

# Making Thinking and Learning Visible

Through **Inquiry**



Full-Day Early Learning-Kindergarten  
Video Viewing Guide

## How to Use the Viewing Guide

The video, *Making Thinking and Learning Visible Through Inquiry* can be watched in its entirety or in segments. The accompanying questions are intended to provoke thinking and discussion before, during and after viewing.

The Viewing Guide is designed for differentiated audiences and includes reflective questions for Educators (e.g., Full-Day Early Learning–Kindergarten (FDELK) teams, child care staff, family resource centre staff, other primary teachers), administrators (e.g., principals, child care supervisors) and parents. Administrators and other system leaders have a vital role to play in all aspects of the implementation of FDELK. Engaging administrators and system leaders in reflective discussion will provide educator teams with support in designing programs and learning environments that promote the development of self-regulation skills.

Engaging parents in early learning provides valuable insights and observations that build bridges and relationships between community, home, and school. Insights, perspectives, and shared understanding about the learning that takes place when children engage in authentic inquiries will ultimately benefit the children.

## Inquiry

*Educators become the leaders of a “community of inquiry.” They do not wait for development to happen rather they foster, provoke, and scaffold it by deepening children’s current understanding so new knowledge systems and new connections among them may be continuously generated.*

*(Adapted from Eun 2010, Bruner 1996)*

Throughout the video you will hear how Full-Day Early Learning–Kindergarten teams across the province are “Rethinking, Removing, and Repeating” practices in relation to inquiry-based learning. Educator teams have been rethinking abstract theme-based planning and repeating inquiry-based planning that is based on concepts from the overall expectations, informed by the children ideas and interests that they can deeply and directly explore.

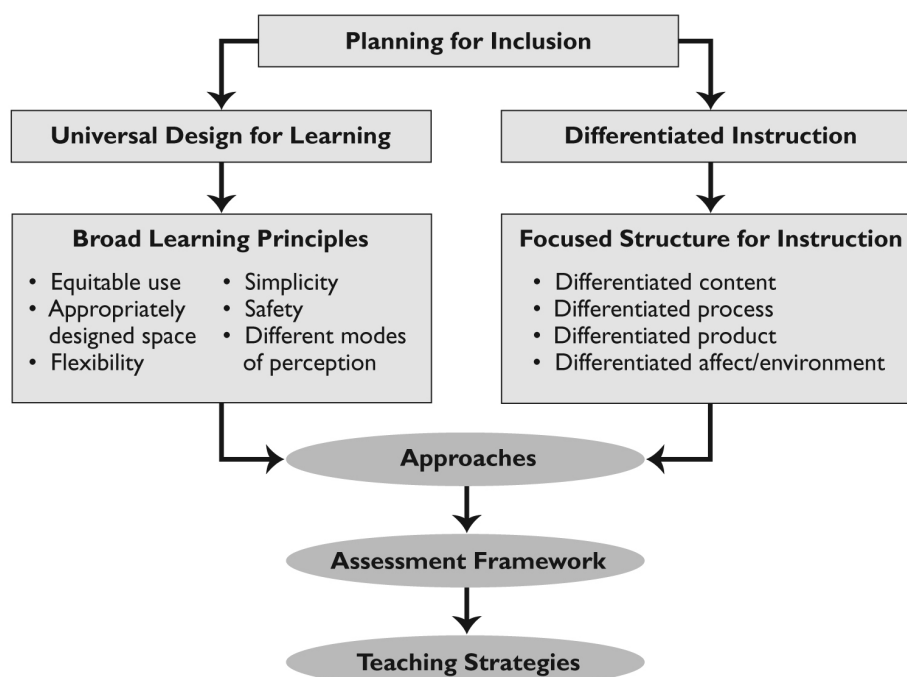
## Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Differentiated Instruction

The following information on UDL is taken from *Learning for All: A Guide to Effective Instruction and Assessment for All Students, Kindergarten to Grade 12*, Ministry of Education, Ontario, 2011, p.11-20. [http://www.ontariodirectors.ca/L4All/L4A\\_en\\_downloads/LearningforAll%20K-12%20draft%20J.pdf](http://www.ontariodirectors.ca/L4All/L4A_en_downloads/LearningforAll%20K-12%20draft%20J.pdf)

UDL was inspired by work in architecture on the planning of buildings with a view to accessibility for people with physical disabilities (Turnbull et al., 2002). Architects observed that the added improvements facilitated access for all users, not just people with physical disabilities. An access ramp, for instance, provides a person using a wheelchair with easier access to a building, but it also makes it easier for a parent with a child's stroller, a cyclist, or someone using a walker.

