

The Curious Classroom: Comprehension, Community & Inquiry



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Passion and Wonder are Contagious!

Inquiry is a way of life.

*Inquiry based learning is not about a
final product at the end;*

*Inquiry based learning is about living
in a way that kids' questions matter.*

Harvey 2014

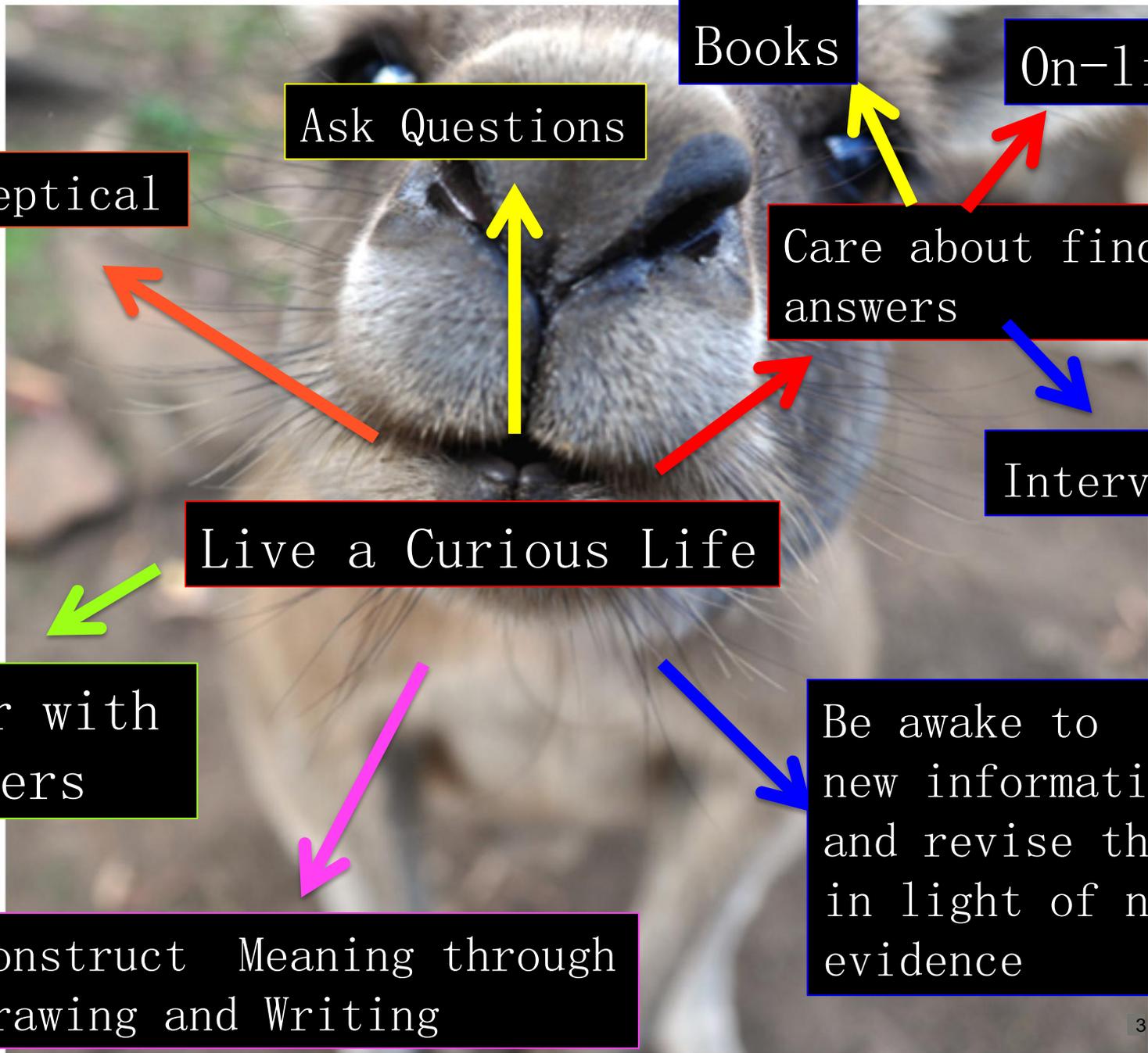
Always be on the
lookout for the
presence of wonder.

E.B. White

Conditions for Curiosity:

- View learning and life as an experiment where we grow, learn & innovate by working on something, making mistakes and trying again (& again...)
- Celebrate the questioning and the learning rather than the knowing.
- Build in time every day for kids to experiment, explore and investigate.
- Model your own curiosity every day and show that you care about finding answers.

(Harvey 16)



