

GUIDED DISCUSSION PLANS: SAMPLE 2

A discussion, like this one, that highlights a particular aspect of children's learning, can happen at any time. It builds on a teacher's understanding after the basic or advanced workshops, providing new insight through analysis of a new stimulus or by reviewing a stimulus they are familiar with from a new perspective.

OBJECTIVES

To better understand inquiry and what it looks like when children are exploring the properties of water.

- What is inquiry?
- What aspects of inquiry are three-, four-, or five-year-olds capable of engaging in?
- How does a teacher help children engage in inquiry?

CONTENT

Use the inquiry diagram and description from the teacher's guide. Review key points, writing them on a chart at the beginning of the meeting.

DOCUMENT MATERIALS

Excerpts from a teacher's journal (pp. 10–12 in the teacher's guide), video cued to vignettes 5 or 6, or a video vignette or series of photographs from one of your classrooms.

SAMPLE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Describe: What exactly did you see the children doing in this video vignette?

Prompt: Help them focus on a particular child by asking questions like, "And what was Linda doing?" Be sure they stick to describing the behavior, not analyzing the inquiry.

Analyze: Which inquiry skills were being used? Which science ideas were being explored?

Prompt: Can you explain why you think so? What did the teacher do to extend this experience with bubbles? Why do you think she did that? How do you think that influenced the children's thinking? What evidence was there of that? What understandings about science were evident? Where?

Conclude: What does this mean for your teaching? What do you think you will do differently next week? Why? What do you want to accomplish with your children? How will you do that? How will you know that you have succeeded?