

W E B E X P E R I E N C E



Kindergarten EXPERIENCE!

Inquiry Based Learning in Kindergarten

November 30th – 8:00 p.m.

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Welcome- A Face to the Voice



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Learning Goals for this Session

- ☑ Reflect on our beliefs about learners and how we can support their curiosity and wonder
- ☑ Discuss the differences between a “traditional” classroom and an inquiry based environment
- ☑ Explore some FAQs about inquiry based learning
- ☑ Look at the characteristics of an inquiry based environment and culture
- ☑ Review the concept of a negotiated curriculum
- ☑ Explore some tried and true sparks for Inquiry



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What are your beliefs about learners?



All children are competent, capable of complex thinking, curious and rich in potential and experience. They grow up in families with diverse social, cultural, and linguistic perspectives.

The Kindergarten Program, 2016 p.10
All students can succeed.
Each student has his or her own unique patterns of learning.

Learning for All, K-12, 2013 p.



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How are your beliefs reflected through inquiry?

How do we nurture and activate learners' wonder and innate curiosity?



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What is Inquiry Based Learning?

Inquiry learning is anchored in curiosity and innate desire to make sense of the world around us.

When we ask questions, have wonderings and use our heads and our hearts to investigate what fascinates us and causes dissonance in our thinking we are engaged in inquiry

It is more than a process of learning but... it is a way of being as a learner. It is a stance.

Inquiry is not subject specific, nor relegated to a certain time of day, but embedded in all learning.

“We don’t have to teach them to ask ‘why?’ because inside each human being is the need to understand the reasons, the meaning of the world around us and the meaning of our life.”
Carla Rinaldi

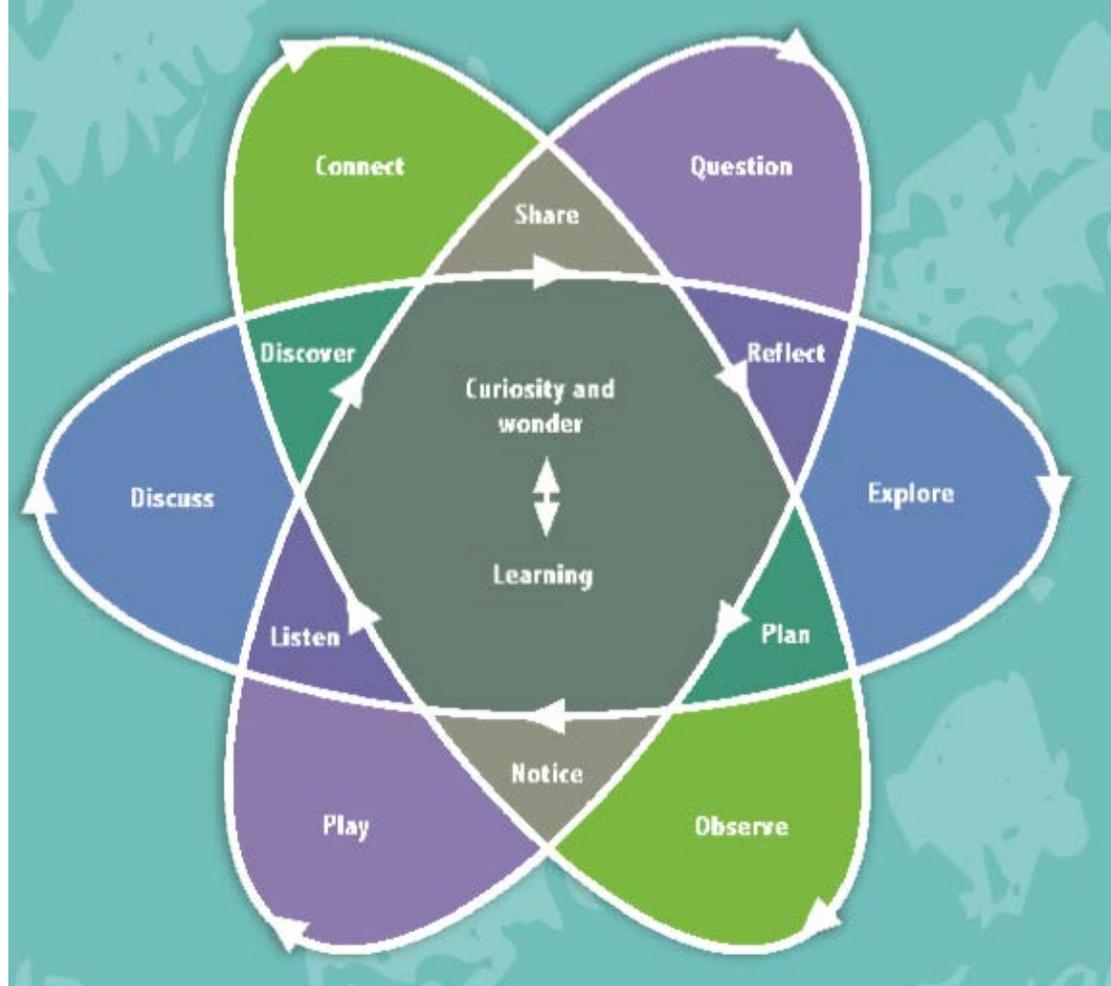
“The role of the educator shifts from a communicator of knowledge to a listener, provocateur, documenter, and negotiator of meaning.”
Veronica Pacini-Ketchabaw



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It starts with wonder and curiosity



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Inquiry in Action

Reflective questions for kindergarten educators

An inquiry stance to learning means being reflective of one's own practice. How would you answer the following questions?

