of Ukrainian secondary school students;
- 2) to identify the emotional and value-based needs of Ukrainian students during the war;
- 3) to determine the potential and main directions of art therapy for enhancing the psychological well-being of students affected by the war.

The survey was conducted randomly in eastern, southern, central, and western Ukraine. The survey was anonymous, with students providing only their first name and the first letter of their surname, age, place of residence before the war, and place of residence now. The survey was written, self-administered, and voluntary. Students filled out the questionnaires themselves on a computer, any gadget, or by hand on a sheet of paper. Teachers helped us pass the questionnaires on to the children. It was very difficult during the war, because there is little electricity in Ukraine now and often no connection. Still, we received a sufficient number of respondents. We read the digital answers of the students or the photos they took with their phones, and we often had to stop because it was impossible to read these questionnaires without crying.

There were two types of questions in the questionnaire – closed (when it was necessary to choose an answer or answers from a list) and open (when students had the opportunity to offer their own answer).

Let's review and analyze the results of the survey.

The first 6 questions relate to the cognitive sphere (according to B. Bloom).

Question 1 is about changes in students' lives (cognitive level – knowledge).

The majority of Ukrainian students said that their lives had changed dramatically. All students recognize the significant changes that have occurred to them as a result of the aggression and can roughly estimate the extent of these changes with regard to their personal well-being.

1. After February 24, 2022, my life has approximately changed by ...	
A) 25 %	0 % of students
B) 50 %	8 % of students
C) 75 %	19 % of students
D) 100 %	73 % of students
E) it hasn't changed	0 % of students

Question 2 concerns students' perception of the causes of the war in Ukraine (cognitive level – comprehension).

The vast majority of students believe that the war is caused by Russia's attempts to destroy Ukraine's independence. Other answers were relatively unpopular.

2. War in Ukraine is...	
A) Russia's attempt to destroy Ukraine's independence	98 % of students
B) a confrontation between Russia and NATO	1 % of students
C) a conflict between different regions of Ukraine	0 % of students
D) redistribution of spheres of influence between strong countries	1 % of students
E) there is no war in Ukraine	0 % of students

Question 3 revealed new skills that students have acquired during the war (cognitive level – application).

Most of the students' answers were about helping others in difficult circumstances, as well as the ability to survive in dangerous conditions. These are the new skills taught to Ukrainian students by the war.

3. During the war, I have acquired new skills, such as...	
A) surviving in dangerous circumstances	26 % of students
B) acting and learning in an online space	13 % of students
C) helping others in difficult circumstances	61 % of students
D) I haven't acquired any new skills	0 % of students
E) your option	0 % of students

Question 4 asked students to identify the most difficult challenges in their lives during the war (cognitive level – analysis).

According to the survey, the biggest problem for most children is their own fear, and they consider overcoming fear to be their biggest challenge. Other difficulties, according to the children, are losing their home and/or school and studying in unfavorable conditions. Adapting to another territory is also difficult for many children. In option E, students also mentioned the loss of relatives and life under occupation.

4. The biggest challenge for me during the war was...	
A) overcoming my fear	68 % of students
B) studying in unfavourable circumstances	14 % of students
C) losing my home/school	7 % of students
D) adapting to life in a new area	3 % of students
E) your option	8 % of students (losing relatives, life under occupation)

Question 5 asked students to assess the role of art in their lives during the war (cognitive level – evaluation).

Despite the difficult conditions and the ongoing war, Ukrainian students recognize the importance of art for them. They are drawn to art, love art, and seek moral support from it. According to most students, art primarily helps to overcome fear. Moreover, as the students wrote, art makes it possible to forget about the war at least for a while, to calm down, have fun, gain inner strength, and remain human.

5. During the war, art (books, music, films etc) gives me an opportunity to ...	
A) have fun and forget about the war	16 % of students
B) feel like an educated person	1 % of students
C) overcome my fear	78% of students
D) I don't need art right now	0% of students
E) your option	5 % of students (calm down, enhance inner strength, remain human etc)

Question 6 concerns students' understanding of possible outcomes of the war between Ukraine and Russia (cognitive level – synthesis).

Despite life's difficulties and trials, Ukrainian children are confident that Ukrainians will win as a nation and that Ukraine will be independent. Students believe in Ukraine passionately, believe in their country and freedom. These are courageous children, they have not broken spiritually and have not lost hope for a better future.

