

Inquiry Demonstration Plan

Lesson How do we learn together on Title: this land? Name: Clint Maltais	Lesson # 3 Subject(s):	Date: July 23, 2020 Grade(s): Educators
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Rationale & Overview

Why does this topic matter to educators?

Land-based learning is inherently imaginative, engaging, and with teacher support, students will develop the habits of thought for connecting learning to themselves, to others, and to place (Clifford and Friesen, 2003). Yet school yards and local greenspaces continue to be an underutilised curricular resource in teaching and learning practices (Judson, 2018). In order to capitalize on these resources and the benefits of routine nature-connectedness, educators need to look inwards at their own beliefs, values, and assumptions and explore how learning can be perceived. It is important to recognise the inquiry topic as an adaptive challenge and not a technical one (Kegan & Lahey, 2009). Technical expertise, like engagement strategies and lesson sequences, come up in professional development but these represent practices and not sustainable pedagogies. The focus of our inquiry will be on educators developing adaptive expertise, that is using “deep conceptual knowledge to understand and work effectively to problem solve in novel situations” (La Fevre et al., 2015, p. 1). Building our collective capacity and adaptive expertise of land-based learning, educators can be supported in transferring and applying these principles across grade-levels and curriculum.

How does this lesson fit within the larger inquiry project?

This lesson is Day 2 AM of a two day workshop and builds on the previous sessions that explore land-based learning and how it relates to our perceptions of learning (supporting questions). During our first day we will examine our current understandings and perceptions of the topic, and then identify a collective commitment for integrating the topic as a core pedagogy. For the sake of this lesson, the commitment we will have generated in the previous lesson is: *We are committed to integrating nature-based learning on a routine* basis in our classrooms.* This lesson further shifts the conversation from learning through sensory experiences (first day), to learning through introspection (second day) as educators reflect on their beliefs, values, and assumptions around learning. By the end of the inquiry project, the intention is for educators to develop an actionable step that will challenge one of their big assumptions that might represent a barrier to their approach to a land-based practice.

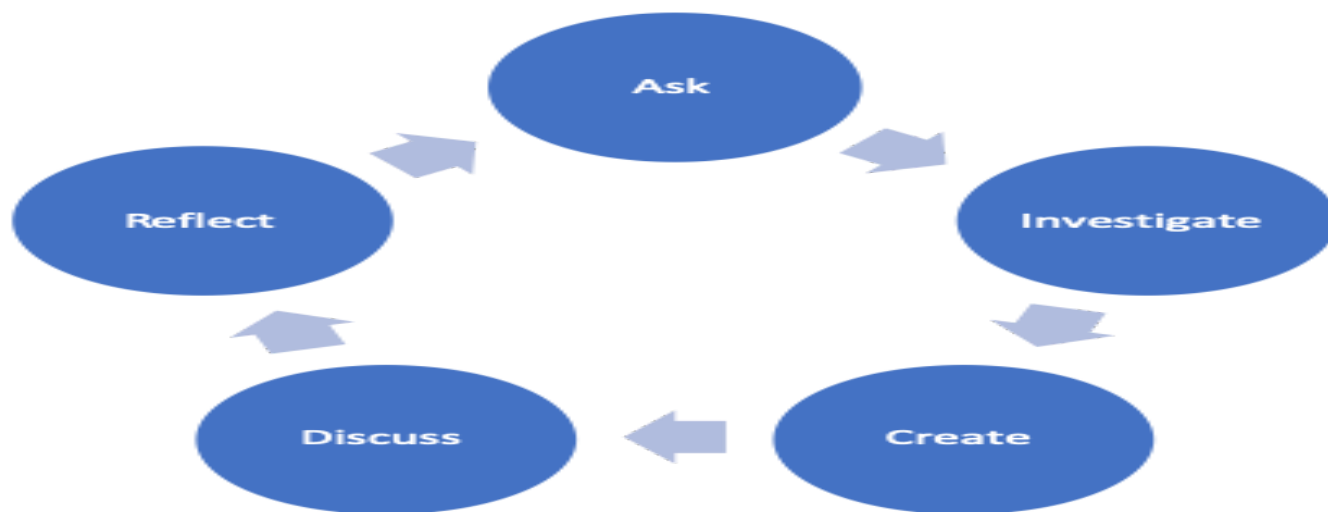
How does this project incorporate the inquiry cycle?

