



Inquiry Project 2023-2024

What is an inquiry project?

Our district has been completing inquiry projects as part of the 1-to-1 program for over 15 years. These projects are a way of demonstrating what our students have been using their devices for and concluding a year's worth of inquiry learning in one final group project.

INQUIRY PROJECTS SHOULD:

- Be done collaboratively in small groups
- Be student-led and designed
- Provide possible solutions to a non-Googleable question
- Have a research element
- Be relevant, thought-provoking, and meaningful
- Involve interviews with real world experts
- Demonstrate our student's ability to use the technology provided to them
- Be presented in a format that speaks to our learners' strengths (video, podcast, slideshow, etc)
- Show evidence of the impact that the inquiry had on the students

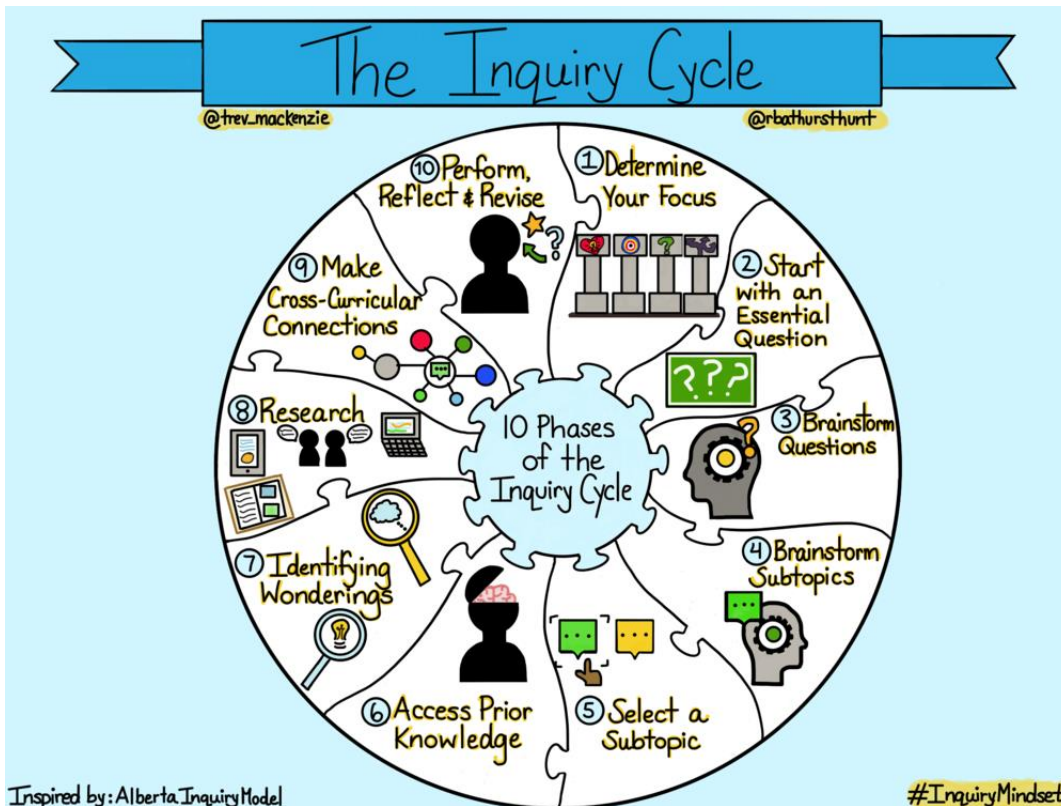
INQUIRY PROJECTS SHOULD NOT:

- Be completed by a single student independently
- Be teacher-led and designed
- Provide answers to Googleable questions
- Be a "Genius Hour", "Experiment", "Science Fair" or "Entrepreneur Fair" Project

Ideally, the final inquiry project should not be the first step into inquiry learning for the class and other teacher-led and smaller-scale inquiries should have preceded the final inquiry project to ensure that the students gain the skills needed to be success in their larger inquiry project.