6. The war in Ukraine will end with...	
A) Ukrainians winning as a nation and Ukraine being independent	98 % of students
B) Ukraine being divided between different countries	0 % of students
C) Ukrainian territories being partially occupied	1 % of students
D) the war will last for a long time and end with nothing	1 % of students
E) your option	0 % of students

The following six questions of the questionnaire relate to the affective sphere (according to B. Bloom).

Question 7 is aimed at identifying priorities for students among different types of art (affective level – receiving).

The survey found that Ukrainian students consider various types of art to be important, but they like books, movies, and music the most. They also sometimes mention painting and animation.

7. Out of all art forms, the one I enjoy most right now is...	
A) music	23 % of students
B) literature	36% of students
C) painting	5 % of students
D) film	34 % of students
E) your option	2 % of students (cartoons)

Question 8 was about the content of works of art that provide spiritual support to students during the war (affective level – responding).

Most of the students wrote that right now they really need works of art about overcoming challenges. They also like stories about fantastic adventures. School relationships, love, and other topics that used to be relevant to children and teenagers were not very popular options.

8. During the war, I get moral support from works of art about	
A) horrors and ghosts	0 % of students
B) school relationships	8 % of students
C) overcoming hardships	72 % of students
D) fantastic adventures	16 % of students
E) your option	4 % (love, family relationships etc)

Question 9 is aimed at identifying the heroes and heroines of art that are relevant for students during the war (affective level – valuing).

As we found out, students like characters who are not afraid of anything, win, and support others. It is interesting that students often combined different answers in their questionnaires.

9. Right now, I like heroes/heroines who can ...	
A) avoid conflicts in relationships	1 % of students
B) support other people	35% of students
C) overcome life's challenges	22 % of students
D) not be afraid of challenges and win	28% of students
E) your option	14 % of students (B+C, B+D, B+C+D)

Question 10 helped to identify the life goals of students during the war, what they consider to be the most important for them in this difficult time (affective level – organization).

The majority of students chose option B – to act calmly and without fear according to the circumstances. That is, the students' struggle with fear and the need to enhance the psychological balance again. But other options were also relevant to them.

10. The main thing for me during the war is ...	
A) being able to hide from danger in time	11 % of students
B) acting calmly and without fear according to the circumstances	54 % of students
C) continuing to study in difficult circumstances	12 % of students
D) finding things for survival (food, clothes, powerbanks etc)	8 % of students
E) your option	15 % of students (not losing one's relatives, having a home, remaining human)

Question 11 is about sharing students' personal artistic experiences that they consider useful during the war (affective level – dissemination).

The majority of Ukrainian students favor spiritual rather than material factors necessary for victory. Although there are answers about improving weapons and rebuilding infrastructure, the vast majority of students believe that the main condition for Ukraine's victory is spiritual resilience and unity of Ukrainians.

Here are just a few common responses from students.

11. For spiritual support, I would like to recommend that my Ukrainian peers ...	
A) read a book (which one?)	24 % of students (poetry by Taras Shevchenko, Lesya Ukrainka, Serhiy Zhadan; fairytales about Sinbad the Sailor, "Puss in Boots" by Charles Perrault, "Pollyanna" by Eleanor Porter, Harry Potter books by J.K. Rowling, "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" by Roald Dahl, "The Hunger Games" by Suzanne Collins, "Animal Farm" and "1984" by George Orwell etc)
B) watch a film/cartoon (which one?)	28% of students ("Howl's Moving Castle", "The Hunger Games", "The Book Thief" etc)
C) listen to music (which kind?)	19 % of students (Ukrainian anthem, Ukrainian folk songs, calm, contemporary (except for Russian))
D) participate in an art form of their choice (which one?)	5 % of students (dancing)
E) your option	24 % of students (hand made – make postcards, jewelry, dolls and other crafts to help the Armed Forces of Ukraine)

Question 12 was about students' awareness of the factors influencing Ukraine's victory in the war (affective level – characterization).

The majority of Ukrainian students favor spiritual rather than material factors necessary for victory. Although there are answers about improving weapons and restoring infrastructure, the vast majority of students believe that the main condition for Ukraine's victory is spiritual resilience and unity of Ukrainians.

