

Discovering P.L.A.C.E

Inquiry exercise for teachers: please complete prior to Jan. 21 workshop

Inquiry is a prerequisite to Place-Based Education, and a critical skill for today's students. Please complete this simple 3-step exercise designed to enhance teacher proficiency in Inquiry-Based Learning.

Step 1.

On your own or with other teachers, watch the first video at <http://www.learner.org/workshops/inquiry/videos.html?pop=yes&pid=1452#>, then answer or discuss with fellow teachers the following questions:

- What is inquiry and why should I use it with my class?
- What concerns do I have about this kind of teaching?

Note: You may need to click on the rectangular video icon twice in order for it to open. The other videos in the series are recommended, but optional.

Step 2.

Now lead your class in a questioning exercise similar to the one led by Dorothy McLeer at October's workshop (for example, at For-Mar Nature Center's table of pelts, "Why are some furs so thick?"). **Note: Dorothy's exercise involved science. For more abstract subjects, such as English or social studies, you may wish to start with a discussion, reading or video clip as a basis for questions.**

- Choose a curriculum subject area and a place (classroom, area of school, courtyard, schoolyard, etc.) that will motivate students to ask questions.
- Divide students into groups of 3-5.
- Assign each group to come up with a couple questions related to the curriculum subject/place.
- Guide students to find the answers to questions, depending on their age (this could be via discussion or with older students, through their own research).
- Guide students into translating their answers into a poster, a report or some other means of communicating their findings.
- Consider taking a picture or shooting a video of this exercise!
- **Taking it slow. Would you rather ease into this assignment? If so, have the class as a whole ask one or two questions and research them together. Then go back and complete the exercise in Step 2.**

Step 3.

After your project, journal your experience by briefly answering the following questions, then send your journal entry to Elizabeth Lowe at ellowe@umflint.edu. Please include:

- Subject and setting
- A description of the exercise
- What went well for you?
- What went well for your students?
- What did you struggle with?
- What did your students struggle with?
- How might you do this differently next time?
- Do you have a photo/video of the exercise to share?

Note: This information will be compiled and shared with the Discovering PLACE cohort of teachers, as well as used to help organize our spring workshops.

Optional: If you'd like your experience posted to share publicly on our blog (<http://blogs.umflint.edu/glsi>), please indicate this in your e-mail. If you are including a photo/video for the blog, please be sure any students pictured have consent forms signed by their parents or guardians (these forms are on the flash drive in your binder).