

**The Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat  
Webcast Professional Learning Series**

**Viewer's Guide**

# **Developing Inquiring Minds**

**Multi-media resource for professional learning**



Curriculum Services Canada | Service des programmes d'études Canada

reach every student



On this DVD you will find a Print and Video Resources folder which contains WMV files for PowerPoint presentations and this Viewer's Guide in PDF.

To order the multi-media package **Developing Inquiring Minds**

Contact ServiceOntario

416-326-5300 or 1-800-668-9938

<http://www.publications.serviceontario.ca/ecom>

The webcast segments and related resources are also accessible online at <http://www.curriculum.org/secretariat/inquiring/index.shtml>.

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## Overview

In this resource you will see students and teachers actively engaged in learning about learning – all highly reflective, action-oriented and determined to understand themselves as key players in the teaching-learning process. They engage in ongoing self-assessment, seek feedback, take action and monitor their progress in order to move their learning forward. Each member of the learning community, teachers and students, assumes an inquiry stance that impacts on his or her thinking and actions.

The teachers in this video take a highly reflective, honest look at their own practice and seek ways to change that will result in improved student learning and achievement. The teachers build in time to reflect, interact and talk about their work in order to construct new knowledge and understandings. They engage in inquiry related to their own practice and the needs of their students.

For these teachers, teaching becomes very intentional. Through their design-down planning and ongoing assessment, they create open-ended learning experiences that are inclusive of all students. They offer students real choice and an opportunity to develop their own voice. The focus is on learning the curriculum content using the inquiry process and developing digital and critical literacy.

A strong sense of respect exists which empowers students and teachers to fully participate, take risks, and learn from, with and on behalf of each other. Students become more independent, metacognitive and aware of the relevance and value of what they are learning. Through self-assessment and reflection, students learn to talk about themselves as learners and identify their strengths and needs.

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**“When teachers join forces with their students in the formative assessment process, their partnership generates powerful learning outcomes. Teachers become more effective, students become actively engaged and they both become intentional learners.”**

**(Brookhart & Moss, 2009)**

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The Grade 2 classroom environment you will see is intentionally designed to help students develop into articulate, critical thinkers and learners. The respectful culture of the classroom invites all students to participate in the teaching-learning process. All children feel valued as part of their learning community. Students follow their own interests, formulate their own inquiry questions and select their preferred method of learning and sharing.

The wonder and joy of learning is evident in this classroom as students excitedly talk about their unexpected discoveries and new wonderings. In this classroom, students seek and act on peer and teacher feedback, think about their thinking, work collaboratively and question respectfully. They learn to take a critical stance when interpreting any sort of information. These students are becoming critical and competent communicators. They are developing the habits of mind necessary for success in a rapidly changing world.

## WEBCAST SEGMENTS

### **Introduction** (Duration: 0:51)

This Grade 2 classroom environment is intentionally designed to help students develop into independent and articulate thinkers and learners. The respectful culture of the classroom invites all students to participate in the teaching-learning process. Each child feels valued as part of this learning community. Students follow their own interests, formulate their own inquiry questions and select their preferred method of learning and sharing. In this classroom, students seek and act on peer and teacher feedback, think about their thinking, work collaboratively and question respectfully. They are developing the habits of mind necessary for success in a rapidly changing world.

*In your opinion, what are the essential habits of mind that students need to develop in order to be successful during their school years and beyond? How might understanding this context impact on your practice?*

You may wish to consult the following two resources as you formulate your thinking:

The Conference Board of Canada Employability Skills  
[http://calsea.com/conference\\_board.htm](http://calsea.com/conference_board.htm)

The Institute for Habits of Mind  
<http://www.instituteforhabitsofmind.com/what-are-habits-mind>

### **Teachers Demonstrate Effective Descriptive Feedback** (Duration: 15:33)

Using appropriate and respectful vocabulary, two teachers share their own moon journals and give each other feedback. Students deepen their appreciation of the value of descriptive feedback and gain insight into how to give and receive descriptive feedback. They reflect on the demonstration and co-create success criteria for effective feedback sessions.