6. Ukrainians will win the war with Russia if they ...	
7.	
A) restore the damaged infrastructure	2 % of students
B) are resilient and united	59 % of students
C) receive more humanitarian aid from the world	1 % of students
D) are well-armed and can fight better	32 % of students
E) your option	6 % of students (A+B+C, B+D, B+C+D)

The last six questions of the questionnaire are related to the psychomotor sphere of students. We were interested in how it has changed, what new experience of war Ukrainian students have gained, and how they are using it. We also wanted to find out what problems students face in connection with regard to the presence or absence of such experience.

The questions about the psychomotor sphere were open-ended and involved a brief description of one's own experience and brief comments.

Here are the six questions:

Question 13. Who among the heroes/heroines of artworks or people from real life gave you an example of behavior/actions in difficult circumstances?

(psychomotor level – imitation)

Question 14. Why has this example been useful to you?

(psychomotor level – manipulation)

Question 15. How and when did you apply this example in practice?

(psychomotor level – precision)

Question 16. What did or did not work for you in applying this example?

(psychomotor level – articulation)

Question 17. How did you personally improve this example?

(psychomotor level – correction)

Question 18. How often do you use this valuable example?

(psychomotor level – naturalization)

What did the students say about the psychomotor domain? Of course, their experience of the war is different and depends on the region. In the regions that suffered the most from the war and were or are under

occupation (Luhansk and Kherson regions), students wrote a lot (59%) about how they learned to survive under missile fire, hide in shelters, and avoid dangers. But at the same time, they (41%) also wrote about how other people helped them (relatives, teachers, volunteers, Ukrainian military) and how they helped others (physically and morally).

But even in other areas (where there are no direct hostilities, but there are daily missile threats), students are getting a bitter experience of war every day. They are trying to continue their studies often without electricity, heat and internet, they are learning to do adult work and help others.

22% of students did not write anything about who gives them examples of how to behave in difficult circumstances. But 78% of students have positive role models. 28% of students named President Volodymyr Zelenskyy as a role model ("because he didn't run and hide," "he demonstrates an example of unity with the people," "he is brave and loves Ukraine" etc). 22% of students wrote that they appreciated positive examples of behavior from real people (relatives, teachers, volunteers, Ukrainian military). 18% of students named famous heroes and heroines from books/movies/cartoons (Charlie Bucket, Katniss, Pollyanna, etc).

Students explained why these examples were useful to them and how they used them during the war. At the same time, 58% of students were unable to describe how they improved their role models' experience.

Among the things that Ukrainian students succeed in during the war, they mentioned continuing their studies in difficult conditions (38%), helping others (29%), adapting to a foreign country (12%), finding food, water and other means of survival (7%), and others.

Among the things that students fail to do during the war, 73% of respondents wrote that they sometimes fail to overcome fear, that they fight it but cannot overcome it.

#### 4. The task of art therapy in war conditions.

Based on a survey, we found that even in war the students appeal to art, they are interested in books, films and they give them strength to life. In addition, students themselves tend to be engaged in art, create art products (draw, sing, etc.). During the war, students expect from works of art not so much entertainment and escape to another fictional world as value orientations, spiritual support, positive examples of overcoming trials, confidence in moral norms as opposed to an abnormal world.

Art therapy as a method of enhancing the psychological well-being of students during the war has the following tasks:

- 1) reduce the level of anxiety and fear of danger in students;
- 2) support emotional well-being, give students an energy (spiritual) charge, increase their stress resistance in conditions of instability;
- 3) demonstrate to students and record positive examples/opportunities (in works of art) to overcome difficult trials;
- 4) emphasize the priority of humanity, moral values as opposed to death, chaos, absurdity;
- 5) comprehend the modern world within the scope of historical and spiritual experience taken from different countries and peoples;
- 6) promote students' search for answers to complex ideological and moral questions;
- 7) give students in wartime confidence and faith in the future.

If in the conditions of wild nature animals fight for their physical survival and the one who is stronger wins, then in the conditions of human society the struggle continues not so much for physical survival as for moral, mental values. Therefore, it is impossible to win the war in Ukraine only by physical and military means. We, adults and children, must win it morally and mentally. And this is impossible without culture and art, which have a huge spiritual potential for the education of young people. Accordingly, art therapy plays an exceptional role in war conditions.

