



Project Approach in Garneau School

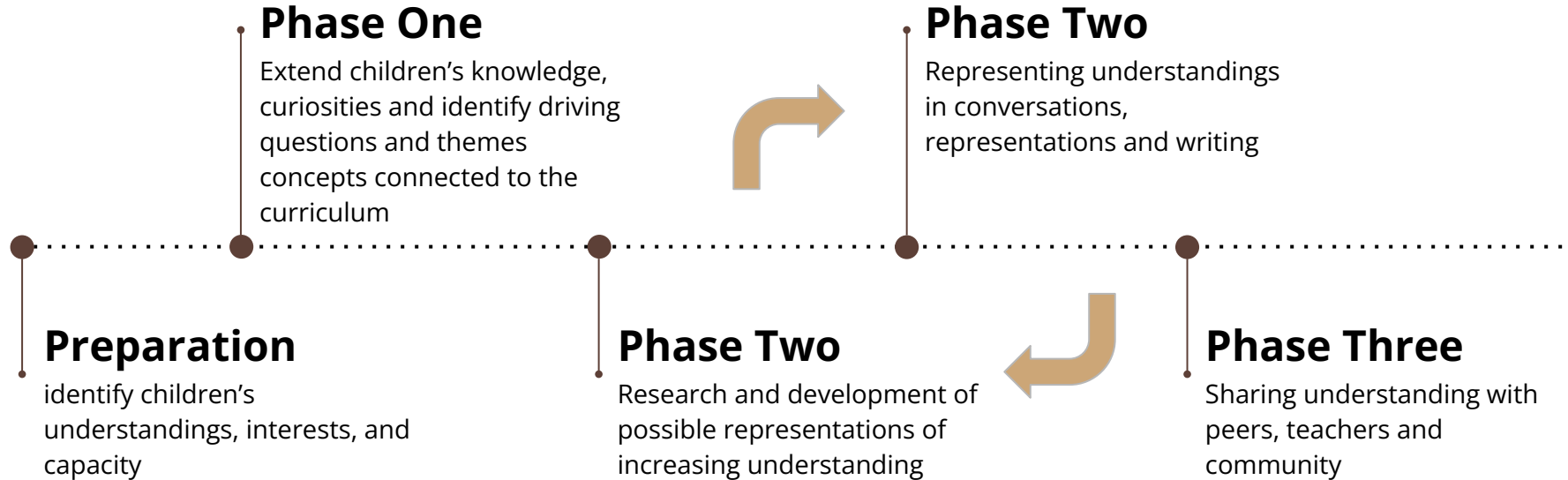


Project Framework

How you might expect the project
to unfold...



Project Phases



A brief overview...



Preparation

The beginning of a project

Before the project can begin, teachers imagine and plan for several potential project possibilities.

They think about curriculum links, depth of content, student engagement, resources availability, possible representations, field visits, experts, and lessons.

Only then do we begin to create these activities designed to explore student's curiosity to discover which project would resonate with children.



"The most valuable
resource that all
teachers have is
each other. Without
collaboration our
growth is limited to
our own
perspectives"

--Robert John Meehan



Information Gathering in and for Phase One

Provocations

Put simply, provocations provoke! They provoke thoughts, discussions, questions, interests, creativity and ideas. They can also expand on a thought, project, idea and interest.

Prototypes

Children build their first simple representation to illustrate their current understanding of the project topic with available materials. Multiple iterations throughout the project will allow them to refine their designs.

Conversations

A wide ranging class conversation about the project themes allows ideas to be explored, applied and revealed. Then with deepening inquiry a theme emerges and provides the unified foundation for the project.

Exploring ideas authentically

...field visits, games, inventions, challenges, guests, artifacts and more!





Phase One

Inspiring a classroom of kids to share what they know and where they want to go!

Teacher's strengthen and deepen students understanding around the central theme of the project, a unified learning narrative is nourished. At the same time, a narrowing down of individual topics of interest for small groups and independent students.

Research techniques, note taking skills, expository writing and curricular concepts are directly taught and applied. Inquiry skills and dialogic learning are also emphasized.



Phase One Learning



Curriculum

Children are taught curriculum to help them frame their research, craft their writing, ask the deepest questions, specific outcomes ...



Skills

Often specific skills are needed for project success... field notes, research techniques, group collaboration.... etc.



