

**A word of caution from the IFLA Guidelines.** Because creating a successful model involves years of research, development, and practical experimentation, and adapting a successful model requires a deep understanding of the theoretical foundations of that model, schools without a model should take care when deciding how to proceed.

FOSIL was adapted from the [Empire State Information Fluency Continuum](#) (2010, revised 2019) in 2012 by Darryl Toerien. The ESIFC was developed under the guidance of Dr Barbara Stripling and serves 3.2 million students in 4,236 schools in New York State alone (as of October 2019).

In 2019, FOSIL became the centre of the [FOSIL Group](#), a growing international community of librarians and teachers working together to better enable inquiry as an approach to gaining knowledge. FOSIL and all FOSIL-based resources are freely available under [CC BY-NC 4.0](#).

#### Useful resources

- The Galileo Educational Network ([galileo.org](#))  
[Designing Learning](#) – with excellent introduction to inquiry
- The National Library of New Zealand ([natlib.govt.nz](#))  
[Supporting inquiry learning](#) – with a number of prominent models, including Stripling’s Model of Inquiry
- ESIFC ([slsa-nys.libguides.com/ifc](#)) – with supporting materials
- Callison, D. (2015). *The evolution of inquiry : controlled, guided, modeled, and free*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO.



Visit the FOSIL Group at [fossil.org.uk](#) to learn more, and to join a community of educators committed to the cause of advancing inquiry

#### Bibliography

Computer History Museum (n.d.) *Douglas C. Engelbart*. Retrieved from: <https://computerhistory.org/profile/doug-engelbart/>

IBO (2018) *Ideal Libraries: A Guide for Schools*. Cardiff: IBO.

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (2015) *IFLA School Library Guidelines*. Den Hague: IFLA. Retrieved from: <https://www.ifla.org/files/assets/school-libraries-resource-centers/publications/ifla-school-library-guidelines.pdf>



# Fossil based Inquiry for school librarians: an introduction

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## Why inquiry?

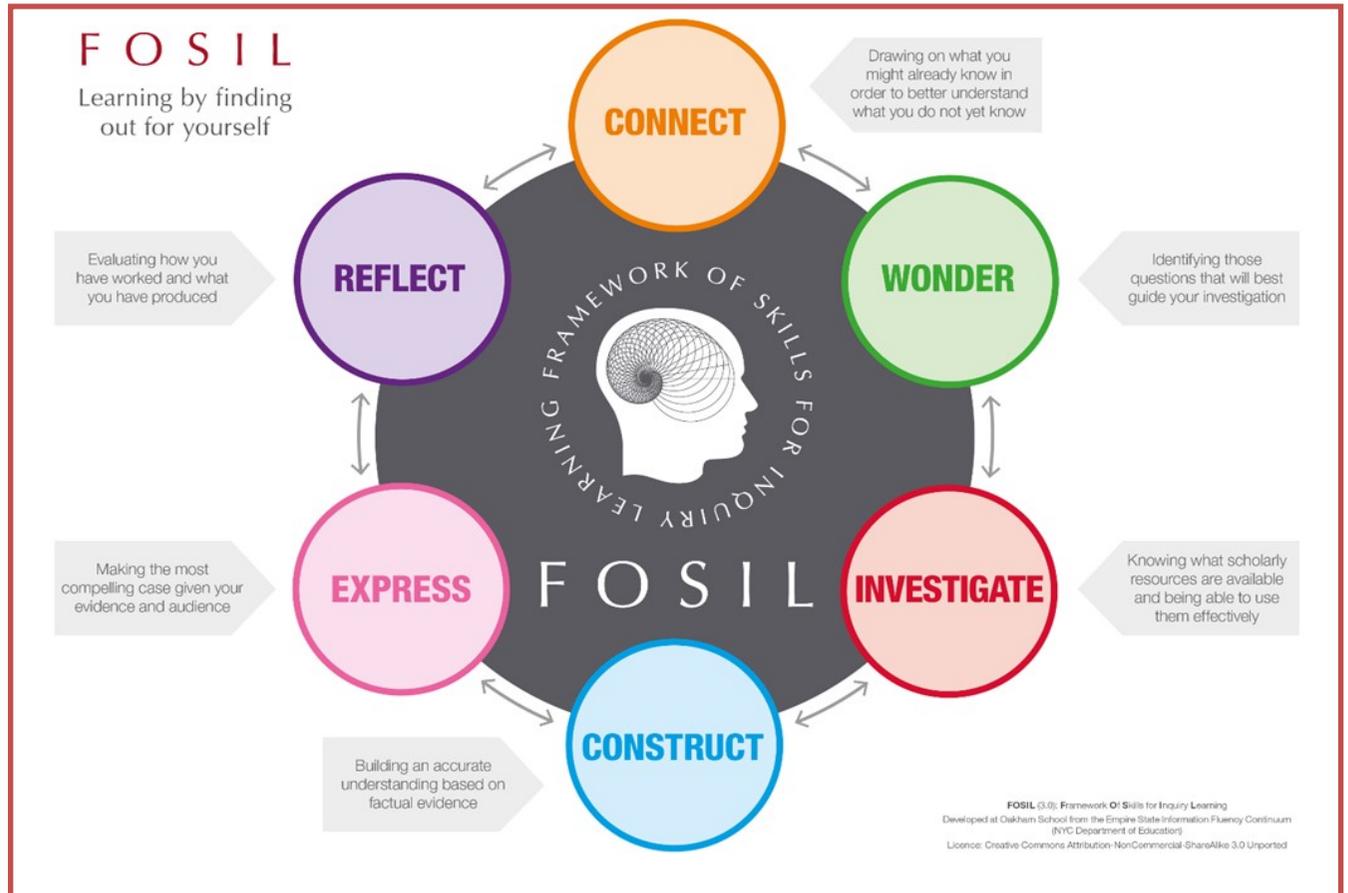
The [Galileo Education Network describes inquiry](#) as a "dynamic process of being open to wonder and puzzlement and coming to know and understand the world, and as such, it is a stance that pervades all aspects of life and is essential to the way in which knowledge is created".

Libraries, and by extension librarians, are historically rooted in this process, and this remains fundamental to who we are and what we do. This is clearly reflected in the excellent *Ideal libraries: a guide for schools* (IBO, 2018, p. 9):

Libraries are where most forms of inquiry, not just academic ones, begin... and the librarian is responsible for energizing and maintaining the inquiry process. Ideally, the librarian is trained

The *IFLA School Library Guidelines* (2015) goes further, identifying inquiry-based learning and teaching as a core instructional activity of the school librarian, along with media and information literacy. Consequently, a number of very successful models have been created for developing media and information literacy skills within the inquiry process, with the school librarian taking a leadership role in ensuring there is a systematic approach to teaching the inquiry process that is guided by a school-based continuum of media and information literacy skills and strategies.

FOSIL is an example of an inquiry process that is a guided school-based continuum of media and information literacy skills and strategies, and is endorsed by CILIP SLG, SLA and CILIP ILG.



Knowledge builds on knowledge, so pausing to take stock of what you already know reveals more clearly what you do not yet know.

Gaps in what you know give rise to questions, some more fruitful than others.

These questions guide your investigation, which is aimed at sourcing reliable information that you can work with.

This is the point of learning by finding out for yourself – building knowledge and understanding from information in response to the questions that you have.

Once you know what you are talking about, you need to be able to share it appropriately, effectively and ethically.