An urgent problem in wartime is to preserve not only the territory of Ukraine, but also Ukrainian youth, their mental health and psychological well-being. It is Ukrainian students who after some time will restore Ukraine, defend the principles of the civilized world, so their internal state, their psychological well-being are important, their moral values, norms and aspirations are also important.

When there are so many murders, atrocities and destruction around, when the world has become extremely unstable, it is very difficult to think not only about physical survival, but also about psychological well-being. However, it is necessary to think about it now, because now it is necessary to form a young generation in Ukraine that will not be intimidated, desperate, depressed and will not wait only for help from the outside. Such a generation will not be able to defend and build anything.

Young Ukrainians must learn to be strong, not to be afraid of difficulties and dangers, to realize and defend the values of human civilization, world democracy, respect law.

Although our children have witnessed many deaths and destruction, but humanity and love must remain in their souls, faith in the power of moral norms and that light will always overcome darkness, and good will overcome evil.

Now there is the lack of heat, electricity and security in Ukraine, but we have books and other works of art for our children that will help them to survive mentally during the war.

Art therapy should also help Ukrainian students survive not only personally, but as a nation - stable, united, free, democratic and civilized.

5. Effective methods of art therapy during the war in Ukraine.

Since the beginning of the war, Ukrainian teachers have gained considerable experience in art therapy, which they use in the classroom and outside of school. Teachers often stay with students in shelters, helping them overcome dangers.

When working with students during the war, it is necessary to adhere to the principles of non-violent communication:

- 1) not retraumatizing children who have suffered psychological trauma during the war;
- 2) not isolating them from real life and society;
- 3) not asking (intrusively, deliberately) students about the war and at the same time listen carefully and discuss issues important to children if they want to share their own feelings or experiences of war;
- 4) not evaluating critically, categorically and unequivocally (from the point of view of “right” or “wrong”) the statements and actions of children during the war, recognizing their right to their own opinion and position;
- 5) not evoking aggressive emotions in students, not causing affective states in them;
- 6) not humiliating or degrading the child’s personality, treating students as equal partners in the process of communication;
- 7) create a zone of maximum psychological comfort, shelter, trust and interaction.

There are three components in the structure of art therapy:

- knowledge (information about art objects that can improve the psychological state of students);
- action (types of students’ artistic activities: communication, theater, drawing, singing, handmade, etc.);
- values (building students’ values, providing positive behaviour examples for them using art and creative activities).

Now I’m going to introduce you to the most famous art object in Ukraine, which is very popular with Ukrainian children. He is cheerful, positive and brave. This is the Fig Cat. He was painted by the artist Olena Pavlova. Since February 24, 2022, Fig Cat has been living through the tragic events in Ukraine together with us, but he supports the fighting spirit of Ukrainians. Various types of students’ artistic activities are connected with the Fig Cat. They are happy to paint him with the colors of their moods, invent their own stories and comics for him, talk to him, and trust him with their thoughts and feelings.

Fig Cat is the protagonist of our 5th grade foreign literature textbook. Each new topic begins with a motivational task with the Fig Cat (coloring him, telling him a story, etc).

In Year 6, the Fig Cat came to the online platform of our foreign literature textbook. He is among students and literary characters.

In times of war, a hugging dog, Hibuki, is useful for students. Hibuki means “hug” in Hebrew. It is a unique therapeutic toy that helps to overcome trauma, cope with pain, loss and destruction caused by military aggression. Hugging the dog helps students overcome fears and focus on caring for others. The hugging dog has become a character in children’s comics and storybooks. This is the experience of Israeli therapy. The creator of Hibuki therapy was Dr. Shai Hyun-Gal during the Second Lebanon War in Israel. Since then, Hibuki has been helping children in Israel, Japan, and America to survive trauma, enhance mental health, and return to life. Now, thanks to Daphne Sharon-Maksymova, a psychotherapist, international expert in crisis and trauma work, and Hibuki therapy trainer for Ukrainian psychologists, the project is already working in all regions of Ukraine.

