Study Guide

LOVE THE QUESTIONS
Reclaiming Research
with Curiosity and Passion

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Foreword by Linda Rief

Professional development training for teachers provided by Stenhouse Publishers

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Summary

Cathy Fraser believes that school research projects should be less like a chore and more like police investigations. In *Love the Questions: Reclaiming Research with Curiosity and Passion,* she describes ways to engage middle and secondary students from the outset, fanning the flames of their curiosity and passion.
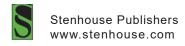
Accessible and full of classroom stories, this book provides strategies that capture the possibilities of genuine inquiry. In this book, you will learn how to:

- honor students' passions, interests, and specific questions

- teach students to frame relevant questions throughout the research process

- embrace inquiry, curiosity, and exploration

- develop authentic projects; including surveys, experiments, and interviews

- work collaboratively with school librarians to benefit teachers and students

- move beyond memorization assessment to assessment designed to help students learn and grow

Cathy offers minilessons, tools for practice, graphic organizers, and student work examples to help you transform student research projects into creative investigations.

The following are suggestions to help educators read, write, discuss, and extend the ideas from *Love the Questions* into the classroom. These ideas will come to life as teachers are given opportunities to put them into practice.

With that in mind, we have developed discussion questions, pulled provocative quotes, and provided professional development ideas from each chapter. These resources will enable participants to reflect on the text as well as the writing lives of their students. The suggestions offered in this guide are designed to foster collaboration and spark new thinking.

Introduction

Discussion/Sharing

- What does research look like and sound like in your classroom?

- What are your beliefs around student research projects?

- What do you hope to achieve by exploring this book?

A Video Introduction to Cathy Fraser and *Love the Questions*

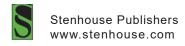https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nN-ulmkiuGo

As you view the video clip, jot down your thinking on a two-column note. What are you thinking? What do you wonder?

Introductory Reading Excerpt

- Read the introduction to *Love the Questions*.

- Read the list of ways to promote improved research at the secondary level on page 4 and respond to these ideas.

Quotes Worth Discussing

"When we see this process played out, we discover that research is not linear, but recursive." – page 1

"Some of the most precious aspects of research are setbacks, curiosity, and revisiting questions and information for new understanding and discovery." – page 3

"If we want students to internalize and transform our content, let them research." – page 4

Putting Ideas into Practice (5 Minutes)

What is one concept you will continue to think about after today? Jot down your thinking in a journal.

Chapter 1
A Question of Content: Topic vs. Inquiry-Based Projects

Discussion/Sharing

- What are some typical research projects you assign to students?

- What role does student choice have in the research process?

- Read Figure 1.3: "Hunting for the youth" (pages 20–21). What do you notice in reading this student paper? What do you wonder?

Reading Excerpt

- Read the section titled "Making an Invisible Process Visible" on pages 6–12.

- Look at Figures 1.1 and 1.2, the "What" Model and the "Recursive" Model. What do you notice? What do you wonder?

- How is Cathy's approach to research with students similar and/or different to yours?
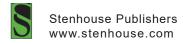
Quotes Worth Discussing

"If we want our students to transform information, then we must get them to a place where there is a much heftier question that leads to higher-order and critical thinking about information." – page 6

"For research to be real, there must be discovery and a transformation of the information into something new, hence creating knowledge; this is represented in my drawing as a plate of warm cookies." – page 9

"Research begins with inquiry." – page 18

Putting Ideas into Practice

- Take a minute and compose a list of research projects you typically assign to students. Keep these projects in mind as you work through the text and integrate new thinking into your practice.

- What is one concept you will continue to think about after today? Record your thinking in a journal.

Chapter 2
Where Do Questions Come From?

Discussion/Sharing

- What strategies do you use to spark curiosity in students?

- How do you create a culture of inquiry in the classroom?

- What are your thoughts on students generating their own questions to guide research?

- Read the student SMART goal paper, Figure 2.1: Remaking a Dream (pages 25–31). What do notice? What do you wonder?

Reading Excerpt

- Read the section "Espousing a Culture of Inquiry" on pages 37–41.

- What connections can you make with the text?

Quotes Worth Discussing

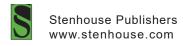*"Every study I've ever read ends with more questions and identifies areas in need of further study."* – page 24

"Questions that come from students directly have the best impact on their

learning." – page 39

"Real research leads to discovery." – page 39

Putting Ideas into Practice

What is one concept you will continue to think about after today and might try in your classroom? Reflect on your list of research projects that you typically assign. Choose one of these projects and reconsider it as you work through this book. What role might student-generated questions play in the project? Jot down your thinking in a journal.

Chapter 3
Have a Plan

Discussion/Sharing

- What role do student-generated questions play in your assigned research projects?

- How do you plan for research in the classroom?
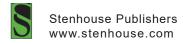
Reading Excerpt

- Read the "Benefits of Planning Research" section on pages 52–55.

- Study the chart that examines closed inquiry research against open inquiry research. What did you notice? What did you wonder?

- How might you front load the research process for students?

Toolbox

- A mind map is a visual strategy for students to connect multiple facets of a topic and see where their thinking takes them. Figures 3.2–3.4 are examples of mind maps. Choose a topic and try this strategy out.

- Graphic organizers can support students as they respond to different texts. Look through the organizers shared in this chapter.

  o double-entry journal

  o reaction to Resources organizer

  o information Search organizer

Quotes Worth Discussing

"In fact, Murray spent most of his career promoting the idea that writing should be taught as a process with emphasis on the learning and discovery rather than the product." – page 52
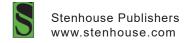
"In the spirit of Don Murray and Donald Graves, I submit that for research to become the valuable learning experience it should be, we must focus our efforts on teaching and celebrating the process rather than showing our students that we only value the product (and that the product had better reflect our content and be properly formatted)." – page 52

"We need to help students frame the nature of their inquiries before we set them loose at a computer." – page 56

Putting Ideas into Practice

How do students plan for research? How might you tweak the plan of an existing research project? Between sessions, try the strategy of mind mapping with students. Jot your thinking down in a journal.

