

Links to Learning

Welcome to this year's CNY edition of "Links to Learning" our curriculum newsletter for CWBS parents and students. In this edition we will continue our look at what Inquiry is all about, and how we can encourage and support the continued development of our children's inquiry skills. We will also continue to have fun activities for our all of you to have a go at, at home, so you can share your ideas and learning with each other. May the Year of the Year of the Dragon be a special one for you all.

Explaining Inquiry in different ways

There are a number of ways to look and describe inquiry as a pedagogy and stance; here are a few for you to consider:

- Inquiry is natural to how we learn; making connections beyond school in "places of wonder" and "links beyond what we already know"
- Inquiry is asking WHY over and over again
- Inquiry is going beyond facts, its explaining them in different contexts
- Inquiry is reaching beyond current understandings and raising new questions
- Inquiry is being curious always wondering about "why", "how", "what if"
- Inquiry is not always a questionit is also a wondering that I want to explore and find out more about, so I can build new understandings of my world

Inquiry is problem-posing and problem solving

Inquiry is critiquing the world of "what it is"

Inquiry is based on the connections I make with the world I live in, wanting to understand these, as well as explore my own new wonderings



What makes learning exciting for us

Allow me to be actively engaged.
Give me hands on tasks to discover,
explore and confirm for myself.

Give me opportunities to
work together with others
so we can find out something
new as a team.

Motivate, encourage, share and
support me with what I am
trying to find out and do.
I'm proud of my efforts.

Give me lots of choices.
Sometimes I have a different
way I want to show you
my understandings.



Make it real for us, so that we can
connect this to the world we live in
and the world we are a part of.

Give me tools that I can use to help me
figure out how to find answers.
If I can have a way to organize my ideas,
I will feel more enthusiastic.

Thinking Skills: Using "I can" statements

Use these statements to show how you are developing and applying your Thinking Skills in all your learning.

- I can find out facts.
- I can learn new ideas.
- I can understand and use new vocabulary.
- I understand what I have learnt.
- I understand information from different sources.
- I can explain my new thinking to you.
- I can use my skills and knowledge in different situations and to solve problems.
- I can find similarities and differences.
- I can identify unique features.
- I can put different information together.
- I can think about different points of view.
- I know people can have other points of view.

Some “thinking challenges” for all

To further develop our thinking strategies when doing inquiry into different subject areas, we need to practise on a regular basis. This can be done in a fun and approachable way in which students want to participate and challenge themselves. We are including some activities in this section, which you can use again and again, as you all enjoy “bettering your brain power” while having a good time in the process. Compare your notes after each activity and discuss your answers, as well as the reasons for your answers, and see just how much you learn.

In two minutes name things:

- That are made of wood
- That have spots
- That you can rip / tear
- That are sweet
- That you pack inside a cereal box
- That you can wash



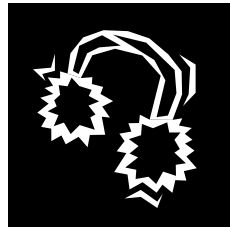
A-Z Warm ups

In two minutes, write down as many answers as you can using the letters of the alphabet

- A-Z of alphabet wild animals
- A-Z of big things
- A-Z of alphabet cartoon characters
- A-Z of alphabet black things
- A-Z of alphabet hairy things

Describe at least ten different uses for:

- A domino
- A sock
- A bottle cap
- Knee pads
- Earmuffs
- A paint brush



Give five or more reasons why:

- A gigantic hole has appeared in the car park overnight
- All public transport drivers are wearing purple hats today
- The sky is filled with balloons
- Its still dark at midday
- The letter “d” isn't in the alphabet anymore



Looking at questioning

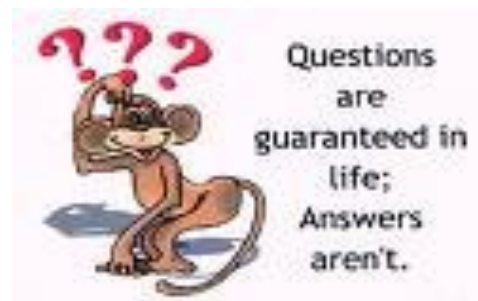


The process of deciding what is relevant, what is of interest, what is legitimate, what is authentic, and what requires further investigation demands the ability to ask questions.