Art therapy with toys (puppet therapy) is very useful for children during the war. Ukrainian students in year 5 and 6 are well acquainted with Tove Jansson’s works about Moomins, in particular her story “Comet in Moominland.” The students also know cartoons about them. That’s why they love to draw Moomins, play with Moomins, and tell them about their fears and hopes. Together, the fairy-tale moomins and their friends overcome all challenges. Ukrainian students follow their example.

Many favorite characters of Ukrainian children support them during the war. These include the brave Nutcracker, Pippi Longstocking who never gets sad, Alice who had a free imagination, and others..

But the game of joy, invented by the heroine of Eleanor Porter’s novel “Pollyanna”, is of particular importance to Ukrainian students. The girl Pollyanna, who lost her parents at an early age, did not lose her sense of the joy of life and taught everyone around her to play the game of joy. The idea of joy is not meant to be detachment from real problems. On the contrary, it is acceptance of life as it is, but at the same time searching for positive moments in it, despite trials and difficulties.

In times of horrific war events, it is very important to teach students to look for a positive trajectory. The Ukrainian Dream (Mriya) project is an example of such a positive trajectory. This is the third stamp that Ukrainian Post has put into circulation under martial law. The design of the stamp, envelope, and postcard was



based on a drawing by Sofia Kravchuk from Volyn. The 11-year-old girl won the All-Ukrainian drawing and photo contest “What is Ukraine for me?” Sofia Kravchuk explained: “The drawing depicts a girl, Maria, flying on a firebird with her arms spread out like wings. She touches the sky like a bird, and next to her is the AN-225 Mriya airplane, her friend. It has a smile and eyes. It seems to be alive.”

Book therapy is very useful during the war. When there is not enough electricity in Ukraine, when the Internet is often down, books have returned to the range of Ukrainian students’ interests. Reading aloud and to oneself, alone and together, reading, thinking and discussing is very important. S. Zhadan wrote, “Of course, books are not able to end the war. But books can help us stay ourselves during the war. And it is books that will prevent us from losing ourselves and disappearing.”

The following types of books are especially relevant for children who have suffered during the war:

- works about the Second World War, which provide examples of physical and spiritual survival, as well as resistance to violence;
- contemporary works about the war in Ukraine;
- works about heroes and heroines who save others;
- works about overcoming difficulties and obstacles, etc.

Equally useful are the life stories of writers who went through difficult times but did not give up and did a lot of good for humanity. Our students need to realize that the world has experienced wars many times throughout its history, and each country has its own war experience that can help Ukrainian children.

A striking example is Germany in the early nineteenth century. During the Napoleonic Wars, part of Germany was occupied by France, and the German language and culture were banned. But there were people who dreamed of the revival of Germany and worked to make it happen. Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, simple librarians from the city of Kassel, traveled around the German lands and collected fairy tales, which they later recorded and published in German. They stood up for the German language and culture in that difficult time.

Today, Ukraine is also facing an acute problem of protecting the Ukrainian language, Ukrainian culture, and Ukrainian statehood, as part of the country is occupied by Russian troops.

And here is a contemporary German writer, Michael Andreas Helmut Ende. He was born in Munich on the eve of World War II. He, like many German boys, survived the danger of being mobilized into the ranks of the Hitler Youth. However, he ran away and hid, not wanting to participate in mass murder. After some time, he returned to the topic of violence. In his book “Jim Button and Luke the Engine Driver” M. Ende told about such phenomena as Nazism, racism, and fascism in a fairy tale form. And his characters Jim Button, Luke the engine driver, and Emma the steam locomotive fight the dragoness Mrs. Grindtooth, who embodies violence. Then the good heroes return home to the island of Lummerland, where they build a free and fair country together with other good people.

Our partner, the rector of the University of Heidelberg, Hans Werner Huneke, gave a lecture to Ukrainian teachers and children about M. Ende’s book, where he told them about the good country Lummerland and the bad country Kummerland. The latter resembles modern countries that threaten the whole world with weapons.

Ukrainian students found positive examples of people who are not afraid of anyone or anything in the characters of Jim Button and Luke the engine driver. Today, Ukrainian children play with them to overcome challenges.

The Augsburg Puppet Theater (Germany) created a puppet show based on this work, which later became a favorite series of Germans of different generations. The song about Lummerland is especially popular, with its cheerful and upbeat melody. We have translated it into Ukrainian so that Ukrainian children can sing it and believe that good will always triumph over evil.