- Am I curious?
- Do I think out loud about my wonderings?
- Am I a co-learner?
- Am I flexible and spontaneous?
- Am I willing to yield the plan I currently have for an opportunity that arises in the moment?
- Am I open to act on opportunities for learning?
- Do I offer multiple ways for students to demonstrate skills and knowledge?
- Do I provide materials and resources that allow for inquiries to grow?
- Do I reflect on student wonderings and use these as next steps?
- Do I engage learners in frequent discussions about learning?
- Have I created a safe environment that allows children to take risks?
- Do I know and focus on big ideas and conceptual understandings?
- Do I support and encourage students to investigate their wonderings?



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How does inquiry differ from a traditional Kindergarten program?

Traditional teaching	Inquiry teaching
Educator is the expert	Educator is a co-learner
Educator tells	Educator models
Educator controls	Educator activates
Educator corrects mistakes	Educator gives feedback
Educator gives answers	Educator asks questions
Educator is a manager	Educator is a provocateur
Educator assesses task completion	Educator assesses learning

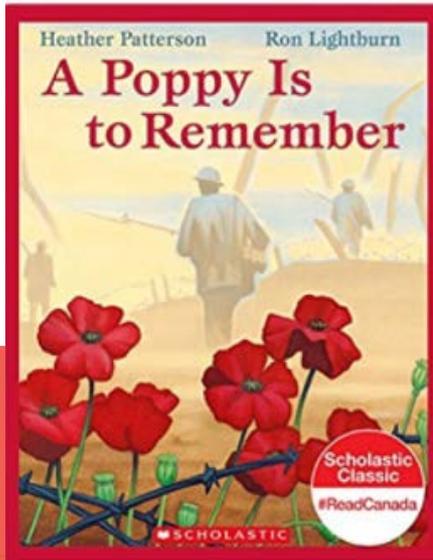


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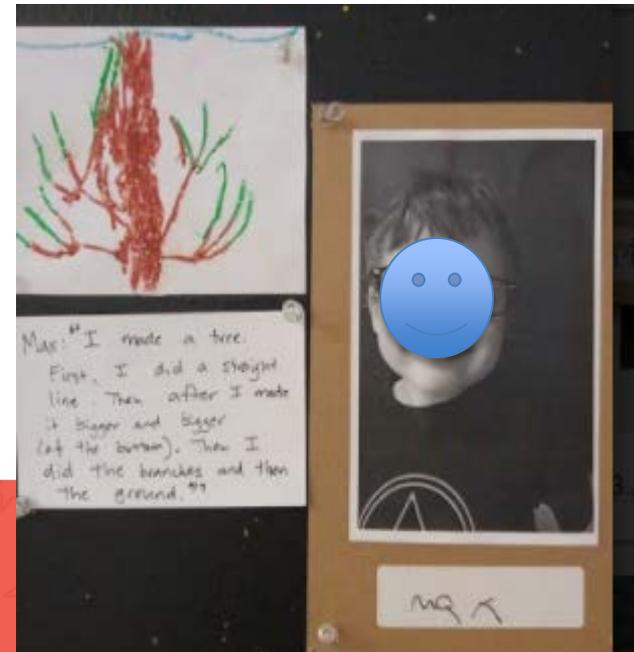
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What might seasonal provocations look like?



“I can't draw a tree....”



Winter
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FAQS

Does every interest, wondering and question become an inquiry?

How long is an inquiry suppose to last?

What if not everyone is interested?

What?

- What is the learner's theory or wondering?
- Is it fleeting or momentary?
- Based on your knowledge of the learner, is it something they seem truly curious about?

So what?

- Is this an important question?
- What is the most substantial aspect?
- Can it be linked to prior knowledge?
- Are there connections to curriculum?
- Can new knowledge be built?
- Could learners make their thinking visible?
- Can it be connected to something in real life?

Now what?

- What do those interested already know or think about the wondering?
- Where do we hope to go?
- How will we co-plan and co-negotiate?
- What materials/resources are needed?
- Who will provide them?
- How will we capture children's thinking and learning?
- How will we revisit this thinking and learning?

What is a robust inquiry question?



I wonder what that is for?

What? So What? Now What?

Daniel saw a mark on the sidewalk. "I wonder what that is for?"

"It's for stuff underground," Alex

"It must be for going straight and then crossing over the road, or nothing". Charlie

"(Someone) painted it", Tikwaha

"Aah, construction up ahead", Blake

"Or pipes that have lead in it." Alex

Who could answer Daniel's question?

Ms. D-Geri
Construction workers-Charlie
God-Klara
Teachers-Ella
We could look it up-Geri
We could ask Guelph Hydro-Geri
Santa-Kiah
The president-Geri

"Ummmm, it's maybe for, if you dig that place up there might be broken pipes", Geri

PIC-COLLAGE

E-mailing the Mayor

October 26th

We wanted to figure out what the signs on the side walk were so we decided to email the mayor.

Dear Mr Mayor,

This is the Kindergarten class of Sacred Heart School during our neighborhood painted walk we found an orange triangle painted on the sidewalk. We were hoping, since you run the city, if you could tell us what the marking is and what its purpose is on the sidewalk.

Please see the attached photos of the mark and our class questions.

Thank you for helping us understand our community and its various ways of communicating.

Sincerely,
The Kindergarten class 2 at Sacred Heart School Guelph

Oct. 26

PIC-COLLAGE

Nov. 2

After receiving a reply back from they mayors office we found out that the marks on the sidewalk were "cross-cut" marks. They are marks used to position survey equipment like this.

