

VOLUME 47 • NO. 1 • FALL 2022

MB Speaks

VOICE OF THE MANITOBA SOCIAL SCIENCE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION



**Climate Change
Changes
Everything and So
Could Inquiry**

**We Made a Zoo:
Early Years Inquiry
During a Pandemic**

**Teaching With The
World On Fire:
Climate Inquiry in
the Middle Years**

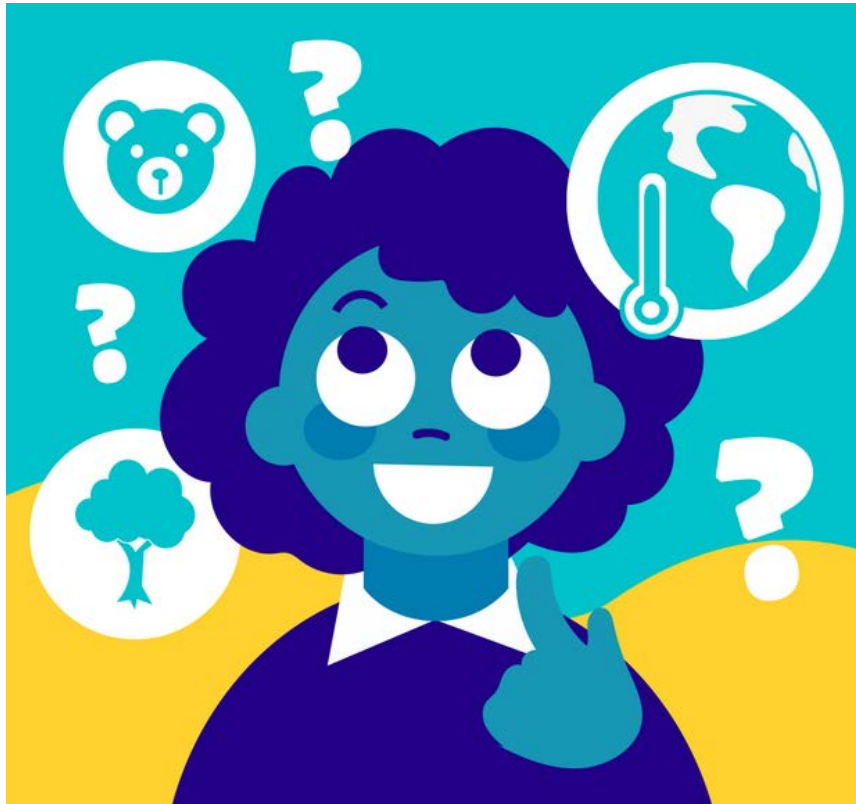


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President's Message

One of my favourite educational philosophers, Paulo Friere, once wrote that, "... apart from inquiry, apart from praxis individuals cannot be truly human. Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world and with each other" (2012, p. 72). In my humble opinion, I don't think there could be a better definition of what it means to be immersed in the social sciences. Yes, many, if not most of us, with university backgrounds in the social sciences got into teaching because we love the content (I tell my students all the time that I'm a history and politics 'geek' or 'nerd' and am very proud of it), but think of why that is. We love our subject area because, for most of our lives, we've spent years being "restless and impatient" in our pursuit of understanding the world; we've constantly been asking questions about it. We've come to our knowledge and understanding through that relentless pursuit of inquiry into our subject areas.

When I was first formally introduced to the concept of inquiry learning, the teacher's role was explained through the expression "guide at the side, not sage on the stage". I understand this expression (and the accompanying debate over pedagogy) can sometimes be divisive, but the fact is that social studies teachers should be both guide and sage. Social studies teachers need to have the knowledge that we've learned through our own inquiries, in order to be a better guide for our students and to help facilitate their own learning. However, we also need to recognize that our inquiries, and subsequent understandings, represent our interests and inquiries. We need to also make space for students to develop their own inquiries, and to develop their own informed understandings. The magic is that students may ask questions that we had never even considered, and through their inquiries we can see our own understandings anew.

For these reasons, I am very happy to share with you this journal, dedicated to the issue of inquiry learning and how teachers can and are using inquiry learning to inspire their students to ask tough questions, develop and use important learning skills, and work collaboratively to tackle issues of great importance. As usual, you will find that the journal contains a diverse range of content that targets practice, pedagogy, and professional development.

On that note, I'd like to highlight our own MSSTA PD event that is happening on MTS PD Day, Friday, October 21st. For the first time since 2019, we are returning to our traditional in-person format. I'm very excited to be able to share that we have over 30 different sessions offered for our members and guests, the large majority of which are being given by Manitoba educators, and that our keynote address will be given by another of my favourite educational thinkers, Dr. Joel Westheimer. Please take a moment to check out our website for more information and to find the link to register

Finally, and perhaps selfishly, I wanted to take a moment for reflection. This issue of

The MSSTA journal will be the last one with me as president. At the October AGM I will be stepping aside after 6 years as MSSTA president. I believe that it's critically important that organizations such as ours allow for new ideas and new leadership and am very excited about the potential future of MSSTA with a new voice at the helm. As departure is always a welcome time for reflection, I leave with mixed emotions. One of my goals when I first became president was to make MSSTA more relevant outside of our annual PD day. Though we had some success with offering PD events throughout the year, I still believe that we can engage more with our members beyond October. Much of this comes down to communication and, 6 years later, I still grapple with how best to communicate and engage with members, especially understanding how overwhelmed we all become with emails and social media.

While almost half of my time as president occurred during a pandemic, which definitely put a damper on our in-person events, it did allow us to learn how to reach members virtually, which also meant that we were better able to work with our partners across the country. This being said, when I look back on my time as MSSTA president, I think the thing I'll be most proud of is the countless hours I put into working with these partner social studies teachers associations across the country to create our new, national social studies teachers organization, the Social Studies Educators Network of Canada- Le Réseau pour l'enseignement des sciences sociales du Canada (SSENC/RESSC). To now have a national network of social studies teachers means that there can be more and stronger advocacy for social studies education in this country at a time when it is definitely needed.

I am forever grateful for the time I have spent serving as the president of MSSTA. I've learned a great deal and hope I've represented Manitoba social science teachers well. I can't say enough about the support I've received from the members of the MSSTA executive board for the last six years. Though it may be quiet and behind the scenes, the members of the MSSTA executive put in hundreds of hours of work every year because of their devotion to and belief in the importance of social science education. To every single one of you, thank you.

We are incredibly lucky to have a rich diversity of incredibly strong, passionate, and dedicated social science teachers in this province and our students are the ones who benefit greatly from that. But, just as I stated at the beginning, what makes social studies teachers who we are is the fact that we enjoy immersing ourselves in our own inquiry and that's why it's now time for me to continue on my own set of inquiries as I head back to school to pursue my PhD.

Best wishes for a safe, productive, and engaging new school year.
Sincerely,



“Perhaps we should be less concerned with whether [students] can answer our questions than with whether they can ask their own”

-Eisner, 2001



What is Inquiry Based Learning?



What is Inquiry Based Learning?

Inquiry-based learning is a pedagogical approach that places students' questions, observations and wonderings at the center of our classrooms. Through this approach, educators work alongside students to facilitate their movement from wondering to understanding.

Inquiry-based learning is focused on uncovering curriculum through students' own questions.

Why Inquiry?

The literature offers many reasons for enacting inquiry-based learning. It is said to:

- increase student motivation, investment and understanding
- legitimize student interest and challenge dominant/singular narratives
- encourage collective learning
- encourage and develops critical thinking and problem-solving skills
- encourage more questioning
- foster research skills and information literacies
- lead to greater student achievement



Starting With Questions



Starting With Questions

a) Encourage student wonder

For example: Take students outside and ask them to take photos that represent their wonderings. Students can share these wonderings with their peers, and potentially develop these initial queries into larger inquiries. Through activities like this, students can see that their learning starts with their own questions, rather than questions imposed on them.

b) Center thinking and problem-solving in your classroom

For example: give students a photo and ask what questions they would need to answer in order to determine when and where the photo was taken. This encourages students to develop their own series of questions about an artifact--they are determining what they need to ask in order to answer a larger question.

c) Develop thoughtful inquiry questions

Beyond creating learning environments that encourage questioning, students need to learn how to develop effective inquiry questions. The Critical Thinking Consortium (TC2) has an excellent resource that rests on four criteria for developing questions: informative, manageable, relevant and thoughtful. Inquiry projects can only begin once students create effective questions.