Among the literary works about World War II, the most popular among Ukrainian students are “The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas” by John Boyne (Ireland), “Noah’s Child” by Eric-Emmanuel Schmitt (France), “The Book Thief” by Markus Zusak (Australia), “Schindler’s List” by Thomas Keneally (Australia). All these works have become favorite films of Ukrainian students.

There is a phrase in Thomas Keneally’s “Schindler’s List”: “Whoever saves one life saves the world entire.” Oscar Schindler, an SS officer, saved hundreds of Jews. This story was filmed by the brilliant director Steven Spielberg. The book and the movie are about protecting human life, about the value of human life despite the horror of war.

The novel “The Book Thief” by Markus Zusak and the movie of the same name are about saving books and people in Nazi Germany. Liesel Meminger rescues books from a Nazi fire. Then she steals books from the mayor’s library. But the books also save her, preventing her from becoming like the children of the Hitler Youth. She remains kind, sensitive, and humane.

Many Ukrainian students and teachers acted like Liesel during the war in Ukraine. For example, in Kherson, they saved Ukrainian books that the invaders were burning.

Books about the Second World War make students realize that it is possible to overcome the war not only physically but also spiritually if you save and preserve the culture and people around you. To save everything that can be saved and everyone who can be saved is what millions of Ukrainians are doing during the war with Russia.

Contemporary works by Ukrainian writers about the war in Ukraine provide a special vision and examples of courage and resilience. The poet S. Zhadan has become an opinion leader among Ukrainian children and teenagers. Since the first day of the war, he has lived in Kharkiv, supporting those around him, helping the military, the elderly, and children. His works are a chronicle of our time and at the same time a philosophy of the new age, when someone's life and the fate of the country depend on their personal position.

Ukrainian youth read and sing the works of S. Zhadan. He created the rock band "Zhadan and the Dogs." Zhadan's poem "Metro" about people hiding from missile attacks became a popular song.

A boy from Saltivka whose house burned down  
A metro line deeper than most seas  
Flashlight in my pocket, subway gut full  
The Lord is with you at the subway station  
A girl from the lyceum who came from Novi Domy  
No one could tell you – and neither could I  
No one explained why this neighborhood is burning down  
But your childish heart is stronger than metal  
Angry and merry children of the Kharkiv basements,  
Children living in the depths of the subway.  
The world that has seen it all has grown gray and old.  
But love is work, and we have to do this work every day.  
Let it be quiet, let the city cover you with its wings  
The city will stand up for you, the city will share its warmth  
It will pour you hot tea from a thermos  
And when you grow up, you'll be able to warm it too (...)

People change during the war. Students need to realize that the world has changed dramatically, and they are inevitably going to change with it. Art therapy should make them realize that change is a normal process. It will always continue, so it is important to monitor your changes and become stronger and stronger. Many students wrote in their questionnaires that they wanted to be strong and unbreakable, not to be afraid of anything.

One of the books about change, about growing up and overcoming fear is the book "Mio, My Son" by the Swedish writer Astrid Lindgren. The story "Mio, My Son" is a story about courage, about how a lonely and miserable boy overcame his fears and became a real hero, defeating the evil knight Kato.

This book has many similarities with the present. Sir Kato turns towns and villages into ruins. He takes children captive and turns them into birds. He threatens all of humanity. At first, Mio was very afraid of Kato. But gradually the boy overcame his fear and managed to defeat Kato and free the children from captivity. So, this is a book about overcoming fear. This is what Ukrainian students really need today.

In the first months of the war in Ukraine, the All-Ukrainian Online School was organized to bring together children who were left without schools and without teachers so that they could learn and feel cared for. I also worked in this online school. With the help of our Swedish colleagues, professors Hans Albin Larsson and Hans Christian Öster, and teachers from Sweden, we managed to organize communication between Ukrainian and Swedish students. The Swedes sent Ukrainian children letters of support, photos and drawings from children, teachers and professors from Sweden. Little Ukrainians felt that the entire civilized world had risen up against the war.

We were convinced of the usefulness of international art therapy.

