



Foundations of Inquiry

Course Outline

Course Overview

This course uses the five big questions – Who, What, Where, Why and How – to teach students how to pose and answer inquiry questions. Along the way, students learn to search Google more effectively, take notes in a meaningful way, ask powerful questions, reduce bias, and generally learn about the world.

Students have ample opportunities to work on material they're passionate about and are supported as they develop intellectual passions. In-course social networking gives students a chance to learn from each other.

Course Content and Suggested Timelines

Unit 1: Inquiry Skills (Suggested timeline: 1 month)

This section of the course allows students to become independent learners by formally exploring and acquiring the skills needed to successfully engage in independent learning.

Curriculum Organizer: Posing effective questions to solve problems

It is expected that students will:

- Pose a wide variety of questions, across a wide variety of authentic problems.
- Think creatively and divergently about approaches to problem solving. (e.g. Edward DeBono)
- Feedback on questions posed by other students.

Curriculum Organizer: Doing (and storing) reliable internet research

It is expected that students will:

- Demonstrate efficient search skills
- Find information which answers questions they've posed
- Use internet tools (e.g. diigo, zotero) to record and annotate research results
- Give and receive feedback on internet research

Curriculum Organizer: Acquiring a new skill

It is expected that students will:

- Understand and use a variety of practice techniques for learning a new skill.
- Communicate past experiences of skill acquisition.
- Discuss skill acquisition with other students.

Curriculum Organizer: Coming to a new understanding (theorizing)

It is expected that students will:

- Integrate multiple perspectives as they produce new theories
- Demonstrate critical thinking, and 'thinking styles'
- Demonstrate understanding of logical fallacies (e.g. straw man arguments)
- Give feedback to other student on their proposed theories
- Demonstrate strong research skills in generating new understandings.

Unit 2: Practicing Inquiry (Suggested timeline: 2 months)

Curriculum Organizer: Problem Based Inquiry

It is expected that students will:

- Select a problem to approach; or generate their own problem (e.g. how to improve solar energy)
- Use the skills from Unit 1 in emerging a solution to their problem.
- Give feedback to other student on their inquiry activity.
- Communicate their research and solutions in a clear and insightful manner.

Curriculum Organizer: Learning a New Skill

It is expected that students will:

- Demonstrate clear progress in a new skill.
- Give feedback to other students as they acquire a skill.

Curriculum Organizer: Theoretical Inquiry

It is expected that students will:

- Choose a theoretical issue to approach
- Demonstrate the use of different "thinking hats" as they approach their problem
- Effectively communicate their theoretical approach.

Unit 3: Independent Project (Suggested timeline: 4-6 weeks)

It is expected that students will:

- Work with their teacher to specify an appropriate project (e.g. learning a new musical technique; understanding the biology of stress; proposing solutions to local political problems)
- Demonstrate skills learned throughout their approach
- Provide frequent teacher updates about project progress
- Effectively communicate their theoretical approach.

Course Materials

There are no materials required for this course. All content and resources can be found within the course.

Assessment Information

35% Student Skill Acquisition

Students are evaluated on how deeply they engage in the course activities, and how much progress they make in terms of inquiry skills.

40% Student Projects

Students are evaluated on the quality of project, and of the process used to generate the project.

25% Student Feedback

Students are evaluated on the feedback they give to others, and how they respond to feedback on their own work.

When students are not meeting the learning outcomes/ falling behind

When students fall behind the expected pace or plan, they will be contacted via email or phone and if there is no improvement or response, parents will also be contacted. If deemed necessary, contact with the student's home school may also occur to help determine a solution.

Students are expected to let the course teacher know when they are struggling with course content. In response, the course teacher will provide appropriate help or strategies to support learning. The course teacher will also provide feedback on course work to support learning and help students improve. Parents will be made aware if their child is actively working but struggling to meet the learning outcomes of the course.

Students falling behind in a manner where it does not appear that they will complete the course within a year will be sent reminder emails. Without a response or renewed efforts in the course, the

student may be assigned an F or withdrawn. Should they begin actively working in the course, the student may be given an alternate completion date.

Expectations

- Adhere to the EBUS Academic Integrity Policy
- Contact your teacher when help is needed
- Review feedback from assignments and tests, where applicable
- Work to complete the course in a timely manner
- Communicate respectfully
- Review weekly progress reports

Reporting to Parents:

There are 4 term report cards that can be downloaded from the student dashboard. A notice will go out when these report cards are available.

Every week that EBUS is in Session the teacher will send out a progress report showing the student's progress.

Contacting Your Teacher:

Your teacher will be available Monday to Friday during regular school hours. If you are having trouble with any concepts, please contact your teacher right away!

Jeff Bennett jbennett@sd91.bc.ca