



2017-2018 Yukon Education Learning Networks: Empowering and Engaging Others in an Inquiry-Based Professional Learning Network Celebration of Learning Discussion Template

Yukon Education
School: Selkirk Elementary School
Inquiry Team Members: Nicole Doré

Your focus for this year: To foster the literacy results of the Early French Immersion students, especially in the primary years.

My goal: To build a strong new French Immersion program within our newly appointed dual-track school.

Note: this inquiry focused on fostering a learning network on a team of professionals and their own inquiries. We offered a professional learning opportunities that developed field-based pedagogical skills, creating a shared vision, a common vocabulary, a commitment to student learning (in literacy), and a reliance of sharing of practices and resources

Scanning:

Last year, the Neurolinguistic Approach (ANL) was presented to the three French Immersion teachers and applied to all our FSL learners with great success. Two Early French Immersion kindergarten classes and a first grade gained a great reputation for fostering high abilities in spoken FSL. We felt confident in the approach and wanted our new dual-track school to continue to foster this approach as the French Immersion program would grow.

Scanning the school this year had shown that despite everyone's effort in creating a successful French Immersion program, there was a need for time to collaborate; the French Immersion team seldom had the opportunity to meet.

It became obvious that a new classroom teacher, the Learning Assistant and Educational Assistants would benefit from learning the foundations of the Neurolinguistic Approach in order to foster the new program in a linear way. I utilized the Spiral of Inquiry to promote collaborative, evidence-informed inquiry from each team member with a focus on literacy (Principle of learning: *Emphasize the social nature of learning*).

Focus:

I sought out to support networked learning by providing an opportunity for the team to collaborate and cooperate on language pedagogy. I wanted to provide my peers with new tools (the *Spiral* and *ANL*) for professional development, which would ultimately lead the team into a professional learning community allowing us to share effective practices about pedagogical strategies that supported teaching and learning in a second language. Through informal conversations and short monthly meetings, my energy would be concentrated for the team as:

- a consultant: offering support and providing resources;
- a collaborator: creating challenges and encouraging growth; and
- a coach: facilitating vision and professional growth, as well as frequent check ins.

Hunch:

The team was composed of highly skilled and committed professionals. By collaborating with Curricular Consultants at the Department, we engaged a team of Teachers and Educational Assistants, on a voluntary basis, to work on their own spiral of inquiries, with a focus on language. Providing support, frequent check ins, one-on-one discussions, and coordinating meetings, required a large time commitment but would ultimately create the learning network the Immersion students would benefit from.

New professional learning:

The team was allotted one PD day, which we organized into three elements:

- **L'ANL** with Pascal St-Laurent, *French as a Second Language Curriculum Consultant*
- **Balanced Literacy** with Christiane Robert, *Reading Recovery Teacher*
- **Spirals of Inquiry** with me, *French Immersion Teacher*

This provided the team with new learning that could be implemented directly into the classroom and ultimately improve their current practices. It also gave the team the opportunity to share where they were at in their inquiry, to collaborate and to support each other.

Further professional learning came from:

- **Observation Survey Training** with Jane Wilson & Christiane Robert, provided new skills in assessment that become transparent and comparable
- **Learning Network Sessions** with the Department of Education – onsite and online meetings allowed me to gain insight and share with my team
- **School PD Days** (Mindset, Goal Setting, FN) which directly relates to our inquiries
- **Spiral Conference** with Linda Kaser & Judy Halbert (I was very lucky to attend this informal discussion providing me with insight that I could share with my team.)
 - **Wrap up & celebration**- time to share our inquiries and professional learning

Taking action: Describe strategies you and your team decided on and how your actions worked out. Be as specific as possible – so that other teams can learn from your experience.

“Taking action” came hand-in-hand with the “New learning”. Every part of the new learning embedded taking action, influencing the direction and intentions the team had on their inquiries. The three big-questions were continuously revisited. Record keeping of informal conversations, PD Days, student results were all part of the evidence gathered to determine the effectiveness and positive changes in their professional practice.

Throughout the entire process, the frequent check ins were crucial in sustaining the momentum of learning. Also, reflecting on the team’s emotional and motivational state was pivotal in determining the next courses of action.

Checking:

“Teachers who co-create their own learning are more curious.” A team of eleven professionals resulted in six inquiries, in addition to my own and a consultant’s inquiry.

