



INQUIRY CHARTS

DESCRIPTION

In this activity students will examine multiple sources of information for points of consistency and inconsistency. The purpose of this activity is to build critical reading skills. This activity can be modified to fit students with a variety of research skills. As a beginning research activity, the teacher can select the topic and provide inquiry questions and sources. For more advanced students, they may select their own topics, prepare their own inquiry questions, and find their own sources.

LEARNING STRATEGIES Metacognition, Questioning

LESSON PLAN STAGE Investigation, Launching into New Content, Synthesis

SKILLS Making Meaning

PREPARATION

- Decide what topics will be explored.
- Decide what inquiry questions students will explore.
- Decide what sources will be used.
- Provide students with the graphic organizer.

ACTIVITY STEPS

TEACHING TIPS

1	Introduce Inquiry Charts.	Most students will be familiar with a KWL chart. Introduce Inquiry Charts as a more advanced KWL chart. Share the topic selected for the inquiry with the students. Have a whole-class discussion where students share what they already know about the topic if everyone is doing the same one. If students are doing different topics, have each student write down what they already know. Basically, do the K of a KWL chart: What do you already know?
2	Model writing inquiry questions.	Think aloud as you create two or three sample inquiry questions based on the topic. Describe the elements of a good inquiry question (open-ended, not too narrow).
3	Develop inquiry questions.	Students can work in pairs or small groups to develop inquiry questions. In some situations it may be appropriate for the teacher to provide one or two questions to help students get started.



ACTIVITY STEPS

TEACHING TIPS

4	Use graphic organizer to record information from multiple sources.	The graphic organizer should include the inquiry question and space to record answers from two or three different sources.
5	Research answers.	Students search for answers to the inquiry question(s). In some classes, the teacher will provide the sources and in others students will do their own research. Mini-lessons around conducting research may be necessary here.
6	Evaluate sources for consistency or inconsistency.	<p>Looking at the inquiry question and the information found through the sources, students determine if there are consistencies or inconsistencies. Do they say the same things? Different things? Provide specific examples.</p> <p>You may need to model this step for students before having them do it independently. Be sure to model identifying both consistencies and inconsistencies.</p>
7	Synthesize information.	<p>Answer the inquiry question using information from all of the sources and include an analysis of the consistency or inconsistency among the sources.</p> <p>It may help to provide an example that shows students how to include an analysis of the consistency or inconsistency of the sources. Sentence starters may also be helpful here.</p>
8	Share out.	If students are researching different topics there can be class presentations where they share what they have learned. If students are doing the same topics, they can work in pairs to share and expand on their own work by learning from each other.
9	Reflect	<p>Students can reflect individually or as a group, orally or in writing.</p> <p>Why do you think it is important to look at consistencies and inconsistencies when doing all types of research (e.g., for school projects or scientific research)?</p>