Language Building Through Inquiry, Layered Multimodal Texts, and Play

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Promising Practices to Support Upper Primary Grade Learners

⚡️ **Spiral Inquiry-Based Curriculum** (Bruner, 1977)
Process of continuous learning where concepts should be repeatedly revisited until students understand new concepts. “Learning is better achieved through discovery and problem solving, engaging students in hypothesis, questioning, and discussing inquiries (p. 56)

⚡️ **Deep Scaffolding** (Brown & Broemmel, 2011)
Supporting students to gain access to meaning, structure, and language demands of a text and build connections to their life experiences.

⚡️ **Layered Complex Multimodal Texts** (Assaf & Johnson, 2015)
Literary and informational text sets that represent multiple readability and difficulty levels that can provide meaning, structure and language scaffolding.
Inquiry-Based Learning

Multimodal Texts

Play
Potential Outcomes for Upper Primary Grade Learners

✓ Motivated and Engaged Learners

✓ Reading Volume

✓ High Level Thinking – Analyze, Synthesize and Evaluate Information

✓ Deep Comprehension and Purposeful Language Learning

✓ Reading and Writing Multiple Text Types and Formats

✓ Utilizing Academic Vocabulary

✓ Rehearsal, Practice and Mastery of Language and Literacy Skills
Inquiry is more than just asking questions.

Useful application of inquiry learning is when students attempt to convert information and data into useful knowledge.

...Using reading, writing, thinking and speaking!
Generating and Sharing Funds of Knowledge

KNOWN
- Family
- Community
- School
- Friends
- Social Life
- Media
- Self

UNKNOWN
- Generating and Adding to Funds of Knowledge Thru
- Reading
- Writing
- Viewing
- Thinking
### What do you want to do in the future?

**Interviewing Mentors**

**Searching for Answers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do you ALREADY KNOW?</th>
<th>What do you WANT to LEARN?</th>
<th>What did YOU LEARN?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The school was built by...</td>
<td>Why government did not built the school?</td>
<td>The government is responsible for building the school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school opened...</td>
<td>Why the school has few teachers?</td>
<td>There are few teachers because the school lacks funds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They consider the pupils because of...</td>
<td>Why government should invest more money in the school?</td>
<td>The government should invest more money to improve the school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school has 5 teachers.</td>
<td>They are new; they are not experienced.</td>
<td>The new teachers are not experienced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a volunteer who helps the children.</td>
<td>They are very eager to learn.</td>
<td>The children are eager to learn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school is not well funded.</td>
<td>Because of the small number of teachers.</td>
<td>The school is not well funded due to the lack of teachers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Mrs. I.N. Masiwa, the late Mrs. Anne Price, the late Mrs. Billy Boga, and the SGBs.
- £500,000
- Because the school is underfunded, too far from East London.
- I don't really know, but the teachers always complain and strike.
What part of your community is important to you?
Exploring Our Identities

This I Believe

I BELIEVE IN MY SIBLINGS.

What do you believe in?

Poems for Two Voices

How are you the same/different?
Inquiry-Based Learning

- Thematic
  - Spiral Curriculum
    - Collaborative Grouping
      - Integration of Reading and Writing
        - Intentional Scaffolded Instruction
          - Process and Product Focused

Building on Life Experiences
Layered multimodal texts are literary and informational texts that represent different levels of complexity that provide meaning, structure, and language scaffolding.
Layered Multimodal Texts

Multiple print and digital texts in diverse media, formats, and lengths.

Layered in complexity to support meaning, structure, language, background knowledge of reader, motivation, interests, and demands of language task.
Scaffolding Complexity

- Introducing background knowledge
- Immersing students in more complex language exposure and usage that makes a difference in their ability to access knowledge
- Engaging students with carefully selected or constructed graphic organizers that make the structure of the text visible
- Modeling how to interpret the meaning of texts that use more complex approaches, like satire or rhetorical argument
- Engaging pairs or teams of students with more challenging texts as “buddies” and giving them opportunities to reflect on those texts through discussions with each other or through “buddy” journals
- Making 20 percent of their class reading “stretch” texts that help them reach beyond their reading level
Gradual Release of Responsibility

Students
- Observe, listen and respond
- Participate and respond
- Attempt with support
- Practice and problem solve

Teachers
- Introduce and provide models of strategies and texts
- Demonstrate how the strategy works in a shared setting
- Support students as they practice in small groups
- Observe students as they practice independently

Sheena Harvey Generation Ready (2013)
Example Layered Multimodal Text Sets

**Text 1** Video: South Africa’s Got Talent
Q: What does this girl believe in?

**Text 2** Photos: Trash, Church, Friends, Family, etc.
Q: What do you notice in these images? Why are they important?

**Text 3** Podcast of This I Believe Essay
Q: What do you notice about this story?

**Text 4** This I Believe Essay transcript
Q: What do you notice about how this essay is written?

**Text 4** Inside/Outside Circle Graphic Organizer
Q: What do you believe in and why?

**Text 5** Sentence Frame: I believe in......because... One time.....And... I believe in ...... because.
The aim is not to classify a text as simple or complex but to determine what it is that readers need to know and be successful with a text.
Individual multimodal texts can also serve as “anchors” of support for new learning and previously covered concepts or strategies.
Sugar Act
French and Indian War = $, Trade only with British
Molasses
No taxation without representation

Stamp Act - tax on paper
- playing cards
- magazines
- marriage licenses
- angry colonists

I observed that ______.

_____ is different because ______.

I predict that the ____ will be ____.

Comparing

The Sugar Act
Taxes passed
Colonists = angry
Colonists boycott
No taxation without representation
Repeated

The Stamp Act

Stamp Acts
Intentional Uses of Multimodal Texts

Make Content Accessible

Build Necessary Knowledge

Make Language Accessible

Mentor Academic Structure

Lower Affective Filter
Play, Social Interaction, and ZPD

✓ Engaging in social play with peers reinforces new skills and provides time to rehearse and practice new concepts.

✓ Play creates the zone of proximal development where higher mental functions and language use co-exist.

✓ Part of a spiral curriculum.
Play, Social Interaction and ZPD

Variety of modes and opportunities.
- Readers Theatre
- Poetry Slams
- Words Sorts
- Board Games
- Physical Games
- Karaoke
- Song and Chants
- Cooperative Learning
Teacher Education: Pre and In Service

Spiral Inquiry-Based Curriculum
- Process of continuous language and literacy learning
- Facilitate inquiry around curriculum topics that engage learners
- Nurture inquiry attitudes or habits of mind

Deep Scaffolding
- Support students to gain access to meaning, structure, and language
Layered Complex Multimodal Texts
- Understand text complexity
- Support for multiple readability and difficulty levels

Play, Social Interaction and ZPD
- Create opportunities for social interaction and play
- Lower the affective filter
- Reinforce new concepts and skills
- Encourage peer learning.
Selected References


THANK YOU

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