The Cycle of Inquiry Process

1. Observation: Teachers record observations of children engaged in play.

2. Develop hypotheses: Teachers reflect on observation data. They develop and record their hypotheses about what children know and think. They relate these to important child outcomes, such as conceptual development, problem solving, literacy, mathematics...

3. Plan research questions: Teachers reflect on their hypotheses. They ask questions they want to pursue or they want the children to pursue.

4. Plan interventions to guide the thinking of children: Teachers plan many possible ways to extend children’s developing knowledge and thinking.

5. Set up and facilitate play: Teachers design and set up a provocation based on their ideas about what plans represent the best next step for children’s learning.

Teachers can enter the COI at two points in the cycle. They can begin with an observation, or they set up a provocation as a starting point for an investigation. For example, setting out a stage with instruments to encourage dramatic play to investigate children’s ideas about music and performance.

Broderick & Hong 2011 expanded from Gandini & Goldhaber, 2001