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## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

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### DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES OF INQUIRY

Inquiry - a close examination of a matter in a search for information or truth; seeking for information by asking questions. "Inquiry" calls attention to systematic processes of exploring issues, collecting and analyzing evidence, and making informed judgments.

Inquiry focuses on issues, objects, or works. An issue, object, or work is defined, for this purpose, as anything that may be analyzed by a student depending on his/her area of inquiry. This may include research articles, novels, plays, works of art, court opinions, scientific formulas, human interactions, history, essays, and other texts.

#### Stage 1

- Observes and records most evident aspects of issue/object/work
- Identifies and defines the explicit elements of issue/object/work
- Articulates the observations
- Develops accuracy of observations through practice, assessment, feedback, and self-assessment
- Uses oral and written exercises and discussions to increase observational skills and the use of terminology
- Gathers information from few sources

#### Stage 2

- Continues to refine observational skills by practicing using feedback from assessments
- Identifies assumptions and implicit implications of issue/object/work
- Learns to make inferences based on observations
- Articulates the methods by which inferences were made from observations
- Uses feedback on the quality of the inferences as well as on one's thought process in order to improve self-assessment
- Uses experiences of what is being studied to develop own understanding.
- Recognizes concepts once they have been applied.
- Recognizes when one's own experiences may be an example of concept.
- Gathers information from a few, critical sources

#### Stage 3

- Explores the relationships both between and among the inferences and observations
- Articulates the process used to make and examine these relationships
- Learns from modeling and examples of observations/inferences/relationships
- Applies concepts to experiences
- Explores issue/object/work from others' perspectives
- Seeks a thorough understanding of issue/object/work prior to making judgments about issue/object/work
- Gathers information from multiple sources

#### Stage 4

- Integrates observations/inferences/relationships of issue/object/work
- Assesses the significance of the relationships to the overall meaning of the work
- Articulates the importance of the observations/inferences/relationships to the overall unity and meaning of the work
- Explores issue/object/work from multiple perspectives
- Makes judgments only after thoroughly exploring issue/object/work
- Explores issue/object/work using methods from multiple disciplines
- Examines relationships between issues/objects/works
- Gathers information from multiple sources and evaluates their credibility