This project falls within the “Ask” and “Investigate” phases by exploring learning as it relates to nature and developing a collective commitment for integrating land-based learning on a routine basis. Our inquiry further develops the beginnings of the “Create” phase. In recognising

the FPPL that learning requires patience and time, this inquiry does not complete the inquiry cycle, and instead our final step together proposes to support educators in developing a personal, actionable step in embedding nature-connectedness as a core pedagogy. There is space to return to our inquiry group at a later date to discuss and reflect on our practice, identify new learnings, and begin the next cycle of more deeply exploring land-based learning.

Key Questions For Inquiry

Core Question & Supporting Questions for Inquiry Project	Question(s) Addressed in This Lesson
<p>How do we learn together on this land?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is learning? • Where do people go to learn? • How do people learn? • Who (or what) do they learn from? • Why and for what purpose do they learn? 	<p>How do we learn?</p> <p>Who (or what) do they learn from?</p>



Inquiry Approach and Rationale

For this project we will be using a design thinking approach to inquiry. The design thinking process works well when used as a framework for working on an adaptive challenge because much of the deep work we are doing within the inquiry involves reflecting on our own beliefs, values, and assumptions. This introspective process aligns well with the first stage of the design cycle, empathising, to collectively understand the needs and insights of the participants in order to support one another (d.school at Stanford, n.d.). Together, we will define the problem which we will frame as a commitment (*We are committed to integrating nature-based learning*

on a routine basis in our classrooms), and then we will return to the empathising stage to explore more learning through the immunity map experience. Ultimately we want participants to prototype by designing curriculum and making instructional decisions based on core beliefs and values rooted in land-based principles. Our design approach is limited in that the test and reflection stage fall outside the scope of our two-day workshop, although we would encourage educators to remain connected to debrief their tests together (perhaps in a PLC).*

Core Principles of Effective Teaching (Sharon Friesen)

Focus on one or more core principles in the lesson

<p>Core Principle 1: Effective teaching practice begins with the thoughtful and intentional design of learning that engages students intellectually and academically.</p> <p><i>*What aspects of the inquiry are the most challenging and meaningful for students?</i></p>	<p>In one of my deep in-depth journal posts, I proposed: "I wonder how our teaching practices would change if we spent more of our professional learning time looking inwards and determining our own principles, values, and beliefs instead of being told what principles and beliefs we ought to use as our guiding framework for designing student learning" (Maltais, 2020). This wonder has been the driving influence in my design for creating a space that educators, individually and collectively, can reflect on their beliefs and values around land-based learning. This is a hard, but necessary step that needs to happen before we can "have the courage to act out [our beliefs]" (Wagamese, 2016).</p>
<p>Core Principle 2: The work that students are asked to undertake is worthy of their time and attention, is personally relevant, and deeply connected to the world in which they live.</p> <p><i>*What makes this inquiry valuable, meaningful, and "alive" for the students and teachers?</i></p>	<p>See "Inquiry Lesson 4"</p>
<p>Core Principle 3: Assessment practices are clearly focused on improving student learning and guiding teaching decisions and actions.</p> <p><i>*How do I define learning and success in this inquiry? How is learning expressed and articulated in peer, self and teacher assessments?</i></p>	<p>See "Inquiry Lesson 2"</p>

