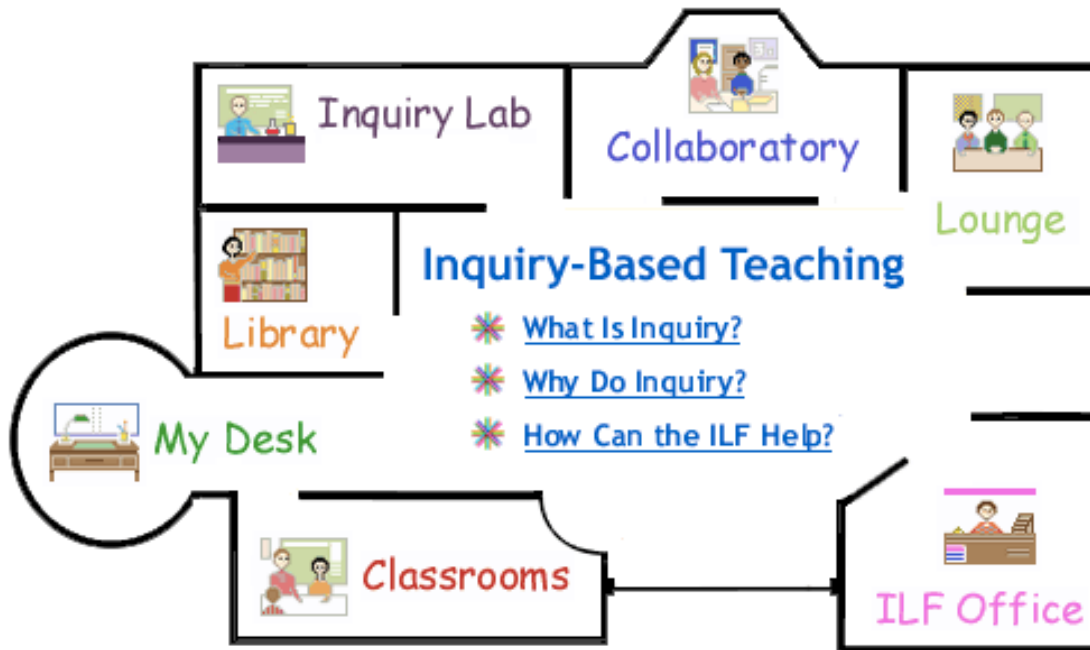




Inquiry Learning Forum

Supporting Student Learning & Teacher Growth through Inquiry



USER GUIDE

<http://ilf.crlt.indiana.edu>

User Guide

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The Inquiry Learning Forum is housed at the Center for Research on Learning & Technology at Indiana University and is funded in part by the National Science Foundation under grant #9980081.

What is the Inquiry Learning Forum?

The Inquiry Learning Forum (ILF) is an online community of K-12 educators and university students working together to share, improve, reflect, and create learner-centered classrooms. While developed initially for Indiana math and science teachers, the ILF is open to all teachers, school administrators, university faculty, and pre-service education students interested in inquiry-based teaching and learning, free of charge. We will soon have resources available for all grades and content areas.

The ILF is designed around a school metaphor. When you enter the ILF you have the option of visiting several "rooms" that are typical of a school building. Within these spaces you can obtain or share lesson plans, view video examples of fellow teachers, engage in online discussions, and work online with groups focused around a particular topic or idea.