PIC-COLLAGE

"How to know" rather than "What to know"

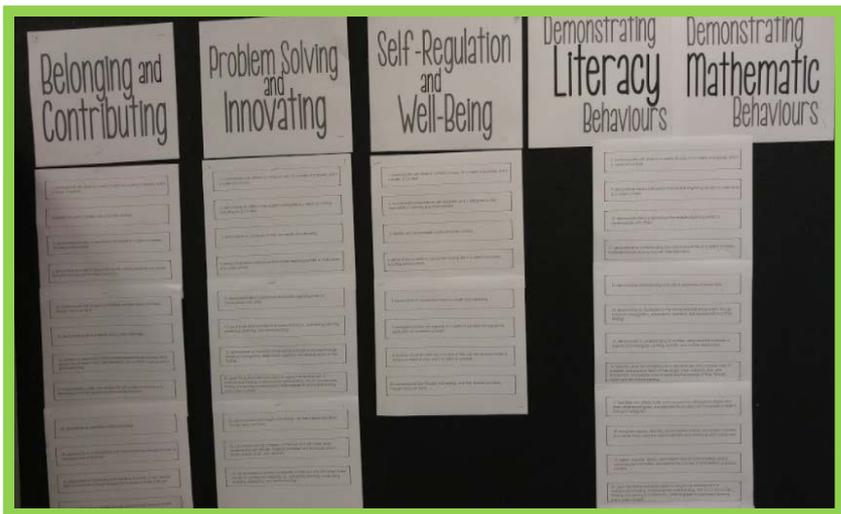


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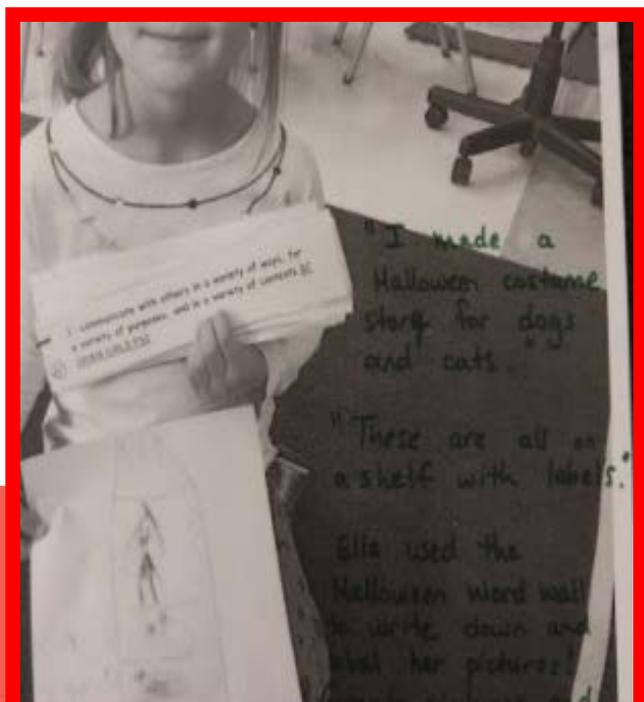
Four Frame Connections



Am I thinking broadly about the evidence of learning I am seeing. Thinking conceptually rather than discrete skills?

Can we be thinking about the Frames and the OEs as we observe, converse and document?

Does my method of documentation allow me to make the connections?



E!

"A learning environment should be the voice of the learners that are in it. Documentation, artifacts and materials should be chosen to reflect the learning that has happened, is happening or is about to happen. This communicates that what the children are doing is the most important part of the space."



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Reflect on

Rethinking and Repurposing Materials



Are you bound to materials being in one place and being used for one purpose?



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Materials as Provocations



Do I have confidence in my learners?

Am I going to shut down play and learning by stepping in?

Am I using a narrow lens to look at materials?

Are the materials being used purposefully?

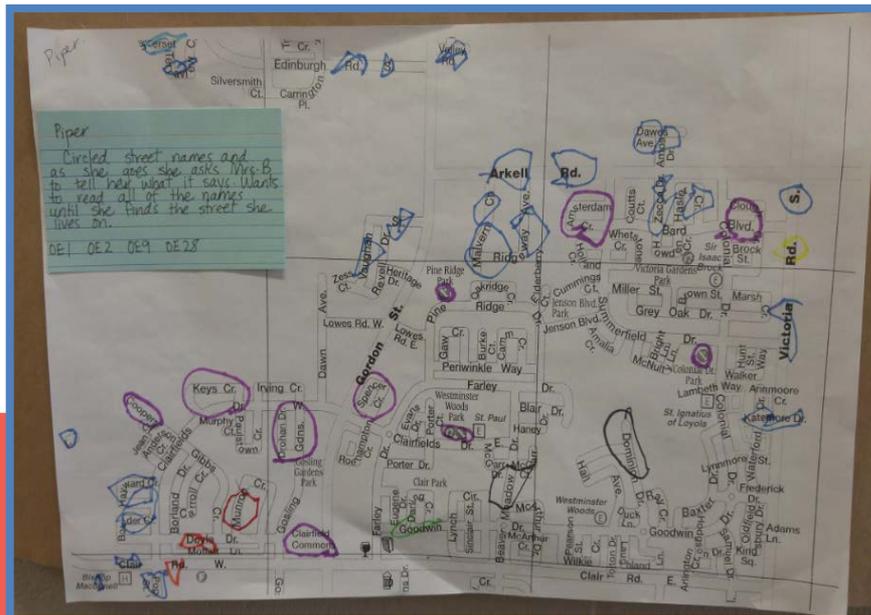
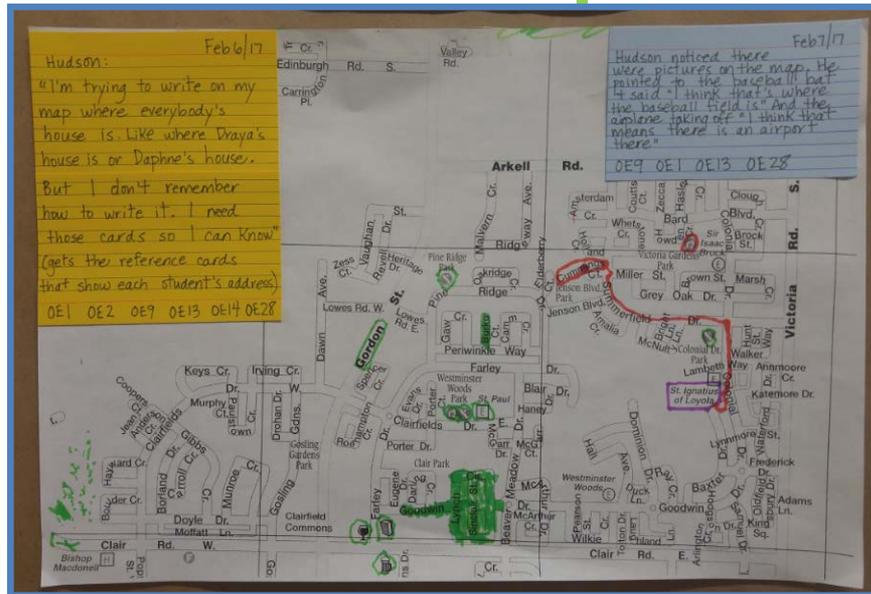
Have I allowed children to explain their thinking?