Inquiry

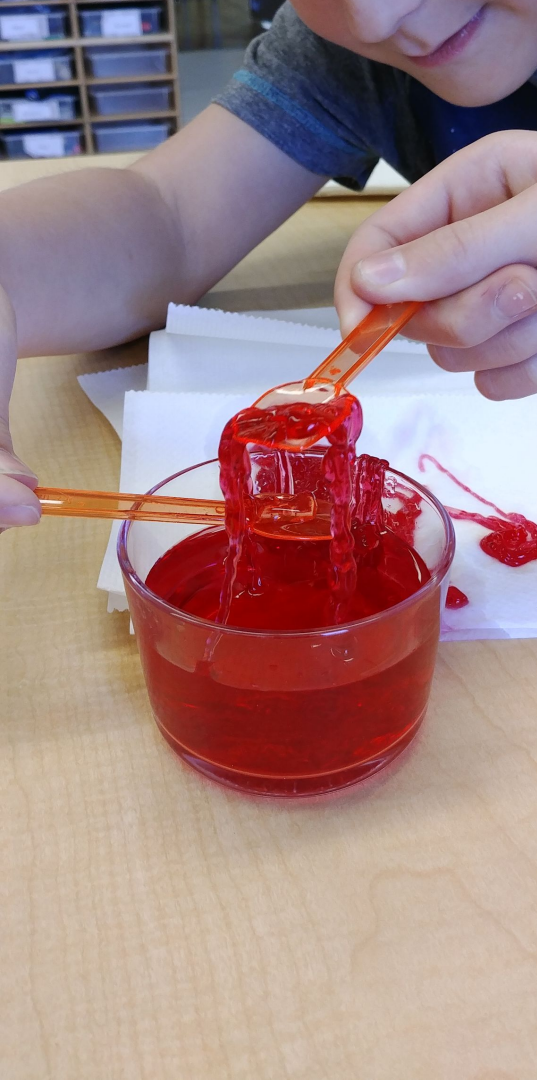
Deep questioning strategies are taught and modeled, driving questions are formed, explored in and out of the classroom.



Project Steps

Expectations of quality, timelines and tasks are identified, the steps of the project are clearly outlined.

(Can be in Phase 2, too)



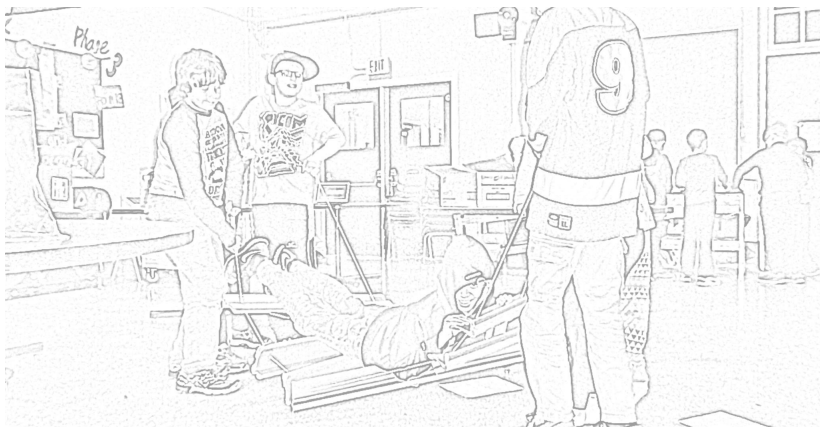
Field Visits & Experts

Inspiring
curiosity

Children become intrigued by specific aspects of a topic and delve into the ideas and concepts surrounding it.

They are encouraged to ask deep questions and consider implications to their wider world. The capacity to ask sophisticated questions is very important.

Considering the impact of ideas is a profound driver to learning in our older children. They learn that intellectual play is fulfilling and engages them on multiple levels.



Inquiry Skills

"Inquiry ... requires more than simply answering questions or getting a right answer. It espouses investigation, exploration, search, quest, research, pursuit, and study. It is enhanced by involvement with a community of learners, each learning from the other in social interaction."



Dialogic learning

"Dialogic teaching harnesses the power of talk to stimulate and extend pupils' thinking and advance their learning and understanding.". It empowers the children through their voice.

There's solid evidence that American students do well when they are encouraged to think for themselves and expected to collaborate with one another. In a report last year, the American Institutes for Research concluded that students who attended so-called deeper learning high schools — which emphasize understanding, not just memorizing, academic content; applying that understanding to novel problems and situations; and developing interpersonal skills and self-control — recorded higher test scores, were more likely to enroll in college and were more adept at collaboration than their peers in conventional schools.

