



The Curious Garden

Natasha Burgess
Marysville Elementary

The Goal

To encourage children to explore their local community, express their curiosity, and focus their attention on the small, living things all around them

The Practice

1. Take students on a community walk. Stop often, taking time to examine underneath rocks, inside the cracks in the sidewalk, and in garden beds.
2. Read the story, **"The Curious Garden"** by Peter Brown. Pause while reading to discuss what is happening in the story, and ask about connections students may have to the character.
3. Explain that some stories are based on real-life, and show pictures of the real curious garden along New York's Highline.
4. Take students back out in the community with the goal of finding unusual places for plants to grow. Select a spot that students could experiment with caring for the plants growing in that location. Review the ways that Liam helps his garden grow.

Recommended Resources & Supplies

"The Curious Garden", by Peter Brown
Images of New York City's Highline

Why it Works

Students are inspired by to story as they look for their own examples of unusual places for things to grow!

Assessment Strategies

Anecdotal notes recorded after initial walk, during story, and during second community walk. Focus observations on connecting, questioning, predicting/infering, retelling, and reflecting (based on SmartLearning ASK Reading and Responding Tool)

Student reflection (self assessment) based on big ideas, curricular competencies and core competencies targeted (see right column).

Extensions

Listen and watch students closely to pick up on inquiries they may wish to explore further. Topics of interest may include, but are not limited to: the plant life cycle, insects, soil, garden tools, rocks, historical buildings, restoration, community building through gardening.

Discuss the difference between native and non-native plants, and have students identify the plants in this area.



Book Ideas

Core Competencies

I collaborate to plan, carry out, and review constructions and activities.

I generate and develop ideas.

I contribute to my community and care for the environment.

Big Ideas/Content

Curiosity and wonder lead us to new discoveries about ourselves and the world around us. (English Language Arts)

Daily and seasonal changes affect all living things. (Science)

Strong communities are the result of being connected to family and community and working together toward common goals. (Career Education)

Curricular Competencies

Use personal experience and knowledge to connect to stories and other texts to make meaning. (ELA)

Experience and interpret the local environment. (S)

Work respectfully and constructively with others to achieve common goals. (CE)

Natasha's Words of Wisdom

Watch and listen closely. Allow children to bring you into their world of curiosity, wonder, and joy.



Math Wonder Walks

Leslie Leitch and Biz Tupper
Nakusp Elementary School

The Goal

Our goal is to connect math with real life learning experiences in our community. The connections include career awareness and math problem solving that involves expression using words/explanations, pictures/graphics, numbers/symbols and real life scenarios.

The Practice

Wonder Walk Prep Talk- A typical math day begins with a brief intro in the classroom that connects a location in the community with a career option. We have a brief discussion about what we might encounter on our walk and various types of math that might be appropriate to express our findings.

In the morning, while talking about the upcoming Wonder Walk, we create a Wonder Walk Organizer on the board and ask, "I wonder what kind of math a ____ (insert name of a career e.g. "baker") ____ uses".

Wonder Walk – 30 minutes. Students carry a clipboard, Wonder Walk Organizer worksheet and a pencil.

Problem Solving

Upon returning to the classroom, students begin recording their ideas on the Wonder Walk Organizer that has been tailored over the past year to meet our needs. Students are expected to demonstrate their math understanding using the four quadrants in order to gain thorough knowledge of the concept.

Real life situations

Students actively search for math in the environment, pull ideas from their heads and collaborate with friends and their teacher to help them make sense of what they discover on our walks and connect it to real life concerns. Initially, students connected irrelevant objects in an attempt to 'make math'. Now, they search for meaning in the math that they see in the community. They see math as an attempt to make meaning, rather than simply jumping through hoops to 'finish their math'. The kids really own their math.

Numbers and symbols

Students explore their math question using numbers, symbols and labels. It includes equations and expressions.

Words, reminders

This section offers definitions and explanations about the rest of the content and processes on the page. It includes attributes, descriptions, vocabulary captions, titles, and labels.

Pictures, graphics

These may be in the form of T-charts, number lines, various types of graphs, drawings, models and representations of manipulatives.

Wrap up Time

This includes completing/adjusting the lesson that began before the walk and independent student work.

Why it Works

It requires the students to actively seek and support math concepts in the environment. They

are required to choose, analyze and present information. They are not regurgitating information; they are constructing knowledge. They make meaning by necessity. It is very obvious when their work doesn't make sense; then they fix it! This awareness continues to grow, and it points to the success of what we are doing.

Recommended Resources & Supplies

Wonder Walk Organizer

by Leslie Leitch & Biz Tupper

Assessment Strategies

Student self-assessment, observations during math class, conversations on math walks, individual math conferences, occasional collection and marking of Wonder Walk worksheets, occasional quizzes using the same format.

[Download Wonder Walk Organizer](#)

Core Competencies

I can understand and share information. (C)

I can represent my learning and make connections. (C)

I can reflect on and evaluate my thinking. (T)

I can identify problems and generate solution ideas. (P/S)

I can take ownership of my goals, learning and behaviour (P/S)

Big Ideas/Content

Decimals, fractions, and percents are used to represent and describe parts and wholes of numbers

Computational fluency and flexibility with numbers extend to operations with integers and decimals.

Linear relations can be represented in many

connected ways to identify regularities and make generalizations.

The constant ratio between the circumference and diameter of circles can be used to describe, measure, and compare spatial relationships.

Data from circle graphs can be used to illustrate proportion and to compare and interpret.

Curricular Competencies

Coming soon

Leslie & Biz's Words of Wisdom

Daily Wonder Walk math totally supports the redesigned curriculum through: flexible learning environments each day, personalized learning through choice of topic, inquiry by searching for career ideas and math concepts in the environment, cross-curricular study, active engagement, change, math literacy, Know, Understand, Do (the curriculum model), concept-based, competency driven