Do I have norms in place for materials?

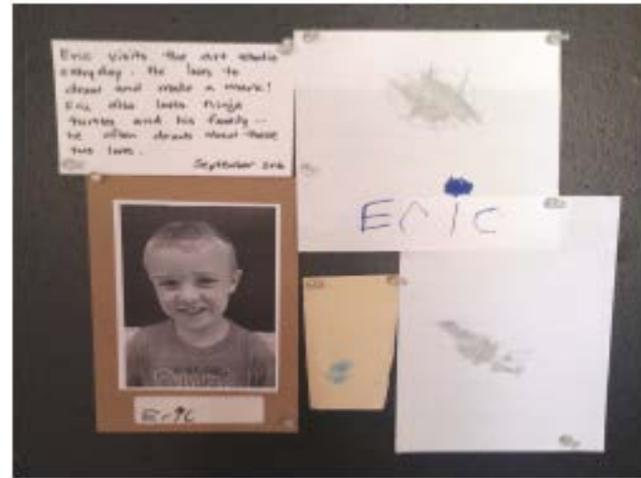
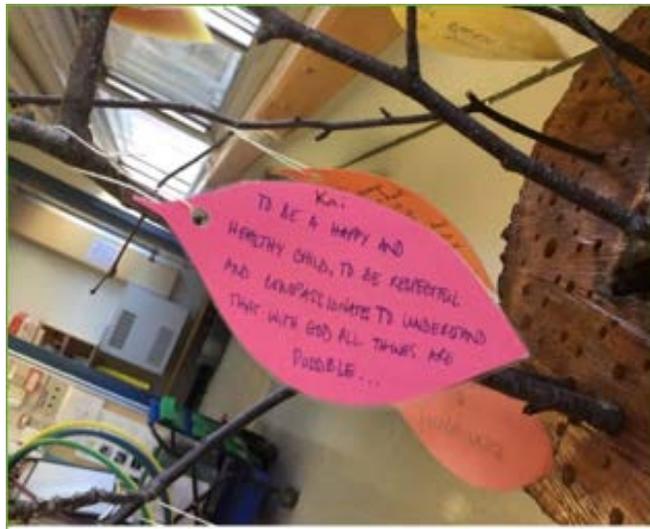
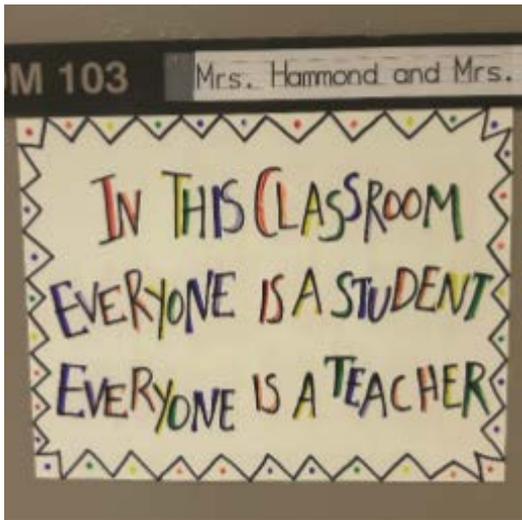
Is this a short or long term usage of materials?

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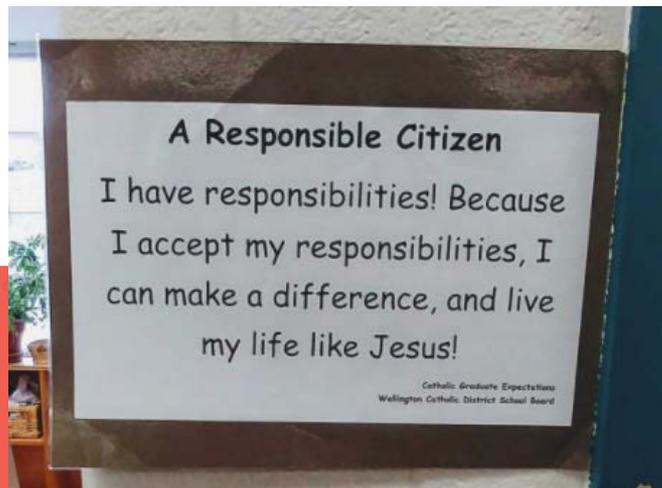
Maps as Provocations



