Facilitating Open Inquiry with Gifted Learners Using Wassermann's Play-Debrief-Replay

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Session Goals:

- To provide student-centered learning experiences for gifted students by using Wassermann's Play-Debrief-Replay method of open inquiry.

- To examine ways in which Wassermann's Play-Debrief-Replay method of inquiry can be purposefully embedded in curriculum and instruction.

*photo courtesy of thetechyteacher.com

• Dr. Selma Wassermann, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada - Professor Emerita of Simon Fraser University, Faculty of Education, author of numerous books and articles on teaching for critical thinking, creator of an iPad app called My Word! Reader, and honored by the Harvard School of Business for her leadership in promoting case method teaching. Dr. Wassermann is currently co-authoring a book about mindsets and their impact on learning, growth, and social change.

Play, Debrief, Replay is a teaching method developed by Dr. Wassermann and Dr. Ivany while they were working at Simon Fraser University.

- Dr. J.W. George Ivany's field of expertise is science education. He was on the faculty of the Teacher's College, Columbia University, New York (1966-1974), including two years as head of the Department of Science Education. He was Dean of Education at Memorial University (1974-1977). He then joined the faculty and administration of Simon Fraser University as Dean of the Faculty of Education (1977-1984) and Academic Vice-President and Provost (1984-1989). He was appointed as the University of Saskatchewan's seventh President in November 1989, and served two terms, until 1999. Memorial University of Newfoundland awarded Dr. Ivany an honorary Doctor of Laws in 1990. http://library.usask.ca

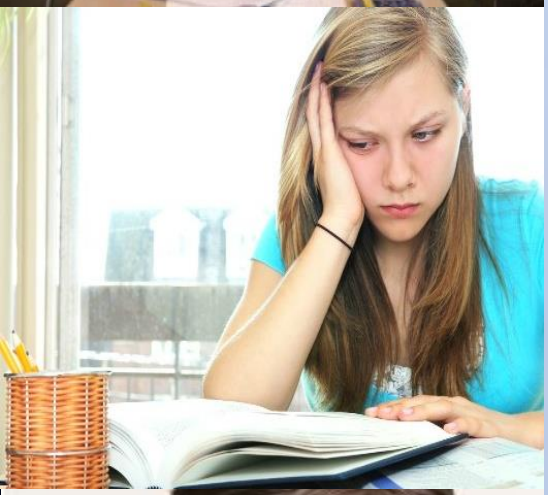
The Can-do Child

"When we thoughtfully allow children the full range of their own attempts to do for themselves, the foundations of can-do are demonstrably established, producing energetic, resourceful, inventive, capable, fully functioning adults."

~Dr. Selma Wassermann

From *Serious Players in the Primary Classroom: Empowering Children Through Active Learning Experiences*

2015 Virginia Beach City Public Schools



But…

"When we do not allow this growth to take its natural course, we get the opposite result: dependent, submissive, handicapped adults who are imprisoned by fears of failure, by their conviction that they cant do."

~Dr. Selma Wassermann

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PLAY

The Teacher's Role:

- Sets up the "play" experience as a basis for promoting reflection and increasing students' understanding of the "big ideas."
- During the "play" the teacher simply observes and gathers anecdotal notes. It is not until the debriefing stage that the teacher takes an active role, facilitating reflection.
- The teacher circulates and is responsive to questions (in an open-ended way), but does not make evaluative comments or direct the students' investigations in any way.

The Student's Role:

PLAY

- Freely experiments (or "plays") with the materials.
- Actively involved in learning. They are talking to each other, sharing ideas, speculating, laughing, and getting excited about what they have found.
- Takes notes (including pictures/diagrams) regarding what they put together and what they find. It is a good habit to take notes while experimenting and students do indeed refer to their notes often while reporting on what they found.

DEBRIEF

The Teacher's Role:

- Facilitates reflection- Debriefing may spontaneously start, as students gather and then start to talk with their peers about what they found.
- Towards the end of debriefing, the teacher provides a focus on one aspect of students' investigations, and ask them to think about how they can delve deeper and solve one problem or answer one question they have. By the end of debriefing, most students have a specific question to answer and a specific way to test it. Students may be regrouped with others who have similar questions.

The Student's Role:

DEBRIEF

- Reports to others on what has been discovered, and to discuss (without judgment) similarities and differences in results.
- Thoughtfully considers "next steps" regarding a more focused question/problem to pursue during the "replay" component.

REPLAY

The Teacher's Role:

- The teacher continues to observe, gather formative data, and respond to students' questions (in an open-ended way).
- This is a time where teachers can emphasize use of controls, repeating experiments, and rigorous experimentation to obtain solid results (positive or negative).

