

A Basic Overview of the Inquiry Process
The Integrated Inquiry Planning Model, Kath Murdoch (2007)

Selection of Topic	A generative topic that allows for the development of broad, “big picture” understandings, links learning areas, has relevance to students and lends itself to direct experience/first-hand data. School and state curriculum standards may assist. May be teacher selected or negotiated with students in conjunction with events or issues arising in the local or global community..	<i>Ideally, these conversations are carried out by a team of teachers prior to the inquiry, and are revisited throughout the inquiry. Documentation should be reshaped as the inquiry unfolds.</i>
Generative Question(s)	What is the unit really about? What are the key ideas? What big question(s) will guide the inquiry? The question may be framed as a problem, a provocation, a challenge, a wondering. In some cases, students help devise the question.	<i>The “frame” of the inquiry must be informed by students. This planning should be displayed and made transparent to students</i>
Understandings Skills and Values	What do we want students to understand by the end of the unit? What is important to know about this? What key skills, strategies, qualities and values will be enriched through this inquiry?	
Tuning In	Engagement and gathering prior knowledge , pre-assessment, questions for inquiry , goal setting. Sometimes students will require some early immersion or “front loading” in the topic if little is known/experienced. Some questions may emerge from students at this stage. What theories do we have? How do we already understand this? Ask students: How could we find out more about this?	
Finding Out	Experiences and texts that add to the knowledge base . Emphasis on gathering first-hand data in a range of ways (usually shared experiences). Data gathering through engaging with experts, surveys, interviews, film, experiment, observations, field work, etc.	<i>Involve students in deciding how you might find out more. Keep building banks of student questions.</i>
Sorting Out	Organizing, analyzing and communicating the information gathered using a range of vehicles (e.g. through Math, Arts, English, Drama, Music, Technology, etc.). Reflective thinking work—revising original theories and propositions. Reviewing the big question: What meaning can we make of this data? What are we learning?	<i>Students will be synthesizing their learning and beginning to make connections. Keep reviewing questions and initial thinking.</i>
Going Further	Revisiting and raising new questions, extending experiences, challenging assumptions . May be negotiated individually; opportunity for students to pursue questions or issues/interests of their own or in small groups. In global integrations, this is often the “bigger world” step which takes the unit from local to global learning.	<i>The emphasis here is on student choice and differentiation.</i>
Drawing Conclusions	Stating understandings. What do we think and know now? How do we feel? High-level thinking about the topic. Identifying avenues for action and application.	<i>These phases are most often woven throughout the unit. Explicit connections must be articulated.</i> <i>Action may be shared or individual.</i>
Reflecting and Acting	Now what? Taking action. Reflecting on the unit: what, how and why learning has come about. What did I learn about this topic? What did I learn about myself? What should I do now?	