Books

On-line

Ask Questions

Be skeptical

Care about finding answers

Interviews

Live a Curious Life

Be awake to new information and revise thinking in light of new evidence

Confer with others

Construct Meaning through Drawing and Writing

How Proficient Collaborators Think and Act

Strategy	Examples/Actions
1. Be responsible to the group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Come prepared: work completed, materials and notes in hand • Bring along interesting questions/ideas/artifacts • Take initiative, help people get organized • Live by the group's calendar, work plan, and ground rules • Settle problems within the group • Fess up if unprepared and take on some other work
2. Listen actively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make eye contact • Nod, confirm, look interested • Lean in, sit close together • Summarize or paraphrase • Use names • Take notes when helpful
3. Speak up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Join in, speak often, be active • Connect your ideas with what others have said • Ask lead and follow-up questions • Use appropriate tone and voice level • Draw upon the notes, materials, or drawings you've brought • Overcome your shyness
4. Share the air and encourage others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show friendliness and support • Take turns • Be aware of who's contributing; work to balance the airtime • Monitor yourself for dominating or shirking • Invite others to participate • Build upon and learn from others' ideas
5. Support your views and findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain and give examples • Refer to specific passages, evidence, or artifacts • Connect or contrast your ideas to others' • Dig deeper into the text or topic; revisit important ideas
6. Show tolerance and respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive others' ideas respectfully; no put-downs allowed • Try to restate opposing views • Use neutral language in disagreeing • Offer your different viewpoint; don't be steamrolled • Welcome and seek insight in divergent viewpoints
7. Reflect and correct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do frequent reflections or "think-backs" on group processes • Identify specific behaviors that helped or hurt the discussion • Talk openly about problems • Make plans to try out new strategies and review their effectiveness • Keep written record of group processing

What Social Strategy Use Looks and Sounds Like

Strategy	Sounds/Looks Like	Doesn't Sound/Look Like
1. Be responsible to the group	<p>"Does everyone have their articles? Good, let's get going."</p> <p>"Let me show you this great website I found..."</p> <p>"I'm sorry, guys, I didn't get the reading done."</p> <p>"Ok, then today I'll take notes on the meeting."</p>	<p>"What? There's a meeting today?"</p> <p>"I left my stuff at home."</p> <p>"Teacher, Bobby keeps messing around."</p> <p>Arriving late, unprepared, without materials.</p>
2. Listen actively	<p>"Joe, pull your chair up closer."</p> <p>"I think I heard you say..."</p> <p>"So you think..."</p> <p>Asking follow up questions</p>	<p>Not looking at others</p> <p>"Huh? I wasn't listening."</p> <p>Playing with pencils, shuffling materials.</p>
3. Speak up	<p>"What you said just reminded me of..."</p> <p>"Can I piggyback on this?"</p> <p>"What made you feel that way?"</p> <p>"Let me show you my drawing."</p>	<p>Silence</p> <p>Whispering or shouting</p> <p>Not using/looking at notes</p> <p>Hiding from participation</p>
4. Share the air and encourage others	<p>"Can you say more about that, Chris?"</p> <p>"We haven't heard from you in a while, Joyce."</p> <p>"I better finish my point and let someone else talk."</p> <p>"That's a cool idea, Tom."</p>	<p>"Blah blah blah blah blah blah blah..."</p> <p>"I pass."</p> <p>"You guys are so boring."</p> <p>Declining to join in when invited</p>
5. Support your views and findings	<p>"I think Jim treats Huck as a son because..."</p> <p>"Right here on page 15, it says that..."</p> <p>"The person I interviewed said..."</p> <p>"My thinking was a lot like Jennifer's..."</p>	<p>"This book is dumb."</p> <p>"Well, that's my opinion anyway."</p> <p>"No, I didn't consider any other interpretations."</p>
6. Show tolerance and respect	<p>"Wow, I thought of something totally different."</p> <p>"I can see your point, but what about..."</p> <p>"I'm glad you brought that up; I never would have seen it that way."</p>	<p>"You are so wrong!"</p> <p>"What book are <i>you</i> reading?"</p> <p>"Where did you get <i>that</i> idea?"</p> <p>Rolling eyes, disconfirming body language.</p>
7. Reflect and correct	<p>"What went well today and where did we run into problems?"</p> <p>"We are not sharing the talk time evenly."</p> <p>"OK, so what will we do differently during our next meeting?"</p>	<p>"We rocked."</p> <p>"We sucked."</p> <p>"It was OK."</p> <p>"Who cares?"</p>

Home Court Advantage: *Showing Friendliness and Support*



See this lesson in action on pages 227, 247.

→ **TIP:** This lesson was originally developed in high school, where put-downs are a special concern. Yes, it sounds corny—but it works. And even the little ones comprehend the metaphor of this lesson—so many of them are on soccer teams! In place of showing the newspaper article, you can simply question them about their experiences playing at home versus away.

WHEN and WHY: We use this lesson for group-building early in the year or at times when bickering or disunity have occurred. Thanks to Nancy Steineke for introducing us to this powerful lesson.

INITIATE: From the sports pages of the newspaper, clip out the standings for a local baseball, football, or soccer team—the ones that include home and away game outcomes. Make copies for kids or project them on a screen.

TEACH/MODEL: “OK, guys, take a look at these standings from today’s paper. What do you notice about home games versus away games? Turn and talk with a partner for a minute.”

Kids will report back that teams generally win more home games than away games.

“Why do you think that is? What would be some reasons? Get back together and jot down a few ideas you have.”

Kids typically will return with ideas like these:

Fans cheer you.	You know the field/court
Nobody boos	Feel comfortable
Same place we practice	Your friends are watching
No distracting fans	

As a whole group, prioritize the suggestions and make a consensus list. If kids don’t bring it up along the way, be sure to highlight the issue of put-downs.

“Is anyone in here on a team? What do you do when one of your teammates makes a mistake?”

Students may offer ideas like, “We say, ‘Nice try Bob!’ ” or “We don’t laugh or boo.”

“Exactly. And in the classroom we are a team also, we are all on the same side. You never put down a teammate. If you hear a put-down in here, you can just quietly say ‘home court’ to remind people we are a team. OK?”

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Invite kids to make posters that depict the idea of home court advantage. They can place the term at the center and elaborate around it with drawings and specific sayings people can use with teammates (“Good effort, Janie” or “No put-downs”). Hang posters around the room and refer to them periodically.