*What teaching and learning experiences do you think occurred prior to this descriptive feedback session which supported the richness of the conversation?*

*What interested you most about the students in this clip?*

*What interested you most about the teachers in this clip?*

*What aspect(s) of this practice would you consider using in your classroom, and why?*

## **Preparing for Shared Writing** (Duration: 6:37)

Students share a current entry from their moon journals with the class. Peers and the teacher give feedback and individually record effective key words and phrases found in each piece of writing. The class then comes together to add their selections to the “Treasure Words” anchor chart. This chart is posted as a reference for future writing. The class then collaboratively writes a passage about the moon.

*What does this sharing session reveal to you about the culture of the classroom?*

*In what ways might this culture have been created?*

*How might the teacher be connecting these sharing sessions to character development?*

*What writing techniques do you predict the teacher will model during the actual shared writing?*

“Good questions are the driving force of critical and creative thinking and therefore one of the best indicators of significant learning. Good questions are those that force students to challenge their taken for granted assumptions and see their own underlying biases. Oftentimes the answer to a good question is irrelevant – the question is an insight in itself. The only answer to the best questions is another good question.”

(Wesch, 2008)



## **Moderation of Student Work** (Duration: 16:28)

Two teachers analyze student writing to determine an individual student's strengths and needs. They discuss next steps for their student as a writer and possible student grouping for differentiated instruction. Dialogue between the teachers is rich, positive, focused and purposeful.

Analyzing student writing yields important information about what students are able to do and also about areas that need improvement.

*What information does student work yield for teachers about their own practice?*

*What questions would you ask of yourself as you think about your student(s) and their writing?*

## **The Student's Perspective** (Duration: 5:35)

Students talk about how motivated they are to learn and the wonder they feel as they discover more and more interesting information through their inquiries. They appreciate the choices they have in how they are learning and how they will demonstrate that learning.

*What are the benefits of an inquiry approach to learning for the students?*

*What are the benefits of an inquiry approach to learning for the teacher?*

*What might be the greatest challenge associated with an inquiry approach to teaching?*

*How might you deal with this challenge?*

“As we increasingly move toward an environment of instant and infinite information, it becomes less important for students to know, memorize or recall information, and more important for them to be able to find, sort, analyze, share, discuss, critique and create information. They need to move from being simply knowledgeable to being knowledge-able.”

(Wesch, 2008)

## **Classroom Tour** (Duration: 8:59)

This classroom environment helps to create a strong community of independent learners. Students are engaged in inquiry about the moon. They delve deeply into areas of personal interest and are excited about the new knowledge they are building.

*What aspects of this learning environment lead to developing independent learners?*

*What evidence do you see of authentic learning and of the teacher taking the lead from her students?*

“Understanding the facts of a story or a content area is of undisputed importance. But for these facts to come to life, they need to be connected to larger patterns of meaning; they need to be in the service of topical research, critical inquiry, and literacy, and they need to be functional and applicable to the world beyond the text.”

(Wilhelm, 2007)

## Further Thinking

You may wish to consider the following questions relating to your own practice with your study group or for personal reflection:

*Adopting the inquiry approach to learning has many benefits. What do you recognize as being the most beneficial aspect of this approach to the teacher and to the student?*

*What challenges might you need to consider before you introduce this type of learning to your students or before you engage in a professional inquiry?*

*How does inquiry learning nurture intellectual curiosity? Why is this curiosity an important attribute to develop in students?*

*How does the inquiry approach to learning impact on the development of metacognition in students?*

*Which aspects of critical literacy does an inquiry approach address, and how?*

*In what ways might students be involved in self-assessment during inquiry learning?*

## References

- Brookhart, B., & Moss, C. (2009). *Advancing formative assessment in every classroom: A guide for instructional leaders*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Wesch, M. (2008). *A portal to media literacy*. The University of Manitoba. Podcast retrieved from [http://umanitoba.ca/ist/production/streaming/podcast\\_wesch.html](http://umanitoba.ca/ist/production/streaming/podcast_wesch.html).
- Wilhelm, J. (2007). *Engaging readers and writers with inquiry*. New York: Scholastic.

