

Reviews

Reviews Editor: Ann Pisarevsky



Activate your students: An Inquiry based learning approach to sustainability

Author: Sharon Rushton

Publisher: Curriculum Corporation, Carlton South, Vic.

Year published: 2008

ISBN: Lower Primary: 978 1 74200 301 6

Middle Primary: 978 1 74200 302 3

Upper Primary: 978 1 74200 303 0

RRP: \$34-95

Type of book: Series of three books – thematic units with worksheets

Subject: Sustainability

Suitable for: Primary science

Reading level: Lower Year 2+ (8yo)

Middle Year 3+ (9yo)

Upper: Year 5+ (11yo)

Reviewed by: Peter Hope

As the title suggests this series of books is aimed at teaching children about sustainability. Each book covers three topics appropriate to the targeted age levels. The books promote an inquiry based approach to teaching about sustainability. There is a teacher section at the beginning of each book explaining what can be achieved using an inquiry based/problem solving approach. This is well written and very useful if you haven't used this approach before. It includes a step by step process for beginners to follow with clues for classroom setup and planning. The model fits in well with the 5Es' approach used in Primary Connections, except Sharon uses different names for each stage and has seven stages. These are: Stimulate; Activate and communicate; Plan and predict; Investigate; Record and report; Connect and finally Evaluate. The level of written language used in the lower primary worksheets is, in my opinion, a little

harder than I would expect to use with children below Year 2 or 3. The activities are generally age appropriate but the worksheets will need to be modified if used with preps or grade 1 students.

The three themes covered in the lower primary book are Creatures in the garden, A close look at plants and Underwater communities. The middle primary book themes are Communities and food, Communities and transport and Communities and their buildings. The upper primary book themes are Sustainable energy, A sustainable home environment and Sustainable agriculture for a healthier world.

The overall book presentation style is done well – it is clear and easy to read with useful illustrations when needed. There is a teacher planning guide for each theme. This includes an outline of what is to be achieved and materials required. The planning takes you through the seven steps as well as providing further suggestions and resources. The separate student worksheets are set out clearly with adequate space to record observations. At the end of each book is a two page proforma for teacher planning, a reflection and evaluation sheet and sheets to further expand the unit.

The choice of activities was really good as they will be relevant to each targeted age group. The author has selected interesting things for the students to investigate and presented them clearly. Equipment and materials are generally commonly available in a primary school.

Overall it is an excellent resource for this area of science with some very good activities which will engage a class of children and lead them to further observe and explore aspects of sustainability in a meaningful way. The activities also lend themselves to being further extended and the three books can be used as a school wide thematic or integrated approach to learning about a sustainable future.

These books are available for purchase from STAV Publishing. Refer to our advertisement in this journal, or go to our website www.stav.org.au and follow the links to STAV Publishing resources.

Mastery-based Spaced learning Problem-based Place-based Discussion-based Flipped learning Inquiry Product-oriented. We use this approach so that students can

! A teacher who begins using an inquiry-based approach can find a range of high-quality supports for each of these practices, such as the Right Question Institute on constructing questions, or the Exploratorium's Institute for Inquiry on formative assessment in science inquiry. The pedagogy can act as a cornerstone that brings together a professional community and knowledge management efforts, all geared towards developing and refining practice. Similar books and articles. Activate Your Students: An Inquiry-Based Learning Approach to Sustainability (Middle Primary) [Book Review]. Inquiry-Based Learning Introductory Course for Social Sciences has a Significant Impact on Students Subsequent Performance at McMaster University, Canada. Mick Healey - forthcoming - Inquiry: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy. Transforming Thinking: Philosophical Inquiry in the Primary and Secondary Classroom. Catherine C. McCall - 2009 - Routledge. The Effectiveness of Brain-Based Teaching Approach in Dealing with the Problems of Students' Conceptual Understanding and Learning Motivation Towards Physics. Salmiza Saleh - 2012 - Educational Studies 38 (1):19-29. Analytics. Added t