Varied Inquiry Projects



Inquiry based learning can be teacher centered, where the teacher develops the inquiry questions and compiles the resources; alternately, the inquiry questions, compilation of resources, analysis, and mode of communication can be directed by the student.

Some examples:

Central Inquiry: for this, the entire class works through a unit by collectively investigating a central/shared inquiry question.

Fill & Extend Inquiry: after completing a teacher led unit, students determine the pieces and people that were missing from the unit. In a unit on WWII, students may identify that they did not learn anything about schooling in Canada during the war. In turn, they could create an effective inquiry question that encapsulates what they want to know about schools, students and-

curriculum during WWII in Canada. This can also be done with a topic or theme that was covered superficially in the unit, but that students want to know more about. As our units are always curations, and can never cover everything, these fill and extend inquiries help to invite themes, voices, and events that were not covered in our units.

Inquiry to Action: This type of inquiry is commonly used in Global Issues, but teachers in other grades are also using this form of inquiry to encourage meaningful student learning and assessment. For this, students create inquiry questions connected to political, social, economic, or environmental issues. Once they have come to fully understand the issue through their inquiry, they use these understandings to develop an action plan to help respond to this issue.

Climate Change Changes Everything and so Could Inquiry

-BRITTANY FRASER

Climate change changes everything. And for a very brief time, the nature of that change is still up to us."

—Klein, 2014, p. 76

Education has the potential to play a significant role in addressing the climate crisis. However, current approaches to teaching this issue are often superficial and typically fall short of inspiring action and change. In pursuit of climate justice and a more equitable and sustainable future, educators need to deepen their own understanding of the climate crisis, and afford space in their classrooms for critical dialogue, exploration, and student-led activism through inquiry-based learning.

Current Approaches to the Climate Crisis

Current approaches and proposed solutions to addressing the climate crisis both in schools and in larger society tend to center individual actions such as responsible waste disposal or adopting more “eco-friendly” consumer habits. Recycling and reusing are

among the most popular examples of individual climate change solutions performed in schools today.

However, these approaches are feel-good, low-effort actions that have little significant impact (Goldman et al., 2021); they also ignore the most important “R” which is to reduce consumption. Instead, the emphasis on recycling initiatives in schools reinforces consumer culture and distracts from the increasing need to reduce large scale production and consumption. Driven by profit, the goal of mass production and consumption is to meet the needs of the system even if this threatens the environment and human well-being (Bell, 2015). This can lead to the exploitation of nature and vulnerable populations in the form of unsustainable extraction, increased emissions, irresponsible handling of waste, disproportionate funding, and forced displacement. When climate change solutions rely heavily on individual action, they have minimal global impact and fail to address the systemic conditions that perpetuate climate injustice. Moreover, this



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individualized approach serves as a distraction from the substantive government, corporate, and systemic changes that the climate crisis requires.

Although most individuals are not to blame for our current environmental crisis, policies and school initiatives continue to pressure citizens to take personal responsibility for the damage caused by large corporations that are driven by the capitalist market (Farrell, 2022). This is evident in Manitoba's climate and green action plan which places its emphasis on Manitobans doing their individual part to help the environment: "Whether it is recycling waste or being more energy efficient, each of us can help make a difference" (Manitoba Sustainable Development, 2017, p. 5). Similarly, environmental citizenship, a core concept within the Manitoba Social Studies curriculum, also emphasizes individual responsibility:

Quality of life depends upon the sustainability of the environment. This places a particularly important responsibility on citizens, who must ultimately balance the demands of economic growth and high living standards against respect for the environment and the needs of future generations. (Manitoba Education and Youth, 2003, p. 10)

While these goals and outcomes promote active citizenship and environmental stewardship, they also reinforce individualistic solutions tied to economic growth which leave the underlying structures of the capitalist system intact. Therefore, educators, alongside their students, must develop a critical awareness of the root causes and contributing factors of the climate crisis in order to effectively address climate injustice.

Neoliberalism and the Climate Crisis

The causes and contributing factors of ineffective climate change solutions are inherently connected to neoliberal capitalist logic. Encompassing both a way of knowing and being within an economic system, the term neoliberalism "treasures both individual self-responsibility and social efficiency, aligning the purposes of public institutions to the primacy of the market" (Tuck, 2013, p. 325). Ultimately, neoliberalism emphasizes the issues and actions of the individual over the systemic conditions that have contributed to these issues in order to protect and sustain economic

growth. Key tenets of neoliberalism include the free market economy, consumerism, and individualism, and each plays a pivotal role in the ever-worsening climate crisis.

With efficiency, competition, and economic growth at its core, neoliberalism emphasizes the value of the free market which promotes privatization, minimal government intervention, and reduced government expenditure on public and social services, thereby placing the onus solely on individuals to provide their own needs and to better the environment (Hursh et al., 2015). For example, the promotion of “eco-friendly” products and practices on individual consumers, such as recycling initiatives, continue to justify consumerism and encourage large corporations to continue mass producing as long as consumers are the ones to dispose of their waste “responsibly.” In addition, increased production also increases the extraction and consumption of fossil fuels whose harmful emissions are known to be a primary cause of the ever-changing climate. Further, the harmful effects of climate change, such as rising temperatures and sea levels, have disproportionately impacted underserved populations and marginalized communities by means of inequitable funding, lack of resources, and forced displacement (Faber & Schlegel, 2017). Neoliberalism assumes that the market, driven by profitability, can be relied upon to make all decisions, including decisions concerning the climate crisis (Hursh et al.,

2015). This diverts the responsibility onto individual consumers to adjust their own lifestyles accordingly. However, these individualistic neoliberal approaches have not only failed in terms of adequately addressing environmental issues such as reducing pollution and carbon emissions, but continue to perpetuate and exacerbate the climate crisis due to the market’s demand for consistent growth and profit. This is evident in how corporations often turn environmental issues into “opportunities for entrepreneurialism and technological innovation, rather than a systematic political and cultural rethinking and reworking of our relationships with the environment” (Hursh et al., 2015, p. 308). When the main goal is profit, alternative means of addressing the climate crisis such as reducing consumption, regulating production, prohibiting harmful environmental practices, and redistributing wealth are seen as naïve and damaging to the neoliberal market (Bell, 2015; Tuck, 2014). When the needs of our increasingly neoliberal society overrule the needs and well-being of humanity and the environment, how then, can real change be enacted?

Inspiring Change through Inquiry

[Climate change] is a civilizational wake-up call. A powerful message—spoken in the language of fires, floods, droughts, and extinctions . . . Telling us that we need to evolve.

—Klein, 2014, p. 69

When climate crisis solutions rely heavily on individual responsibility and are only discussed through a neoliberal capitalist lens, we fail to critique and transform the very systems that exacerbate climate injustice. In contrast, if we openly critique these current approaches by inviting students to question, explore, reflect on, and take action against the systems and structures that perpetuate these issues, then there is emancipatory potential to enact real change. More specifically, there is immense potential to enact change through inquiry.

A Freirean approach to inquiry-based learning, informed by Paulo Freire's (1968/2005) seminal work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, emphasizes education as a practice of freedom through the processes of problem-posing, critical dialogue, consciousness-raising, naming the world, and praxis. This approach to inquiry prompts students to view the world through a critical lens in order to recognize and name the environmental inequities and injustices that exist, for the purpose of transforming themselves, others, and ultimately, the world.

In order to transform the world, students must first be able to name the world (Freire, 1968/2005). Within a climate justice inquiry, this would involve the ability to name the injustices brought on by climate change, such as its disproportionate impact on marginalized communities, and their associated causes. This can be facilitated through Freire's practice of

problem-posing. Problem-posing is a process that emphasizes critical thinking and dialogue by inviting students to challenge the existing structures and systems in which they are situated. While neoliberalism attempts to invisibilize these underlying structures and systems, problem-posing education strives to uncover and disrupt these realities. Problem-posing and critical dialogue are key components of inquiry-based learning which pose real-world problems, such as the climate crisis and its connection to capitalism, for students to engage with and explore in ways that are meaningful, relevant, authentic, and ultimately, transformative.