Chapter 4
The Importance of Strong Comprehension Skills in Research

Discussion/Sharing (10 Minutes)

- How do you support students in comprehension as they work through complex texts?

- How is your thinking about research in the classroom changing?

Reading Excerpt (15 Minutes)

Read the "Complex, Discipline-Specific Language and Texts" section on pages 84–85. What do you notice? What do you wonder?
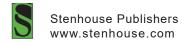
Toolbox Strategy- Making Thinking Visible (15 Minutes)

- Reread the section "Reading Strategies: Making Thinking Visible" on pages 85–89.

  o Cathy shares several strategies from Cris Tovani that support making our thinking visible (pages 85–86). Choose one of the strategies to try for yourself as the learner. Additionally, try it out in the classroom with students.

  o What did you notice? What did you wonder?

- Think of upcoming lessons. Is there a place where students would benefit from one of the strategies shared in this section?

Quotes Worth Discussing (15 Minutes)

"Students don't like academic surprises or the possibility of failure, so when they actually learn that their guess is off the mark, they revert to compliance mode and 'change' their argument to fall in line with the prevailing tides." – page 82

"Before students can analyze, they must be able to read, draw meaning from, and internalize the information they locate." – page 83

"Students need rigor and perseverance to interpret complex texts before they can use them to support a claim or thesis." – page 84

Putting Ideas into Practice (5 Minutes)

How do you support reading comprehension throughout the research process? How might you tweak the plan of an existing research project? Jot down your thinking in a journal.

Chapter 5
The Importance of Documentation

Discussion/Sharing

- What is your stance on teaching students to document resources?

- How do you approach teaching source citation?

- What challenges do you face when students cite sources?

Reading Excerpt

Read the "Citing Sources" section on pages 109–114. What jumps out at you? How does this compare to your current understanding of citing sources?
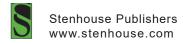
Toolbox Strategy

- On pages 110–111, Cathy shares a strategy for students to track the difference between information from a source as opposed to their thoughts about that information:

  o Column 1: students put facts into their own words

  o Column 2: students say something about each fact

- How might this strategy work in your classroom?

Quotes Worth Discussing

"Developing students' note-taking skills will allow them to see where an author's thoughts end and theirs begin. Making this line more distinct will help cut down on incidents of plagiarism." – page 109

"Elementary teachers would do students a great service if they taught them to delineate information gathered from a source and their own thinking; this could be accomplished by requiring students to say something about every quote, summary, fact, and para-

phrase." – page 110

"We know that students often learn best through repetition, so they would benefit from seeing us model citing sources multiple times in many classes." – page 113

Putting Ideas into Practice

What is one concept you will continue to think about after today? How might documentation and citation be incorporated in your research work with students moving forward? Jot down your thinking.

Chapter 6
Assessment

Discussion/Sharing

- Take a moment and read through your journal entries. Is there any thinking that jumps out at you?

- What thoughts or questions do you have as you consider your students' research assignments.

- How do you assess student research projects?

Reading Excerpt

- Read the "What's the Purpose?" section on pages 134–139.

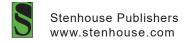- How does this information compare to how you set purpose with students?

Toolbox Strategy: Formative Assessment Strategies

- Cathy writes, "If we use the formative and summative assessment model, we can collect and assess parts of the project along the way." Read Cathy's list of formative assessment strategies on pages 141–142.

- How might you incorporate one or more of these ideas into your students' research assignments?

- Discuss thinking and ideas as a group.

Quotes Worth Discussing

"Further, it is very important that we establish the purpose of the research project before we assign it so that students are clear about the learning goals of the project and we can design an assessment tool that measures what we are trying to accomplish."

– page 135

"Higher-order thinking skills are what we should be assessing in research projects, because that is where students demonstrate their learning." – page 135

"Our assessments should be designed to look for signs of success rather than confirmation of failure. One of the reasons we educators detest and resent standardized tests is because they confirm failure." – page 144

Putting Ideas into Practice

What is one concept you will continue to think about after today? How might the formative assessment ideas in this chapter be incorporated into your approach with your students' research? Jot down your thinking.

Chapter 7
Making the Argument

Discussion/Sharing

- Read through the entries of your reflective journal.

- What thoughts or questions do you have as you move forward with assigning research?
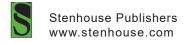
Reading Excerpt

- Read the section "Thinking Like a Librarian" on pages 159–162.

- How could this approach be useful while teaching the research process? What do you wonder? What challenges do you see?

Toolbox Strategy

- What tweaks might you make to how you approach research projects with students?

  o Topic versus Inquiry Based

  o Generating Questions versus Questioning

  o A Plan

  o Supporting Comprehension

  o Documentation of Sources and Ideas

  o Assessment

- Discuss thinking and ideas as a group.

Quotes Worth Discussing

"When our students see themselves as creators of knowledge instead of merely consumers, they have reached the level of advanced literacy." – page 149

"Practicing questioning and asking questions many times in school can help our students in real life, which is why it is so important for us to provide a safe place for students to exercise this skill." – page 153

"We must be sure that our students understand and get lots of practice with evaluating sources for accuracy and authority and have aptitude in spotting and forming argument." – page 156

Putting Ideas into Practice (5 Minutes)

Do you feel you met your goals in exploring this text? What might be your next steps for putting new learning into practice? Write a final reflection in a journal.