Other scholars and teachers from different countries also contacted Ukrainian students and teachers. In particular, the wife of the Swedish writer Ulf Stark expressed support for Ukrainian children and gave them a lecture about the writer and the works we study at school.

During the war, we launched a new online project called "Scientists of the World to Children and Teachers of Ukraine." Professors from Europe and Japan took part in it.

Japanese professor Susumu Nonaka gave a lecture to Ukrainian teachers and children about Japanese paper theater, kamishibai. And now Ukrainian children have begun to perform kamishibai performances. In particular, students from Kyiv, under the guidance of their teacher Natalia Cherniayeva, created drawings and scenery for a paper play. They presented the Japanese fairy tale Momotaro about a hero who went to a distant island, defeated all the monsters and returned home.

In terms of different art therapy activities during the war, communication and various creative activities of students (literary, theatrical, drawing, singing, etc.) play the most important role.

Is it worth talking about the war with students? This conversation cannot be avoided, because something happens to them every day because of the war. Therefore, it is necessary to talk. In words, students record not only the facts of the war, but also their own states and the new insights they acquire during the war.

Students can express their perception of war and their own experience of war in their literary works, for example, in the genre of Japanese poetry called haiku.

The siren calls us.

To the shelter again.

Ukraine's not asleep.

According to the students, drawing is very calming and at the same time gives them an opportunity to express their feelings during the war. Students of school #17 in Kamianets-Podilskyi, together with their teacher N. Rudnytska, painted a portrait of Taras Shevchenko in different colors on his birthday, when Ukraine was under a massive missile attack. Different colors symbolize different shades of students' feelings and moods – from fear and despair to faith and hope.

Art therapy should not only calm students down during the war, but also provide them with new meanings and values in life.

Another hero who sets an example for Ukrainian students is the character in Jack London's story "Love of Life." He has no name, because he is one of many who found themselves in the North in search of gold. He was betrayed by his friend and lost in the cold land, but he did not give up and kept moving and fighting for his life. During his journey, he realized that gold is not as valuable as human life. He had to throw away the bag of gold. But he realized the value of simple things – water, food, matches. "Counting matches" – with the help of this technique (as the hero of J. London's story did), our children can learn to appreciate what they have for survival. You can count material things, but you can also count intangible things. During the war, we all rethink the value of what we had and what we have left to continue living.

#### 6. Conclusions and suggestions.

1. Continue to investigate the Ukrainian students' perception of the war, as well as their emotional needs during and after the war; to conduct surveys according to B. Bloom's taxonomy in different regions of Ukraine at least once every six months.

2. Study and disseminate the useful experience of different countries on the mental recovery of people affected by war and other global disasters.

3. "Art hub for teachers": to organize the exchange of effective methods of art therapy to work with students affected by the war.

4. Involve teachers, students from different countries in art communication (online) with Ukrainian students and teachers (lectures, workshops, discussions and other forms of communication about the art and culture of different countries, about the artistic preferences of modern youth, etc.).

5. Introduce elective disciplines or modules on the methodology and methods of art therapy within the framework of subjects for future teachers.

6. Create an online platform "Art without Borders", on which to place the useful experience of teachers and lecturers of Ukraine and other countries in the field of art therapy for children and adolescents.

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**НІКОЛЕНКО О., ЗУЄНКО М., ГРИНЬОВА М., КОГУТ І., НІКОЛЕНКО К.**

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### **АРТ-ТЕРАПІЯ ДЛЯ ПОКРАЩЕННЯ ПСИХОЛОГІЧНОГО САМОПОЧУТТЯ УЧНІВ ТРАВМОВАНИХ ПІД ЧАС ВІЙНИ**

Стаття спрямована на вивчення та розробку арт-методик для відновлення психологічної стабільності учнів, які постраждали під час війни. Дослідження було поділено на такі етапи: опитування щодо сприйняття війни й власного «досвіду війни» серед учнів середніх шкіл; фіксація «больових точок» (проблемних) і «опорних точок» (корисних знань, умінь) у відповідях учнів; розроблення ефективної методики арт-терапії в умовах війни для подолання учнями втрат і здобуття ними нової життєвої й духовної перспективи.

**Ключові слова:** арт терапія, таксономія Блума, арт-хаб, арт-техніки, психологічна стабільність учнів

Стаття надійшла до редакції 10.04.2023 р.