Once named, students can reflect and act on these climate injustices which leads to Freire's (1968/2005) notion of praxis, or the recursive process of action and reflection. By naming and critiquing dominant systems and ideologies, such as neoliberalism, students can begin to critique current environmental approaches and explore alternative options. Ultimately, "we want students to come to see themselves as truth-tellers and change-makers. If we ask children to critique the world but then fail to encourage them to act, our classrooms can degenerate into factories for cynicism" (Au et al., 2007, p. xi). Through a Freirean lens, the interplay of reflection and action is an essential part of inquiry that is too often omitted, rushed, glossed over, or implemented in ways that are superficial or individualistic.

Drawing on Indigenous ways of knowing and being, transformative climate inquiry and action requires a relational approach that focuses on restoring human connection through respect, relevance, responsibility, reciprocity, and reverence with and for the earth, land, nature, and each other (Pidgeon, 2019). In order to do this effectively, educators must extend inquiry beyond the classroom walls, outside into nature, and into the community. Through this collective learning and action centered on relational accountability, as opposed to placing all responsibility on the individual, students and communities can remain hopeful and empowered to act as positive change-makers.

Educators play a vital role in affording opportunities for student inquiry and activism. Therefore, we must remain critically informed through the development of a greater understanding of the current climate crisis and its causes. From this place of informed understanding, a Freirean approach to inquiry-based learning facilitated with and not for communities, holds immense emancipatory

potential to invoke hope, inspire collective action, spark political resistance, and pursue transformative climate justice within an increasingly neoliberal society.

About the Author



Brittany Fraser is an elementary school teacher in River East Transcona School Division and is currently pursuing a Master of Education degree at the University of Manitoba.

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Fires, Floods & Fear

Is it time to Invoke the Emergencies Act?¹

-SHANNON D. M. MOORE

An enormous mobilization, on a scale similar to the one orchestrated by C.D. Howe, will be essential to fundamentally redesign our economy and society for the global green energy revolution. Indeed, given the urgency of the task if we are to avert climate disaster, it's clear that a massive campaign of government planning, oversight and ownership – along the lines of what was achieved during the war through government planning and Crown corporations – will be needed. -McQuaig, 2019

Amidst daily reports of heat waves, wildfires, species extinction, and sea level rise, students today have understandable anxiety about the future of the planet. Many students have taken this eco-anxiety to the streets, choosing to leave their classrooms to march in climate strikes. Understandably, youth committed to action are confused by the lack of urgency, the platitudes, the purposeful ignorance, and the outright resistance from 'the adults'.

Bewildered, they have watched their Prime Minister march alongside them, while at the same time committing 4.5 billion public dollars to a leaky pipeline (McQuaig, 2019).

Disappointed, they have witnessed world leaders feign interest in the climate crisis while

at the same time failing to reach an agreement at the COP25 United Nations climate summit. Appalled, they have watched world 'leaders' patronize and mock them on social media. In turn, youth have learned to look to people their own age for leadership, commitment, and imagination. While youth sit in classrooms, they are reminded daily that transformative action is required immediately if we are to stop the rise in global temperatures. As educators, we are remiss if we do not also transform our pedagogy to respond to this crisis.

Although Social Studies courses have undergone recent theoretical shifts, moving towards historical thinking, critical thinking, and

¹ A longer version of this paper was originally presented in February, 2020 at the WestCAST conference in Vancouver, BC. Since that time, the federal government has invoked the Emergencies Act. In addition, Seth Klein published *A Good War* in October, 2020. I have recognized both events in this newer, abbreviated version of the paper.

inquiry-based learning, these shifts do not go far enough to make Social Studies relevant to the current youth context, and the urgency that this moment requires. Following the celebrations of inquiry-based learning—that it recognizes and legitimizes student’s interests (Fielding, 2012), encourages Following the celebrations of inquiry-based learning—that it recognizes and legitimizes student’s interests (Fielding, 2012), encourages and develops critical thinking skills (Duran & Dokme, 2016; Selwyn, 2014), enhances understanding and encourages more questioning (Scardamalia, 2002), and leads to greater student achievement, motivation and investment (Gini-Newman & Gini Newman, 2016; Ryan & Deci, 2000)— I advocate for a Social Studies course anchored to one central inquiry question: Should Canada invoke the Emergencies Act in response to the climate crisis?

Although the invocation of the Emergencies Act may seem dramatic, misaligned, or even unwarranted to some, it is precisely the drama of the question that encourages urgent ethical discussions. This question also demands that students: understand the structure of government and existing climate regulation, explore historical invocations of the War Measures Act and the more recent use of the Emergencies Act; investigate the science of climate change; research the Canadian economy; analyze alternate energy sources; and examine current environmental laws and

regulations nationally and internationally. The question can be answered individually, in groups, or preferentially as a full class to encourage dialogue and deliberation.

Part of identifying an appropriate question for an inquiry topic is being clear about the reasons, or rationale for making that choice. This is true for students, when they initiate an inquiry, and it’s also important for us as teachers. We make choices about inquiries for our classes based on our knowledge of our students, of the content and skills we are required to teach, and about what kinds of experiences we want our students to have (Selwyn, 2014, p.270).

Reduce

Before I begin advocating for a course anchored to such a question, let me first respond to those who will decry it for ‘bringing politics in the classroom’. Put simply, there is no class/room void of politics; further, the status quo—often revered as neutral—is political: There is a misguided and unfortunate tendency in our society to believe that activities that

strengthen or maintain the status quo are neutral or at least non-political, while activities that critique or challenge the status quo are “political” and inappropriate (Ross & Vinson, 2013, p.23). There is a misguided and unfortunate tendency in our society to believe that activities that strengthen or maintain the status quo are neutral or at least non-political, while activities that critique or challenge the status quo are “political” and inappropriate (Ross & Vinson, 2013, p.23).

Those that wish to label critical, philosophical discussions in the classroom ‘ideological’, not only misunderstand the impossibility of neutrality, they ignore its imposition. Following Bigelow and Peterson (2002), “neutrality is neither possible nor desirable” (p.5). Moreover, as Ross and Vinson (2013) explain, the ‘ideology of neutrality’ encourages passivity and maintains current inequities (p.25). Regardless, the central inquiry question, Should Canada invoke the Emergencies Act in response to the climate crisis?, does not mandate a particular response; the question places students in the role of evaluators rather than coercing a single perspective. As I write this, I am not sure how I would answer this question, nor am I certain of the advocacy or warnings that would arise in each unique classroom community.

Re-imagine

Although anchoring courses to varied, contextual, responsive inquiry questions limits the capacity to pre-determine curriculum, “when students investigate questions that have a clear worthwhile purpose and present problems or challenges that they perceive as meaningful” we can shift classrooms “from places where teachers ‘cover’ the curriculum to places where students ‘uncover’ the curriculum” (Gini-Newman & Gini Newman, 2016, p.16). Through this piece, I will reveal how this particular inquiry question would inevitably uncover the enduring understandings outlined in the provincial curriculum for Grade 11, The History of Canada (Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning, 2014). Rather than retrieving content, students are generating questions, problem solving, and critically engaging with the course themes.

Reuse

The central inquiry surrounding the imposition of the Emergencies Act (CIEA from this point forward²) necessitates that students explore the three times in Canadian history that the War Measure Act has been imposed, and the more recent³ use of the Emergencies³ Act. That is, in order to meaningfully respond to the

² CIEA is used throughout this paper to represent Central Inquiry surrounding the imposition of the Emergencies Act.

³ The War Measures Act was replaced by the Emergencies Act in the 1980s; the latter iteration grants cabinet less powers and ensures that government actions adhere to rights set out in The Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

CCIEA, students will have to investigate and consider each time the act has been used in our history. They will also need to compare the contexts in which it was enacted to the current climate crisis, in order to determine if current conditions parallel and/or justify enactment—or if it ever was justified. In turn, the students will need to consider the justifications offered in each instance, explore the public responses at the time, reflect on the consequences of the suspension of democracy, and finally compare each historical context to the current crisis. In addition to uncovering content from Clusters Three and Four in the Grade 11 curriculum, this inquiry also follows many benchmarks of historical thinking outlined in the curriculum documents, most evident in this example reading a source for evidence and taking a historical perspective (Seixas, 2006). The historical perspective benchmark necessitates students “use evidence and understanding of the historical context, to answer questions of why people acted the way they did (or thought what they did) even when their actions seem at first irrational or inexplicable or different from we would have done or thought” (Seixas, 2006, p.10). Through investigation, comparison and deliberation, students will develop deeper understandings of each context, as they are actively engaging with the curriculum, rather than passively consuming/memorizing details. Moreover, students will need to determine what else they need to know in order to answer CIEA. As Eisner (2001) states, “Perhaps

we should be less concerned with whether [students] can answer our questions than with whether they can ask their own. The most significant intellectual achievement is not so much in problem solving, but in question posing” (301). Beyond the construction of the main inquiry question, students will need to generate many more questions throughout the inquiry process.

