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Guide on the Side:

Using Guided Inquiry to Promote Deep Learning and Metacognition

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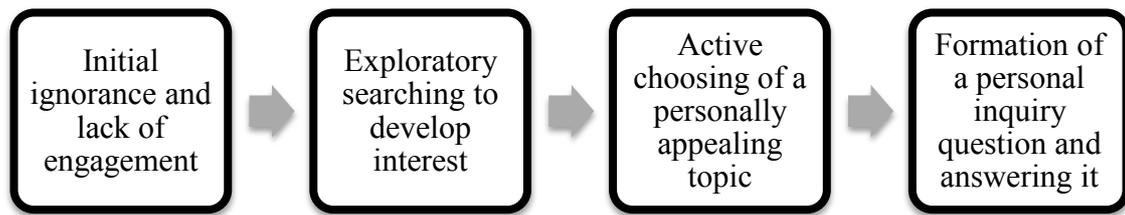
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Guided Inquiry (GI) is an emerging pedagogy used to promote deep learning with an intended focus on the Information Search Process, the autonomy of students in finding and answering their own inquiry question, and ongoing support for students from teachers and teacher librarians. There is a growing body of international research from key scholars in the teacher librarian field showing support for this method (Gordon & Todd, 2009; Kuhlthau, Maniotes, & Caspari, 2012; Todd, 2012; Todd, Gordon, & Lu, 2010; Todd, Gordon, & Lu, 2011). GI is grounded in a constructivist approach to learning based on the Information Search Process developed by extensive research from Kuhlthau (2004). This model of information seeking and using behaviour describes and documents the experience of young researchers as they engage with information. The Information Search Process has been extended (Kuhlthau, Maniotes, & Caspari, 2012) to include the Guided Inquiry Design Process using the verbs, Open, Immerse, Explore, Identify, Create and Share, and Assess to describe the actions of the inquiry community.

The pedagogy emerging around GI is very timely because of the new Australian Curriculum's emphasis on inquiry learning. However, Lupton (2012) found an absence of scaffolding to support it. The assertion of GI is that deep learning and engagement take a long time to move among the stages shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Student growth using a GI approach



Unfortunately, due to time constraints and curriculum requirements, school projects often do not allow for the take up of interest and self-directed inquiry that Guided Inquiry promotes (Garrison & Spruce, 2013).

This paper will share findings from a study investigating the use of a GI approach to support a group of Year 7 students in History and Geography at a private Catholic girls school. The main purpose of this study is to examine how students use and interpret the GI process whilst engaged in a research project in History or Geography and then how they transfer it to the other subject and engage in a similar research project six months later.

There are three data sources used in this research: students' research booklets, assessment projects, and focus group interviews. First, the students completed a research booklet documenting their process and progress whilst researching for their assessment project. This research booklet was designed by the researchers using key principles of GI (Kulthau, Maniotes, & Caspari, 2012; Todd, Kuhlthau, & Heinstrom, 2005). After the students completed the research booklets and corresponding assessment projects, the researchers used the students' reflections to create an interview guide of questions and topics to use in focus group interviews (Patton, 2002). These focus groups gave students the opportunity to elaborate on their responses and reflections from the research booklets and consider the value of GI in helping them do research. This process will be repeated for the second research

project in History and Geography in Semester 2. This paper shares preliminary findings from the first phase after the students completed the first research project in Semester 1.

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