



Guided Inquiry Design: A Framework for Your School

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[Chapter 5](#) Immerse: Building Background Knowledge, Connect to Content, Discover Interesting Ideas

I. BUILD BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

The Learning Team, comprised of the teacher and librarian, create a shared learning experience to stimulate the conversation.



Students may watch a video, read a book together, take a field trip, or learn from an expert.



The Learning Team intentionally creates an opportunity to build background knowledge through an immersion experience.

Read a book, story, or article



They design engaging ways for students to immerse in overall ideas

Watch a video and discuss interesting ideas as a group



Visit a museum



IMMERSE: the purpose here is to guide students to connect with the content and to discover interesting ideas to explore further.

Students are guided to connect with content and to discover interesting things to explore further.



Students are guided to connect what they already know with what is interesting, curious, surprising or troubling



Students start building background knowledge, and begin to reflect on ideas that matter to them and are worth further investigation.



CAUTION is suggested that *too much information* not be provided at once, students should not be overwhelmed if boredom is evident, too much detail is being presented.



IMMERSION is an overview of background knowledge to build upon.

Engage students



General or big picture



Accomplish broad learning goals

Connect students to content



Discover interesting ideas



IMMERSION session will

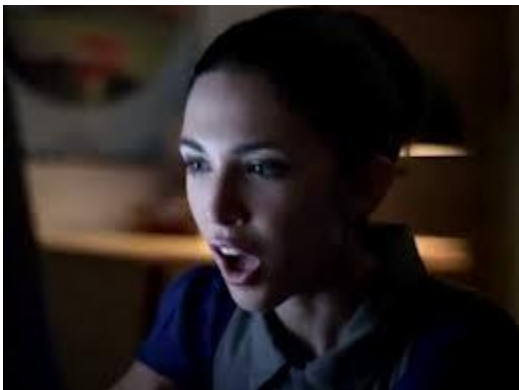
Vary depending on the students' ages, topic complexity, knowledge, etc.



Tailored to students' interests, abilities, and needs in order to inspire them to engage their own interests



Stimulates students' thinking rather than specific facts they are expected to memorize



EXAMPLES of IMMERSE Sessions

Video, provides the information



Interactive activity to apply what was viewed in video

Extended engagement for a period of time to stay on this topic for further exploration



Older students will begin to research the sources available on this topic to see what is available.



2. CONNECT TO CONTENT

Literature is placed first to enable learning to take place outward into the curriculum



Teaching team may take multiple approaches, social studies/ history and language arts will provide an historical and literary lens



Small, conversation “inquiry circle” groups are formed to discuss to go deeper into personal meaning.



Students will list the ideas or issues for further investigation

Students will have a time of reflection



Students will keep inquiry journals

3. DISCOVER INTERESTING IDEAS

Museum exhibition or museum-based programs

GUIDED INQUIRY IS WHAT MAKES IT AN EFFECTIVE WAY OF LEARNING BUT ALSO A CHALLENGING WAY OF TEACHING. P. 63



LEARNING TEAM

Modeling- being open to many different perspectives, incomplete ideas, and speculation



Students' conjectures must be encouraged in a safe, open environment. The team supports information gathering at this point, which will lead to deeper thinking.



Listening

- Personal connections
- Interesting ideas
- Speculations
- Expertise
- Travels experience

Encouraging

Positively encourages a supportive, safe environments



LEARNER/ STUDENT's ROLE p. 67

Inquiry circles

Students gather in small groups to engage in conversation in inquiry circles. They reflect on their own connections, questions, thoughts, and ideas as they compose in inquiry circles.



Learning team organizes the students into these inquiry circles, of 4 to 6 students.



Inquiry circles may be developed by students; needs & abilities, curriculum content, and the overall learning goals.



May be arranged by subtopics that interest students.



The curriculum provides the content theme and lens for the students' choices.

The learning team will make sure that there are clear connections to the curriculum.



Inquiry journals

Students/learners use inquiry journals to express their thoughts, feelings, and actions across the inquiry process and compose to reflect on every aspect of the content. P.68



Inquiry journals are used to jot down interesting ideas. Students build on what they already know and begin to construct new understanding.



The learning team reads and responds to students' journals.



Exit cards

At the close of an inquiry session, students were to reflect on their thoughts. This helped to introduce students' to the idea of a journal and prepare the way for deeper responses that would follow later in the process.



These Immerse journal entries were short, inviting writing exercises



Free write for five minutes.



Sometimes they were asked to write their thoughts, feelings, and actions. This is useful to help students to become aware of what they only partially know.

Learning team can determine where students' were connecting to content, generate interesting ideas, and be aware of their actions.



The exit card journal entries helped the learning team keep a pulse on the learners as they went through this phase of the process.

IMMERSE develops three inquiry tools for building strategies in inquiry p.68

1. Inquiry community-to immerse the students' in a mutual experience
2. Inquiry circle – small groups to get multiple perspectives, learn what other students know, and to draw out interesting ideas.
3. Inquiry journal- a means to compose and personalize background knowledge, informs meaningful conversations about content, and reflects on interesting ideas

WORKSHEETS

Figures 5.1 - Inquiry Journal Prompts worksheet- with questions to prompt and direct students' thinking,

List three things you learned that:

Something that surprised you

Something you knew already

List some interesting ideas

List idea you want to know more about

Figure 5.2 - Model Session Plan – worksheet to help the learning team to build background knowledge through a shared experience to prepare for more in-depth questioning in Explore. Detailed example of how to apply the IMMERSE experience in a learning community. P.71

Starter-Inquiry community, inquiry journal

Worktime- Inquiry circle

Reflection-Inquiry community

Figure 5.3- Example Session Plan Connect to content, discover interesting ideas, build background knowledge. Starter, Worktime, Reflection, Notes

Ideas for Immerse Sessions

Students all read the same materials then discuss

Learning experience