One might imagine that students will recognize that they need to know more about the structure of government in order to answer this question—another fulfillment of the current mandated provincial curriculum (Enduring Understandings, Governance and Economics). They will need to recognize the three levels of government in Canada, and the responsibilities of each level. Further, they might evaluate whether targeted environmental laws or regulations enacted by the municipal, provincial and/or federal governments are more effective than a full-scale implementation of the Emergencies Act (EA). In order to evaluate whether passing specific environmental laws will suffice, students will need to know how governments pass laws. Through this, students will also likely explore current environmental laws, solutions offered by various political parties, and advocacy and resistance to increased government regulation. Further, students can question whether the EA is necessary when one considers various taxes, laws and

regulations that might be implemented instead. For example, students could consider the carbon tax as one alternative; this would allow them to explore the advocacy, potential and resistance to pricing pollution. Students could also explore forms of governance within Indigenous communities and consider if alternatives to the EA, such as collective decision making, could yield more effective environmental results. Beyond interventions in Canada, this question invites students to explore economic and environmental protocols throughout the globe.

Importantly, the CIEA requires that students investigate the science of the climate crisis, both the causes and consequences, in order to

determine if a public welfare emergency exists. If the government were to implement the EA in order to respond to the crisis, students will need to know what specific measures should be taken to deal with the emergency. That is, they need to fully understand the human actions that contribute to climate change, so that they might recognize which actions should be regulated or banned under the EA. Further, students will need to investigate current and alternate forms of energy, and weigh the pros and cons of each; specifically, the environmental impacts associated with extraction, consumption, and disposal of resources.

As information about climate change is



Photography by rui_noronha via Getty Images

delivered through various mediums, such as investigation requires that students employ a variety of media literacies to evaluate the reliability of sources. Cooper (2011) argues that climate change deniers have been more effective at using multiple forms of media to direct messaging at a populace with low media literacy. In order to be media literate one needs to identify the codes of each medium, the way these codes are used to coerce understanding, and the funding and motivation behind the production of mediums—to name a few salient elements of media literacies. This CIEA requires the evaluation of a variety of sources, and in turn necessitates students engage critical media literacies.

Beyond outright denial of the science, some of the anxiety that compels opposition to environmental initiatives and regulations is economic. This CIEA requires that students explore the economy of Canada, and how various industries contribute to the climate crisis (Enduring Understandings, Governance and Economics). This exploration demands that students first identify the main economic activities in Canada. Then, students can explore the possible environmental impacts of various industries. Through this research, students will need to consider the environmental benefits of regulating or eliminating particular products and/or industries; however, they will also need to consider the economic and social impacts of

such actions. Surely, students engaged in inquiry would not end their questioning at the environment, they would consider the companies, employees and families impacted by the regulation of industry. However, students might also recognize solutions in new green industries that politicians and industrialists refuse to consider—and question what monetary and political reasons motivate these refusals. Students may also weigh the costs of climate consequences against the economic benefits of industry; that is, they might question the health care and infrastructure costs associated with climate change against the costs of retraining or economically supporting workers transitioning to new industries. They may also investigate the history of crown corporations in Canada, and the possibility of more government intervention in the economy, as we saw in World War II under C.D. Howe.

Importantly, the CIEA encourages students to consider the ethics of such an imposition. That is, should our government be permitted to suspend democracy in times of crisis? Is this suspension ever required? The recent invocation certainly raised many important discussions about the distinction between rights and freedoms, between personal and public values.

While the Emergencies Act allows for the “requisition, use or disposition of property” that could permit government control of

corporations, it also allows for the regulation of travel and the evacuation of persons. In considering the ethics of such sweeping power, students might question how these powers were historically used. For example, they might explore the use of the War Measures Act to intern Canadian citizens, and compare the wording of the Emergencies Act against the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Through an exploration of internment, students would be confronted with the potential of groups in today's society being similarly targeted. In turn, they would be required to consider whether the potential risks of implementing the EA still warrant its use.

From here, a myriad of ethical questions follow: Is it ethical for the government to regulate the consumption of meat in order to combat climate change?; What is our responsibility to consider animal species that are facing extinction when we answer this question?; Are job losses in particular industries ethical?; Are import/export bans ethical to citizens in other countries? Further, students will likely also consider the ethics of not using such sweeping measures to respond to the climate crisis; what, that is, are the ethical implications of inaction? As you can see, this list of questions for this CIEA could go on. I am sure that as you have been reading this you have thought of a myriad of pedagogical possibilities for this, or other

central inquiry questions.

Recycle

While I have offered a few possible topics that might arise from the use of CIEA, my list is one sided. Due to the various perspectives and experiences of the students in any given class, they will bring issues, topics and questions that any one teacher would not singularly consider. This does not negate the professionalism required of a teacher, rather it requires it. As each inquiry question that a class constructs will be different, teachers need to be able to facilitate, organize, and encourage the learning in relation to each question. Teachers are experts in pedagogy, that means they possess the professional expertise to respond to various topics through critical and creative thinking, through thoughtful scaffolding and facilitation, and through the collection of quality resources. In the same way students will be asking what they need to know to answer this question, teachers will be asking what they need to collect and develop to help students answer. In turn, learning is no longer the passive consumption of pre-set curriculum, it is active questioning and self-motivated investigation. Regardless of how students answer this CIEA, the hope is that they develop a deeper understanding through the process—and more importantly to recognize themselves as active citizens who are encouraged to ask questions, to investigate, to evaluate evidence, and to make judgments.

About the Author



Shannon D.M. Moore is an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Education, at The University of Manitoba. Prior to joining the faculty, Shannon taught social studies and English in B.C. for nineteen years. She is the U of M representative on MSSTA, and the managing editor of MBSpeaks, the MSSTA journal.

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We Made a Zoo

Early Years Inquiry During a Pandemics

-ANGIE KUHNLE

While teachers everywhere were modifying all aspects of their teaching to fit a new socially distanced, hands-off model of education, I was pondering how I could still do inquiry with my Grade 3/4 class at Highbury School. My 24 students and I were set up in the school library with no white board, projector or manipulatives, surrounded by books we were not allowed to touch. We couldn't leave the room, even for Phys ed or Music. I knew this wasn't going to be a normal year, but I knew I still had to find a way to follow my own teaching philosophy and the only way I could think of to do that was to jump head first into some inquiry.

Starting With Student's Questions

In the Fall term of 2020 we read the book *The One and Only Ivan* by Katherine Applegate. The story follows a gorilla named Ivan who lives in a mall. Quickly my animal-loving students had questions about Ivan, like "is he real?" and "why does he live in a mall?" I provided them with answers using the historical and biographical information available on the internet about the real Ivan, and this led to



even more questions and connections. I could feel this was going somewhere and I wanted to see just how far my students and I would take it.

In the novel, Ivan paints pictures to fight the boredom of his solitary life in a cage, and the owner of the mall sells the paintings in the giftshop. One day, while using the Question Formulation Technique (Rothstein & Santana,

2011), my students created, classified, modified and prioritized questions and we were left with an idea we wanted to explore further.

Read more about this technique at the end of the article

The question was: “is it ethical to sell art made by animals?” This question reminded me that our local Zoo, The Assiniboine Park Zoo, was selling paintings made by polar bears as a fundraising event. I showed the fundraiser website to my students, and more questions came out like: “is it safe for animals to paint?” and “why does the Zoo need money?”

