

Overview of an inquiry journey Kath Murdoch

Phase and intention	Typical teacher and student activity
<p>Framing up the inquiry....(planning ahead)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - establishing a worthwhile context and compelling question - Identifying conceptual underpinnings - making links with system/school curriculum - identifying understanding goals - identifying key skills and dispositions - identifying possible indicators of understanding 	<p>Teachers gather Initial student ideas, questions, suggestions. Here, teachers are in initial design phase - framing up possibilities and clarifying the <i>big picture</i>. Students participating in sharing with the teacher and each other their views on what the inquiry should entail. Students may sometimes attend or provide advice to planning meetings. Teachers at this stage are in dialogue about the higher purpose of the inquiry - they need to be able to 'see the horizon' at a conceptual level - even if the journey towards it remains unknown.</p>
<p>Tuning in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gathering data about students' existing thinking, knowledge, feeling and understanding.... - Helping students make connections with the key concept/s - Providing purpose, big picture and authenticity - Motivating, exciting, engaging.... 	<p>In this phase of an inquiry - the teacher is essentially <i>tuning in</i> to the students' thinking. The teacher takes a very active role as <i>inquirer</i> - with student thinking being the focus of their inquiry! Students are typically making their thinking visible in a range of ways, - through play or more structured tasks - they are producing evidence of their early theories, possibly beginning to ask questions, they are becoming more aware of how this inquiry links with their lives and what they will be learning more about and learning to do. Increasingly, students are able to identify and share their early ideas confidently and in a range of ways. They are aware that their ideas are tentative and are likely to change through the course of the inquiry. Depending on the nature of the inquiry itself - this may be a time when students are challenged with a project or task that they will be working towards or a problem that they will be addressing. Importantly, the information teachers are gathering at this stage help inform subsequent planning.</p>
<p>Finding out</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gathering new information to address the compelling question - Developing the research skills that are required - Learning HOW to organize and manage the process of finding out - Having some shared experiences that will allow us to talk and share our thinking with others - Stimulating curiosity through new experiences and information - Learning how to record information gathered in efficient ways 	<p>Typically, students at this phase are involved in the process of planning for and researching new information. What they do depends on the manner in which they will be finding out - they may be experimenting, surveying, searching the web, watching clips, emailing or skypeing experts, asking their parents or others, making phone calls, reading texts, viewing images, listening to podcasts, stories, speakers, examining artworks, working through a 'trial and error process. They are also recording what they are finding so they can refer back to it when they take their thinking deeper. They may also add to their wonderings - or wonder for the first time....</p> <p><i>I think we could/should</i> <i>Maybe should search for</i> <i>How about we ask...</i> <i>I found out</i> <i>Oh - now I know...</i> <i>This makes me wonder about...</i></p>
<p>Sorting out</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comprehending -Making meaning of the information gathered - Revealing new thinking and deeper understanding - Answering questions - Reviewing/revising early thinking - synthesizing - Interpreting the information and 	<p><i>This is a critical phase in the assessment of understanding.</i> In this phase students are typically analyzing and sharing their discoveries. They are using math, art, language, organizers, drama, dance. music etc to process and respond to the information they have. They are talking, responding, sharing and processing. They are revealing new and deeper understanding about the concept and noticing patterns and trends. New questions may emerge as a result of this processing of information...</p>

<p>communicating with others</p>	<p>Verbal evidence <i>I used to think but now I think</i> <i>I can answer some of my questions</i> <i>I wasn't expecting to find out that....</i> <i>I can connect this with....</i> <i>I have learned that</i> <i>This means/I think this means</i> <i>'This tells me that...</i> <i>Now I'm wondering</i> <i>I'm learning how to</i></p>
<p>Going further</p> <p>Opportunities for students to pursue questions and interests arising from the journey so far</p> <p>Learners to work more independently on their investigations</p>	<p>Typically students are working on projects/investigations that are more independent. They are designing all or some of their own inquiry journeys. The emphasis may be on the process and/or the understanding goals.</p> <p><i>I want to find out more about...</i> <i>Why/who/what/where/when/how</i> <i>Can we/I....</i> <i>I think I should/could...</i> <i>I'm confused about</i> <i>I still need to know/do</i></p>
<p>Reflecting and acting</p> <p>(THESE 'PHASES" ARE ACTIVATED THROUGHOUT THE CYCLE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to help students apply their learning to other contexts - to put the learning to use - to enable the students to reflect on what and how they have learned and set goals for the future to assess final understanding and growth in skills 	<p>Typically students are engaged in tasks that put their learning into "action" in some way. This might be individual or collaborative. It might be the end of the inquiry or during it. Students are also reviewing, revising and reflecting both on what an show they have learned. They are involved in TASKS that provide a closure to the inquiry but are also mindful that new questions have arisen and further investigation is possible. Importantly, students are sharing their awareness of HOW they are learning - what they are learning about learning itself as they explore the question.</p> <p><i>I used to think but now I think</i> <i>I can use this when...</i> <i>I /we should</i> <i>I/we have learned to</i> <i>I have learned more about...</i> <i>Next time I need to</i> <i>I wish I had</i> <i>I have got better at</i></p>
<p>Evaluation</p>	<p>Using feedback from students, assessments of learning and their own reflections during the journey of inquiry, teachers now pause to review the effectiveness of the whole. They look back over the learning and ask themselves whether the planned understanding goals had been reached and whether the skills they intended students to strengthen had indeed developed. Reflections on the inquiry are recorded and many will prompt thinking ahead for the next journey of inquiry - especially where skills have emerged as needing attention.</p>

The cycle should INFORM planning, guide it but it doesn't mean we can create the whole thing before we start. When I use a planner with the elements of the cycle in it - I see that planner as a guide *throughout* the process - not as a template to be filled in one sitting. **The cycle is emergent and on linear....**how kids 'sort out' the ideas information depends on what they gather - and that is not something we can determine in detail. The cycle unfolds.