Emphasize the social nature of learning	Leaders collaborate, cooperate, and support networked learning.	Foster collaborative opportunities for educators to develop and share activities, integrated approaches, and action research projects related to L2 pedagogy.
---	---	--

The results have demonstrated that:

- An EFI K class has resulted in notable progress in reading;
- An EFI K class has resulted in notable progress in oral speaking through the use of l'ANL;
- An EFI grade 1 resulted in ____ in reading.
- An EFI 1/2 resulted in ____ in writing.
- A Reading Recovery Teacher noticed...
- A FSL Consultant

My check will not be completed until the team member's have "finalized" or at least "checked" their own inquiries, at which time the following questions will be discussed: *Have your new actions changed your learner's outcomes for the better? How do you feel the spiral has helped you?*

The rich exchanges, integration of EAs and consultants as well as the professional growth created great satisfaction for myself as a coach, but also for every member of the team. This has been a successful Learning network, creating heightened confidence and motivation in our FSL learners, but also in the team members. This model's strength was not necessarily in the individual projects, but how each member is now immersed in inquiry! My final question will be: *What will come next?*

Reflections/Advice:

"One spiral of inquiry leads to another." Not only did gathering the French Immersion team together create a platform to work collaboratively and share challenges and successes, but every member is now aware of the transformation that happens as the spiral begins. It took a lot of energy to have many roles, but working with such a committed team and seeing how they are now immersed in the inquiry process is enough to make me feel satisfied!

Side note: Having completed my first inquiry two years ago, I also realized the importance of Growth Mindset and the Seven Learning Principles in the inquiry process. It wasn't highlighted in *Spirals of Inquiry: for equity and quality's* model two years ago, but has since become a crucial element to the process. I am grateful to have seen this change and hope that my colleagues will continue to see changes throughout the following years as they continue to lead themselves into new inquiries.

NOII is dedicated to:

EVERY learner crossing the stage with dignity, purpose and options.

ALL learners leaving our settings more curious than when they arrive.

ALL learners gaining an understanding of and respect for Yukon First Nations ways of knowing and doing.

NOTES:

Consider also gather evidence of your innovative actions using the following table as a guide:

Seven Principles of Learning in an Innovative Learning Environment		
What works for learners?	What this means for LEADERS	My evidence ...
Put learners at the centre	Leaders must be relentlessly curious about what's going on for students in the system. Student learning is the driving force, but students aren't the only learners. In an innovative learning environment, everyone is a learner, including teachers, support staff, formal leaders, parents and others.	Fostering a strong French as a second language community in and out of the school was our ultimate goal. By fostering a professional learning community, it allowed for collaboration and time to share best practices in an innovative learning environment.
Emphasize the social nature of learning	Leaders collaborate, cooperate, and support networked learning.	foster collaborative opportunities for educators to develop and share activities, integrated approaches, and action research projects related to L2 pedagogy.
Understand that emotions are central to learning	Leaders understand and apply the dynamics of social and emotional learning. They are attuned to their own emotions and motivations, and to the emotions and motivations of others—including the positives, like satisfaction and self-efficacy; and the negatives, like helplessness and anxiety. They understand how emotions affect performance.	* As adults, we can monitor and manage our emotions. However, in a busy environment, it was crucial to respect our colleagues' needs and foster trust and confidence to clarify any concerns. Comfort in engaging open and honest dialogue was going to contribute to the success of each individual.
Recognize individual differences	Leaders understand the dynamics of their team members, including their strengths, interests, experiences, and gaps in learning. They draw on these differences and help everyone in the system to develop through carefully designed professional learning.	Professional Learning opportunities were created and integrated throughout the inquiry. Neurolinguistic Approach, Reading Recovery Training, Balnaced Literacy Review... all these are some of the examples that motivated the team and provided enrichment

		activities based on their needs.
Stretch all learners	Leaders stretch themselves and others, but they avoid overload or stress that diminishes performance.	Applying the Spiral for the first time requires a lot of time and energy. The highly committed team members made this inquiry a great success.
Use assessment for learning	Leaders set clear expectations while being open to new possibilities. They continually assess what is working and where the gaps are. They always consider qualitative data as well as quantitative data. They seek and give meaningful feedback to promote learning.	Every member took qualitative data through forms of videos, discussions, and written work. This allowed them to provide meaningful feedback and promote learning for the learners but also for the other team members through sharing.
Build horizontal connections	Leaders are connectors. They connect activities, ideas and people, in and out of school. Their connections include partnerships in the community, with other schools, and with organizations at a distance.	Including Educational Assistants and Curriculum Consultants to the Teachers allowed for common language and integration. Partnerships were at the base of this inquiry.