

EXPLORE

QUESTION

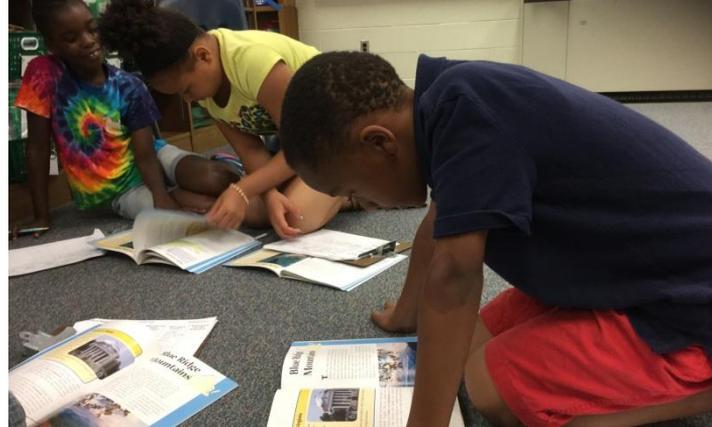
COLLECT & CREDIT

UNDERSTAND

COMMUNICATE

Teams of **librarians, reading specialists, and instructional technology coaches** planned and implemented inquiry experiences for students at the end of the school year. Their goals?

- To develop an **easy-to-use template** for planning inquiry projects; and
- To test a **team approach** to guiding student learning.



Regions of Virginia

General Stanford librarian **Tonia Eriksen** and a McIntosh team (librarian **Yvette Melendez**, reading specialist **Kelly Erickson**, and ITC **Maggie Knight**) developed an inquiry experience for third graders on the **regions of Virginia**. They introduced the concept of “regions” by touring the school to examine the characteristics, people, and functions associated with regions of the school like the cafeteria and bus lanes.

Next, students worked in teams to find information about the regions of Virginia, tackling one region in a 90-minute session each day. Students organized information using criteria for determining importance. Learning outcomes included:

- **Conceptual understanding** of a region as a place;
- Improved skill in using **text features** to find information;
- **Social skills** for learning together and self-regulation; and
- **Pride** in accomplishment as they presented their learning to other third graders.

	Where is it?	What happens there?	What does this place look like?	What was it used for?	What people go with that place?
Coastal Plain region	Eastern Virginia Chesapeake Bay Atlantic Ocean	go to the beach swim in the ocean	It is flat has oysters has a ocean clay crabs River	for a beach for people to swim for a climate	kids lifeguard people adults
Piedmont region	By the Chesapeake Bay	We use tobacco in Virginia In the present	Has a water fall big rocks has big trees on the edges	tobacco products	Farmer's



2014-2015 Inquiry Team

- Joy Barclay and Sarah Garrity, Hilton
- Nina Chapman, Magruder
- Jan Clause and Rhonda Lane, Riverside
- Deb Eggers, Richneck
- Kelly Erickson, Maggie Knight, and Yvette Melendez, McIntosh
- Tonia Eriksen, General Stanford
- Kim Grizzle and Jessica Winkley, Nelson
- Lisa Horrell, Deer Park
- Claudine Payne, Carver
- Analiese Smith and Sarah Garrity, Dutrow
- Melanie Toran, An Achievable Dream
- Michelle Tunstall, Jenkins

Oh the Places You'll Go!

Principal **Melody Camm** challenged Nelson students to become experts on topics of personal interest. Librarian **Jessica Winkley** and reading specialist **Kim Grizzle** developed an inquiry process format to help each student discover and learn more about his or her passion. At a school-wide expo on June 12, students shared their knowledge with the entire school community. Topics covered a huge range of interests, including soccer, horses, fashion designers, Paris, Anne Frank, and even eyelash mites.

Above **Camden** (left) shares what she has learned police dogs with **Ian** and **Juan**, as part of a larger investigation into law enforcement. When asked why her group worked on this topic, she said, "We all want to be cops when we grow up. We thought protecting the world would be cool."

Learning to work together

Students worked in groups to research their topics and prepare their presentations. **Camden** explained, "We learned how to work together. Once you get the hang of it, its better. Sometimes you don't get along with people but sometimes you just have to try. " A benefit of working together, she says, is "you take some ideas from them."

Future Plans

In school year 2015-2016, **Mary Keeling**, project coordinator, plans to recruit and develop cross-disciplinary inquiry teams at eight elementary schools to support widespread use of inquiry learning practices.

Inquiry learning is powerful because it shifts the focus from a right or wrong answer to the process of learning and investigation. Kids say that learning this way is fun because it taps into their interests and experiences. Working together to guide inquiry helps teachers get smarter, too. Inquiry teams realize they share common goals, and that collaboration creates powerful synergy. Using the Inquiry Process is a smart way to help our students and teachers achieve success.

The Lilead Fellows Program provides support for this project. The Lilead Fellows Program is an advanced and intensive professional development program designed to empower, enable, and equip school district library supervisors to think differently about their library programs and to be effective and inspirational leaders for change in their districts.