



GRADE 12 CURRENT TOPICS  
IN FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS,  
AND INUIT STUDIES

Appendix D:  
Inquiry Template



## APPENDIX D: INQUIRY TEMPLATE

This template is intended to guide student inquiry into complex issues and may be adapted to suit student needs. It has been designed to provide teachers and students with flexibility regarding which issues are to be studied, as well as to the nature of the inquiry. It is hoped that students will be empowered by the inquiry process, and motivated to become more engaged in their communities.

Inquiry-based learning has its roots in the educational reform movements that began in the 1930s and were guided by the work of Piaget, Vigotsky, Dewey, and other constructivists who regard learning as an active process – a process where students construct understanding through problem solving and reflection.

Student inquiry is a complex process. It begins with the identification of an issue and the creation of good questions that guide students in finding resources, gathering and interpreting information, creating useful knowledge, and reporting their findings. Inquiry relies upon critical thinking, and results in new learning. In this model, the role of the teacher shifts from covering content to being a guide and facilitator. When students are given the opportunity to take an active role and manage their own learning, they develop skills needed to make informed decisions as active citizens.

### Guidelines for Student Inquiry

- Cultivate an open, democratic learning environment where students are encouraged to be curious and independent.
- Use student-centred learning strategies such as brainstorming, discussion, concept maps, and graphic organizers, and observe student progress through classroom-based assessment techniques. These strategies will provide ongoing opportunities for teachers to assess prior knowledge, to deal with student misconceptions and difficulties, and to assess progress.
- Help students articulate good questions that move beyond simple, factual answers to those with diverse answers and perspectives.
- Provide opportunities for students to start their inquiry at the local community level and to engage in place-based site learning. Deep, experiential understanding of an issue at the local level will help them to connect with the larger, more abstract global issue.

- Determine whether an inquiry will involve the whole class, small groups, or individual students. If the inquiry process is new to students, begin by having all students collaborate on one topic. This approach will allow teachers to play a more active role in role-modelling and guiding the inquiry. As well, students will learn from each other as they share their research, discuss their findings and conclusions, and are exposed to healthy dissent and diverse perspectives.
- Encourage students to think critically and engage in reflection throughout the learning process, and to maintain a learning log to record their growth and learning.
- Use multiple resources, including primary source material and encourage academic rigour. Students should be exposed to multiple and contradictory viewpoints, and then encouraged to seek their own position based on reliable information. Sources include expert interviews, publications, media sources, Internet sources, government and non-government agencies and organizations, and others.
- Determine appropriate methods of presentation. Encourage creativity and rigour.
- Assessment needs to be ongoing and to take multiple forms. Student progress should be monitored and tracked through the use of ongoing observation and discussion, and with anecdotal records and checklists.

The template that follows may be used or adapted to guide student inquiry.

## Significance and Scope

- Why is this issue important?
- Who/what is affected by the issue?

## Evidence

- How did I become aware of this issue?
- How reliable are the sources and the evidence?
- When and how did this issue originate?

## Perspective

- What are the various perspectives on this issue?
- What role does media play in creating/perpetuating this issue?
- At this point, what is your perspective?

## Impact/Current Responses

- What are the social, environmental, economic, and political impacts at the local, regional, national, and global level?
- What are the current responses to the issue? What might be the short- and long-term intended and unintended social, environmental, economic, or political consequence of the responses?

## Connections/Relationality

- Does this issue stand alone or is it part of a pattern?
- How has this issue changed over time?
- How are the environment, society, economy, or politics connected in this issue?

## Reflection

- How might this issue have evolved differently?
- How might this issue have been prevented?
- What other questions do you have?
- How has your thinking changed?
- How do you feel about the issue now?

## Praxis

- What should the world do differently now?
- What are the challenges/ barriers?
- How can I engage with this issue?
- How can I engage others?