### Planning the inquiry

#### 1. What is our purpose?

1a) To inquire into the following:

- **transdisciplinary theme**

  **Where we are in place and time**: An exploration of our orientation in place and time; of our personal histories, the discoveries, explorations and migrations of humankind; personal histories; homes and journeys; the discoveries, explorations and migrations of humankind; the relationships between and the interconnectedness of individuals and civilizations, from local and global perspectives.

- **central idea**

Knowing about our family histories enables us to discover our cultural origins and develop historical awareness.

#### 1b) Summative assessment task(s):

What are the possible ways of assessing students’ understanding of the central idea? What evidence, including student-initiated actions, will we look for?

**Putting you in the picture**: Students will draw the most important things they have learned about their families. Teachers will use this drawing to discuss this with them on a one-to-one basis and assess their level of understanding of the central idea. (Anecdotal record)

Students will present their drawings to the class and will compare them to the information on the graffiti board to see the differences between what they knew about their families at the beginning of the unit and what they know by then.

They will have the opportunity to walk through the gallery of drawings, looking at all the pictures and talking to their friends about them. They will self-assess and reflect on how this makes them feel at the end of the unit. (Reflection journal)

Students will be able to recognize and show an understanding of the fact that their family histories have developed over time and that they have explored and identified their personal histories throughout this inquiry.

#### 2. What do we want to learn?

What are the key concepts (form, function, causation, change, connection, perspective, responsibility, reflection) to be emphasized within this inquiry?

**Key concepts**:

- **Change**: Students learn about how family histories change over time.
- **Causation**: Students learn how emerging technologies help shape the family activities and hence their history.
- **Reflection**: Students reflect on their own family histories.

What lines of inquiry will define the scope of the inquiry into the central idea?

- Our family history.
- How family histories are different or alike over time.
- Ways we can find out about our history.
- How has technology changed family over time?

What teacher questions/provocations will drive these inquiries?

A visitor comes to the class with a mystery box containing artifacts from her family. Once the students have guessed the three things in the box, the visitor explains how these things are related to her. Then, she starts telling them the story of her family by using a backward timeline (starting at the present and working backwards).
| **How have our ancestors influenced our own way of living?** |
| **How have our family traditions changed over time?** |
| **How can we know about our family past?** |
### 3. How might we know what we have learned?
*This column should be used in conjunction with “How best might we learn?”*

After listening to the visitor, students write on a graffiti board the most distant memory they know about their families (could also be a memory shared by a parent or grandparent, not necessarily only the student’s memory).

**Frontloading:** The teacher builds a timeline with the students’ help and displays it across the room to record the history of the class. They will start the timeline in the current day and then move backwards over time.

The teachers will look for any evidence regarding the students’ prior understanding of the concept of time.

What are the possible ways of assessing student learning in the context of the lines of inquiry? What evidence will we look for?

Students listen attentively to stories (parents’ presentations, teacher reading stories) and ask appropriate questions. (Oral communication rubric)

Students share information about their grandparents’ interview with each other. (Anecdotal record)

Students present and explain their family timelines. (Oral communication rubric)

Students self-assess their attitude during their classmates’ presentations.

Students share their family timelines with classmates. (Anecdotal record)

Students show understanding of the changes in their families over time by organizing a chart using ICT tools.

Students show understanding of the concept of time by rebuilding stories in a backward direction.

Students show commitment and responsibility when putting together the museum exhibition. (Checklist)

Students self-assess their performance during the museum exhibition.

Students explain about family traditions when showing a family artifact. (Anecdotal record)

Students will identify differences between families, cultures and ideas of others. (Reflection journal)

### 4. How best might we learn?

What are the learning experiences suggested by the teacher and/or students to encourage the students to engage with the inquiries and address the driving questions?

