

## FOSIL 2025 Symposium Report by Darryl Toerien

The inaugural FOSIL 2025 Symposium—**Engaging and Empowering Inquirers**—on Saturday 8 February, which was free and online, drew together more than 200 colleagues from over 25 countries, with half from the UK. Thanks to Elizabeth Hutchinson for hosting and Jenny Toerien for assisting.

The **programme** was as rich as it was varied. **Dianne Oberg**, Professor Emerita at the **University of Alberta** (Canada) opened proceedings. **Key takeaway:** Inquiry, like anything meaningful and worthwhile, takes time. **Joanne Bleby** and **Lee FitzGerald** from **Loreto Kirribilli** (Australia) shared about collaboration between teachers and librarians, with a focus on History. **Key takeaway:** Inquiry is good for exam results, but also the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, *and* students realising their full potential as human beings. **Mary-Rose Grieve** from **Hartland International School** shared inspiration from *Artificial Intelligence*, by David Biedrzycki. **Key takeaway:** "We shall not cease from exploration and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time." (T. S. Eliot, *Little Gidding*). **Ruth Maloney** from **Tonbridge Grammar School** shared about integrating skills into an inquiry process. **Key takeaway:** FOSIL provides a unifying vocabulary that facilitates purposeful collaboration between teachers and librarians. **Jannath Khanom** from **Connaught School for Girls** shared about introducing inquiry through the literacy curriculum. **Key takeaway:** Lead by example and ensure all work is shared with line managers. **David Harrow**, **Faye Marland** and **Nick O'Loughlin** from **AKS Lytham** shared about celebrating students as inquirers. **Key takeaway:** Don't forget the joy in/ of learning. **Barbara Stripling**, Professor Emerita at **Syracuse University** (America) closed proceedings with a reflection on how much revolutionary progress we have made, with much yet to be done. **Key takeaway:** It's on us—we have to be the revolutionary leaders our students need.

The Symposium proceedings are freely available at [tinyurl.com/FOSILForum2025](https://tinyurl.com/FOSILForum2025), with a YouTube playlist of recordings at [tinyurl.com/FOSIL2025](https://tinyurl.com/FOSIL2025).

Three major FOSIL developments were also announced during the Symposium. **Firstly**, Barbara Stripling and I are writing a book for Bloomsbury Libraries Unlimited—*Teaching Inquiry as Conversation: Bringing Wonder to Life*. Since 2020, we have been meeting weekly, and the book is an exciting opportunity to draw our work more closely together *and* develop important aspects of it further. **Secondly**, the foundation of the independent **Institute for the Advancement of Inquiry** (IAI), which I am honoured to direct, the purpose of which is to initiate and support efforts that foster the development of school-age children as engaged and empowered inquirers. The IAI has been endorsed by the President of IASL and the Chair of the IFLA School Libraries Section, among others. **Thirdly**, the Creative Commons release of the rebooted Heroic Inquiry Cycle. Inquiry is a learning process *that is embodied*, meaning it has cognitive and meta-cognitive, emotional, social and cultural dimensions. Heroic Inquiry makes

this explicit by aligning stages of the FOSIL Inquiry Cycle with stages in the Hero's Journey, and is an invitation for colleagues to adopt or adapt as necessary.



### REFLECT

Evaluating how you have worked and what you have produced.



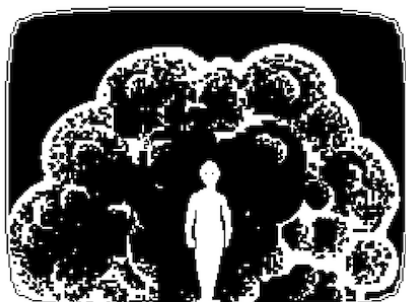
### CONNECT

Drawing on what you might already know in order to better understand what you do not yet know.



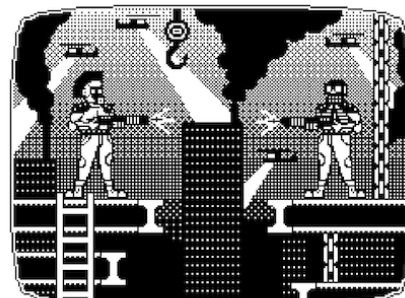
### WONDER

Identifying those questions that will best guide your investigation.



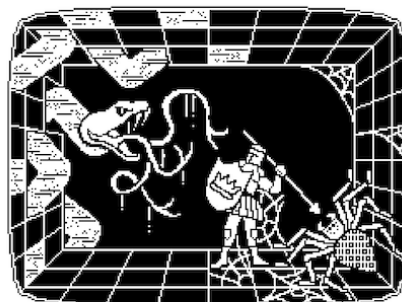
### EXPRESS

Making the most compelling case given your evidence and audience.



### CONSTRUCT

Building an accurate understanding based on factual evidence.



### INVESTIGATE

Discerning the reliability of available sources and using them appropriately and effectively.

Heroic Inquiry Reboot (2.1) by the **FOSIL Group** and **Hugh Rose** for **Blanchelande College** is based on the **Empire State Information Fluency Continuum** by **Barbara Stripling** and shared under **CC BY-NC-SA 4.0**.