



## Learning students LOVE through curiosity and questions

Instagram: @trev\_mackenzie

LinkedIn: @trevor-mackenzie-37103b261/

BlueSky: @trevormackenzie.bsky.social

X: @trev\_mackenzie

Website: trevormackenzie.com

### **A little bit about Trevor**

- ❑ 23rd year as a practicing high school teacher in Victoria British Columbia Canada
- ❑ Author, consulter, researcher
- ❑ Worked with at-risk youth with which the traditional model of education was failing

*“When curiosity is high, academic achievement is high.”*

### **Dive into inquiry**

- How did Trevor get into inquiry? Light bulb moment; safety before rigor, engaged in collaborative inquiry as a staff
- A student named Garrison changed his life. Garrison struggled with traditional schooling, Trevor asked him the simple question, “What do you love doing in your spare time?” and found out that Garrison loved graffiti.
- Trevor experimented by redesigned curriculum elements around Garrison’s interests in graffiti and learned that agency, curiosity and interest Matter!
- **Working through the lens of the things they love changes everything for them.**
- Measuring curiosity: how do you measure it? It’s really difficult, but it starts with asking them. (Scale 1-10)
- Lots of doors are opened when the key of curiosity is used.

## **Culture of curiosity and inquiry mindset**

- Inquiry is curiosity.
- If you plan for curiosity, you are experiencing inquiry.
- A by-product of curiosity is questions.

## **Starting with Curiosity**

- Begin with specific strategies. Number one on the list is provocation.
- Provocation is an intentionally planned experience where the objective of the experience with our students is to get them curious about their curriculum.
- When we do provocation well, students will have questions.
- Provocation differs from a hook in that a hook is meant to recapture students' attention (re-hook them), whereas provocation seeks to provoke them to ask questions.
- Begin with curricular standards when planning provocations.

## **Question Routines**

- We have questions... Now what do we do with them?!
- 10 High impact question routines which encourage students to sort questions into structures
  - Continuum, question triangle, question sort, quadrant, pyramid, staircase, pencil, hexagons, timeline, and question buddies routines - learn more about them in Trevor's book *Inquiry Mindset* (link in the Wakelet collection below)
- Trevor recommends collecting questions, posting them, and then using them to determine the best curricular course. Choosing a student's question can be transformational for their engagement.

## **Here's how Trevor used the Routine: Question Continuum in a class of seven-year-olds:**

1. Draw a continuum on the board and label the ends. He used the labels "closed-ended questions" and "open-ended questions."
2. Solicit student feedback in defining both ends of the continuum. Coach as needed.
3. Have students write questions on sticky notes and place them on the continuum where they believe they fit. Adjust as needed with student feedback.
4. Collect the questions and use them as launching points throughout the section.

\*This routine can be used across grade levels and subject areas. While all routines don't fit every teacher's context, find the few that you can own and reach students in your setting.

### **Routine: Question Pyramid**

- 1 big circle (open-ended question) at the top
- 3 smaller circles (closed-ended questions) on the next level that help answer the open-ended question)

### **Routine: Question Pencil**

- Sort How, What, Might, etc. questions through the question pencil.
  - Add a word bank on the side
- “Where do my questions fit, and what are the next steps?” Answer the easier questions, and prepare to dig deeper on harder ones.

### **Sticky Notes**

- Sticky notes can lead students to engage physically as well. The physical embodiment connects with the cognitive response. Students may sometimes feel safer to write their questions on white boards first, so their questions don't feel as permanent. ELL students may even draw their questions.

### **Tips for starting**

- Go find video demonstrations, like the ones on Trevor's Instagram.
- Find a colleague in your building that is willing to try an inquiry mindset with you.

*\*Curiosity is like a campfire; it draws others in and provides a setting for community. So many teachers are naturally curious. Embrace why you got into teaching in the first place and lead from a stance of curiosity.*

### **Wakelet Collection:**

- [Links and Resources](#)