- Students receive visits from volunteer parents who come to talk about their family histories.
- Teachers read fiction and non-fiction books about family histories. Students draw and write about them and share their work with classmates.
- Students bring photos of their ancestors and talk with the Art teacher about how their families have changed and how they look now. After that, they will draw their families as they are now.
- Students will explore the concept of time in their own bodies by moving like babies and walking like six year-old children, young people, adults and old people.
- Students take some questions home with which to interview their relatives in order to find out information about their ancestors. They will share the results of the interview in small groups.
- Students and parents build a timeline of their family histories at home. Students present it to the class.
- Students bring their artifacts and together with the Art teacher, they will put up the display of exhibits in their classroom. They will prepare a card with the details of their artifact and will be ready to explain about it to visitors.
- Pair interview: Students interview each other in pairs in order to find out the most important moments in their family histories that they can remember. Then, they report to their class teacher.
- Students identify three moments in their family histories and design a chart in Microsoft Word to organize the way in which things have changed in their families.
- Students talk with the homeroom teacher about what they understand so far about what a family history is and how it is built. They will exchange opinions about how they might know what has happened in the past. The teacher proposes to dramatize a well-known tale starting from the end, to rebuild the story by going backwards. They will also explore the concept of evidence since they will have to start each scene from the props they find on stage.
- Students may choose to bring information about their religion, traditions and rituals they preserve in their families. They may prepare a drawing, a graphic organizer (e.g. t-chart, Mind Map®) or a brief text to present to the class.
- Students may choose to find out about the family traditions and rituals they carry out which involve music. They will talk and/or sing with their Music teacher pieces of songs that have passed through generations.
- Circle time: Students reflect on what they learnt, how they did it, what things they still wonder about, the most difficult part, etc.
• Students and teachers agree on how they will organize all their understanding about their family histories. They will also agree on how the teacher will assess their projects, namely what criteria will be used.

• Students write learning logs with their reflection on the unit and possible actions they might take.

What opportunities will occur for transdisciplinary skills development and for the development of the attributes of the learner profile?

**Transdisciplinary skills:**
Communication skills – present timelines and their artifacts and other pieces of work to their classmates;
Research skills – developing questions, recording data, presenting results from an interview.

**IB Learner profile:**
Communicators – explain their findings to others.
Inquirers – ask questions and find information about their families.
Risk takers – volunteer to share special traditions, e.g. regarding religion or music in their families.
Open-minded and principled – listen to a range of histories and traditions and develop respect for other cultures and other customs.

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5. What resources need to be gathered?
What people, places, audio-visual materials, related literature, music, art, computer software, etc, will be available?

• Artifacts brought from home for the museum, family photographs, maps and flags of countries that their ancestors came from.

• People: Parents and other adults in the school community.

• Fiction and non-fiction books about family histories, different cultures, religion, arts, e.g. The Keeping Quilt by Patricia Polacco.

• Teacher’s bibliography: Murdoch, K, Classroom connections: Strategies for integrated learning; Short, K: Learning together through inquiry (El aprendizaje a través de la indagación).

How will the classroom environment, local environment, and/or the community be used to facilitate the inquiry?

A special place in each classroom will be set up to collect family artifacts.

Timelines will be displayed in the classroom, including family and visitor timelines.

An ongoing graffiti board will be available so that students can write their new findings whenever they want to.

Music sent in by parents will be played frequently so that they get familiar with other cultures and family traditions.
6. To what extent did we achieve our purpose?
Assess the outcome of the inquiry by providing evidence of students’ understanding of the central idea. The reflections of all teachers involved in the planning and teaching of the inquiry should be included.

Students understood that families are all different and that their personal and family history has been built over time. During whole class reflections we recorded comments like this: “I go to Polish school but I also learn Spanish at home.” This child although she knows that her parents’ history ties back to Poland, she is also embracing Spanish as she knows it is a very useful language and needed to communicate with certain people.

Through Art activities (such as printing) the students could understand that all that has happened in the past makes things as they are – if things had been different in the past, the result would be different in the present. This shows that they understood that their own identity is impacted upon by the chain of events, customs and traditions they have experienced in their family.

More examples of the understanding of the central idea have been recorded in their portfolios and anecdotal records.

How you could improve on the assessment task(s) so that you would have a more accurate picture of each student’s understanding of the central idea.

The “Putting you in the picture” assessment task was effective since students had the opportunity to create a drawing that represented their family histories as well as putting themselves in the drawing to explain their role. They grasped the idea of being the result of their family history. However, this task could be improved by differentiating according to presentation preferences and learning styles and allowing the students to choose the way to represent their ideas. For example they could present orally, through writing or dramatically – not just by drawing. Some students found it difficult to represent their understanding clearly in a drawing.

What was the evidence that connections were made between the central idea and the transdisciplinary theme?

Students had the opportunity to find out their family histories over several generations and this helped them understand better why and how they are now living in this place and what things had influenced the paths of their ancestors. One clear example of this was the family timeline they presented in front of the class.

7. To what extent did we include the elements of the PYP?
What were the learning experiences that enabled students to:
- develop an understanding of the concepts identified in “What do we want to learn?”
  
Key concepts
  
Change: Students identified three moments in their family’s histories (current, recent past and distant past) and prepared a chart with drawings of things that have changed over time in their families (e.g. toys, clothes, communication). Students listened to different family histories and made comparisons of how people lived a long time ago (e.g. during their grandparents’ time) and how they live now. They prepared a chart to reinforce the concepts of “then” and “now”. Perspective: Students interviewed with a partner and listened to each other talk about their family histories. They noticed that everyone has somewhat of a different family history, but yet all of them are similar and one is not better than another, just different. The students reinforced this concept by drawing about all they have heard (including traditions, customs, events, etc) and labeled the title: “Only Different”. In this way they learned to respect the difference.
  