- David L. Kirp, "Make School A Democracy," NY Times



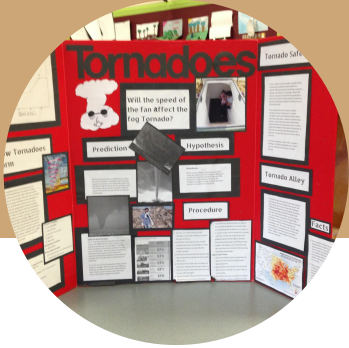
Phase Two

Research,
Represent and
Repeat!



A magical blend of curiosity, collaboration, and developing expertise fuels children. When children have purpose and 'agency', then they feel an intrinsic motivation to reach their potential. Along the way they encounter a heady array of obstacles... difficult materials, uncooperative partners, time constraints, scarcity and demanding teachers!

Phase Two Learning



Research

Children are taught curriculum to help them deepen their research, and time is provided for in-depth understanding.



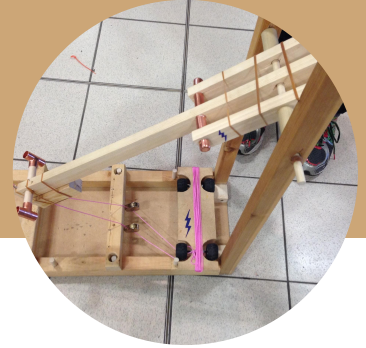
Writing

Expository writing, sentence structures, vocabulary and modeling of writing techniques are emphasized with specific direct feedback.



Representation

Deepening understanding and tangling with how to represent ideas in their projects helps children identify further avenues of research.

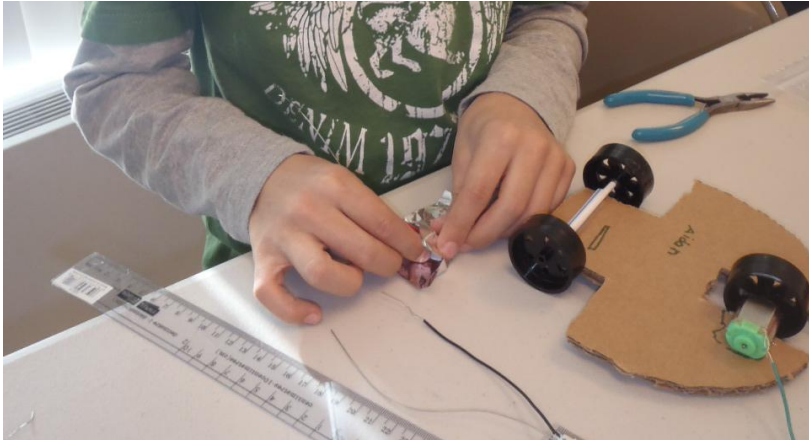


Problem Solving

Problems with materials, time constraints, and communicate ideas clearly add authenticity to projects and builds children's grit!

Children's voice and choice

Honouring children's personal capacities allows them to learn from a position of strength. It is an essential component of their ownership over their project.