<p>Core Principle 4: Teachers foster a variety of interdependent relationships in classrooms that promote learning and create a strong culture around learning.</p> <p><i>*How do I connect students with each other, with experts in the field, with larger communities and nature, and across disciplines?</i></p>	<p>See "Inquiry Lesson 1"</p>
<p>Core Principle 5: Teachers improve their practice in the company of peers.</p> <p><i>*How do I reflect on the inquiry together, and/or collaborate with others?</i></p>	<p>This inquiry provides a great opportunity to explore how PLCs can positively disrupt and affect school culture, and how we can leverage a PLC to facilitate innovation and change within our school. We recognise that all participants bring a "personal foundation of experience" (Boud, 2001, p. 12) and we needed to share these experiences and begin the process of building our collective knowledge from a place of strength. The result of teachers sharing their knowledge and experience is in their "gaining deeper knowledge, creating more thoughtful plans, and providing more varied and detailed student supports" (Mindich & Lieberman, 2012, p. 36). In utilising the knowledge of the whole group, and making visible the adaptive expertise of the PLC, we will be able to support each other in building capacity around our developing pedagogies in land-based learning (La Fevre, Timperley, and Ell, 2015; Mindich & Lieberman, 2012).</p>

BC Curriculum Core Competencies

Communication	Thinking	Personal & Social
<p>I communicate purposefully, using forms and strategies I have practiced.</p> <p>I contribute during group activities with peers and share</p>		<p>I can interact with others and the environment respectfully and thoughtfully.</p>

roles and responsibilities to achieve goals.		
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BC Curriculum Big Ideas (STUDENTS UNDERSTAND)

Science (Grade 4)

All living things sense and respond to their environment.

English Language Arts (Grade 4)

Exploring stories and other texts helps us understand and make connections to others and to the world.

BC Curriculum Learning Standards (STUDENTS DO)

(STUDENTS KNOW)

Learning Standards - Curricular Competencies	Learning Standards - Content
Science <i>Questioning and Predicting</i> Demonstrate curiosity about the natural world Observe objects and events in familiar contexts	Science Sensing and responding (humans)
English Language Arts <i>Comprehend and Connect (reading, listening, viewing)</i> Use personal experience and knowledge to connect to text and deepen understanding of self, community, and world Identify how story in First Peoples cultures connects people to land	English Language Arts Strategies and processes (metacognitive strategies)

BC Curriculum Indigenous Connections/ First Peoples Principles of Learning

How will I incorporate Indigenous knowledge and principles of learning?

Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place).

Learning requires exploration of one's identity.

Respectful Relations

How will I invite students of all backgrounds, interests and skills into the inquiry?

-The asterisk in "routine* basis" in our one BIG thing honours the individual intentions and experiences of the participants. Some participants might be committing to taking students outside once a month, and some might be committing to taking students outside 3-5 times a week, but all can contribute to the collective knowledge of the group.

Lesson Activities

Time Allotted (1h30)		Teacher	Students
Invitation	15 mins	<p>Ideate</p> <p><i>What are the hidden or competing commitments that might prevent educators from embedding land-based learning as a core pedagogy?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Land acknowledgement -Introduce sit spot routine with story and practice (connecting with land) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Participate in 10 minute sit spot routine (walk around neighbourhood, sit spot in yard, looking out window)
Inquiry	60 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -<i>How do we learn?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Moving from sensory to introspection. -Facilitate collaborative immunity map (Kegan and Lahey, 2008). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Column 1: Our one BIG thing (<i>co-constructed in last lesson</i> - i.e. <i>We are committed to integrating nature-based learning on a routine* basis in our classrooms</i>) Column 2: Fearless Inventory (what am I actively doing instead of doing my one BIG thing - i.e. <i>I'm covering the "important" content</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Share (or pass) based on sit spot routine -Contribute to immunity map on Jamboard and discuss