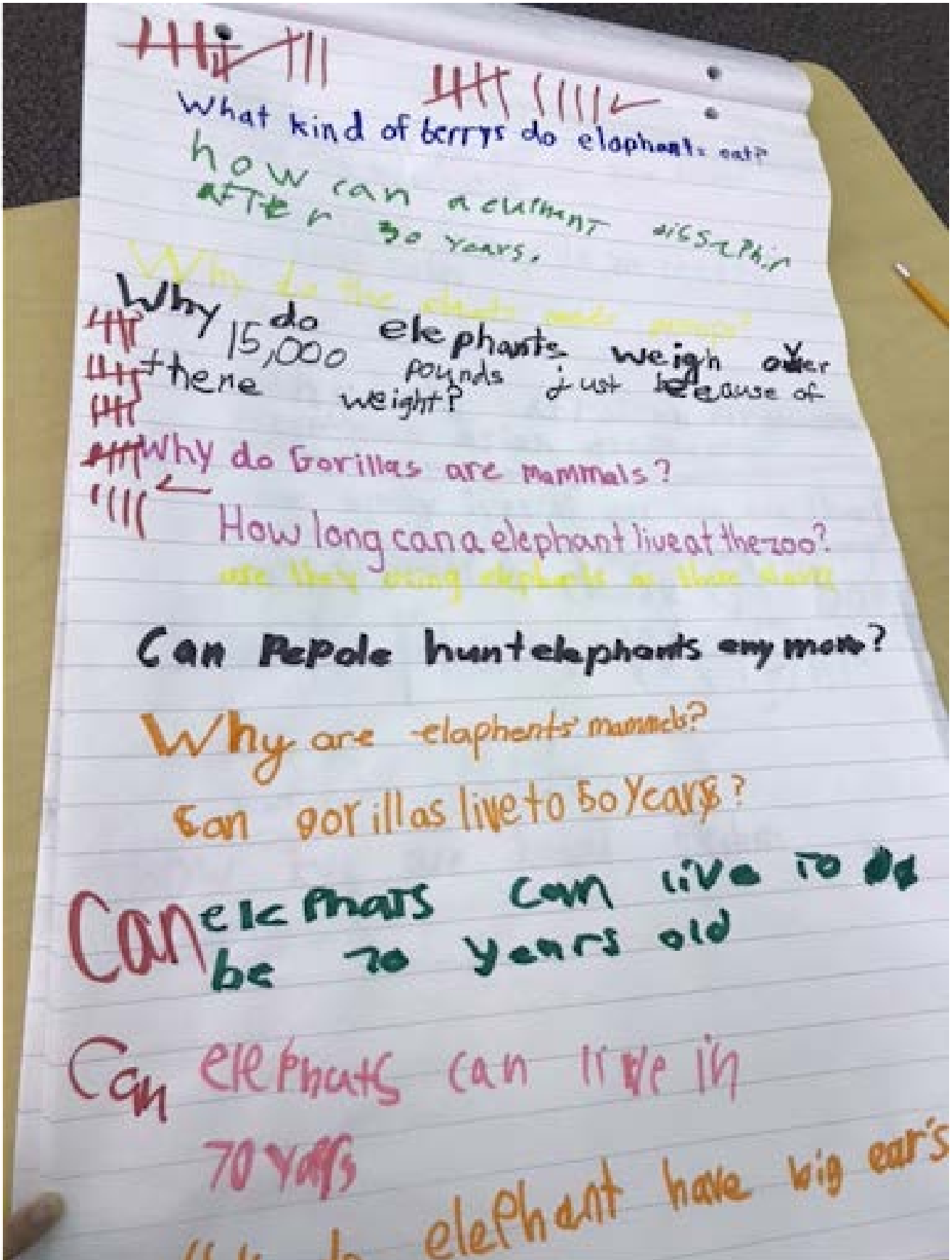
Supportive Preparation

Knowing that my students had minimal computer research skills and that most of my students were reading at or below a grade 3 reading level, helping them feel successful and independent while finding the answers to their own questions was my first priority. I used the questions they had come up with using the Question Formulation Technique alongside some questions I predicted they may come up with as the inquiry progressed. I then began searching for the answers myself on the internet. Once I found the answers, I copied the information into word documents, and began revising them to reflect grade-level appropriate language. This was the most time-consuming part of preparation for the inquiry

project, but it was fairly easy to shorten a sentence by eliminating extra adjectives or swap some university-level vocabulary for more simplified words. Once this was complete, I taught my students a number of research and reading comprehension strategies using the simplified paragraphs I created for them, meeting a variety of Social Studies and English Language Arts outcomes. We also watched videos of animals in zoos, and continued following the Question Formulation Technique process. Throughout, I continued to make connections to curricular outcomes.

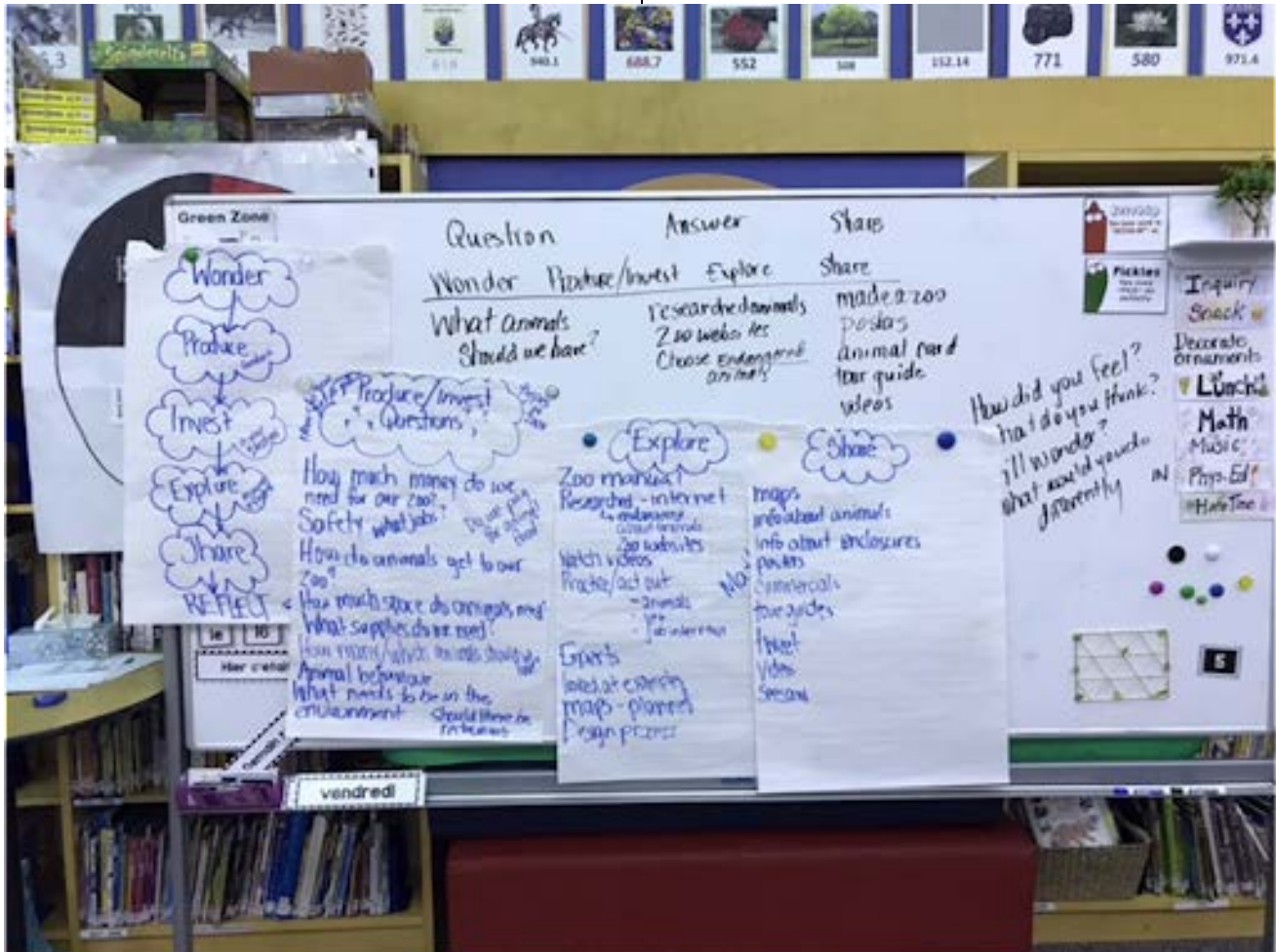
My Classroom Became A Zoo, But In A Good Way!