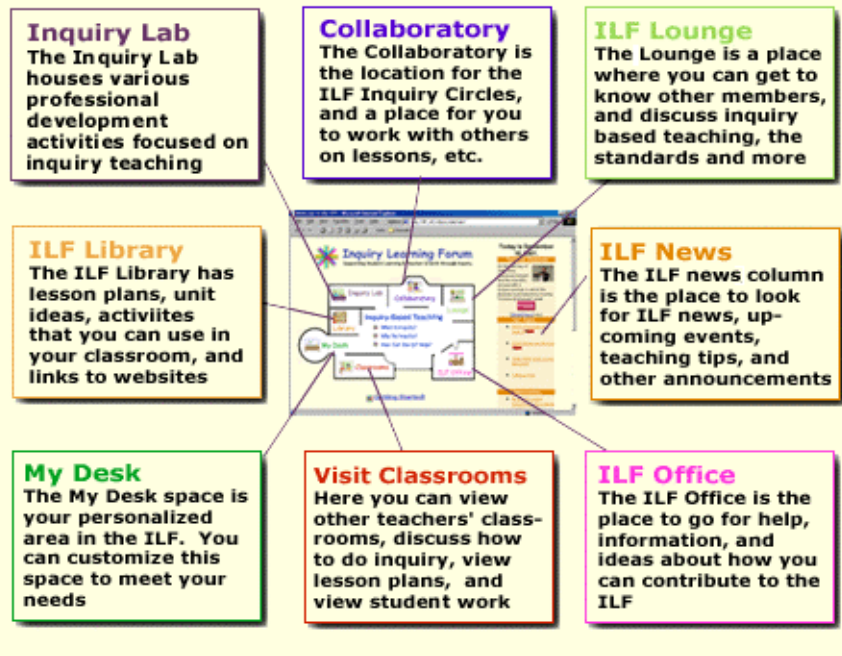
The goal is not to present a practice to emulate, but rather to provide a vehicle for discussing teaching practice and advancing community and individual reflection and understanding. Through observation, discussion, and reflection, each participant can find his or her own path to continued professional growth and development.

How Will the ILF Benefit Me?

The ILF can provide you with:

- Connections to Other Students and Teachers
 - Videos of teachers doing inquiry in their classroom
 - Opportunities to collaborate with other students and teachers
 - A supportive place to ask questions and engage in discussions
 - Build a network with other educators
- Resources for your future teaching
 - Inquiry-based lessons and units submitted by other teachers
 - Web-based and text resources for classroom inquiry
 - Friendships and collaborations that will continue after graduation
 - Enrich your professional experience

Opportunities in the ILF Community



The ILF is a continuously growing community of teachers, so there are many different opportunities available to you. Below is a tour of the ILF which includes some of the ways in which you can participate in the ILF!

A Brief Tour of the ILF

Classrooms

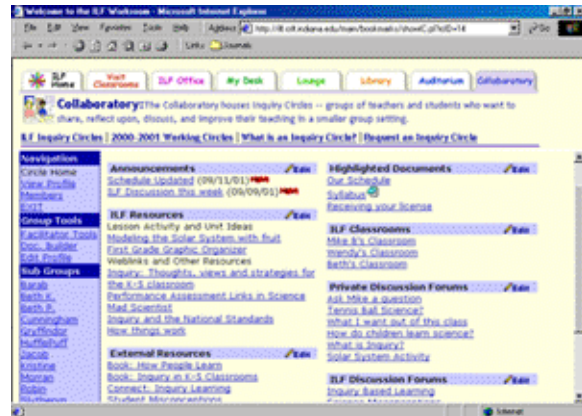
When we asked teachers what they would like to do for their own professional development, their response often was to see someone else teach. While that is difficult to do during the school day, the Internet makes it possible for teachers to "visit" other teachers' classrooms at a time when it is convenient for them.

In the ILF Classrooms, videos of actual lessons act as anchor points for these virtual "visits." Each Classroom also includes teacher reflections on the lesson, discussions, links to various standards, lesson plans, examples of student work, and resources.



Collaboratory - Inquiry Circles

The focus of your class experience is likely to be Inquiry Circles. These are places for you to share resources with your fellow students and to talk with them about course related topics. The inquiry circle for your class will also provide easy bookmarks to find classrooms used as case examples for your class assignments.



My Desk

Your desk is your personal portal to the ILF. Through your desk you can:

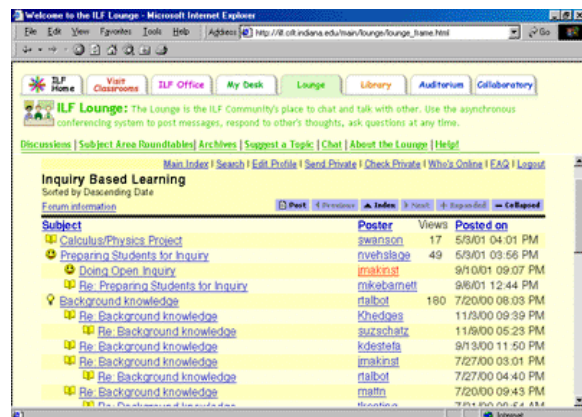
- View and update your personal profile
- Leave notes in your personal journal
- Keep track of your ILF activities, classrooms, and discussions
- Store bookmarks to both ILF and external resources
- Find easy links to your Inquiry Circles.



