

Inquiry

An Inquiry: Think about an inquiry that you elected to do. How did you go about answering your questions?

Inquiry, as the leading pedagogical approach of the *Primary Years Program*, is recognized as allowing students to be actively involved in their own learning and to take responsibility for that learning. Inquiry involves the synthesis, analysis and manipulation of knowledge, whether through play or through more formally structured learning throughout the *Primary Years Program*. Inquiry allows each student's understanding of the world to develop in a manner and at a rate that is unique to that student. At Carl Cozier Elementary School students are invited to investigate significant issues by formulating their own questions, designing their own inquiries, assessing the various means available to support their inquiries, and proceeding with research, experimentation, observation and analysis that will help them in finding their own responses to the issues. The starting point is students' current understanding, and the goal is the active construction of meaning by building connections between that understanding and new information and experience, derived from the inquiry into new content. While there is certainly a role for practice and the need for some things to be known automatically, it is felt that teaching to the fullest extent possible through inquiry leads to the most substantial and enduring learning.

What does inquiry look like?

Inquiry, interpreted in the broadest sense, is the process initiated by the students or the teacher that moves the students from their current level of understanding to a new and deeper level of understanding. This can mean:

- exploring, wondering and questioning
- experimenting and playing with possibilities
- making connections between previous learning and current learning
- making predictions and acting purposefully to see what happens collecting data and reporting findings
- clarifying existing ideas and reappraising perceptions of events
- deepening understanding through the application of a concept
- making and testing theories researching and seeking information
- taking and defending a position
- solving problems in a variety of ways .