

## I Am Teaching Thinking, Gr. 6 & 7

Female: **[00:00]** So this year we've backed off a little bit from the technology because I recognized that what I really was teaching in my classroom was not just how to write an essay, how to write a paragraph. But I'm teaching thinking. And everything that we do in the classroom now is—has that broad—that precise idea, that unless it causes us to think deeply, it's not worth doing in this classroom.

So my Grade 7's and—have been on an incredible journey this year of, of thinking. And all of their work has, has been done into relation to that. And we, we've really entered into the idea of inquiry and asking big questions and having profound discussions amongst ourselves as learners in the classroom, where I am very much a part of that, that process. So I'm not necessarily the teacher, although I still have ultimate say in the classroom, I am one of the learners in the classroom. And we're en—moving on, on this journey together.

So the types of things that we've done this year, again were triggered by our access to social media. So one of the, the big inquiries that my students did this year was on robotics, which I'm going to talk about a little bit more. But the question they were trying to figure out was—it has to do with moral machines. And should—it's coming. Machines will be able to make life and death decisions on behalf of humans, and how do we feel about that in the classroom.

So that was our big idea. And then we moved in many digi—different directions to explore that topic and just see where we stood on that topic, how we felt about it, how that's going to impact our world. So we continued(?) ...

Inquiry now is a driver in my classroom, asking those big questions and then moving in different directions to seek meaning, to deve—develop insight. So a lot of the writing that my students now do are—is reflecting on their learning, what are, what are their insights, what questions do they still have, what do they notice. So that is the big writing piece for us now.

**[01:57]** And then the genre type writing fits into—as another layer in, in what we do. Our biggest inquiry this year that we did, the kids wanted to know if they could be completely in charge of their own learning and not have me directing it in any way whatsoever. So my Grade 7's took on that challenge of where they had to pick their own topics and they had to completely move through the learning with only me as a facilitator, maybe ask them questions, help them describe, but not really judging or evaluating what it is that they were, were doing.

And what would that experience be like for them, if we did that. And that was a hugely powerful moment for the kids to recognize that they don't have to wait for a teacher to direct them to learn, that they actually can engage in that process themselves within the school. So not what they do outside of school, but within a—a—actual school.

So inquiry is the driver now in our classroom and we ask big questions, and we look for answers to big questions. And it's so much more interesting than how I use to do things in the past.

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