

## Nanaimo Christian School



Grades Involved: 5-8

We have been implementing LiD for three years.

The LiD Specialist Project is a multi-year project that students begin in grade six. There are students who begin this project a year or two earlier depending on readiness and the level of support that is available. A topic is community selected (Parents, Student, Teacher). The students develop a plan of study and information gathering on the chosen topic. Through the use of a variety of conferences, criteria lists, rubrics, and supporting assignments student are supported in their study. In February students complete a mini presentation highlighting where they have come and the direction for the finish of the year. In June the school celebrates the learning that has taken place. The school invites the community to participate as an audience as students share what they have studied and learned. Each presentation closes with a focus on the study that is to take place in the coming year. Our hope is that this process, though onerous at times will show students that learning never ends and there will always be something new to discover and explore.

They have two learning presentations a year using a variety of presentation techniques, including Prezi. It is a cultural shift so it takes a lot to work through the disinterest or lack of desire as middle level learners. Persistence pays off when you are introducing the concept in the middle of the educational program rather than at the beginning.

Some of our greatest celebrations came from students getting to the point that the next step was to start breeding their Indian Runner Ducks for certain traits. The other exciting project led to a girl becoming a vegetarian and monitoring her health (along with her doctor who was on board) to make sure that it was not harming her. She ended by “publishing” a cookbook of her favourite recipes.

Depth of learning is so essential so it is worth the effort.



A letter sent to parents and students prior to the program beginning:

### **Learning in Depth Information Sheet**

Dear middle school students and their parents. As a returning middle school member at Nanaimo Christian School there are a few details we need to take care of. When you entered middle school you had the opportunity to choose a topic that you will study for the entire time that you are at middle school. Each year you will continue exploring this topic in more depth. Each June you will make a full presentation to your learning community sharing what you have learned this year. In February you will make a presentation to your parents as part of your student led conference.

Choosing the areas for further study is very important. If you choose well this opportunity is fulfilling and energizing. If you choose on a whim this activity may become more of a chore. For this reason we ask that your parents become involved in the choosing process.

You will receive support and criteria to build your assignment around at school. There will be time at school to work on this assignment, but our desire is that you pick something that you are interested enough in that you will want to look into it more on your free time as well. If you do not have this desire to do more work on your own time at the beginning, it is good to adjust the area that you will research so that it is engaging. Try to come up with a hands on angle or presentation that will make this more engaging for you and your audience.

You want to choose areas for further study that are open ended and lend themselves to further study. Some of the more interesting topics that have been done in the past include “Making the change to live as a vegetarian” and Ocean Life. These topics are open ended enough that further study is always available. Our desire as a school is to have students leave the three years of middle school with a level of knowledge on a certain topic that would be worthy of upper level high school programming.

Please fill out this sheet and have your parents sign it and return it to your classroom teacher as soon as possible. You will find an example below to help guide you.

Topic: Ocean Life

Previous Study: General Pacific Ocean Life, Three tidal zones

New Focus:

- a. What lives in the sand of the ocean floor?
- b. The effect of plastic pollution on the ecosystems of the BC coast.
- c. Scientific classification of ocean animals in the Salish Sea.

Presentation Idea: vlog or prezi

Student Name Printed and Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name Printed and Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