This notion soon found its way into education. Instruction that both responds to the characteristics of a diverse group of students and is precisely tailored to the unique strengths and needs of each student can be achieved using the principles and guidelines associated with three instructional approaches:

- Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
- differentiated instruction, and
- the tiered approach to prevention and intervention



Used in combination, *UDL* and *differentiated instruction* enable educators to respond effectively to the strengths and needs of all students. UDL provides educators with broad principles for planning instruction for a diverse group of students, whereas differentiated instruction allows them to address specific skills and difficulties (Raynal & Rieunier, 1998). The two approaches overlap, sharing certain goals and strategies, such as providing a range of instructional strategies, resources, activities, and assessment tools in order to meet the different strengths, needs, readiness, and learning styles or preferences of the students in a class.

The chart below highlights places in this video where connections to UDL can be seen in the practices of the educator teams. You may wish to read the chapter(s) cited before viewing the video, or as part of your follow-up discussions after viewing.

<b>Time</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Connections to Learning for All (Draft 2009)</b>
10:15	Rethinking the stance that instruction, teaching, and learning can only happen in a large group	Chapter 2: Universal Design for Learning/ Differentiated Instruction
13:50	Co-constructing inquiry with the children: designing learning opportunities so children have a variety of experiences	Chapter 1: pages 7, 8 - Personalization Chapter 2: Universal Design for Learning/ Differentiated Instruction
17:35	Planning based on observations of children's interests Changing the environment as the children's needs change	Chapter 2: Universal Design for Learning
30:00	Making connections Children's inquiries - questions, theories, observations, and conclusions Co-constructing inquiries with the children	Chapter 2: Universal Design for Learning/ Differentiated Instruction Chapter 3: Assessment for Learning Chapter 4: Planning Assessment and Instruction

## Considerations for Viewing

The following considerations are provided to inform and focus your thinking as you view the videos.

### Numbers of Children

The groups of children seen in the classrooms may not be representative of the numbers of actual children in the class. Children present in the video had written parental permission to be filmed.

### Classroom Space

The space allotted to Kindergarten classes varies from school to school. The classrooms shown represent this variation. The organization of some of the physical environments shown is indicative of the rethinking and removing that has been done.

### Resources

The classrooms shown depict a wide variation in resources. The materials and equipment in the classrooms vary based on local contexts and decision making.

### Community Partnerships

Many Board teams benefit from community partnerships with organizations such as faculties of education, community colleges, and parent volunteers. Additional adults in the classrooms reflect these partnerships.

## Safety

Educators are responsible for ensuring the safety of children, and for encouraging and motivating children to assume responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others. Educators must ensure that children acquire the knowledge and skills needed for safe participation in all learning opportunities both inside the school and in the outdoors. Children must be aware of any required safety procedures and of ways of interacting with each other to ensure that they are not putting themselves or their peers in danger.

## Sample Questions for Educator Teams

These sample questions can be used to guide reflection and discussion about learning through inquiry. You may wish to reference *The Full-Day Early Learning-Kindergarten Program (Draft 2010)* (pages 15-16), which focuses on inquiry-based learning.

### Before viewing the video

When you hear the word “theme” what comes to your mind?

When you hear the word “inquiry” what comes to your mind?

What does the document say about themes and inquiry in Kindergarten?

### While viewing the video

Notice how educator teams are:

- repeating, removing, and rethinking their theme-based planning and moving to inquiry
- engaging in co-constructing inquiries with the children
- making learning visible to the children and to others

What observations did the educator teams make about their own transition from planning monthly themes to co-constructing inquiries with the children?

