



Guided Inquiry

9TH-12TH

**STATE HISTORICAL
SOCIETY OF IOWA**
IOWA DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS

**LIBRARY
OF CONGRESS**
**TEACHING
WITH PRIMARY
SOURCES**

Introduction to Guided Inquiry

Guided inquiry is a type of inquiry-based learning where a teacher provides scaffolding to guide the students through their inquiries. This is achieved by giving students only the goal and the process, which allows students to take control of their own learning.

Students will:

1. Create investigations
2. Ask questions
3. Do research
4. Distill information
5. Sharpen their critical thinking skills

Like all student-led learning, guided inquiry is a way for students to learn how to make sense of multiple sources of information, figure things out on their own, and learn more about research. There are many benefits to guided inquiry in the classroom.

Benefits:

1. Motivating for students
2. Develop critical and higher level thinking skills
3. Natures independent thinking
4. Develop research skills

Steps to Guided Inquiry

Step 1: Prep

Teachers may use the [Primary Source Sets](#) as a tool to create their guided inquiry, or create using their own resources.

- A. Create a compelling question that you want your students to be able to answer based upon the primary sources that will be given to them. Or use a question that the students developed, like through a QFT.
- B. Create a few short paragraphs of background information on the topic.
- C. Compile 7-9 primary sources (gauge the number based on your class and project)

Step 2: Open

Open your guided inquiry with the compelling question and background information. Discuss with your students that their goal is to answer the compelling question based on evidence found in the sources provided.

Step 3: Explore

Have students read and annotate the sources as well as highlight important information that they feel helps to answer the compelling question. They should mark up their packets with quotes, vocabulary, and important information related to the topic or compelling question.

Step 4: Gather

Students will start to gather their evidence together to construct an argument. Have students tentatively answer the compelling question based on the evidence presented. They will then choose three reasons why they answered in that manner. Those three reasons will now become categories to sort all of the sources into. Have the students take each source and put it into one of those categories. This will be the basis for their thesis, evidence in argument in the final step. For help completing this step, watch this [video](#) about the DBQ Project's Bucketing technique.

Example of Guided Inquiry

Step 5: Create

Students will create an argumentative essay answering the compelling question and using the provided sources as evidence for their argument. Have them write a five paragraph essay with the following components:

A. Paragraph 1

1. Hook
2. Background Information
3. Thesis

B. Paragraph 2

1. Piece of evidence 1 with analysis
2. Piece of evidence 2 with analysis

C. Paragraph 3

1. Piece of evidence 3 with analysis
2. Piece of evidence 4 with analysis

D. Paragraph 4

1. Piece of evidence 5 with analysis
2. Piece of evidence 6 with analysis

E. Paragraph 5

1. Conclusion