Research Process

Research and Expertise

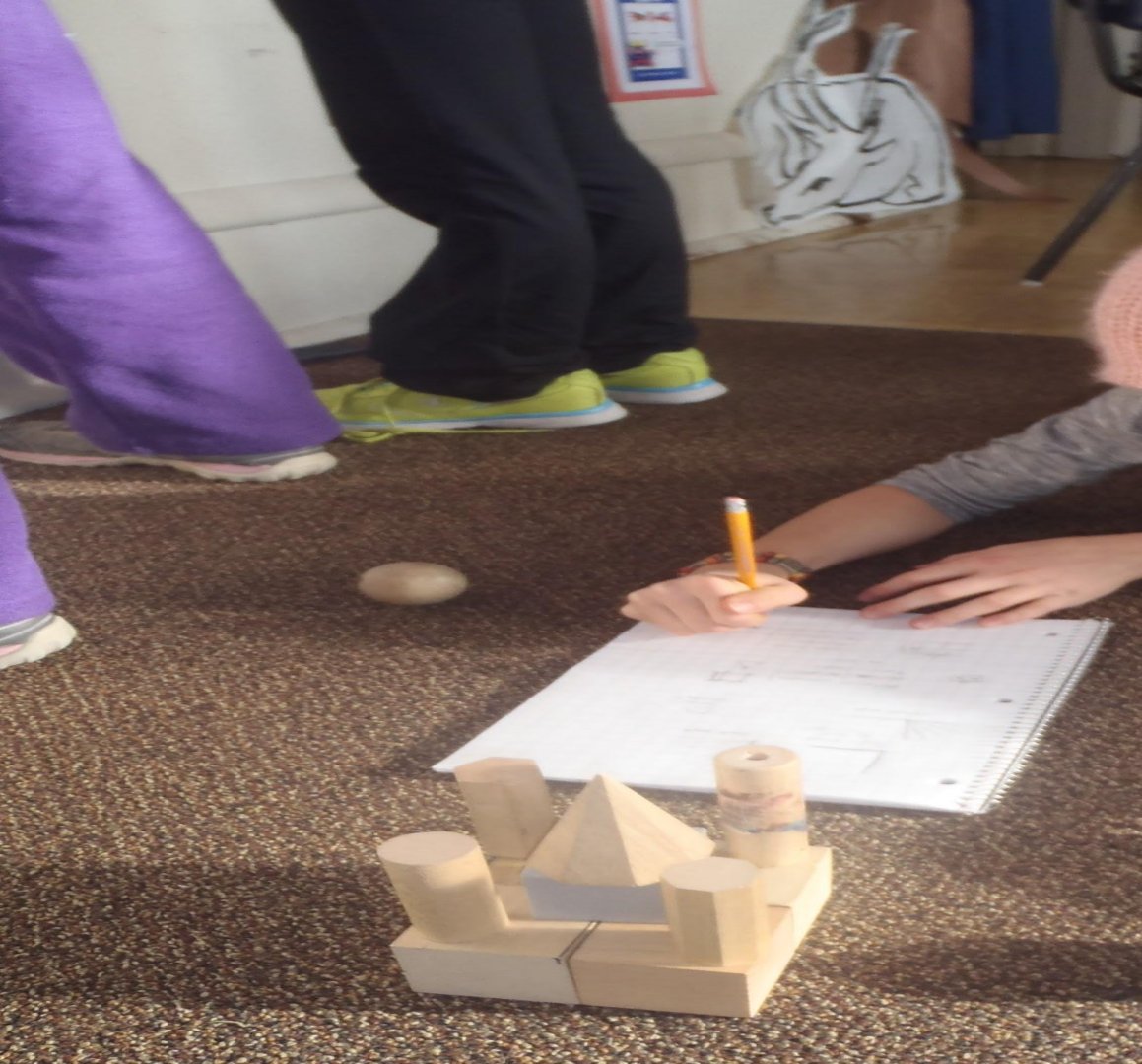
Using a specific driving question to develop personal expertise in an area of the project theme. Gathering information from books and websites

Field Visits, Experts and Artifacts

Authentic learning comes from direct experience and connection with real world experiences and applications.

Extensive Resources

Websites, games, rich books and first class library are vital resources



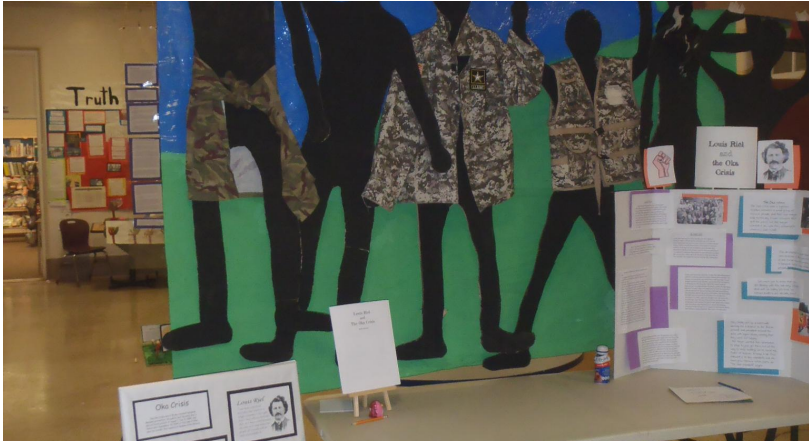
I developed a broader theory of what separates the two general classes of learners—helpless versus mastery-oriented... The helpless ones believe that intelligence is a fixed trait: you have only a certain amount, and that's that. I call this a "fixed mind-set." Mistakes crack their self-confidence because they attribute errors to a lack of ability, which they feel powerless to change...

The mastery-oriented children, on the other hand, think intelligence is malleable and can be developed through education and hard work. They want to learn above all else.

- Carol Dweck, "The Secret to Raising Smart Kids," *Scientific American*

Relationships

...it isn't only about calling teachers by their first name or a sense of mutual respect. It is also recognizing that true learning, deep learning, needs a learning community. Where individualism is honoured but so are compromises to the needs of a whole learning community.



