



TEACHING & LEARNING

through inquiry



THE UNIVERSITY
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Giovanna Lucci | PhD Candidate
Jonathan Ferreira | PhD Candidate

Land Acknowledgement

I would like to begin by acknowledging that the land on which we gather is the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the xwməθkwə́yəm (Musqueam) People.



INQUIRY-BASED LEARNING (IBL)

is about...



Write up to 3 words to define what IBL is
about based on your prior knowledge



join at [menti.com](https://www.menti.com)

use code: **7785 8043**



HOW MUCH EXPERIENCE

do you have?



How experienced are you in designing and teaching inquiry-based lessons? (Variations include task-based learning, project-based learning, and problem-based learning)



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IBL: *what?*

- ① A process of both **problem-posing** and **problem-solving**.
- ② Inquiry can only begin with what learners **already know, perceive, and feel**.
- ③ **Collaboration with others** to **formulate and address authentic questions of interest** on a predetermined topic to **build new understandings, meanings, and knowledge** about their topic (Savitz & Wallace, 2016).
- ④ **Inquiry ethos:** a loving and patient process of critical dialogue and discovery to co-construct sociopolitical consciousness (Freire, 1998)
- ⑤ **The opposite of knowledge transmission**
teach a subject not to produce little living libraries on that subject but rather to get students to think (Bruner, 1960).



**TEACHING THROUGH INQUIRY
CONSIDERS OUR WORK A
FAILURE IF STUDENTS DO NOT
LEAVE SCHOOL FILLED WITH
QUESTIONS AND THE
YEARNING TO EXPLORE THEM**



Wolk (2008, p. 118)

IBL: why?

- 1 Contemporary ways of knowing, being, and doing in our personal, social, civic, and professional lives.
- 2 Interdisciplinary opportunities: application of discipline-specific competencies.
- 3 Student-driven and student-focused: active and democratic participation in the learning process.
- 4 Develop metacognition (know how to know), and construct a sense of responsibility and agency towards their learning goals (Savitz, 2016)
- 5 Higher attendance, fewer behaviour problems, and greater homework completion (Wilhelm & Wilhelm, 2010).



IBL HELPS TO EXPAND THE BOUNDARIES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING AND ALLOWS STUDENTS TO HAVE LARGER PARTICIPATION IN THE LEARNING PROCESS BY PLACING MORE OWNERSHIP OF THE LEARNING PROCESS IN THE HANDS OF STUDENTS



Blessinger & Carfora (2014, p. 10)



IBL IN NORTH AMERICA
particularly in Canada

IBL IN NORTH AMERICA *particularly in Canada*

- **NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL (2011)**
Engage in inquiry like scientists to investigate and build models and theories about the world.
- **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA) STANDARDS (NCTE & IRA, 1996)**
Enable learners to gather, evaluate and interpret findings from various information sources.
- **COMMON CORE STANDARDS (2010)**
Develop research skills to build and present knowledge drawing on several sources.

IBL IN NORTH AMERICA

particularly in Canada

- **BRITISH COLUMBIA**

“Students are bound to form questions that provide teachers with insight into their thinking”
(B.C. Ministry of Education, n.d).

- **MANITOBA**

“Inquiry encompasses the habits of mind that promote learning and the processes that can be woven through all classroom learning experiences” (Manitoba, n.d).

- **ONTARIO**

EXAMPLE: Grade 6 Social Studies, students investigate “different perspectives on historical and/or contemporary experiences of a few distinct communities, including First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit communities, in Canada”, or “global issues of political, social, economic, and/or environmental importance, their impact on the global community, and responses to the issues” (Ontario, n.d.).


IBL challenges

- 1 Modest teacher **training**.
- 2 Educators' **resistance to change** and **apparent loss of control** over teaching-learning process.
- 3 **Underestimating required resources**.
- 4 Communicating with **parents/guardians** whose **traditional schooling expectations** conflict with student-driven inquiry learning.
- 5 **Time** and **pedagogical constraints** (Capps et al., 2016; Early & Kendrick, 2020; Voet & De Wever, 2018).
- 6 "IBL might be **time-consuming** and **offer little help in achieving high grades in English exams**" (Jiang, 2021, p. 7).



HOW DO STUDENTS LEARN THROUGH INQUIRY?

*and how can teachers
scaffold the learning
process?*



1

ARTICULATE ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS

QUESTIONS SHOULD:

- **Matter to students** now and in the future;
- **Connect to students' current lives;**
- **Be about quality** and **require students to be critical;**
- **Get at the heart of the matter** (for the topic, text, discipline, etc);
- Possess **emotive force, intellectual bite, or edginess;**
- Be **open-ended, debatable, possible to contend, arguable** (not googlable);
- Be **linked to data** (resources are available to use in pursuit of answers); and
- Be **concise and clearly stated** (Wilhelm, 2014).

2

INVESTIGATE QUESTIONS & GATHER EVIDENCE

USING DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC METHODS (E.G., ELA, SOCIAL STUDIES, SCIENCE, MATH)

1. **Scaffold** the inquiry process (e.g., concept maps, resource list, teaching how to navigate databases, conduct and/or record experiments, etc)
2. Frontload (pre-teach) the unit to activate and build on **students' prior knowledge**
3. Foreground **personal connections** to the units
4. Highlight purpose and motivation to enquire (Why are we doing this?)
5. Build on the frontloading to develop **conceptual and procedural tools** (language tools, too)
6. Read a variety of materials (text, image, audio, video) as **a whole group**
7. Read other texts **in small groups or individually** to experience multiple perspectives on a topic
8. Engage in activities that continue to deepen conceptual understanding and sharpen strategy use **through repeated practice** with real problems (not drilling; instead, meaningfully applying knowledge and skills)

3

COMMUNICATE RESULTS OF INVESTIGATIONS TO SPECIFIC AUDIENCES

- **EXPAND COMMUNICATIVE REPERTOIRES**
 - art prints, pieces of music, and videotapes of dances or dramas
 - writing, sketching, improvisational drama, graphing, and charting
- **DRAW ON/ DEVELOP STUDENTS' DIGITAL LITERACIES**
to address various audiences in physical and digital contexts

4

EVALUATE ONE'S OWN CLAIMS AND THOSE OF OTHERS

(Moje, 2015; Wilhelm & Wilhelm, 2010)

- GALLERY WALKS
- DISCUSSION(S)
- SHARING CIRCLES
- THINK/ PAIR/ SHARE
- EXIT SLIPS
- SELF- AND PEER-FEEDBACK



BREAK

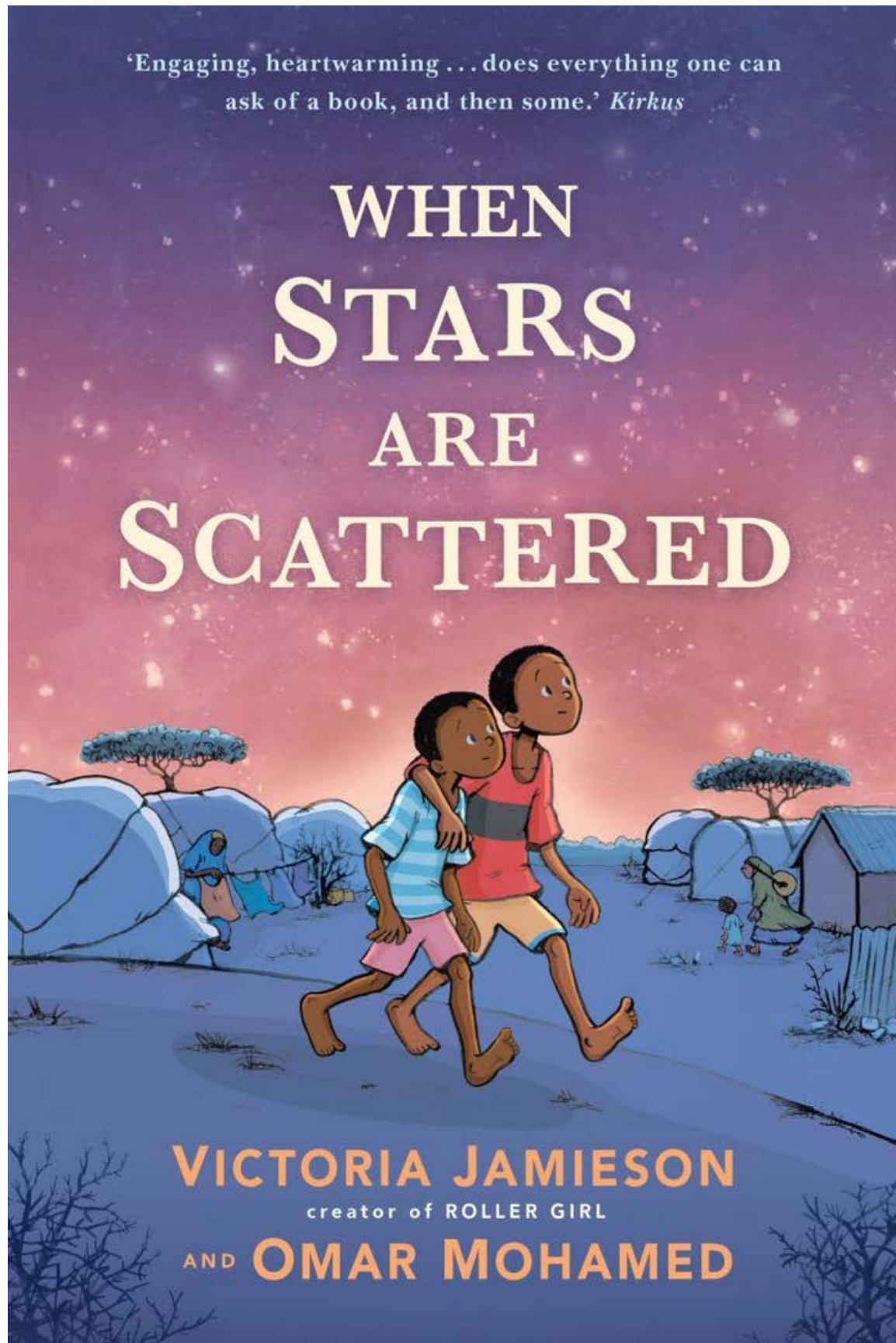
recap

- 1 ARTICULATE ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS**
Your students **CAN** and **SHOULD** be part of this process.
- 2 INVESTIGATE QUESTIONS & GATHER EVIDENCE**
using **discipline-specific methods** (e.g., ELA, Social Studies, Science, Math).
- 3 COMMUNICATE RESULTS OF INVESTIGATIONS TO SPECIFIC AUDIENCES**
- 4 EVALUATE ONE'S OWN CLAIMS AND THOSE OF OTHERS**
(Moje, 2015; Wilhelm & Wilhelm, 2010).

to be
point of view.
Memoir ['mɛm
biography writ
know

ADAPTED EXAMPLE

from the British Columbia curriculum



fiction based on true events



about personal experiences/ perspectives



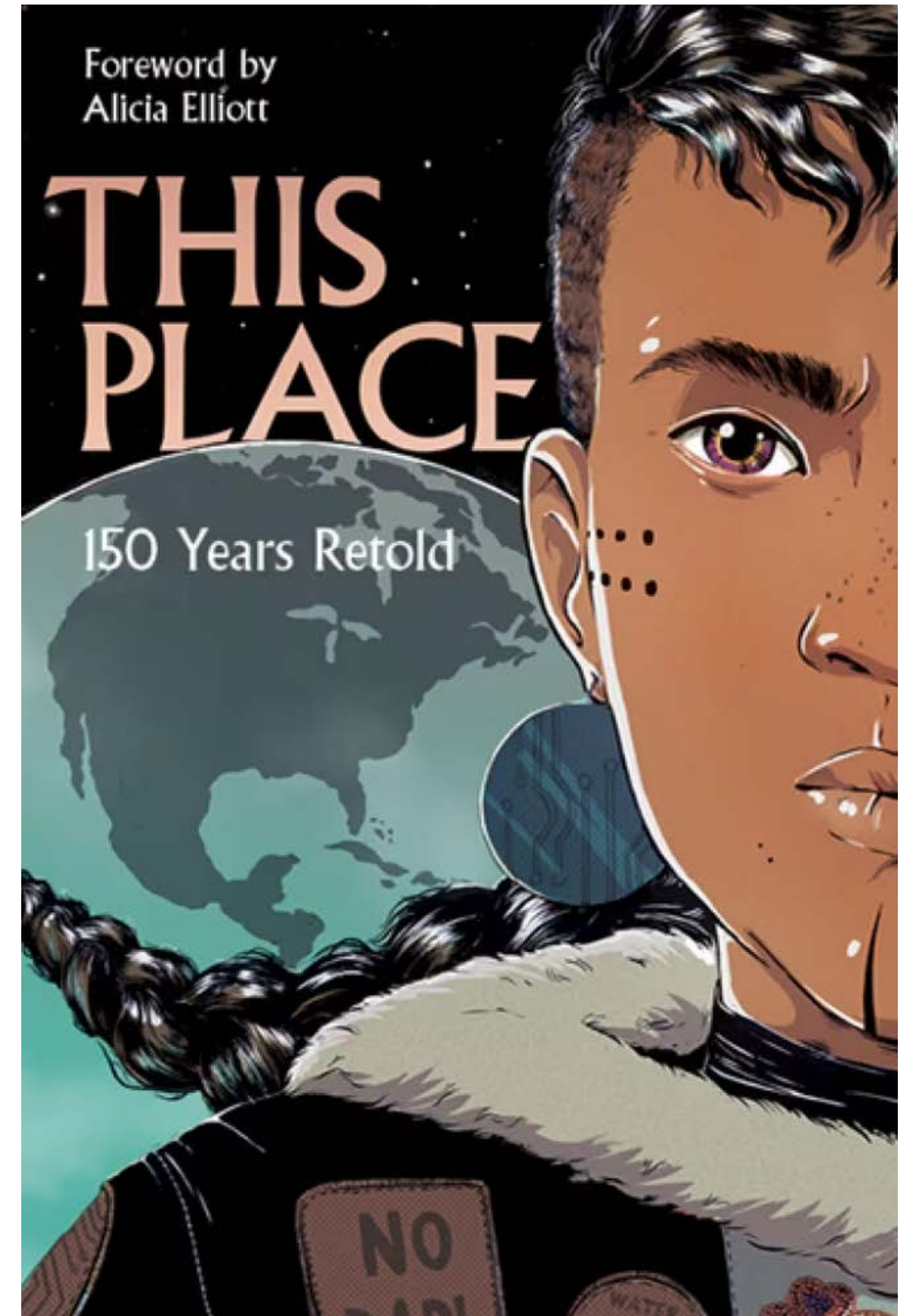
touch on issues of social justice relevant to students' context



multimodal



also a podcast



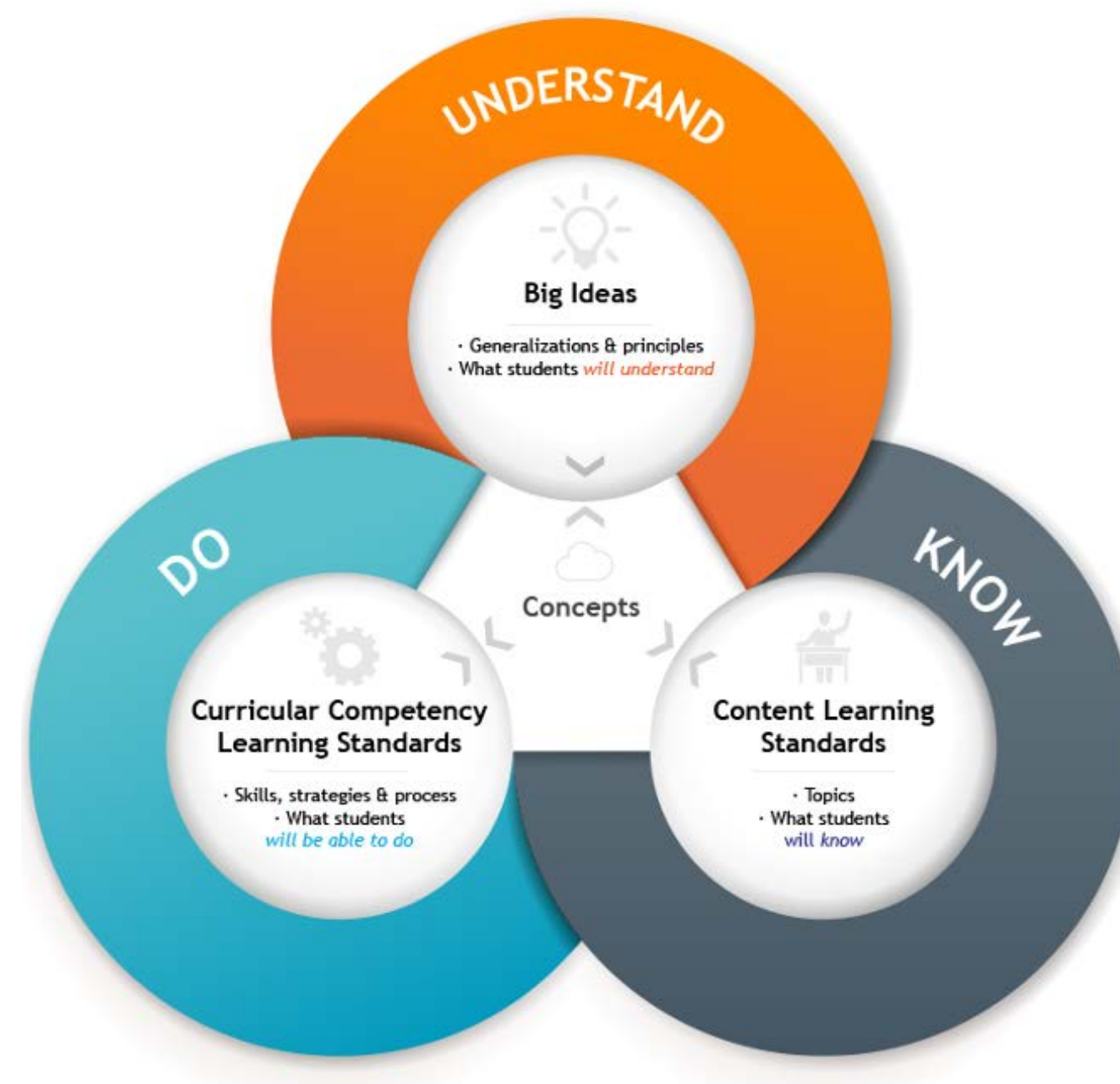


FROM MEMOIR TO PODCAST (GRADE 10)

TASK

Students:

- Explore various memoirs before they brainstorm, workshop, draft, peer-edit, and polish their own memoirs, all while examining a social issue that affects them.
- Use an interview process to begin exploring how the social issue investigated in their memoir affects others.
- Use their memoirs and what they learn through their interviews to create a podcast that further examines the issue, where they learn about developing scenes, sound/music, and editing on classroom iPads and/or their own devices.
- Reflect on how the medium changed the sharing of the social issue and how people might understand the issue.

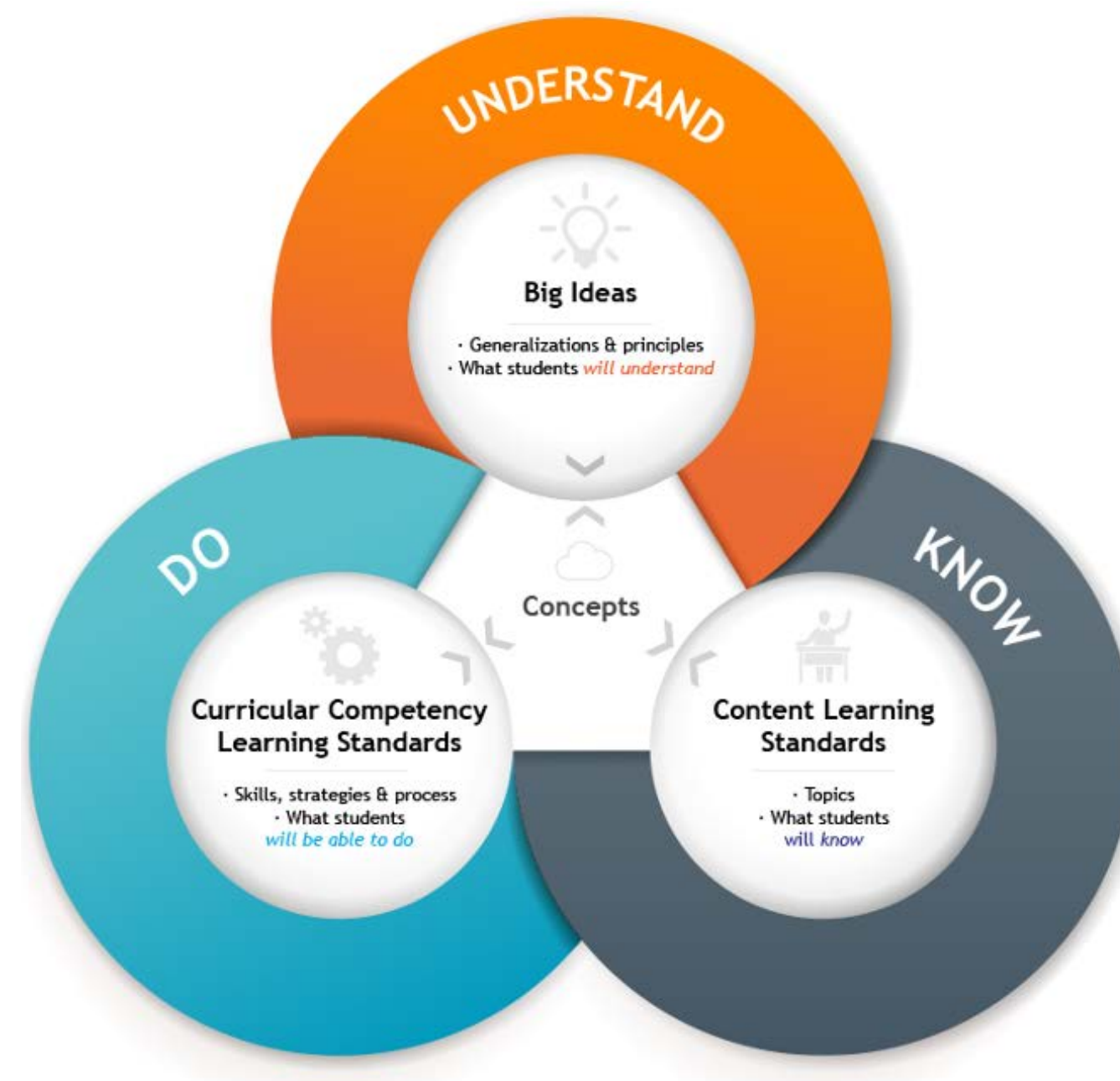




FROM MEMOIR TO PODCAST (GRADE 10)

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- **What is an example of a social issue that affects me?**
- How does listening to others' stories affect our understanding of our own lives?
- How does the medium affect our expression?





FROM MEMOIR TO PODCAST (GRADE 10)

Proposed Steps

- **Define the genre memoir** (personal memories, nonfictional narrative). Present main characteristics and perhaps a personal example (to build rapport).
- **Read examples of memoirs across different media** (text, video, audio), **highlight the conflict** in the narrative and **elicit how it is connected to social issue(s)**.
- **Plan language learning activities** to scaffold memoir composition
 - **Elicit** and **practice** narrative **verb tenses, adverbs,** and **connectives** to logically order events
 - **Descriptive and figurative language** to express feelings, opinions and ideas (e.g., adverbs, adjectives, metaphor, simile, idioms, etc.)



FROM MEMOIR TO PODCAST (GRADE 10)

Proposed Steps

- **Introduce the genre of podcasts**
 - What is it? Why do people listen to it? How is it structured?
 - Elicit strategies and procedures to conduct podcast interviews
- Have students **compare examples of written memoirs** and **podcasts** to identify how people express feelings, opinions, and ideas differently
 - **Opportunities for text-to-self connections.** How do they relate to the podcasts? How are conflicts discussed in the podcasts similar to one(s) they included in their own memoirs
- **Engage in discussion:** If you used your memoir as the basis for your podcast, what changes or new insights have you noticed between your original memoir and your finished podcast?



FROM MEMOIR TO PODCAST (GRADE 10)

Some ideas

- **Exit Slips**

- What do you want others to notice about your podcast?
- What have you learned from your peers' podcasts?
- How do their memoirs relate to yours and/or current social issues?

- **Self-Assessment**

- What changes would you make if you had more time or if you had to do it all over again?

HANDS-ON *activity*

- Get together in groups of 3–5 people
- As a group, choose 1 unit of study (a set of lessons) from your school textbooks and work together to transform it into an inquiry-based unit.

HANDS-ON activity

CHECKLIST

- 1 **Contextualize:** define the grade level, students' English language proficiency, the language(s) they speak, and cultural backgrounds.
- 2 **Define the unit theme, essential inquiry question(s), and a tentative project**
- 3 **Find other texts** that could help deepen students' understanding of the essential question(s) and remember to consider various media sources!
- 4 **Brainstorm the kind of language/knowledge support** students need to complete the project + at least 1 activity to address such needs
- 5 **Think of at least 2 activities students will have to do as part of the inquiry process** (i.e., what do they have to do to create a well-thought response to the essential question(s))
- 6 **Propose 1-2 ways for your students to communicate their findings**
- 7 **Propose 1-2 ways for your students to evaluate their inquiry learning process**

PEER-FEEDBACK

➤➤➤ Get together with another group

➤➤➤ Share your work

➤➤➤ Provide peer-feedback by:

- highlighting something you've learned from the other group
- commenting on things that would (*or not*) work in your teaching context
- making a suggestion for reconsideration or improvement

TAKEAWAYS

briefly share:

- What is something that you learned about IBL?
- What is something that you would like to explore further?
- How applicable do you think IBL is in your context?
- What adaptations do you anticipate making to plan for IBL in your context?



QUESTIONS?

THANK YOU!

MERCI!

OBRIGADO/A!

e-mail us

giolucci@student.ubc.ca

jfeitosa@student.ubc.ca