

Do You Have an “Inquiry-Based Classroom”?

As an educator, I assume EVERYONE would like to develop an “Inquiry-Based Classroom”. In my first two decades of teaching my classroom evolved into an inquiry-based environment. I focused on teaching critical thinking skills, the scientific process, and empowering my students to question, design projects, evaluate results, reflect and continue the questioning process. It took time, resources, curriculum integration, research and a full-time commitment to reflect and improve the program.

Then, I was introduced to Kerry Ruef and David Melody and their innovative, thinking by analogy, interdisciplinary program.....**THE PRIVATE EYE.** (Go to: www.theprivateeye.com)

My third decade in the trenches was most rewarding. Using **The Private Eye** program from Day 1 to Day 182 gave every student in my class the opportunity to grow academically, socially, and personally. All of the research-based higher order thinking skills-thinking by analogy, theorizing, creative analysis, critical thinking and practicing the Scientific Processes became common place in my “Inquiry-Based Classroom”. Daily use across the curriculum gave my students opportunities to explore, question and understand concepts and content through various modalities not taught through rote, generic programs. The phrase “Less is More” took on a real-life meaning.

The Private Eye process develops “Habit of Mind” through “Thinking and Looking by Analogy”. Your classroom will be transformed into a world of theorists, artists, inventors, poets and curious, fun-loving, life-long learners. A 5X jeweler’s loupe, a couple of thought provoking questions inspiring analytical responses are all you need to spawn your “Inquiry-Based Classroom”.

Thank you Kerry and David, your commitment to excellence in education is exemplary! Every educator, world-wide deserves to be introduced to **The Private Eye**.

Why The Private Eye? **The Private Eye** is cost-effective (less than \$200 per classroom), challenging, fun, and a mind-provoking, interdisciplinary program that makes average teachers above-average and above-average teachers exemplary. Student growth in vocabulary development, writing skills, artistic talents, comprehension, communication, creativity, self-respect, academic performance and natural curiosity are products of using **The Private Eye** in an “Inquiry-Based Classroom”.

Teachers can implement **The Private Eye** with relatively simple, teacher-friendly lessons that **WORK!!**

The Private Eye can be woven into the first quarter hour of the day with a focus tailored to the curriculum. Using **The Private Eye** process, interdisciplinary lessons can take a writing assignment, understanding math/science concepts, reading comprehension/comparison questions and scale and structure drawings to higher levels.

The last ten classroom minutes can reflect on a summary of the notes, products and assessments to focus on the day's accomplishments. This opportunity crystalizes thoughts that can be used to answer the universal question, "What did you learn in school today?"

Developing an "Inquiry-Based Classroom" should be the goal of every educator, our students deserve it! **The Private Eye's** research-based, integrative approach focusing on student and teacher achievement is a win-win proposal.

I sincerely hope that everyone reading this letter gives **The Private Eye** a chance in their schools.

Sincerely,

Jeff Self, Retired Elementary Teacher

Recipient of the Presidential Award in Math and Science, CA 1990