

INQUIRY RESEARCH: A PROCESS GUIDE

TRANSFORMING TRADITIONAL RESEARCH TO INQUIRY UNITS

Beginning the Process

- Determine the goals and objectives of the project
Beginning with the end in mind, it is important to identify what you want students to know and be able to do upon completion of the work (*Effective classroom instruction*).
- Collaborate
The richness of the project is greatly enhanced when the design and instruction are done collaboratively with the school librarian and classroom teacher/s. This partnership creates a rich dynamic for students.
- Select an Inquiry Research Model
There are several models available. Here are two that we used successfully:

Stripling Model of Inquiry
http://www.loc.gov/teachers/tps/quarterly/inquiry_learning/pdf/StriplingModelofInquiry.pdf
http://www.loc.gov/teachers/tps/quarterly/inquiry_learning/article.html

O'Dell Education Research Process Plan
<http://odelleducation.com/literacy-curriculum/research/grades-9-10>
<http://www.odelleducation.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Research-Unit-Plan-G6.pdf>
- Transform your research project
Examine your existing research unit to determine which elements are inquiry based and which are traditional. Modify the unit; decide what to keep and what must be created new.
Traditional vs Inquiry (Harvey, Stephanie, & Daniels, Harvey)
http://ssla.ca/ckfinder/userfiles/files/Inquiry%20Approach%20versus%20the%20Coverage%20Approach_aug16.pdf

Assessing Student's Background Knowledge and Skill Level

- Assess students' content literacy and technical skill set to determine their proficiency.

Technical Expertise – Establish technical ability of the students. As the project is crafted develop expectations to match students' abilities, while simultaneously challenging them to reach higher.

Content Literacy – With every project there is an area of content students should master as a prelude to their personal, deeper investigation. Consider this learning need. Important content may be covered before the project begins or incorporated into the project itself.

Designing the Inquiry Research Project

- Identify a driving question (essential question)
- Include student choice and student interest to help students construct meaning
- Include a process, tools and handouts that will enable students to learn how they learn
- Identify & adapt the tools and handouts in the *Student Research Plan* to meet your goals

- Identify, adapt, create “embedded” teaching and learning tools, for example:
 - KWL Chart
 - Topic Investigation (worksheet)
 - Initiate Research Questions (worksheet)
 - Examine Questions (worksheet)
 - What Makes Questions Good Questions (guide)
 - Note-taking
 - i.e.: Cornell Note-taking System
 - Evidence Based Claim (worksheet)
 - Student Self-Evaluation, Student Process Journal, Reflection (worksheet) etc...
- Review and refine assessments
 - Create rubrics, checklists, grading sheets, etc...
 - i.e.: Buck Institute Collaboration Rubric
- Adapt and modify handouts, teaching tools, learning tools
- Finalize inquiry research project, the documents used to introduce the project to the students, and worksheets for students to use
- Finalize formative and summative assessments ~Adapt, modify, and create assessment tools and rubrics.
- Establish a timeline for the project ~*We suggest you build in extra process time for your students the first time through.*

Assessment

- Students create a product – Students evaluate the process

Students evaluate the inquiry research process using the tools created specifically for that project. This may be cyclical as students work – evaluate – return to work – evaluate... until product completion and final process evaluation.

Cautionary Note

This is a fluid process; nothing created is static. Modify as you move through the process.

Contributors:

Mary Tiedemann - *School Library Systems, OCM BOCES*

Misty Coller and Mary Klucznik - *Chittenango High School*

Sue Bang and Maria Nastasi - *Lafayette High School*

Sara Birmingham, Rebecca DeCesare and Mary Gotham, Shana Michel - *West Genesee High School*

Pam Blocklin and Karen Fenner - *Westhill High School*

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