		<p>Column 3: Hidden, Competing Commitments (what am I worried about or fear will happen if I do the opposite of column two actions - i.e. <i>I worry students will get lost, injured or won't be appropriately dressed if I take learning outside</i>)</p> <p>Column 4: Big assumptions (turn my hidden commitments into big assumptions - i.e. <i>I'm assuming that the important subjects are numeracy and literacy</i>)</p> <p><i>We learn from reflection and introspection.</i></p>	
Reflection	15 mins	Reflection using <i>Connect, Extend, Challenge</i> on chart paper	<p>-Using a different colour marker than earlier, make connections to, extend the ideas of, or challenge the responses to the focus questions from earlier in the day:</p> <p><i>-Where do people go to learn?</i> <i>-How do people learn?</i> <i>-Who (or what) do they learn from?</i></p>

Materials and Resources

- Prepare Jamboard and ensure appropriate share setting to allow participants to contribute.
- Prepare to share sit spot story (either rehearse orally or write it down to read to participants).

Organizational Strategies

- Be fluent in technical challenges and adaptive challenges and why a commitment to nature-based learning might be considered an adaptive challenge. This will support the explanation of the immunity map and how participants interact with it.

Proactive, Positive Classroom Learning Environment Strategies

- Develop norms for collaborative online work. Present the question in our first session: *We want to maximize our time in our group. What are some norms we should observe in order to be fully present* (i.e. no phones, share with permission, non-judgemental, giving space...)
- Periodically review norms throughout the workshop as needed.

Extensions

- The asterisk in "routine* basis" in our one BIG thing honours the individual intentions and experiences of the participants. Some participants might be committing to taking students outside once a month, and some might be committing to taking students outside 3-5 times a week, but all can contribute to the collective knowledge of the group.
- There is a need to return to this inquiry after the workshop is complete to share how testing our big assumptions was experienced by educators. Educators who wish to extend could begin to identify and explore opportunities for new learning in the form of books, research articles, or additional workshops to theoretically support this shift in pedagogy. They could bring this new learning to future sessions as our initial workshop morphs into a professional learning community.

Reflections (to be completed after the lesson demonstration)

I find live online teaching particularly challenging in that I really appreciate real time feedback by those in the room, and in this lesson, I found it even more difficult because I have a limited relationship with Ali, Gurpreet, and Melody (as much as several weeks of an online course can afford!). So while I thought the lesson and sequencing went well, I certainly missed out on the community building aspect typically incorporated into the first lesson in the unit. I think it is important, especially when working with other educators around an inquiry topic, that the facilitator is perceived as a co-learner and collaborator, and I tried to be intentional about being a participant-facilitator in this lesson. In this role I tried to synthesize and connect the experiences and stories that everyone shared in the discussion, and use that information to guide our [predetermined] direction from examining learning as a sensory experience to an introspective one.

One of the things I was thinking about afterwards was around my intentions for the inquiry and the lessons and how I was trying to design processes for educators to look inward. I felt a bit anxious in that it seems a fine balance between asserting or even suggesting my own beliefs and creating a space for educators to reflect on their own. Some people, too, might not even be in a place where they are willing or open to that inward journey. Within the larger inquiry I think I would have felt less anxious as educators would choose to participate in the workshop and we have used the first day to collectively come to an agreed upon

commitment to be used in the experience from today's lesson (rather than me just telling people today that this was our one BIG idea!).

I really appreciate the feedback and suggestions that Ali, Gurpreet, and Melody shared with me. I think it was valuable receiving their perspectives as "outsiders" to the inquiry topic. Ali and Gurpreet both offered resources (<https://sierraclub.bc.ca/> and the works of the poet and philosopher, Tagore) that I intend to explore. Melody shared the common concern with outdoor learning around safety and legal issues that might arise in routinely taking students outside. I thought this was a really relevant comment based on the learning task, and if we had more time we would have fleshed out these worries and fears as hidden commitments and assumptions we hold about teaching and learning. This was an indicator that the lesson sequence within the unit should work well.

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