Suchman Inquiry

The Suchman Inquiry Model facilitates students to think through an event or problem and ask questions to find a solution. Students take an active role and engage in applying higher-order thinking skill.

Procedure:

1. Introduce a discrepant event, or a puzzling situation that challenges students to provide a theory of explanation.
2. Have students ask questions to gather data. They can only ask the teacher single questions that can be asked in a yes or no format.
3. The teacher responds to the questions to help students gather data to form an explanation. The teacher helps students to clarify as needed.
4. The teacher asks student to formalize the data and formulate an explanation. Students solve the problem with the information they have collected.

Students analyze their thinking and questioning patterns and how the information was helpful or misleading as well as how they found the solution.

Background Information

Richard Suchman’s model supports the belief that student should become autonomous, self-directed learners. This inquiry strategy presents a puzzling problem related to a concept. Suchman calls this problem a “discrepant event.” Students are then instructed that they are to propose hypotheses and ideas that would explain the phenomenon by asking questions that the teacher can answer with "Yes," "No," or "Maybe."