“It’s like stickers in your brain”: Using the Guided Inquiry Process to Support Lifelong Learning Skills in an Australian School Library

Kasey Garrison & Lee FitzGerald
What is Guided Inquiry (GI)?

- Pedagogy grounded in a constructivist approach to learning based on the Information Search Process (ISP) (Kuhlthau; 1989a; 2004)
- Enriched with the Guided Inquiry Design process (GID) (Kuhlthau, Maniotes & Caspari, 2012; 2015)
- Focus on student autonomy in pursuing own interests
- Reflection in developing self-regulating learning skills
- Continuous support from teachers and teacher librarians
Kuhlthau, Maniotes and Caspari (2015) describe GI as “tak[ing] students beyond the pre-digested format of the text book into learning from a variety of sources to construct their own understandings” (p. 61).

- Community of research from various scholars
Timely in Australian Context

- Curriculum changes emphasising inquiry learning
  - …but omitting a process to support it (Lupton, 2012)
- Supports in the form of ISP and GID (Kuhlthau, Maniotes, & Caspari, 2012; 2015)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction to the project</th>
<th>Developing and identifying background knowledge</th>
<th>Discovering interesting ideas</th>
<th>Ponder what was discovered in the first stages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Building curiosity and interest in topics</td>
<td>Connecting to content</td>
<td>Pursuing what becomes personally interesting</td>
<td>Identifying an inquiry question and topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining an open mind</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Icons used with permission.
- Collecting information on the topic and question
- Researching broadly and deeply

- Answering inquiry question through synthesis of research
- Creating final product to communicate ideas
- Sharing with classmates and researchers

- Assess the achievement of learning goals
- Reflect on the content and creation
- Reflection on the process
Research Question

➔ How do students use and interpret the GID process whilst engaged in research projects?
Participants
- Year 7 Students
- All girls independent Catholic school in Sydney
- 33 volunteers

Complete data from 16

GI Unit
- Research in History and Geography
- Semesters 1 and 2
- Research booklet
  - Document process
- Final Product - Essay and Oral Presentation
Study Progression- 2015 school year

**GI Unit 1**
- Research Booklets marked
- Final Products marked

**GI Unit 2**
- Research Booklets marked
- Final Products marked

- **April-May**
- **June**
- **September-October**
- **November**

**Focus Groups**
1. Semi-structured interview guide
2. Less structured interview guide
Content Analysis of Transcripts

• Deductive Approach

Emergent Codes and Subcodes

• GID Stages
• Element of Choice
• Personal & Academic Rewards
• Reflection
Stages of the GID Process

- Noted as positive, helpful aspects of breaking into stages
- Found in previous research with TLs (Garrison & Spruce, 2016)

---

Madalyn

“I am splitting it up so I can get each little part done as efficiently as possible.”

Holly Bell

“...they don't just push you in with all of the information...They really take you through it with the different stages, so ok, I’ve finished this stage, then the next stage.”
Specific stages noted as useful.

Sleeping Beauty
“helped me reflect on what I already knew. So that really helped me because I knew what to go for.”

Eternity
“because you could get to find out about more, not just your area of focus…I found that really fun.”
Choice is good.

Cinderella
“it was good that we were able to make our own [question] because sometimes that can make more sense than what you are given because it is what you think rather than what you are told to.”

Sleeping Beauty
“creating your own question meant we could kind of explore our interests and decide what we wanted to find out about those places.”
Ariel

“...I really liked the GI actually, I found it was really refined... using it to create questions and stuff that I feel as if, it's more the way to kind of be a part of it, more than just writing a speech or something like that, whereas answering questions and stuff makes you feel more connected to the project.”
Royal

“I found many more websites and things I could look at in other subjects as well so not just history and this area, but I’ve learnt to do it in English and other subjects, and learning about more reliable sources.”
Reflection

Anastasia: “...reflecting on the whole process kind of brought the whole thing together.”

Madalyn: “it’s kind of just, ok, I finished now just what did I do? What worked? What didn't for next time?”

Eternity: “I also really, really dislike reflecting mainly because I think it’s totally therapeutic and I don't like those sort of things that you get in a therapy session.”
Limitations

- Teachers’ inexperience with GID process
  - Lack of understanding
- Nature of sample
  - Small, Catholic independent all girls school in affluent urban suburb

Future Directions

- Working on GI with the teachers
  - Professional development sessions
  - More ownership of GI
- Following same girls through Year 8
- Replicate with a dissimilar sample of students
SIGNIFICANCE

- Development of metacognitive skills and strategies
- Need for collaboration between teachers and teacher librarians
- Importance of growing a wider base of research on the GID process for support
- Development of support
References available in paper proceedings.
Grazie Merci Gracias Vinaka Aayya Grazas Danke Mahsi Ga Toda Efcharisto Haw aa Takk Imena Barkl Tenki ya Arigato Osyo Melesi Kulo Mesi Cheers Komapsumnida Thank you Ah bo Da ja Achiu Asantte Nandi Grazzi Sanco Mossi Xie xie Pojo Bisse Koko Wneeweh Barka Ka Aio Asai Thenks Mamnoon Paylla