As the project evolved, my students convinced me that we absolutely had to turn our library into a zoo. This is the beauty of inquiry, the students propel the learning in the classroom. They acknowledged how big this task would be, and we slowly broke everything down into steps. As is the case in many inquiry projects, the results invited interdisciplinary learning. We incorporated Art and Drama when we acted out commercials and created posters promoting our zoo. We also engaged in Math outcomes when we measured cage spaces, graphed survey results and created prices for our zoo tickets, gift shop and restaurants. In Science we learned about animal adaptations, habitats and endangered species, in addition to organizing our zoo into biomes. In French we even wrote bilingual signs. In Social Studies we



looked at sustainable development, environmental issues impacting natural habitats, and examined maps from zoos around the world. Using this information, we created large map of our zoo which included a legend. The map was drawn to scale and we used cardinal directions when describing locations

student would like to apply for. We watched videos about applying for jobs, and invited our principal, an interview expert, to answer our questions about preparing for interviews. Each student was paired with a partner, spaced 2 meters apart, wearing masks, and participated in a filmed job interview for the position they



within the zoo. The zoo invited interdisciplinary thinking and meaningful connections. One of my favourite parts of the project was when the students researched and explored the many employment and volunteer opportunities zoos had to offer. Once we knew all of the positions we would need to fill in our zoo, we began writing resumes and applications for jobs each

wanted in the zoo. The next day we used the ringtones on my phone to make imaginary phone calls offering everyone the jobs. This imaginary play was a fun way to teach life skills while also making this project feel even more authentic for my students. With the staff hired, we were ready to open a zoo!

Thinking on My Feet, Or Paws, Or Hoofs

Since bringing in other classes or families to visit our zoo during a pandemic was not going to be an option, we created a video where each student discussed their enclosures, we oriented visitors to our map and each restaurant gave their menu options. The week before winter break we sent our video to the other classes in our school and division. We asked for visitor feedback on the virtual zoo experience and found that our peers were very excited about our zoo. The pandemic threw so many curveballs; bringing in guests or visiting the “real zoo was almost impossible; however, working in groups, participating in real-life scenarios and finding the answers to our own questions were still realistic and achievable.

Conclusion

Inquiry takes time and a lot of planning, especially when you are working with Early

Years students, but the level of engagement, the number of skills they acquired and the amount of cross-curricular outcomes I was able to assess in this one big project made the time it took me to prepare it completely worth it. I think some teachers look at inquiry and think it is completely unmanageable; that all students will be learning totally different things and it will be impossible to assess. This definitely does not have to be the case. I took a theme students were interested in and used their questions to guide my planning. Most of the time the students were working cooperatively on activities while meeting curricular outcomes that allowed them to demonstrate their learning. My biggest piece of advice is to start small and take off the pressure. A simple class discussion about a character in a book was where this all began, and the first step was showing my students that the answers to their questions matter. Where you go from there is all up to you!

**Question Formulation Technique
on the next page!**

Question Formulation Technique

This model of inquiry and the questioning process is influenced by the work of Dan Rothstein and Luz Santana (2011) and their Question Formulation Technique (QFT). Through repeated cycles of the Question Formulation Technique, students will be developing and utilizing three thinking abilities; divergent thinking, convergent thinking and metacognition (Rothstein & Santana, 2011). The following paragraphs will closely examine each stage and what procedures Rothstein and Santana list as essential in each stage.

Wonder

In the Wonder stage, teachers carefully plan a Question Focus (Rothstein & Santana, 2011), which serves as a stimulus for students. This could be an object, a statement or another aural or visual aid which will attract student attention and invite students to formulate related questions (Rothstein & Santana, 2011). It is important in this stage that teachers do not use a question to provoke the student because the focus of this process is for students to be creating the questions (Rothstein & Santana, 2011). Rothstein and Santana (2011) explain that providing students with questions does not teach them how to create questions, which is exemplified by the following quote from a student they worked with: "Learning how to ask questions is the most important thing I've ever learned. It helps me learn" (p.8).

Produce

In the Produce stage, students create a series of questions based upon the Question Focus. Rothstein and Santana (2011) recognize that both teachers and students are accustomed to teachers asking questions and students responding, and so transitioning to a space where students create the questions needs to be carefully and consciously supported by teachers. In order to support students, the authors: a) create a safe space for student questions; b) offer question rules to help students construct questions. As students create questions, they participate in a divergent thinking exercise, where they are demonstrating an “ability to generate a wide range of ideas and think broadly and creatively” (Rothstein & Santana, 2011, p. 16).



Invest

During this stage, students will spend time working with the questions they have created in the produce stage. With the teacher's guidance, the students will categorize and prioritize their questions, they will also examine, rework and rephrase their questions. Students will begin to learn that "the construction and phrasing of a question shapes the kind of information you can expect to receive" (Rothstein & Santana, 2011, p. 74). As they analyse their questions, they are learning an important skill, how to prioritize (Rothstein & Santana, 2011). This exercise in convergent thinking, which involves synthesizing ideas to make sense of new information, fosters creativity in students (Rothstein & Santana, 2011).

Explore

During the Explore stage, students take the most important questions they prioritized in the previous stage, and take action by exploring to solve these questions. Through this phase, students: feel a stronger sense of ownership; show high levels of enthusiasm; and think deeply about their inquiries. As they face difficulties in this phase, students will need encouragement; however, they will feel a great sense of pride over what they have accomplished thus far.

Reflect

This final stage may be the most important, for both the teacher and the students. Students will think about what steps they have followed, consider their new content knowledge and determine where they could use these skills in the future (Rothstein & Santana, 2011). As they reflect, they will exercise metacognition, as they think about their own thinking and learning process (Rothstein & Santana, 2011). Through this reflection, students “deepen their learning, develop greater confidence for moving forward and applying their newly developed skill, and reveal to their teachers a new depth of understanding that may not have previously been detected” (Rothstein & Santana, 2011, p. 119). At the completion of this stage, the number of possibilities for next steps are infinite as students are prepared for future challenges, and teachers have a clear understanding of the learning that has taken place.

About the Author



Angela Kuhnle is an early years educator. She currently teaches Grade 3/4 at Highbury School in Louis Riel School Division. Angela is also an integral member of the MSSTA executive, serving as the Secretary of the MSSTA Executive.

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Teaching With The World On Fire

Climate Inquiry in the Middle Years

-ELLEN BEES

Warnings about climate change have been around for years, but increasingly it feels like a problem no longer in the remote future. Living in Manitoba, climate change has been a problem we see distantly on the news. Hurricanes increase in frequency and severity, glaciers shrink, and coral reefs slowly turn bone white. All far away consequences that are too easy to ignore or push to the back of our minds

And yet, the last few summers I smell wildfire smoke carried by winds from provinces away. Temporary refugees from Northern reservations threatened by forest fires or flooding have arrived on Winnipeg's doorstep. Increasingly dry summers have resulted in droughts. Then the weather shifts wildly and we are faced with intense rain and flooding. The consequences of climate change are creeping into our province and our consciousness and becoming harder to ignore

As teachers, we are expected to help our students learn about climate change and environmental issues. These topics are built into the Manitoba curriculum in a variety of ways. For instance, the fourth and final cluster

in grade seven social studies has many outcomes about human impact on the environment, as evidenced on the next page.

However, many social studies teachers never quite reach this cluster, or at least don't cover it in the depth it deserves. Often, teachers cover the curriculum sequentially and just run out of time. As well, the science of climate change or environmental issues can be intimidating to teachers without a science background, and as a result it is glossed over.

Teaching about Climate Change

It is vital to make time for environmental topics. Social studies teachers help students understand the human and physical geography of their world, and increasingly environmental issues are coming to the forefront. Experts are warning that limited time is left to avert irreversible damage from climate change (UN Press, 2019). Considering the debate surrounding the carbon tax, discourse on the matter is not always particularly productive. Giving students the tools they need to proficiently analyze environmental issues is important.

7.4.2 Environmental Impact

- 7-KL-028** Describe diverse approaches to land and natural resource use in a society of Europe or the Americas.
- 7-KL-029** Give examples of the impact of human activity on the natural environment in a society of Europe or the Americas.
Examples: endangered plant and animal species, reforestation, restoration of wetlands...
- 7-KE-050** Identify major economic activities in a society of Europe or the Americas.
- 7-KE-053** Describe sustainable development issues in a society of Europe or the Americas.
- 7-VL-009** Be willing to take actions to help sustain the natural environment in Canada and the world.

7.4.5 Living in the Global Village

- 7-KL-026** Identify human activities that contribute to climate change.
- 7-KL-027** Describe social, environmental, and economic consequences of climate change.
- 7-KP-044** Identify ways in which government decisions may affect human impact on the natural environment.
- 7-KE-052** Identify issues related to food production and distribution in a society of Europe or the Americas.
- 7-KE-054** Give examples of the environmental and social impact of consumerism in the local community and in a society of Europe or the Americas.
- 7-VE-017** Be willing to consider the consequences of their consumer choices.