Representations

Many ways to communicate understanding (100 voices)

Throughout this time we build children's ability to express themselves, through design, inquiry and encouraging added details, creativity, ingenuity and mastery of materials.

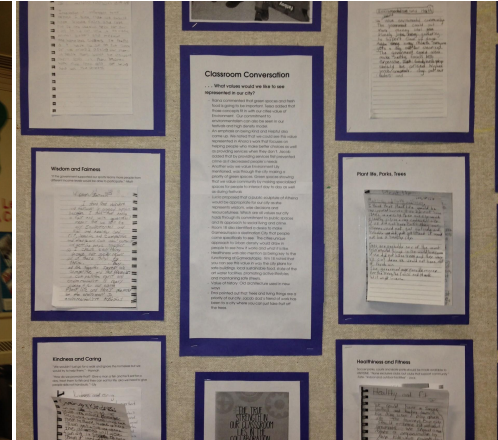
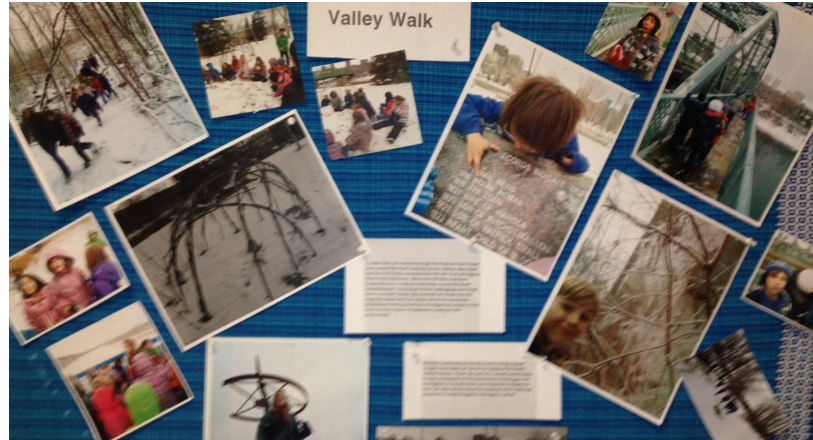
Iterations

Designing and redesigning representations, constantly deepens children's understanding. It helps them identify their intention.



Pedagogical Documentation

Teacher's honouring the learning processes in project through attentive analytical listening. Communicating these to families via bulletin boards.



Presentation Process

Thesis Statements

Students form and share their information with a specific perspective. They aren't only conveying information, they have a purpose to their communication.

Crafting Communication

They purposely design and craft their presentation for their audience

Polished Representations

Children have polished their work to the best of their ability. Essays, pictures, models and presentation boards illustrate their understanding.



Phase Three Celebration of Learning



Experts

Children become the experts. They share their knowledge and understanding with one another.



Exemplars

Children's work set new authentic standards for each other. The work you admire becomes a standard you wish to achieve.



Inquiry

Children become curious about new information and learn new creative ways to approach ideas. They inspire one another.

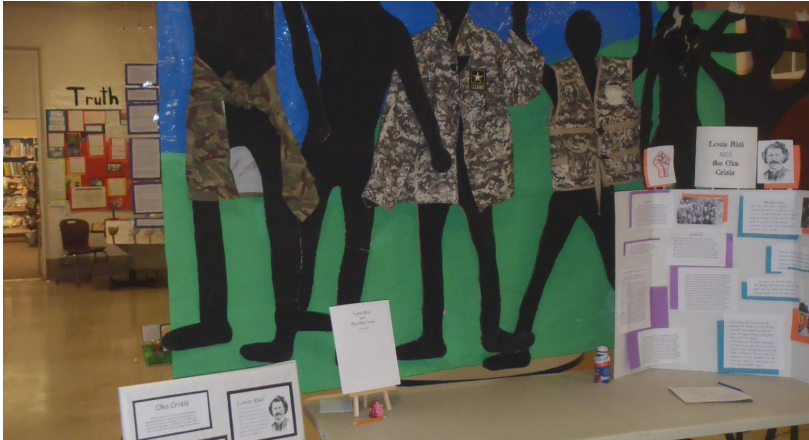


Theatre

We remember the big moments! These are standout moments that cement the importance of information and innovation.

Deeeep Learning

...is not only memorable, it improves academic results in the long term.



Families Help

They attend celebrations, volunteer for more field trips, find odd materials for classrooms, connect teacher's with interesting experts, and often volunteer in the classroom nearing project celebration times.



**Please contact Garneau School Office
if you have any questions about our
program and enrolment.**

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