

# Inquiry Synthesis

Elevator Pitch : Place-based community focused homework. An option to consider.

## **Nobody likes homework!**

- Think about it, do you?
- Generally, assigning homework to elementary students is akin to cruel and unusual punishment
- But WHY?
  - It takes away from family time
  - If it;s compulsory it can be stressful
  - Homework eliminates students exploration time
  - And assigning it makes the assumption that you as the teacher know what the best way for a student to spend their time is

## **Why do teachers assign homework?**

- Teaching is hard
- Often students are not going to pick up the skills that you hope they will in any given lesson
- Homework is a FIX that students can do, to make up for content, knowledge, and skills that are not acquired during lessons!

## **Does this mean students should not be doing work at home?**

- NO! Absolutely not.
- If a student chooses to work on school related materials on their own time, that is fantastic
- Making “traditional homework” like worksheets, reflection questions, posters and continuous projects HOWEVER have little, zero or negative educational outcomes at the elementary level

### **Creating meaningful homework is possible however**

- There are educational opportunities with homework, just not the traditional type
- If teachers can find ways to bridge the gap between the school, the community and the home then they are on the right path to creating meaningful homework
- Creating opportunities for students understand, interact, and build relationships with the space and community around the school is an essential component of an engaged and trusting classroom
  - What is good homework for students?
    - Homework like this is engaging
    - Homework like this encourages family interaction with classroom material
    - Homework like this provides students with authority over their own learning

### **A quick example of a project I like**

- Illegal cooking suite
- Students go home, learn some recipes from their family, the internet, or wherever
- Students bring in supplies, foods, pots, pans and cook a meal Winners move onto the next round
- By the time the project reached the finals we had 100 students in the gym screaming because they could not wait to see what the top 3 cooks had produced
- Parents are invited to watch
- It was live streamed to the entire school
- Engagement was through the roof
- Although the project was not “traditional” education, the community building aspect was incredible and the learning that took place was significant

### **To conclude**

- When you do assign homework, it should not be the homework you were assigned as a child
- It should be engaging, fun and exploratory
- It should not take up too much free time
- It should encourage students to understand themselves, their communities, their school and their family
- Understanding homework through the place-based lens is my next step!