Reflection: During rug time, students reflected on what they learned. Most of these reflections were oral. In the final reflection, they mentioned that now that they know their own families better they will love them more. They also said that they were going to take care of their families and keep their culture as well as respecting other cultures and traditions.

Related concepts
  
Tradition: Students listened to stories of different traditions people have around the world. They drew about their own family traditions.
  
History: The articles students brought in to share encouraged them to think of what the past was like for their families, as they had to research what each artifact was, what it was for, and why was it so “valuable”.
  
Time: Students had to recreate the scenes of the tale: “Three little pigs and the fierce wolf” in a backward direction. This enabled them to understand that we have to move backwards to rebuild what has happened in the past.

- demonstrate the learning and application of particular transdisciplinary skills?
  
Social skills: Students worked as a group and adopted different roles when creating the scenes for their tale. They also cooperated and accepted responsibility as a whole when putting together the artifact museum.
  
Communication skills: They did several presentations to the class: Report of the interview, the timeline, the tale, they also sang songs that passed through generations in their families, and they explained about their artifact in the museum.
  
Research skills: They carried out research on their family timelines, family
traditions and family artifacts.

Self-management skills: They had to organize themselves to do their group work in class; manage their time during their presentations; develop fine motor skills when making drawings in relation to different activities, especially the family drawing made in Art class.

Thinking skills: They discovered new things about their families and their classmates’ families during the presentations and conversations, so they understood why they are all different.

- develop particular attributes of the learner profile and/or attitudes?
  In each case, explain your selection.

Learner profile

Open-minded: Students were open-minded and showed respect for and acceptance of cultural differences and traditions when listening and sharing their presentations.

Communicators: Students were communicators and expressed themselves in a variety of ways – oral presentations, drawings, performing role plays, singing traditional family songs.

Reflective: Students showed being reflective through their learning and what they were doing to learn while the learning experiences were taking place. At the end of the unit, they put some of these reflections in written form.

Inquirers: Students came up with questions and received answers through interviewing about what they wanted to know from their grandparents.

Attitudes

Attitudes such as respect and enthusiasm were reinforced and developed positively. Students showed respect to one another by listening as they presented and showed enthusiasm by asking questions and being engaged in the presentation. They demonstrated commitment when helping fully complete their research and projects. The students showed creativity when they reenacted a day of school back in the days of their grandparents. They appreciated/valued the importance of and felt proud of the artifacts from their families.

8. What student-initiated inquiries arose from the learning?
Record a range of student-initiated inquiries and student questions and highlight any that were incorporated into the teaching and learning.
Why are old things important in a family?

9. Teacher notes
Most of the learning experiences and assessment strategies were directly connected to language in its three interactive aspects: Learning language, learning through language and learning about language.
Where does my family come from?
Did families have the same type of books long ago?
Where did families meet in their homes, did they have comfy chairs?
How is technology different?
What did families/people have back then?
How were things a long time ago?
Why did specific families come from their homeland?
Why are families different?
How did families remember each other back then?
What did my grandfather do when he was a child?

Students showed great interest in knowing and finding out about their family histories.

At this point teachers should go back to box 2 “What do we want to learn?” and highlight the teacher questions/provocations that were most effective in driving the inquiries.

What student-initiated actions arose from the learning?
Record student-initiated actions taken by individuals or groups showing their ability to reflect, to choose and to act.

Students reflected on the importance of respecting their own and others’ family histories and traditions. Students also were surprised that there are so many differences but yet they are all friends and feel as if they are the same.

Students presented information about what they discovered to the class.
They listened and talked to each other during pair interviews and when interviewing their family members.
They wrote about their families.
They learned new vocabulary.
They expressed information visually through pictures and objects.

Connections to mathematics were made when exploring the concept of time and developing timelines and working backwards. We also looked at measurements and how the tools were different then versus now.

The central idea of this unit was connected to the central idea of the unit in an earlier grade/year level about families: Having families and friends helps people develop social awareness.

The concept of extended family was discussed. Students shared their different combinations of extended family. Making a family tree was a great visual for the students.

Students seemed to enjoy all the conversation regarding family histories. They spent a fair amount of time on iPads looking at different toys from the past. They also looked at pictures of old school houses and were amazed at how they...

The discussions seemed to be more valuable as the students learned to share and listen to each other, and have a conversation with each other.

At the end of the unit, all of the students wrote their final reflections.