How was learning made visible to the children and to others?

### After viewing the video

How can the design of long-range plans shift from a focus on monthly themes using nouns (e.g., Hallowe’en, Dinosaurs, Space, Bears) to flexible long-range plans that focus on the concepts from the overall expectations using verbs (e.g., questioning, comparing, measuring)?

How did the educator teams use UDL principles to create a learning environment that supports children’s inquiry?

## Sample Questions for Administrators

These sample questions can be used to guide reflection and discussion about learning through inquiry. You may wish to reference *The Full-Day Early Learning-Kindergarten Program (Draft 2010)* (pages 15-16), which focuses on inquiry-based learning.

For additional support, administrators can reference resources from the Ministry's Administrators Leadership Development site at: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/leadership/principalsWanttoKnow.html>

### Before viewing the video

When you hear the word “theme” what comes to your mind?

When you hear the word “inquiry” what comes to your mind?

What does the document say about themes and inquiry in Kindergarten?

### While viewing the video

Notice how educator teams are:

- repeating, removing, and rethinking their theme-based planning and moving to inquiry
- engaging in co-constructing inquiries with the children
- making learning visible to the children and to others

What observations did the educator teams make about their own transition from planning monthly themes to co-constructing inquiries with the children?

How was the learning made visible to the children and to others?

### After viewing the video

What connections can you make between inquiry learning in Kindergarten and other early years settings and inquiry learning in the primary, junior, and intermediate grades?

How can you support your educator teams as they move from long-range plans that focus on monthly themes using nouns (e.g., Hallowe'en, Dinosaurs, Space, Bears) to flexible long-range plans that focus on the concepts from the overall expectations using verbs (e.g., questioning, comparing, measuring)?

How did the educator teams use UDL principles to create a learning environment that supports children's inquiry?

What are your plans for engaging and communicating with parents?

## Sample Questions for Parents and Community Members

These sample questions can be used to guide reflection and discussion about learning through inquiry. You may wish to reference *The Full-Day Early Learning-Kindergarten Program (Draft 2010)* (pages 15-16), which focuses on inquiry-based learning.

### Before viewing the video

When you hear the word “theme” what comes to your mind?

When you hear the word “inquiry” what comes to your mind?

### While viewing the video

Note: These elements from the video are not intended to be presented to parents in isolation from a facilitated discussion, as many of the terms may be new to parents. They are intended as a guide for facilitators working with parents.

Notice how educator teams are:

- repeating, removing, and rethinking their theme-based planning and moving to inquiry
- engaging in co-constructing inquiries with the children
- making learning visible to the children and to others

### After viewing the video

What did you notice about children’s abilities to ask rich questions, to make detailed observations, and to draw logical conclusions?



## Acknowledgements

The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Branch, Ministry of Education, would like to thank the Full-Day Early Learning–Kindergarten teams, the school administrators, the Board Program Leads, the parents/guardians and the Full-Day Kindergarten children in the following Boards and schools, for allowing us to visit and film in their classrooms, and for sharing their learning with others across the province.

**Greater Essex County District School Board**  
Belle River Public School

**Halton Catholic District School Board**  
St. Luke Elementary School

**Halton District School Board**  
Mohawk Gardens Public School

**Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board**  
St. Lawrence Elementary School

**Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board**  
Prince of Wales Elementary School

**Lakehead District School Board**  
Westmount Public School

**Kenora Catholic District School Board**  
St. Louis School

**Near North District School Board**  
Marshall Park Public School

**Ottawa Catholic District School Board**  
Our Lady of Wisdom School St. Elizabeth School

**Peel District School Board**  
Marvin Heights Public School

**Rainbow District School Board**  
Landsdowne Public School  
Princess Anne Public School

**Sudbury Catholic District School Board**  
St. Raphael School

**Toronto District School Board**  
Pape Avenue Junior Public School

**Waterloo Region District School Board**  
Floradale Public School