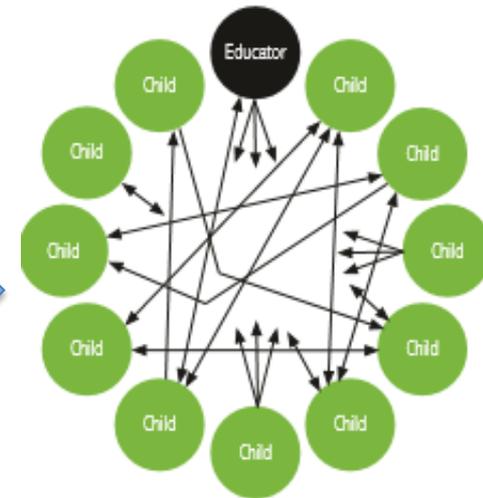
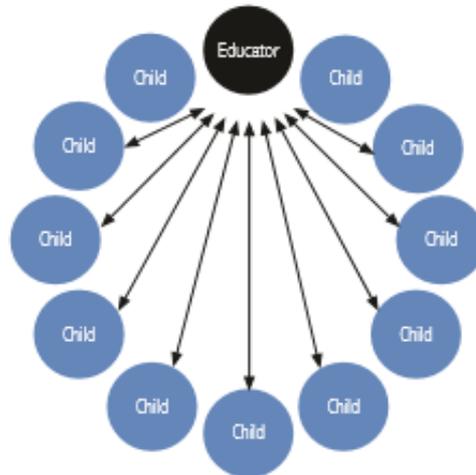
This documentation was posted outside of Shannon, Lori and Emily's classroom at St. Ignatius. The team set out neighbourhood maps that had been blown up as a provocation. **There were no written or verbal prompts the team wanted to see what the learners might do.** When you read the documentation you can see the student learning made visible. In Hudson's documentation 7 different OEs are uncovered and there are skills and knowledge explored in all 4 of the frames. This is a simple provocation that could lead in lots of directions. (excuse the pun) It gives learners a chance to become aware of their surroundings and the community around their own school. Using maps is a great way to gain understanding of basic spatial relationships (17.2) and simple coding.



What is on the walls reflects what you believe about your learners and your environment



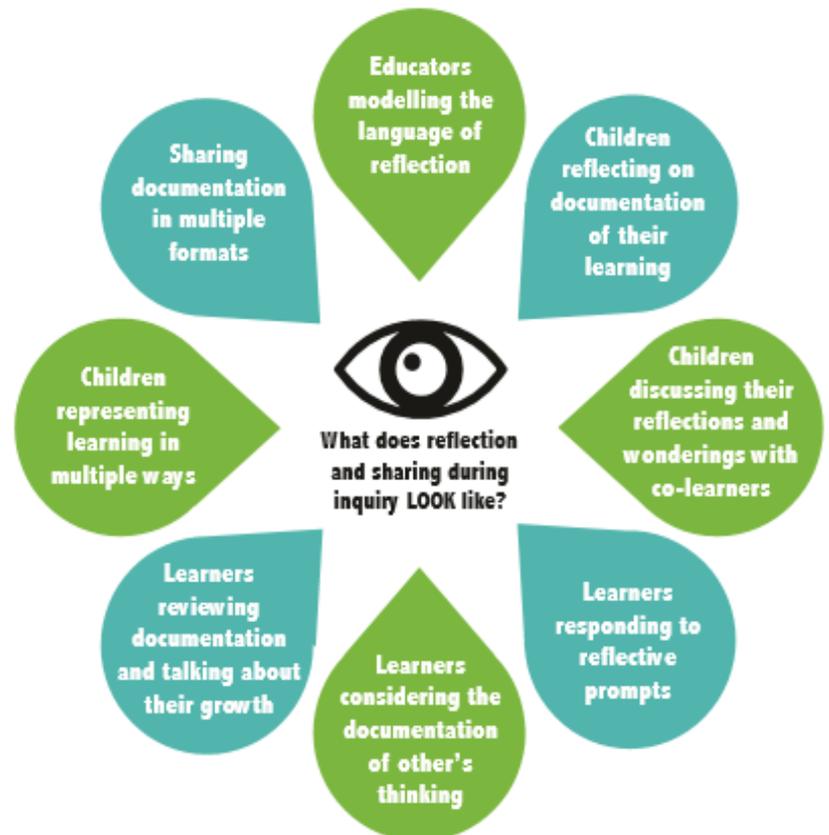
Culture



What is your C:D:C ratio?



