

Inspiring Inquiries: Designing Inquiry Projects for Primary

Michelle Worgan, Inclusive Approaches in Primary ELT



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8th Future of English
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Who I am

I'm Michelle Worgan and I'm an English teacher, materials writer and teacher trainer.

Michelle Worgan
ELT



www.michelleworgan.com

In this session

Part 1: Introduction to inquiry-based learning

Part 2: The design process

Part 3: Learner autonomy

Part 4: Summary



Part 1

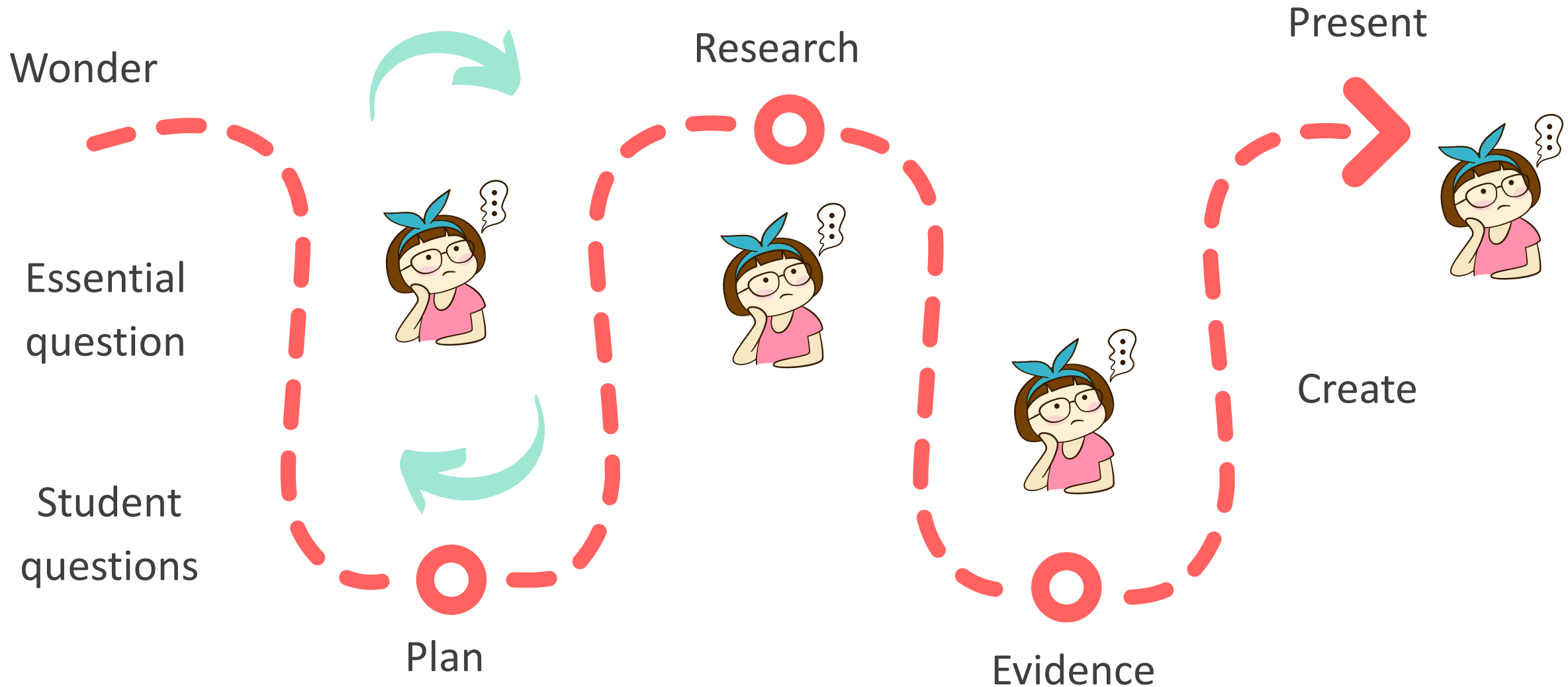
Introduction





What is inquiry-based learning?

The inquiry process



The essential question 1



The essential question 2

What makes the
perfect home?



The essential question 3

Where does our food come from?

What makes the perfect home?



The essential question 4

Where does our food come from?

What makes the perfect home?

How do minibeasts survive?



The inquiry process

- Introduce the question that guides the inquiry.
- Design activities that allow for exploration and investigation.
- Provide opportunities for reflection, discussion, and synthesis of learning.