Lounge

Not only do ILF members get to virtually visit other teachers' classrooms, they also participate in discussions about practice with other professionals. The Lounge has a series of discussion forums focused on specific topics related to inquiry based teaching.

It is through these dialogues that teachers reflect on their own teaching and begin the process of exploring alternative teaching practices that they can apply in their own classrooms.



Inquiry Lab

The professional development activities found here can be utilized in a variety of settings, whether by individuals or groups. They are designed to fit the needs of those starting inquiry for the first time or who are looking to enrich their teaching with more innovative applications of inquiry-based teaching.

The ILF Professional Development Labs are based on the Concerns-Based

Adoption Model, commonly referred to as "CBAM" (Hall, 1979). This model of teacher change suggests that teachers go through various stages of change characterized by different concerns they have regarding the change or innovation. Our Professional Development Labs are organized around these stages and the types of concerns teachers have at each stage.



Library

Need a lesson plan or a web site to get data? The Library is a collection of lesson ideas and web links suggested by teachers for teachers. While viewing an item in the Library you can read how teachers have used the resource in their own classrooms. The Library has two collections:

- Lessons, Activities, and Unit Ideas: materials and lessons developed by teachers for use in their own classrooms for you to download
- Web links and Other Resources: Links to materials, lessons, and resources published in print or on the World Wide Web



ILF Office

The ILF Office is the administrative portion of the site. In the office you can find out more about upcoming ILF events, make a suggestion for improving the ILF, and meet other ILF members by viewing their online profiles.

ILF Research

Faculty members of Indiana University, in cooperation with teachers across Indiana, have developed the Inquiry Learning Forum.

The ILF is the basis for research on building and sustaining communities of practice at the Center for Research on Learning & Technology at Indiana University. While much theory related to the notion of communities of practice has been proposed, there is little understanding of how to build and support them. Thus, the ILF represents an opportunity to be part of a cutting edge research effort.

Three major questions guide this research:

1. How can networking and electronic technologies be used to represent and facilitate the sharing and evolution of teaching practices?
2. What are the taken-as-shared meanings that emerge in the ILF communities and how do we promote boundary crossing?
3. How do the ILF members structure themselves into communities and how do we promote boundary crossing?

By becoming a member of the ILF, you agree to be part of this research effort.

Standards and the Inquiry Learning Forum

The ILF promotes standards-based instruction from Kindergarten to High School Graduation.

Indiana State Science Standards 2000

The Nature of Science and Technology

It is the union of science and technology that forms the scientific endeavor and that makes it so successful. Although each of these human enterprises has a character and history of its own, each is dependent on and reinforces the other. This first standard draws portraits of science and technology that emphasize their roles in the scientific endeavor and reveal some of the similarities and connections between them. In order for students to truly understand the nature of science and technology, they must model the process of scientific investigation through inquiries, fieldwork, lab work, etc. Through these experiences, students will practice designing investigations and experiments, making observations, and formulating theories based on evidence.

Indiana State Math Standards 2000

Problem Solving

Problem solving means engaging in tasks for which the solution process is not known in advance. Good problem solvers have developed a “mathematical disposition” which allows them to analyze situations in mathematical terms. They have developed a range of strategies for developing a solution to a problem, have learned to monitor and adjust the strategies they choose to use in the process of solving a specific problem, and can compare and contrast solutions and problems.

How Do I Participate?

Technical Requirements

You will need a computer with the following:

- Internet Explorer 4.0 or newer, or Netscape 4.0 or newer
- To view video clips you will need to have installed QuickTime 4.0 or newer. (Note: You do not need QuickTime Pro although Apple will try to sell it to you.)
To download a free copy of QuickTime, go to: <http://www.apple.com/quicktime/>
- A connection to the Internet, such a modem, cable, T1, or LAN connection.
- Minimum screen resolution of 800x600
- A soundcard with speakers or headphones (Your own headphones are required if using the university computer labs.)
- Adobe Acrobat Reader plug-in to be able to download several of the resources, like student examples of work

To download a free copy of Adobe Acrobat Reader, go to:

<http://www.adobe.com/acrobat>

- For viewing videos, you should be able to experience better video quality if you have access to a high-speed Internet connection. If you do not have a high-speed Internet connection at home, you might want to view the videos from a Student Technology Center lab. Having a high-speed Internet connection will give you access to larger-screen video.

Joining the ILF

To join the ILF, complete the registration form found at:

<<http://ilf.crlt.indiana.edu/registration.html>>. Registration should only take 5-10 minutes. Consent forms are required because as a member of the ILF, you agree to be part of a research study on building online communities of practice. Your registration should be confirmed via email within one working day.

If you are a student enrolled in a class that is using ILF, your instructor may already have enrolled you. Check with your instructor to see if your class roster is already entered in membership.

Logging in

After having registered, being verified, and receiving a confirmation email, you are then a member of the ILF. You may log in at any time by simply entering your username and password on the ILF homepage <<http://ilf.crlt.indiana.edu>>.

ILF Basic Tasks

What to do if I Have Problems?

If you need help, there are several options for you. You may email ilf@indiana.edu with questions. Or, new this year, we are offering Support Hours at the Center for Research on Learning and Technology (CRLT, IUB). There, you will be able to get one-on-one help with your ILF questions. Go to <http://ilf.crlt.indiana.edu/support/> for Support Hours details.

Logging in

You may log in at any time by clicking the “Members Enter Here” box on the upper right of the ILF homepage <http://ilf.crlt.indiana.edu> and entering your username and password. If you have a problem logging on or if you cannot remember your password, report the problem by clicking on the link “Have a problem logging on?”

Finding My Desk

After logging in, you can get to “My Desk” by clicking on the “My Desk” green link on the left side of the webpage. It is the circular room of the room layout. Just as you have the ability to add book marks and links on your “My Desk” location, so does your instructor. This is where you would find locations where your instructor wants you to go.

Finding an Inquiry Circle

Within the “My Desk” you will see a location on your left labeled “My Inquiry Circles.” These are the circles either you or your instructor has added to your “My Desk” area. To enter a specific Inquiry Circle, simply click on the link provided.

Finding a Classroom

Within the “My Desk” you will see a location on your left labeled “My ILF Classrooms.” These are the classrooms either you or your instructor has added to your “My Desk” area. To enter a specific Classroom, simply click on the link provided.

Viewing Classroom Materials

Once you are into a specific classroom, there are many items to you can view, including classroom videos, the teacher’s reflections, session overviews, lesson plans, and examples of students’ work. The links to these materials are on the top half of the classroom page. When you click on any of the topmost group of links, a specific video

portion of classroom will begin to play. When you click on any of the red links located across the center of the page (to the right of the little book icon), the materials will appear on the bottom portion of the screen. These materials can be viewed and changed while a video is playing without interrupting the video.

Playing the Classroom Videos

Once you are into a specific classroom, you have the option of viewing a video of an instructor's class. To do this, you must first select the type of Internet connection you have. This is done by clicking a selection at the top of the screen: Modem, High Speed, or Full Screen. If you are working from home, you most likely would click Modem. To take advantage of High Speed or Full Screen, it is recommended to be connected through an Ethernet connection. Most locations on the University campus are connected through Ethernet.

Also, to be able to view the videos, you must be sure QuickTime is installed onto your computer. If it is not, you can get it on the ILF site on the webpage directly after you log on by clicking the "Problems Viewing Videos?" link found on the right side of the page.

Once a video is playing, the controls to start and stop the video are located underneath the video image.

ILF Contact Information/Getting Help

On the ILF homepage <<http://ilf.crlt.indiana.edu>>, there is a link called “ILF Support” that can be used to find contact information and staff support hours. You can go there directly at: <<http://ilf.crlt.indiana.edu/support>>. Some of that information is contained below.

Also, on the ILF homepage <<http://ilf.crlt.indiana.edu>>, there is an email link that can be used if you need help or have suggestions. If, after using this link, your response is not satisfactory, please use the following information to contact one of us directly. Please use the main contact location first.

MAIN CONTACT LOCATION

Inquiry Learning Forum

<http://ilf.crlt.indiana.edu>

Indiana University

Wright Education Building, Room 2100

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Bloomington, IN 47405

Email: ilf@indiana.edu

Toll-free Phone: (877) 656-8203

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Video Coordinator

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Project Manager:

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