Sharing and Reflection Time



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Investigating Corn

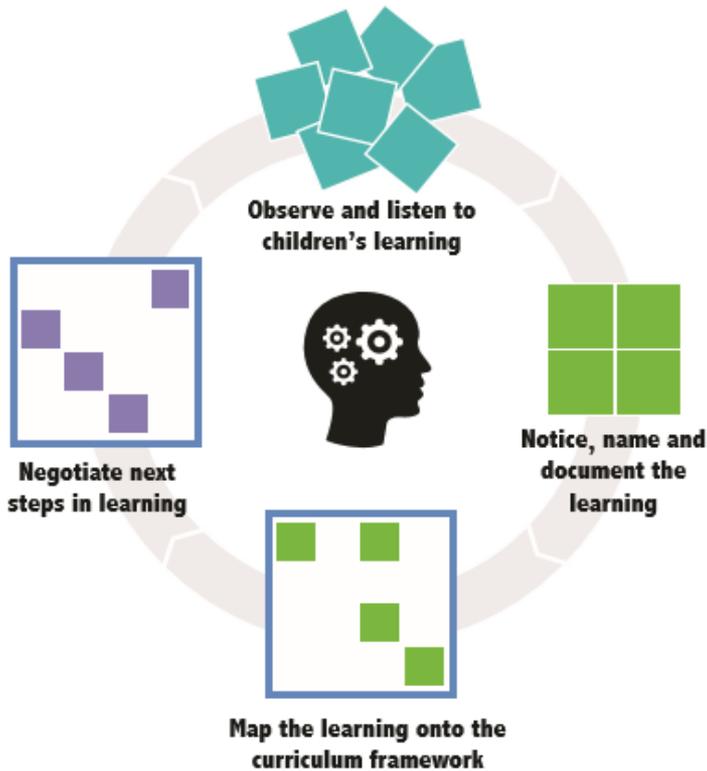
Our class has been exploring corn. We first brought in dried corn stalks and set the ears of corn out with the tweezers for the children to explore. They discussed the shape, size and colour of the kernels they pulled out. One child wondered if we could grow corn from them. After a few days we posed the question " **I wonder what would happen if I put the corn cob in water.** We received a variety of interesting answers. We set the cob in our discovery centre and over the next week we watched what happened. After it started growing we decided as a class we wanted to plant it and watch what it grew into. Currently we are still observing and waiting to see what it will become. This sparked a further interest in planting and now our class room as started to sprout all kinds of fruits and vegetables including plants for our classroom caterpillars.

Next step: Assembling a classroom greenhouse



“How to know” rather than “What to know”

How do I “uncover” curriculum expectations through inquiry?



“A negotiated approach means that curriculum is not solely emergent for the child or from the teacher but is negotiated — it is child initiated but teacher framed.”
Murdoch and Le Mescam



Know your learners, know your curriculum



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Framing Learning within the Context of the Curriculum

In Antonella and Lori's class, some of the children were interested in changing the drama centre into a dance studio. This supported a group of students' growing interest about dance.

The learners decided that they needed to name the dance studio. They came up with two names: the Butterfly Dance Studio and the Princess Dance Studio. They approached the educators with the challenge they were having in deciding on the name.

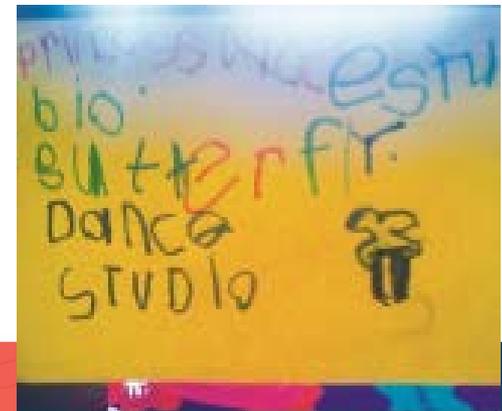
The class had previously spent time on gathering information for graphing, so the educators asked the children the question, "What can we use when we want to collect information about what people are thinking?" One of the students said, "A graph of course!"

The educators scribed the graph titles and the group asked those who were interested in the dance studio which name they preferred. Since it was almost a tie, the name became the Princess and Butterfly Dance Studio.

This negotiation illustrates the benefits of coupling students' motivation with an educator's ability to frame it within the context of program expectations and prior knowledge.



The tally



The new name

How does inquiry fit into the flow of the day?

Inquiry can be happening at any time in multiple areas in any of the frames.

Slow down.. And ask Why this learning, for this child, at this time?

Observe, listen and document and be responsive to learners. Yield your plans for learning

We need to notice and name the learning and provide an culture that is conducive to this type of learning

Talk to key stakeholders about what is developmentally appropriate for our learners

The flow of inquiry is non-linear and unpredictable. Daily flow needs to accommodate this

A plan that is fluid and adaptable with large chunks of time with few transitions so that connections can be made

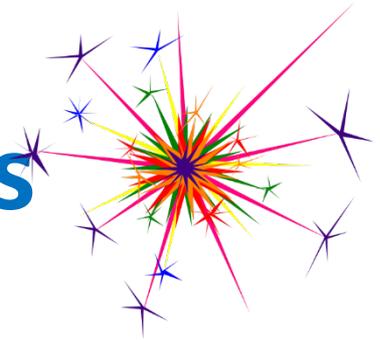


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Tried and true inquiry sparks



Inquiry in Action

Can... Have... Are...

When a wondering is shared or an idea for study is proposed, a great way to explore prior knowledge is the framework of Can... Have... Are.... This allows both learners and educators to examine what they already know about something and where they might go next in the inquiry. It is also a way that misconceptions can be addressed.

Frances and Vanessa used the Can... Have... Are... framework to lay the foundation for an inquiry about caterpillars and butterflies. All thoughts and ideas are honoured as prior knowledge is shared and recorded. In this example the educators did the recording.

Butterflies...

Can... go to Mexico, land on flowers, come out of a chrysalis

Have... heads, wings, polka dots

Are... caterpillars, pretty, beautiful

Caterpillars...

Can... eat leaves, turn into butterflies, wriggle

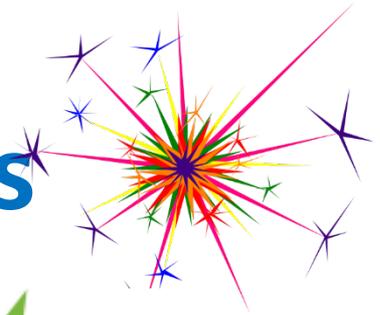
Have... lots of legs, eggs, fur

Are... soft, cuddly, round like a ball, butterflies

Can...
Have... Are...



