From Teaching to Thinking: A Framework for Inquiry

Seasons of Change  ☕  Early Childhood Australia National Conference 2014
Know yourself. Open your heart to this moment.
What is your immediate response to the children’s play and conversation?
What feelings stir in you? What touches your heart as you watch and listen?
What values are ignited as you observe? What leaves you curious, eager to engage?

Take the children’s points of view.
What are the children trying to figure out? What theories are they testing? What questions are they asking?
What understandings and misunderstandings are the children drawing on? Do you see any trajectories of thought?
Any inconsistencies in their thinking? Any contradictions to explore further?

Examine the environment.
How is the organization and use of the physical space and materials impacting this situation?
How are schedules and routines influencing this experience?
How are the children building on each other’s ideas, perspectives, and contributions?

Collaborate with others to expand perspectives.
How do your co-teachers understand the meaning of the children’s play?
What insights do the children’s families have? How does this play reflect or challenge their beliefs, values, or practices?
What child development or early learning theories might you consider? What desired early learning outcomes do you see reflected?

Reflect and take action.
What action might you take to help the children see their own and each other’s ideas?
What might you do to invite the children to take a different perspective?
What might you do to deepen children’s relationships with each other, with their families, and/or with the community?
How will you continue to seek out the child’s point of view? How will you collaborate with families?
Educators and families make hypotheses about children’s theories, questions, and pursuits.

Children play and investigate.

Educators and families observe children’s play and investigations.

Educators and families plan the next provocation or invitation, and create documentation to make this round of the planning cycle visible.

Educators and families make notes and recordings and gather traces of children’s pursuits.

Educators and families study documentation.

Adapted from Pam Oken-Wright and Marty Gravett, “Big Ideas and the Essence of Intent.”

Teaching and Learning: Collaborative Exploration of the Reggio Emilia Approach
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