Source: Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth. (2006). *Social Studies: A foundation for implementation*. https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/socstud/foundation_gr7/gr7_fulldoc.pdf

However, teachers need to proceed with caution. Research suggests when too many dire statistics are thrown at people, they tend to go into ostrich mode. Heads go into the sand to avoid dealing with an overwhelming reality.

Yet, we can't ignore climate change, not with so much at stake. For this reason, I make time for environmental education in my social studies class, emphasizing facts rather than scary headlines. Students complete a jigsaw strategy where they study the causes, effects, and solutions to climate change using various resources (Bees, 2018). Notably, we spend a lot of time on solutions. In his 2017 TED talk, Per Espen Stoknes, a researcher who studies how people psychologically interact with news of climate change, indicates that "in order to create engagement, we should present, on balance, three positive or supportive framings for each climate threat we mention." Having a more solution focused approach prevents disengagement from the topic. To assess student understanding, students write letters to family members educating them about climate change. Recent studies show that teaching young people about climate change affects their parents' views on the topic (Denworth, 2019). This also encourages connections between school and home, so that parents can participate in discussions about climate change, climate anxiety and climate solutions.

The Classroom Story

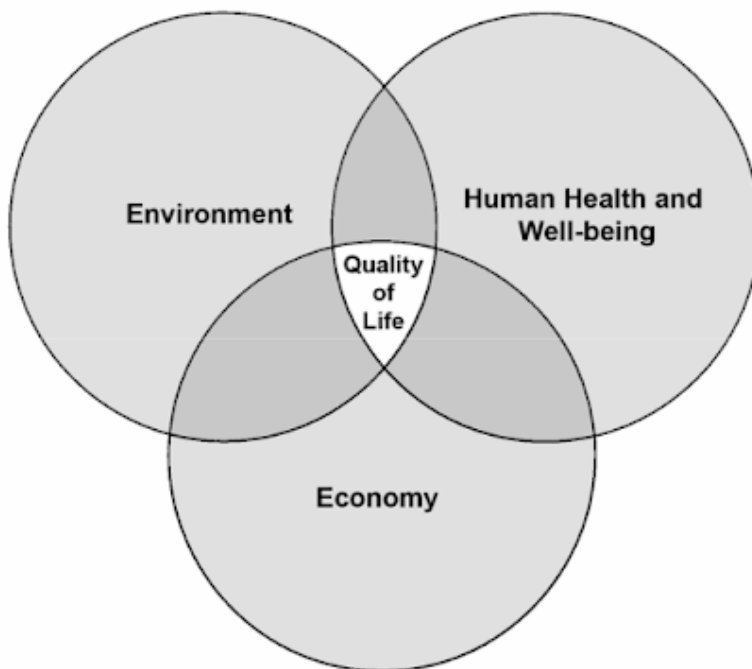
Having background knowledge about climate change is important, but focusing on a global perspective alone can make the issue seem too distant and unapproachable for students. These lessons need to be paired with concrete examples of what environmental issues look like at the local level. It is particularly vital that students understand how these issues are represented in the media, so they are better equipped to interpret future sustainable development issues that will inevitably arise. In 2018, I chose to focus on oil pipelines, an issue with lots of media coverage. That year, the construction of the Trans Mountain pipeline in British Columbia hit a roadblock, as protesters and court challenges halted its progress. This issue ended up being ideal from an education standpoint, as it offered a wealth of current newspaper articles and videos with divergent perspectives. This provided an excellent opportunity to encourage student inquiry.

Throughout the classroom story unit, students were at the center of our inquiry process. The unit provided them with the opportunity to ask questions about a real life sustainable development issue. They took on the role of characters with varying values. This offered the opportunity to engage in debate, as characters reacted differently to the unfolding events. Linking the classroom story with real

life events also allowed us to uncover the different factors that are underlying sustainable development issues and explore how these factors impact each other. The classroom community collaboratively constructed an understanding of sustainability issues, sharing responsibility for the story as we told it together.

To help students engage with the issue, I used the Classroom Story strategy pioneered by GMB Chomichuk and Brent Schmidt. With this strategy, students create characters who must interact and deal with events proposed by the Teacher-Narrator. Each character's story is interrelated with others, with the caveat that for something to happen in the story, the student must write it down.

I created a fictional scenario that mirrored the events in the news. Each student created a character, but the characters' main motivations were determined by chance to allow for a more dynamic story. Students rolled three dice to create stats for their character and to show the character's main motivations or priorities: Economy, Environment, and Society. Characters with a high score for economy valued having good jobs and making money, characters with a high score for environment were very connected to their natural environment, and characters with a high score for society were very community minded, caring about human health and well-being. Students were free to consider their character's three stats to determine what their character valued and how that would impact their actions.



Source: Manitoba Education. *Cluster 2, Global Quality of Life, Sustainability 7.2.1.*
https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/socstud/foundation_gr7/blms/7-2-1b.pdf

I picked Economy, Environment, and Society (or human health and well-being) as the main stats because these three factors come into play for any sustainable development issue. For healthy sustainable development to happen, the economic, environmental, and societal factors must be in balance. By making these factors the driving forces of different characters, it created conflict among the characters and led to effective dialogue and deliberation

The Plot Thickens

The plot of our Classroom Story started with ABC Oil Company arriving to install an oil pipeline north of our fictional town. Students had to decide how their characters viewed the pipeline and write diary entries explaining their reactions. As the plot unrolled, characters reacted to different events, including a protest camp popping up outside of town, the construction potentially being sabotaged, the company offering jobs, and Indigenous groups advocating for Indigenous rights. Importantly, in between each event we spent time investigating news articles and videos about the Trans Mountain pipeline that reflected what was happening in our classroom story. By connecting these articles to our classroom story, students were more motivated to critically assess the real life events and the sustainable development factors affecting them. Our Classroom Story ended with a town

hall meeting and a debate about the future of our fictional town, a debate that became surprisingly heated (in the best possible way). Interestingly, of the three classes that participated, one group's characters voted in favour of the pipeline, one group's characters voted against, and one ended up being tied. More importantly, when I assessed students' understanding of the sustainable development issue posed by the real pipeline, they were able to effectively describe the key factors at play and offer their own opinion supported by evidence. Moreover, their interest in the issue did not abate as news coverage of the Trans Mountain pipeline continued after the end of the unit.

By getting students involved in a fictional sustainable development issue and connecting it to real events, student engagement increased dramatically. We could simply have read a series of articles, but my classes would not have become as personally invested. By creating characters and having these characters interact, students began to better understand the driving forces that affect environmental issues. Importantly, distance is often a key factor that keeps people disengaged with climate change. The Classroom Story put students in the middle of the action and gave them space to critically evaluate a sustainable development conflict happening in our own country. Climate change is a topic that can provoke a feeling of doom. The media primarily

focuses on stories that feel apocalyptic, which is not helpful for promoting lasting engagement in the issue. As a result, when teaching students about climate change it is important to take a factual approach that is solution focused. We must use strategies that help students engage with climate change, not as a distant apocalyptic threat, but as a serious problem in our own backyard that requires our attention and focused solutions. We owe it to them to get this right.

About the Author

Ellen Bees is a middle school teacher who is passionate about social justice and sustainability. For more book recommendations and unit ideas, check out her blog at <https://teacherbees.ca/>. Follow her on twitter: @EllenBees

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Voting Rights through Time: One Inquiry Resource of Many

-RACHEL COLLISHAW,
PEDAGOGICAL ADVISOR, ELECTIONS CANADA



Elections Canada provides bilingual civic education resources and programming for educators to help prepare students to participate in elections and democracy. One of these resources is, [Voting Rights through Time](#). Like many of our resources, *Voting Rights through Time* is grounded in the principles of inquiry-based learning, asking students to form their own response to the question: How inclusive is our democracy?

Discover new updates

Voting Rights through Time, one of our most popular resources for secondary classrooms, has just gone through a big revision. The

updated kit is now available both online and to order. It includes one brand new case study on Inuit and the right to vote, an updated teacher's guide, and improvements to all the case studies to add complexity and improve clarity. With the new case study completing the set, there are now five case studies in federal voting rights for students to explore and compare:

- First Nations Peoples
- Inuit
- Japanese Canadians
- Women
- Youth

Each kit now comes with five context cards, case study card sets, timelines and turning point frames. Students use these hands-on materials to work collaboratively, creating a “timeline with attitude” as they learn these stories of inclusion and exclusion in federal voting rights.