Tried and true inquiry sparks

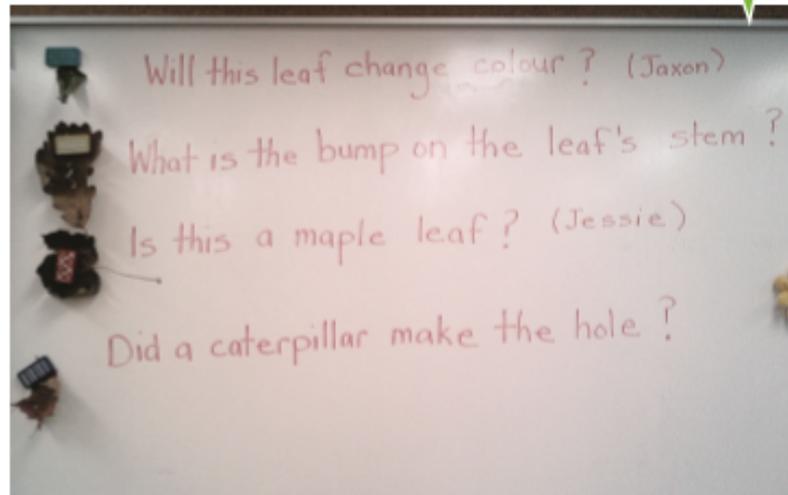


Inquiry in Action

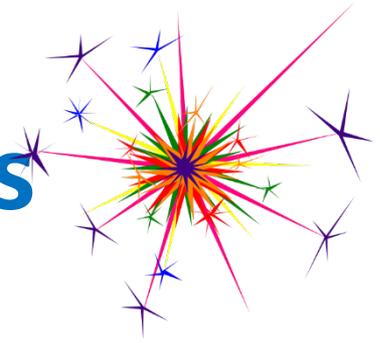
Take a walk... anywhere

Getting out of the classroom and going outdoors, somewhere else in the school or on a trip is an excellent way to provoke wonderings. Traditionally, these types of experiences were often done at the end of a theme or unit of study. If we flip our thinking around and use these experiences to launch an inquiry, the avenues are endless.

These wonderings were sparked during a walk outside to collect leaves. Each learner collected a number of leaves and shared their wonderings. A community circle was formed to discuss the questions posed. Some of the learners had answers to their co-learner's questions. Materials were provided by both the educators and the learners to investigate the life of leaves. Stewardship was a focus, as well as the idea that life is a cycle and that humans are often a part of the cycle for other living things.



Tried and true inquiry sparks

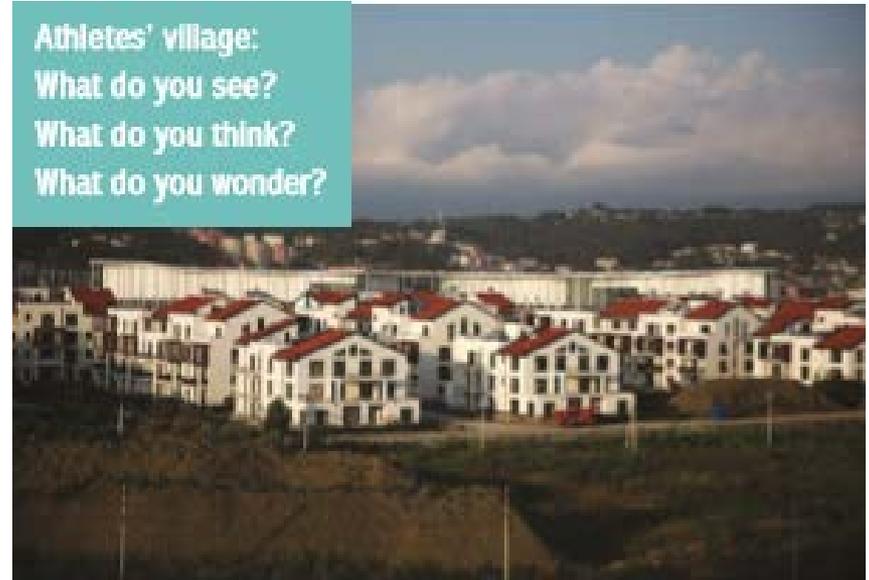


What do you See, Think, Wonder?

Ski hill:
What do you see?
What do you think?
What do you wonder?



Athletes' village:
What do you see?
What do you think?
What do you wonder?

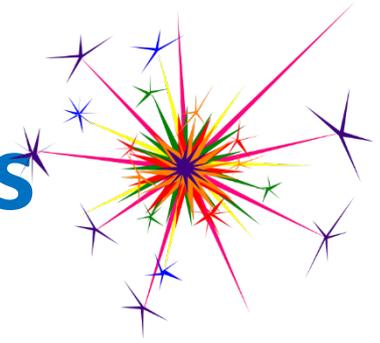


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What do you See, Think, Wonder?