Asking questions is pivotal to learning how to learn and becoming a lifelong learner. In a technology driven world, where information overload is often an issue, it is essential that students have the skills to critically question what they see, read and hear.

Questions can:

- Excite interest or curiosity
- Direct thinking in a particular way
- Focus attention on a topic
- Challenge
- Encourage active engagement in learning
- Encourage reflection on learning
- Help clarify understanding
- Model thinking
- Help make connections
- Spark further questions
- Motivate inquirers
- Access a particular type of thinking (critical, creative, reflective)



Try and use these prompts to ask rich questions:

- What is the evidence that What is shown about
- How else would you Why do you think
- What happens when How do you think
- What does suggest about
- Do you agree with? Why?
- Explain whyis more important than
- Where else would be useful? Why?



Using Inquiry Indicators

The Inquiry Indicators are a great way to look at our learning and see how we are practicing our inquiry skills, as well as how we can use these independently. These are in our classrooms and up around the school. Now use them with your children at home, as together you continue to build even bigger understandings of all the “whys” and “how we now know” when making connections with the philosophy of Inquiry and the Units of Inquiry. Use these prompts to encourage discussions.

Inquiry is:
Questioning



Inquiry is:
Making and testing theories



Inquiry is:
Exploring

Inquiry is:
Taking and defending a position

Inquiry is:
Experimenting



Inquiry is:
Making connections between previous learning and current learning



Inquiry is:
Making predictions

Inquiry is:
Playing with possibilities



Inquiry is:
Deepening understanding

Inquiry is:
Clarifying existing ideas

Inquiry is:
Researching and seeking information



Inquiry is:
Solving problems in a variety of ways

Inquiry is:
Wondering



Inquiry is:
Reporting findings

Inquiry is:
Re-assessing perceptions of events

Inquiry is:
Collecting data



Ask me more.....

1. What does this make you think of?
2. In what ways are these different?
3. In what ways are these the same?
4. What materials did you use?
5. What would happen if you ...
6. What might you try instead?
7. Tell me about your ...?
8. What does it look like?
9. What does it remind you of?
10. What does it feel like?
11. What can you do next time?
12. What can you tell me about it?
13. Tell me what happened.
14. What could you do instead?
15. Which one do you have more of?
16. Is one object longer/shorter than another?
17. What do you call the things you are using?
18. What can you tell me about the things you have?
19. Tell me what it looks like.
20. How are you going to do that?
21. What do you feel, see, hear, taste, smell?
22. How did you do that?
23. What will you do next after you finish that?
24. Is there anything else you could do/use?
25. How do you know?
26. What are some different things you could try?
27. What is it made of?
28. Show me what you could do, now that you know and understand more.



Kids giving it a go!

Try and see if you can find some answers to these "Thinker Stinkers" and "Quizzy Questions"



Maths challenge



A chess board has eight squares per side. How many black squares are there on an entire chess board?

Place the digits 9, 4, 7, 6, 5, 1, in the boxes in order to get the largest result.

$$[*] [*] \times [*] [*] + [*] \times [*] = ?$$

"What if" Key



The What if key makes us think about the possibilities

- What if there was no more school?
- What if we could only use computers to study, answer, draw ... to do all our work on ... so we never had to write / draw anything?
- What if the MTR was no longer available as a means of transport for Hong Kong?



Question Key

The answer is spaghetti

What could be eight questions I may ask someone so they give me this exact answer?

Lipograms

A lipogram is a piece of writing which all words containing a particular letter are omitted.

Your challenge is to write an entertaining piece about a farm animal, a famous person and a wedding, without ever using the letter "e"

Have fun!!



Language Fun



- What is the longest sentence you could write with every word beginning with A?
- Think of five to ten words that come between Arrow and Asleep in the dictionary
- In one minute list as many words as possible that have the letter "e" in them twice each time

Confusing

Gary, Rob, Sue and Rose work as a van driver, teacher, accountant and engineer. Sue is either the accountant or the engineer, and Gary is neither of those. Rose is the teacher or the accountant and Rob is neither of those. The engineer is a male.



So: what job does each person hold?

If Jane is older than Kim, Kim is older than Shawn. Shawn is younger than Jane and Rachel is older than Jane

List the people from oldest to youngest.



Cool inventions



A see through toaster

What do you think!!
Could you change this?
Could you improve this idea or design?

Any comments or ideas you would like to share, let Ms Salter know by sending an email to:

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