



OPTIONAL HANDOUT

CREATING A CULTURE OF INQUIRY

To create a culture of inquiry, notice what your child says and does—learn about the things they are interested in and what they know already! As you observe your child exploring their environment, you and your child become scientists together! A culture of inquiry includes all learners. Include your children in cultural activities, as they are great learning opportunities. Here are some ways to create a culture of inquiry.

	<p><b>Model a questioning mind</b></p>		<p><b>Explore together</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listen to your child’s questions and ask open-ended questions that begin with:  <i>“I wonder what…”</i>  <i>“I wonder how…”</i>  <i>“I wonder why…”</i> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Let your child take the lead and explore his questions together. You don’t need to have all the answers.</li> </ul>		
	<p><b>Be an active observer</b></p>		<p><b>Talk with children</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be an active observer to learn about your child’s interests and abilities. Adapt your language and materials to build on your child’s existing knowledge and understanding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage your child in conversation. Invite her to communicate by asking about her observations, developing questions, making predictions, etc.</li> </ul>		
	<p><b>Know when to intervene</b></p>		<p><b>Provide children with time</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When you observe your child, decide when it is the appropriate time to ask a question or offer help without distracting or overwhelming your child with too much feedback.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Give your child the opportunity to investigate and figure things out.</li> </ul>		