Beginning construction of the village



The village

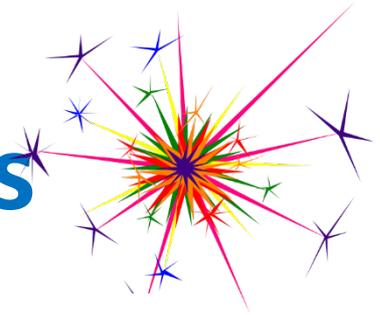


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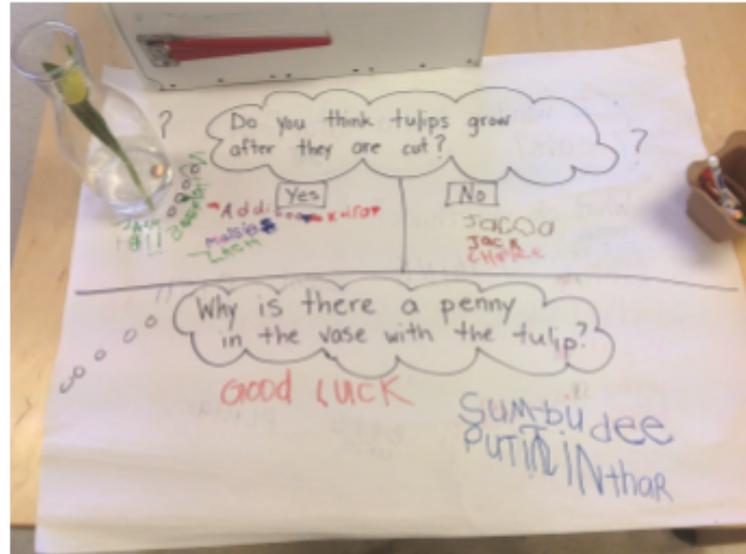
Question of the week

Question of the week/day/month

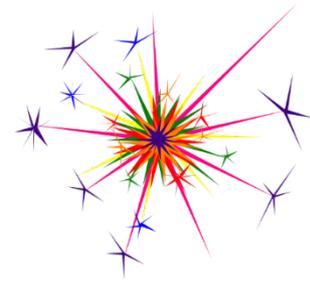
The question of the week centre could be placed anywhere in the environment. Questions of the week could be taken from the Wonder Wall or be a question posed by educators. Learners love it when their wondering is the question of the week. Time is given each week to share responses to the question and to do some research to discover answers. This experience allows for educators to model where answers to questions can be found.

We have found that when children see the question at the start of the week, they engage their families as well. Experts on topics can be found everywhere.

This was a question of the week that educator Cara posed to her class because it was a wondering that she had after seeing cut tulips in a vase. Upon reflection, she realized that her initial question could only be answered with "yes" or "no," so she added a second question that was much more open. In fact, tulips can grow up to an inch after being cut!



Tried and true inquiry sparks



Inquiry in Action

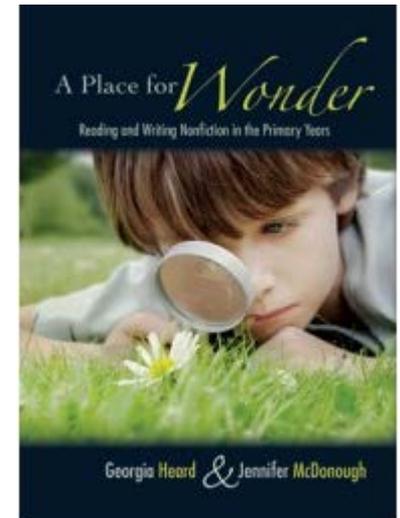
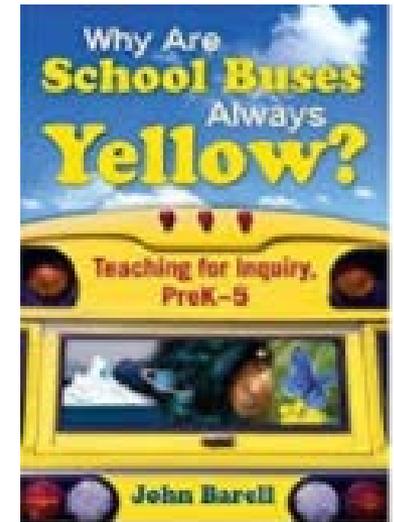
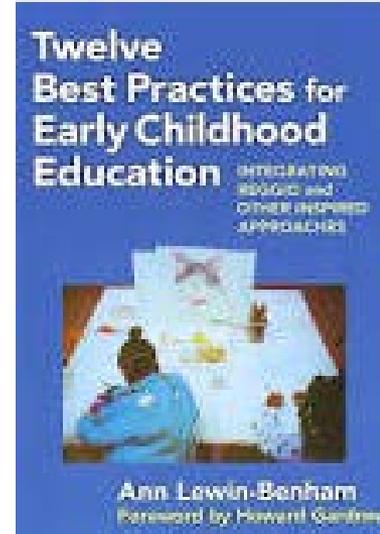
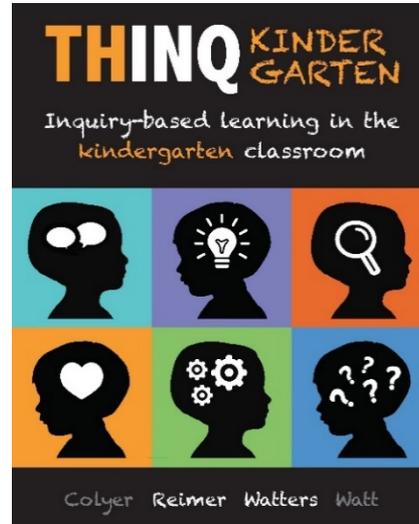
Photo a month

This is a good provocation for an inquiry that can start in September and go until June. Choose a spot outside of the school and take a photo of the class in that spot every month of the school year. These photos are a great way to initiate a discussion and ongoing inquiry about seasonal changes and stewardship.

This educator took a photo of the class under the same tree in the schoolyard each month. It was a great ongoing inquiry that all the learners took part in.



Resources Used



<http://www.edugains.ca/newsite/Kindergarten/index.html>

Think Feel Act –Lessons from Research about Young Children- <http://edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/environment.html>



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THANKS

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#1aday4play



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