

Using Inquiry To Guide Literacy Instruction

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This handout is a guide to prepare you for the presentation. The presentation will include student work samples, example lesson plans, a look at the inquiry process for K-2 classrooms and time to plan how you will use inquiry in your own classroom.

What is inquiry based teaching?

Stephanie Harvey and Harvey Daniels say it best in their book *Inquiry Circles in Action*, when they say, “inquiry based teaching is problem or question driven; it encourages collaboration; it makes kids into explorers and discoverers; it requires kids to think; and it puts teachers in non conventional roles”. (p.56)

Inquiry based learning and teaching is a growing movement in education today. It is a great way to reach all learning styles in your classroom, solving the problem of how to do differentiated instruction each day. It empowers students and creates a sense of community within the classroom. Some may say, “Why would I want to use inquiry in my classroom?” My reply would be, “How can you not?”

The chart below illustrates why a teacher would want to use inquiry based learning in the classroom.

<u>Inquiry learning</u>	vs	<u>Traditional Approach</u>
Student driven		Teacher is the decision maker
Questions are the emphasis		Assigned topics are the emphasis
Kids are encouraged to collaborate		Independent work is the expectation
Teacher’s role is that of a coach		Teacher’s role is that of an expert
Multidiscipline learning		Auditory/Verbal learning
Ability to reflect and self-assess		Tests

Adapted from [Inquiry Circles in Action](#) by Harvey and Daniels, 2009

As you begin using inquiry in reading and writing, your students will need guidance in creating essential questions to guide their learning. Although students are to be the ones crafting the questions, you can plan a few to help their brainstorming process.

Area of Instruction

Essential Question Ideas

Reading Workshop

Shared Reading

Guided Reading

Author Study

Writing Workshop

Independent Writing

So, what does inquiry based teaching and learning look like in reading and writing? The chart below is provided for you to take notes as we cover lesson ideas for using inquiry in your literacy instruction.

What does inquiry look like in:

My notes/ideas

Reading Workshop

Shared Reading

Guided Reading

Author Study

Writing Workshop

Shared Writing

Independent Writing

Projects