# Technical Instructions

## How to Access the Print and Video Resources

To access the **Print and Video Resources** folder in Windows, insert the DVD into the DVD drive of your computer and:

1. Click on the Start menu.
2. Select My Computer.
3. Right-click the mouse on the DVD icon titled DEVELOPING\_INQUIRING\_MINDS\_DVD to open a drop-down options list.
4. From the drop-down list, select and click on the Open option.
5. Double-click on the folder titled Print and Video Resources to access the files. Ignore the folders titled Audio\_TS and Video\_TS.
6. Select the resources you wish to use directly from this folder, **OR** Copy onto the Desktop and open files from the Desktop.

Alternatively, when the DVD is inserted and the options box opens:

1. Select the option Open Folder to View Files.
2. Click on the Print and Video Resources folder.
3. Select the files you wish to use directly from this folder, **OR** Copy the files onto the Desktop and open them from the Desktop.

To access the **Print and Video Resources** folder in Mac OS X, insert the DVD into the DVD drive of your computer and:

1. Exit from the DVD player (which typically opens automatically when a DVD is inserted in the drive).
2. Double-click on the DVD icon titled DEVELOPING\_INQUIRING\_MINDS\_DVD.
3. Select the files you wish to use directly from this folder, **OR** Copy the files onto the Desktop and open them from the Desktop.



## How to Save the Video Files to Your Computer

The video files can all be copied and saved to your computer using either of the following methods for copying and pasting files.

### Method 1

1. Right-click on the file and choose the Copy option.
2. Right-click within any computer folder into which you would like to save the file, and choose the Paste option.

### Method 2

1. Left-click the mouse on the file you want to save, so that the file is highlighted.
2. Simultaneously press the Ctrl and C keys (or, for Macintosh users, the Command and C keys) to copy the file.
3. Left-click within any computer folder in which you would like to save the file, and simultaneously press the Ctrl and V keys (or, for Macintosh users, the Command and V keys) to paste the file there.
  - For Macintosh users, the Command key is the one with the  

### NOTE:

If you want to insert video files into a PowerPoint presentation, you must save these video files in the same folder that contains your PowerPoint file. If you save a PowerPoint presentation to another location (e.g., a memory stick, CD-ROM, etc.), you must also save the video files in the same location in order for the video to play. So, if you transfer the presentation to another computer, you must also transfer the video files with it, or else the video will not link to the PowerPoint presentation.

## How to Insert Video Clips (WMV files) into a PowerPoint Presentation

On this DVD you will find WMV versions of all segments of the webcast. To insert a clip into a PowerPoint presentation, follow the directions below:

1. Open your PowerPoint program.
2. Create a new PowerPoint presentation **OR** open an existing PowerPoint presentation, and within it, open the slide on which you would like to add the video.
3. Insert the webcast DVD into the DVD drive of your computer.
4. If a new window opens asking how you would like to view the files on the disk, choose the option Open Folder to View Files; **OR**

If a new window does not open, open the My Computer window from the Start menu. In the My Computer window, double-click on the icon that is shaped like a disk, which will likely be labelled D: or E:.

5. Save the video segment that you want to insert in a PowerPoint into the same folder that contains your PowerPoint presentation.

**NOTE:** Video files that have been saved to your computer can be cropped and edited into smaller segments using Movie Maker (free on PCs) or iMovie (free on Macintosh).

6. Open the PowerPoint slide on which you would like to insert the video, and click on the Insert menu in the PowerPoint menu bar.
7. From the Insert menu, select Movies and Sounds, and click on the Movie from File option.
8. A window opens, prompting you to select the video file that you would like to add. Find and select the video file that you saved in step 5.
9. Once you have chosen the video file you need, another window opens and asks whether you want your movie to play either automatically when you enter the slide, or only when it is clicked. Choose your preference. (You will notice that the starting image of your movie is not displayed on the slide.)





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