## Foundations for Practice Inquiry and **Pedagogy Across Diverse Contexts**



Arts-Based Research in Education: Foundations for **Practice (Inquiry and Pedagogy Across Diverse** 

**Contexts**) by Melisa Cahnmann-Taylor

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Practice inquiry is a process of systematic and reflective investigation into one's own teaching practice. It is a powerful tool for improving teaching and learning, as it allows teachers to identify areas for improvement and develop new strategies and approaches. Practice inquiry can be used in any context, but it is particularly important in diverse contexts, where teachers need to be able to meet the needs of all learners.

This article explores the foundations for practice inquiry and pedagogy across diverse contexts. We will examine the theoretical underpinnings, methodological approaches, and pedagogical implications of integrating practice inquiry into teacher education.

#### **Theoretical Underpinnings**

Practice inquiry is based on the belief that teachers are reflective practitioners who can learn from their own experiences. This belief is rooted in the work of John Dewey, who argued that experience is the foundation of all learning. Dewey believed that teachers should reflect on their experiences in order to identify areas for improvement and develop new strategies and approaches.

Other theorists who have influenced the development of practice inquiry include Donald Schön, who argued that reflection is essential for professional development, and Paulo Freire, who emphasized the importance of critical inquiry for social justice and equity.

#### **Methodological Approaches**

There are a variety of methodological approaches to practice inquiry. Some of the most common approaches include:

- Action research: Action research is a systematic and reflective process that involves identifying a problem, developing and implementing a plan to address the problem, and evaluating the results of the plan.
- Collaborative inquiry: Collaborative inquiry is a form of practice inquiry that involves working with other teachers to investigate a problem or issue. This can be a powerful way to learn from others and to develop new insights.
- Reflective practice: Reflective practice is a process of systematically reflecting on one's own teaching practice. This can be done through journaling, peer observation, or self-assessment.

#### **Pedagogical Implications**

Integrating practice inquiry into teacher education has a number of pedagogical implications. First, it can help teachers to develop the skills and dispositions necessary for reflective practice. Second, it can help teachers to connect theory and practice in a meaningful way. Third, it can help teachers to develop a critical understanding of their own teaching and learning.

Here are some specific ways that practice inquiry can be integrated into teacher education:

- Incorporating practice inquiry into coursework: Practice inquiry can be integrated into coursework through assignments, projects, and presentations. For example, students can be asked to conduct an action research project on a topic of their choice, or to write a reflective paper on their experiences in a particular classroom.
- Providing opportunities for practice inquiry in field experiences:
   Field experiences are an ideal opportunity for students to practice inquiry. Students can be asked to reflect on their experiences in the field, and to develop and implement action research projects.
- Creating communities of practice: Communities of practice are groups of teachers who come together to share ideas and learn from each other. These communities can provide a supportive environment for practice inquiry, and can help teachers to develop their skills and dispositions for reflective practice.

Practice inquiry is a powerful tool for improving teaching and learning in diverse contexts. By integrating practice inquiry into teacher education, we

can help teachers to develop the skills and dispositions necessary for reflective practice, to connect theory and practice in a meaningful way, and to develop a critical understanding of their own teaching and learning.

#### References

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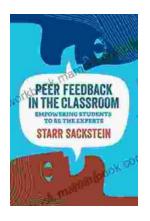
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