

Inquiry Models

What it is: Inquiry models engage students in actively investigating a discipline, actively searching for knowledge or understanding. Students generate questions or identify issues or problems relevant to a content area, then collect and interpret information or data to answer the question or solve the issue or problem. Some disciplines have one or more inquiry models that are specific to their way of thinking. Other disciplines use more generic approaches.

Benefits:

- Increases student involvement and ownership of curriculum and content
- Stimulates curiosity
- Enhances student performance
- Encourages development of independent skills

Examples:

- Scientific Inquiry
- Thinking Like a Historian
- The Big 6
- Ontario Inquiry Model K-12
- Resident Expert (Winebrenner, 2001)
- Action research

Situations where it's useful:

- When you would like to increase depth and complexity for students
- For students that are passionate about a particular topic
- In conjunction with curriculum compacting
- As an anchor activity
- May be particularly valuable for underserved and underrepresented populations

Pointers:

- This strategy can be used with individual students, pairs of students, or teams of students
- This strategy can be used as a whole group activity or with selected students
- Complete an independent contract for the selected question, issue, or problem. The student and teacher should sign it. You may choose to also have a parent/guardian sign.
- You might need to help students develop perseverance in generating questions/issues/problems, carefully investigating them, then interpreting information and data to generate answers or solutions

References/Resources

Author unknown. *Methods of inquiry economics: Modern and ancient history SOSE, the inquiry-based approach used in economics*. Retrieved from <http://www.aldridgeshs.eq.edu.au/sose/skills/inquiry.htm>.

Author unknown. *Ontario inquiry model K-12*. Retrieved from <http://library.queensu.ca/book/export/html/8782>.

Author unknown (n.d.). *Testar model of inquiry*. Retrieved from <http://www.learningplace.com.au/deliver/content.asp?pid=50241>.

Author unknown (n.d.). *The big 6*. Retrieved from <http://www.big6.com>.

Haury, D.L. (1993). *Teaching science through inquiry*. Retrieved from <http://www.ericdigests.org/1993/inquiry.htm>.

Mandell, N. and Malone, B. (2007). *Thinking like a historian: Rethinking history instruction*. Madison, WI: Wisconsin Historical Society.
(also see <http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/ThinkingLikeaHistorian>)

National Science Teachers Association Board of Directors (2004). *NSTA position statement: Scientific inquiry*. Retrieved from <http://www.nsta.org/about/positions/inquiry.aspx>.

Author unknown (n.d.). *The big 6*. Retrieved from <http://www.big6.com>.

Winebrenner, S. (2001). *Teaching gifted kids in the regular classroom: Strategies and techniques every teacher can use to meet the academic needs of the gifted and talented (revised, expanded, updated)*. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing.