

## CLASSROOM COMMUNITIES OF ENQUIRY

10 Core ideas:

1. *Learning is situated.*

Teachers need to create a **community of enquiry** in the classroom because life-long learning in the everyday world only happens in communities of enquiry.

2. *Learning is transformational.*

In a community of enquiry, people use what they know/understand and can do and develop new knowledge/understanding/skills through activities that are **contextualized practice** (and not isolated decontextualized skills). Skills and knowledge are understood as part of socio-cultural understanding.

3. *Learning is social and affective as well as cognitive.*

Every community of enquiry is a **community of learners and teachers** where people cooperate and collaborate and struggle to learn from and with one another as whole people.

4. *Learning is metacognitive.*

In a community of enquiry people know much about what they know, know what they don't know, know what they want to know, and know how to find that out.

5. *Learning is mediated by other people.*

In a genuine classroom community **adults mediate learning** rather than deliver information. 'Teachers' are colleagues as well as guides, learners as well as teachers, assessors of their own learning as mediators as well as assessors of learning.

6. *Learning is principled.*

A community must operate on **principles** or 'rules' (how to listen, take turns, build on ideas etc.) that must be agreed and made explicit if they are not already present as an implicit code of behaviour. A humanitarian democratic community must operate on humanitarian and democratic principles (e.g. mutual respect).

7. *Learning is questioning.*

A community engages in **enquiry** when it is focused more by questions about what is not known by the group than by what is already known.

8. *Learning is tangible.*

Classroom enquiry must be grounded in the realities of the **physical and social worlds** that the children and adults live in (e.g. in science experiments and children's family use of language).

9. *Learning is imaginative.*

When classroom enquiry focuses on curriculum knowledge, understanding and skills about social worlds that cannot actually be present in the classroom (e.g. the world of historical events or the world of a story or the world of the audience for a piece of writing) then enquiry must be **imaginative enquiry** because children can only access those other 'worlds' via imagination.

10. *Learning is mediated by tools.*

Other worlds are represented and made accessible through imaginative enquiry that uses the 'tools' of **icons** (e.g. objects and photographs), **movement** (e.g. pretending to be someone), and other '**languages**' (e.g. music) as well as through **talk**.

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