We are also actively encouraging all those involved in the program to stay away from "Genius Hour" style research projects. While we understand that genius hour can allow students to chase their interests and passions, we want our students to use the inquiry process to find answers to big questions, and use the digital literacy skills of collaboration and communication to help them along the way. Being able to work effectively in a group is one of the core 21st century skills that we want all students to have.

The Inquiry Process

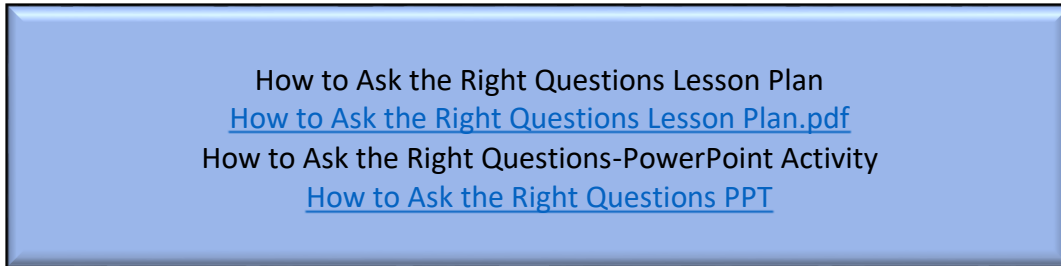


The inquiry process is cyclical, as detailed in the image created by Trevor Mackenzie, author of [Inquiry Mindset](#). Using this cycle as a guide for how we approach *all* questions in our classrooms, not just formal inquiry projects, helps students to be familiar with the process. This familiarity allows students to create final products that are inspiring and authentic and demonstrate a deeper understanding of the underlying inquiry question.

Asking the right questions

Arguably, the most important part of the process is coming up with an inquiry question, something that our students are curious about, that they care about, and is deep enough that they can really dive

into it through the inquiry process. This PowerPoint-led activity (below) is adapted from [The Right Questions Institute](#) and is a good way to get your students into the practice of making good questions not just for their final inquiry project, but for any inquiry learning activity.



My recommendation:

Use this PowerPoint as a way to get your students into the habit of asking good questions. The first time you use it, think about focusing on a specific theme. For example, ask questions about the human body using the strategies outlined in the PowerPoint.

Another suggestion:

After you complete the PowerPoint-led activity, you can use the final questions the students created to group students by interest for their inquiry projects. This way their participation in the group is more authentic since they've already demonstrated interest in this subject area.

Inquiry Plan Template

These fillable forms are a good way to start your inquiry project and keep track of student and group progress throughout this journey. Students can complete the document in their groups once they have determined what their main inquiry question is, along with sub-questions and a loose plan going forward. The forms have spots to fill in for the students but the main template is not editable. The forms are available in Microsoft PPT (through Office 365) and through Google Slides, as well as a printable PDF.

My recommendation:

Students use this as a sort of “inquiry project proposal” to send to their teachers for approval and then schedule a meeting with the classroom teacher to go over any details that need to be adjusted or added.



MS PPT Document (will need to save the file to edit)
[inquiry template FILLABLE.pptx](#)

Google Slides Form (will prompt you to make a copy of your own)
[Google Slides Form](#)

Printable PDF
[Inquiry Plan PDF](#)

Student Self-Assessment

Use these fillable surveys as a way for your students to self-assess using the core competencies. These forms are also an easy way to get valuable information about things going on in the group that students may be hesitant to share with you. These forms are customizable and have been created in a Google Forms and Microsoft Forms version, so choose whichever works for you. You can add/remove elements of the form to make it more customized for your needs. There is also a non-editable PDF version to print if needed.

My recommendation:

Make these a regular (weekly/biweekly) part of your inquiry project so that students can keep coming back and reflecting and making it a part of their own practice.

MS Forms Template:

[Self-Assessment MS Forms Version](#)

Google Forms Template:

[Self-Assessment Google Forms Template](#)

If you have any questions regarding the inquiry process,
please do not hesitate to contact me Yas_mann@sd42.ca