

## INTEGRATING INQUIRY INTO READING ROUTINES

**Grades K-5** (add 5-7 minutes to your normal read aloud time)

Inquiry-based read alouds, provide opportunities to model asking probative, relevant questions and for students to practice connecting conclusions to evidence. This inquiry process is an essential foundation for developing the skills that students will need in the upper grades to evaluate source credibility.

Students will learn

- About types of experience and knowledge that makes someone an expert
- Examples of probative, relevant media analysis questions
- The distinction between fiction and non-fiction
- How to find factual sources in the library

Students will practice

- Asking media analysis questions
- Connecting answers to evidence
- Basic research skills

Materials: Books for read-alouds or student reading; for your own reference, the [Key Categories Of Media Literacy Analysis & Sample Questions](#) handout

### Step 1

Every time you read a book aloud to students, pause to ask open-ended and comprehension questions. In particular, model asking media analysis questions (See the Handout [KEY CATEGORIES OF MEDIA LITERACY ANALYSIS & SAMPLE QUESTIONS](#)). For upper elementary students who are reading on their own, offer media analysis questions as prompts prior to reading. Then use those same questions as springboards for discussion.

In all cases, each time a student offers an answer, probe for evidence: *What made you think that?* or *How do you know?* or *What's your evidence?* In the event that students cannot cite evidence or they cite evidence that doesn't actually support their answer, keep the discussion going by asking what others think. What evidence do they notice?

Except for essential, basic comprehension (for example, everyone understanding the meaning of an important word), the emphasis should be on recognizing legitimate evidence and reasoning, not on insisting that everyone arrive at the same conclusion.

### Step 2

As students become comfortable with the inquiry process, add these things to the reading routine:

- Guide students to pay attention to details in the text AND images.
- Identify your criteria for choosing this book and the type of resource it is (e.g., fiction or non-fiction).

Sharing the reasons for our choices introduces students to criteria they can use to find trustworthy sources.

- Ask: *If someone was looking for factual information about [topic of book] would you recommend this book or tell them to skip it?*

In real life, this is a question that students will more typically apply to social media posts, but we can use books to provide opportunities to practice. Be sure to follow up the question with probes for evidence-based explanations.

- If applicable, help students identify whose perspective is represented (and for older students, whose perspective is missing). Ask, *Who is telling the story? Whose eyes are we seeing through as they experience events? How do you know?* Let students know that all media are made by someone, so they represent someone's (or some group's) perspective. Knowing whose perspective we are seeing/hearing/reading (and whose perspectives are left out) can help us decide whether the source is trustworthy or credible.
- The goal is for students to ultimately ask questions themselves, so create opportunities to pass the torch. For example, begin making the shift from you to them by starting a read-aloud with a question like, *What do you think our first question should be?*
- As young students become accustomed to read-alouds, rather

than starting with the title followed by the name of the author and illustrator, start with the title and questions: *Who wrote this? How could I find out? Who created the pictures? Where in the book would I find their name?* Even pre-readers can learn that the cover always includes the names of author and illustrator and can point out the names even if they can't yet sound out the names. This gives students practice in the inquiry process by making it routine to ask an authorship question.

For older students use selected non-fiction titles (especially books where authors write about aspects of their own lives or special expertise), to help students see that, when it comes to determining credibility, knowing an author's name is only the first step. Ask what students know about the author and what might make the author a good source on the topic of the book.

Most of the time students won't know anything about an author. In these cases, use the opportunity to teach or review basic research skills. Show them where / how to use the resources in your school library to find answers. As they learn about the author, help students identify which facts demonstrate expertise on the topic of the book.

### Step 3

Use book selections to make links with other information literacy lessons and articulate the connection(s). Selections do not have to explicitly address an MIL topic. For example, with a book mentioning a number, take a moment to ask if the number was "a lot or a little" and remind students of what they learned in the "Is 7 a Lot?" activity. Or while

reading a story in which a character seeks advice from another character, pause to ask what made the character offering the advice a good source (or not a good source)? What made the character asking for advice think that their choice would have the needed expertise? Why did they trust them? Connect the answer to other lessons about expertise and source credibility.

To give students practice connecting images to information / messages, you

might follow-up after students have read a book to revisit the cover or illustrations. Ask, *Was the cover a good indication about what was inside? If you were making the cover, would you change anything? Because you can't illustrate everything, we know they had to make choices about what to highlight. Did the publisher, author, or illustrator make the same choices that you would have made? Did they miss anything that you thought was important?*

### CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Invite classroom teachers to share issues, topics, or skills that they are covering and choose books that support those topics and also provide opportunities to practice information literacy skills.

Add inquiry to media beyond books. For example, replace a bulletin board display title that is declarative with one that asks a question. For example, to share the biography of astronaut Sally Ride, rather than "Meet Sally Ride," title the board "What Made Sally Ride an Expert?" or "Would You Ask Sally Ride for Engineering Advice?"

### AASL Standards Correlations

- A. I. 2. Recalling prior and background knowledge as context for new meaning
- A. II. 2. Adopting a discerning stance toward points of view and opinions expressed in information resources and learning products
- A. IV. 3 Making choices about information sources to use
- A. VI. 3. Evaluating information for accuracy, validity, social and cultural context, and appropriateness for need.
- B. I. 1. Using evidence to investigate questions.
- C. I. 1. Interacting with content presented by others.
- C. II. 2. Contributing to discussions in which multiple viewpoints on a topic are expressed.
- D. I. 2. Engaging in sustained inquiry.
- D. III. 1. Actively contributing to group discussions.