The Student's Role:

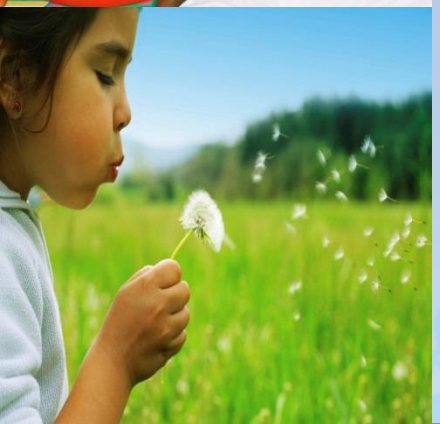
REPLAY

- Students return to the materials, focusing on their question/problem identified during the "debrief."
- Students that did not come up with a question/problem to focus on are encouraged to continue free exploration of the materials.
- Students again take notes on what they set up and the results they get. An optional additional "debrief" can follow, or students can respond in a science process journal/exit ticket, write up their focused investigation, and/or share new questions.

Open-ended questions designed to encourage students to describe, reflect upon, and evaluate their discoveries/investigations:

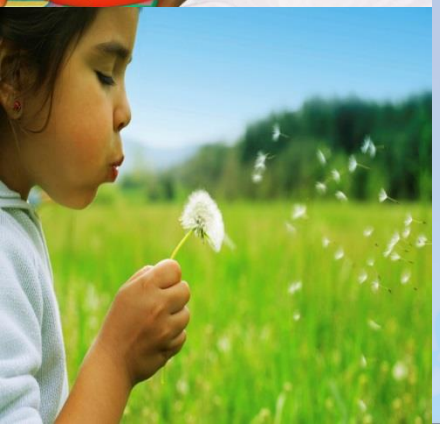
PLAY

- What can you find out about … by exploring with these materials?
- What tools do you have available for making observations about…?
- What types of things are you noticing as you explore your materials?
- Why do you think … ?
- What do you think … means?
- How do you know …?
- What questions do you have based on the observations you are making?
- What predictions can be made?



Possible questions for use during the Debrief:

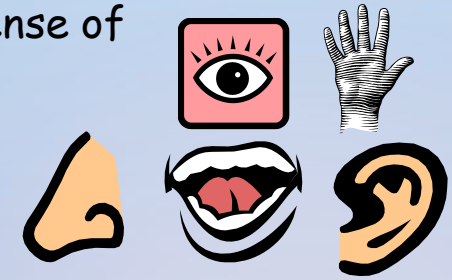
- How might you need to revisit your investigation?
- In what ways might you find/discover the answers to your questions?
- Explain how (a theory, problem, or question) can be tested.
- Do you have other ideas?
- What types of data can you collect?
- What can you infer from the data?
- What data support your ideas?



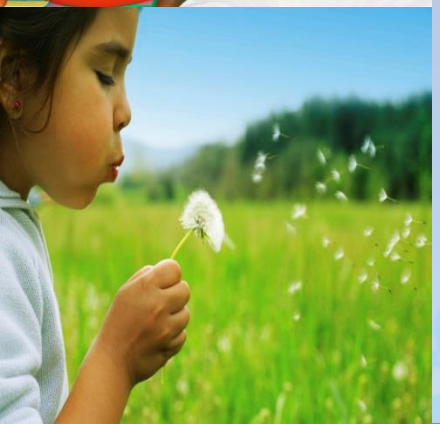
Possible questions for use during Replay:

- What would happen if …?
- What other ideas do you have for…?
- How else could this be used?
- What alternatives have you considered?
- What do your results mean?
- What is the best way to communicate your findings so that they can be clearly understood?
- What is of value about your exploration/investigation?
- Who are some of the people that would be interested in your findings?

K-1 Graphic Organizer for Play-Debrief-Replay and Generating Questions

	I will use my sense of  as I explore and make <u>observations</u>.	  Here are my discoveries and questions.
My notes using pictures, words or combination		

Here's What! PLAY	So What? Debrief	Now What? Replay

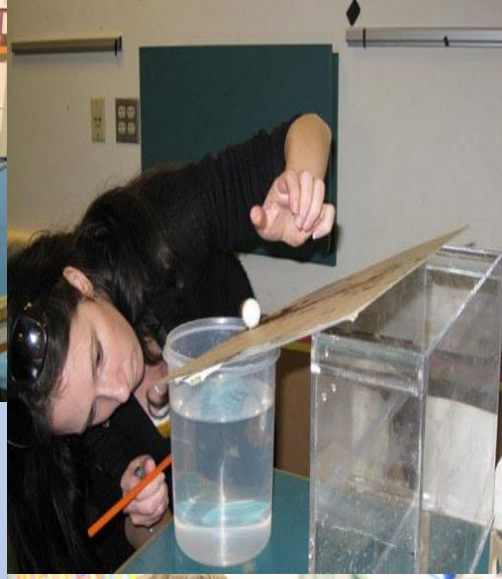


Let's take a look…

Question for consideration:

In what ways will the purposeful infusion of Wassermann's Play-Debrief-Replay in curriculum, instruction, and assessment, help us meet the affective and cognitive needs of gifted learners?




"Never underestimate children, for, if you do, you are bound to be surprised. In a classroom where principles of empowerment underlie students learning experiences, the potential for growth is vast, and the surprises for teachers who choose to follow this course of action are heady. Perhaps this is what makes teaching children so worthwhile." ~Selma Wassermann