The core of the activity has not changed. The kit still uses inquiry pedagogy and historical thinking as its foundation, and there are still printable and blended versions so you can adapt the activity for your learning context. Language learner versions are also still available in both French and English.

Updated Teacher’s Guide

The teacher’s guide has been revised to improve the clarity and sequence of instruction, making it even easier to teach the lesson with limited preparation time.

The guide still includes background information for teachers, but it has been expanded and updated for accuracy and consistency, providing more historical contextual information for each case study. These will help you to respond to students’ questions as they arise in the activity.

Renewed Case Studies

All of the case studies still provide authentic

opportunities for developing oral and written language skills, discussion and inquiry.

The new Inuit case study is now available in all formats: print, downloadable and blended. It can be an excellent starting point to learn more about the history, experiences and perspectives of Inuit in Canada. Students will learn, for example, that Inuit were granted federal voting rights in 1950, but about half of the Inuit communities in Canada lacked voting services until 1962. Students will also learn that in 1979 a new electoral district was created in what is now Nunavut. When a federal election was held, all three candidates were Inuit: Tagak Curley, Abe Okpik and Peter Ittinuar, who was elected.

All of the text in the other case studies has been revised to be more accurate, inclusive, and clear for students in both the standard and the language learner versions. In the revision process, we discovered more historical detail that we’ve now included, making the case studies even more compelling.

Finally, the revised youth case study is much more complex than the previous version. For example, students will learn how a 1991 Royal Commission studied in depth the question of lowering the voting age to 16, and suggested that the question of voting age be reconsidered from time to time as society changes.

Voting Rights through Time still raises questions for students, and can provide a launching point for student-led inquiry into further historical or contemporary issues of inclusion in Canada's democracy. Access or order this free resource to bring this interactive lesson to your students.

Finding our Resources

Like Elections Canada's other educational resources, *Voting Rights through Time* is inquiry-based, hands-on, interactive, student-centred, non-partisan and free. It's also cross-curricular and can be used in many subjects, including Global Issues and History, as well as language arts in English or French.

Teachers can order or download the resource or access the blended learning version at electionsanddemocracy.ca.

About the Author

Rachel Collishaw is the pedagogical advisor at Elections Canada, where she gets to create learning resources and professional learning for educators across Canada. She is the founding president of the Social Studies Educators Network of Canada (SSENC) and the president of the Ontario History and Social Science Teachers' Association (OHASSTA). She brings twenty years of experience as a secondary history teacher to these many roles.



Professional Resources

John Spencer

John Spencer is a name that many teachers may be familiar with. This middle-years teacher turned college professor maintains a Youtube channel dedicated to helping teachers grasp concepts for creative teaching through inquiry-, project-, and problem-based learning. These styles of teaching blend with (and emerge from) each other, and often require creative ways to inspire and assess our students' learning.

www.youtube.com/c/JohnSpencerteacher

The Canadian School Libraries Journal

The Canadian School Libraries Journal is a treasure-trove of resources to inspire and support teachers in their efforts to bring inquiry into the classroom. Here you can find articles that describe the inquiry processes of accomplished teachers, prepared Inquiry-pacs for senior-years Social Studies, downloadable posters, and multiple pdf documents detailing how to plan and structure inquiry in the classroom.

mediaeducationlab.com/curriculum/materials

The Zinn Education Project

The Zinn Education Project contains a great wealth of People's History resources organized by topic, theme, time period, and even user-specified dates! People's History is a powerful way to pursue inquiry because it is inherently subversive of established narratives and lends itself to the examination of controversial moments in history - a powerful fuel for curiosity and self-liberation through education!

www.zinnedproject.org/materials/following-the-threads

Malcolm Gladwell's Pushkin Industries

Malcolm Gladwell's Pushkin Industries is where curious inquirers may find hundreds (if not thousands) of hours of high quality, easily digestible content. The Solvable podcast alone easily forms the backbone of a Global Issues course in its content and is a great mentor text for teachers and students who want to use podcasting as a means of sharing their learning.

www.pushkin.fm/

The Robertson Program

The Robertson Program is all about inquiry in math and science - why is it listed in a MSSTA Journal? The answer is: because inquiry is inherently multidisciplinary if you allow it to be. One of the fundamental challenges of introducing inquiry into your classroom is making time for its messy processes in a tightly packed day. Solution: blend Science and Math into your Social Studies inquiries. It does not take much of a leap to combine "What is light?" and "What is Surface Area?" and turn them into "How can we use light to reduce crime and improve feelings of safety in cities?"

wordpress.oise.utoronto.ca/robertson/inquiry/

Right Question Institute

Put aside all fancy jargon and buzzwords - inquiry is nothing more than asking questions and finding answers (or constructing them!). Though all questions are valid, they are not all equal. Knowing how to form the right question can turn a surface level inquiry of no consequence into an inquiry that shatters everything you knew to be true. At rightquestion.org there are resources for all grade levels and many subjects that you can use to teach your students how to question effectively.

rightquestion.org/

Education Manitoba

For some of us, introducing inquiry into our classrooms is a dream we don't realize because "it's not what everyone else is doing". Setting ourselves apart from our colleagues can feel uncomfortable, especially if we deviate from those trails blazed by the veteran members of our team. If you need assurance that inquiry is legitimate, and has the full approval of MB Education, look no further than Chapter 6: Integrated Learning through Inquiry: A Guided Planning Model. This document is an Aegis against inquiry-naysayers. It contains a straightforward planning model for using inquiry in the classroom.

www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/multilevel/chap6.pdf

Call for Submissions

MB Speaks

SPRING 2023 ISSUE

Call for Submissions SPRING 2023 ISSUE

MB Speaks

Greetings!

You are invited to submit to the Spring 2023 Issue of the Manitoba Social Science Teachers' Association (MSSTA) Journal.

The race to win turns us all into losers

--Alfie Kohn

In 2006, Manitoba Education released, *Rethinking Classroom Assessment with Purpose in Mind*. This document flipped the traditional assessment pyramid to reflect the assessment literature. Research has repeatedly demonstrated that assessment for learning (AfL) is a powerful practice to promote learning. The primacy of AfL is evident in the policy directives, resources and professional development of nearly every Canadian province and territory. For these reasons, the document reduced the focus on assessment of learning and granted more space to assessment as/for learning.

Assessment as/for learning decenters grades, and invites students into the assessment process. In this way, assessment is no longer something that is done to students, but is done with, by and for students (Manitoba Education, 2006). Since the release of this document, social studies educators have engaged in rich conversations about the purpose of assessment, and about how they could alter their assessment practices to centre learning rather than grading. Many more questions have emerged from these conversations: In a social studies environment, how does grading normalize individualism and competition and become a barrier to cooperative learning spaces? How do our assessment practices interfere with our pedagogical practices? Do my assessment practices invite varied literacies and modes of expression? How/do we assess discussion and deliberation? Are current assessment and grading practices irreconcilable with decolonizing practices? What are the philosophical and practical implications of ungrading? There is no doubt that assessment practices continue to invoke questions of ethics, fairness and validity. We would like this issue to be an exploration of these questions.

Call for Submissions SPRING 2023 ISSUE

MB Speaks

Through this issue, we hope to explore the ways in which social studies educators in Manitoba are rethinking their assessment practices.

Educators can submit to any section of the journal:

1. Pedagogy: scholarly writing connected to the issue theme. Writers should aim for 5-7 double-spaced pages. Submissions accepted in this section will serve as the anchor essay for the entire issue.
2. Practice: class activities, lessons and/or unit plans.
3. Professional Development: events, learning resources, books, podcasts, organizations including student groups
4. Photos: If you have any photographs of Manitoba that you would like featured in the issue, we would love to include them.

Submissions should be sent to msstajournal@gmail.com no later than February 1st, 2023.

We hope to publish this issue in March, 2023. Please send your submissions as word documents.

For immediate response to any journal inquiries, please reach out to shannon.moore@umanitoba.ca.

If you are interested in advertising in our journal, please contact us directly; we are in the process of developing protocols and policies around advertising.

TREATY EDUCATION

2022-2023

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MB Speaks



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