Sub questions & Learner questions

How many types of minibeasts can you find?

Where do they live?

What do they look like?

What can they do?

How do they behave?

How do they adapt?

How long do they live?

What dangers are there (in their lives)?

What do they need to survive?

How can we protect them?

Research



Research activities

Scavenger hunt

Learners make a checklist of minibeasts they think they might find in a particular area. They visit the area and make a tally of the number of each minibeast they spot.

Minibeast observation

Bring in real or toy minibeasts. Learners observe / examine and measure the minibeasts.

Online search

Do an online search (as a class or in groups). You may wish to search for information about individual minibeasts or focus on a specific area such as habitats or potential dangers.



Research activities

Minibeast documentaries

Show students clips of different minibeasts in nature. Invite learners to notice as much as they can: what they look like, how they move, their habitat, what they eat, etc.

Life cycles

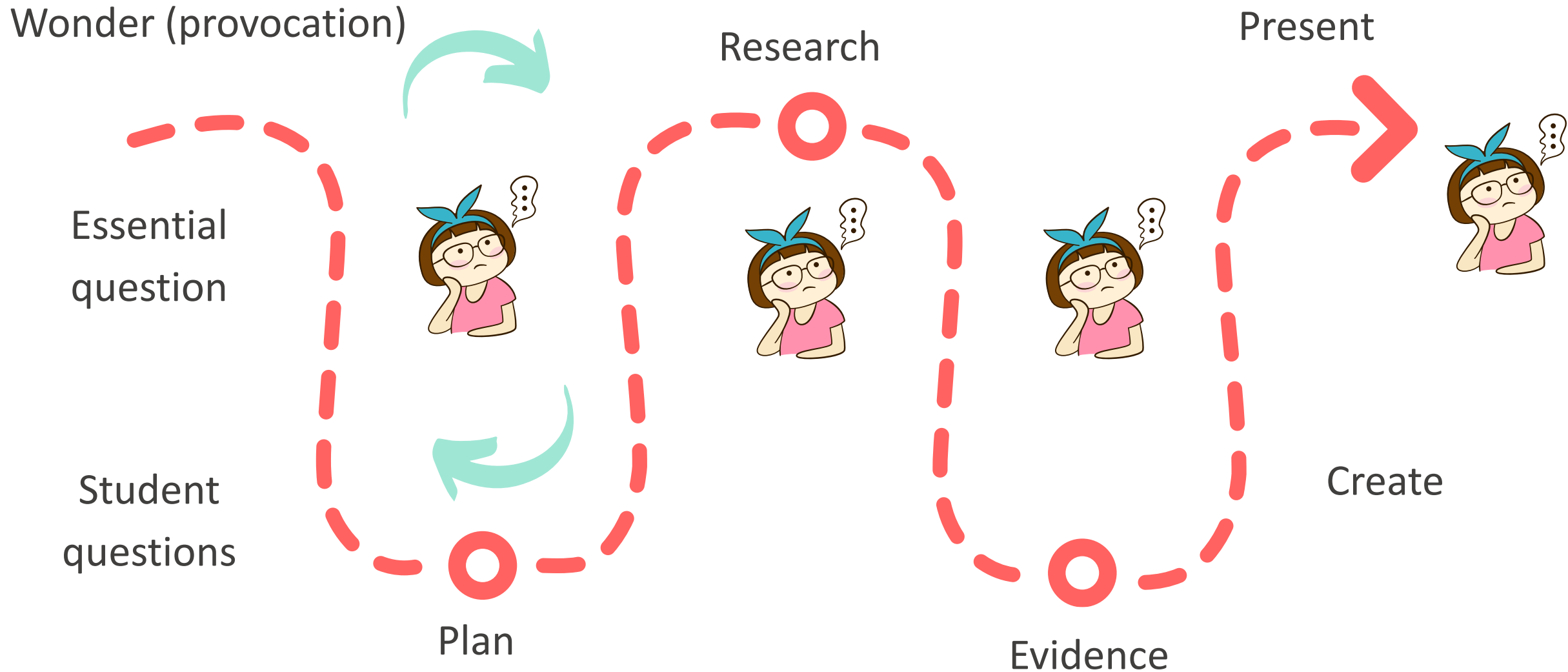
Have learners find out about the life cycle of their chosen minibeast and make a diagram or paper wheel showing the stages.

Amazing art

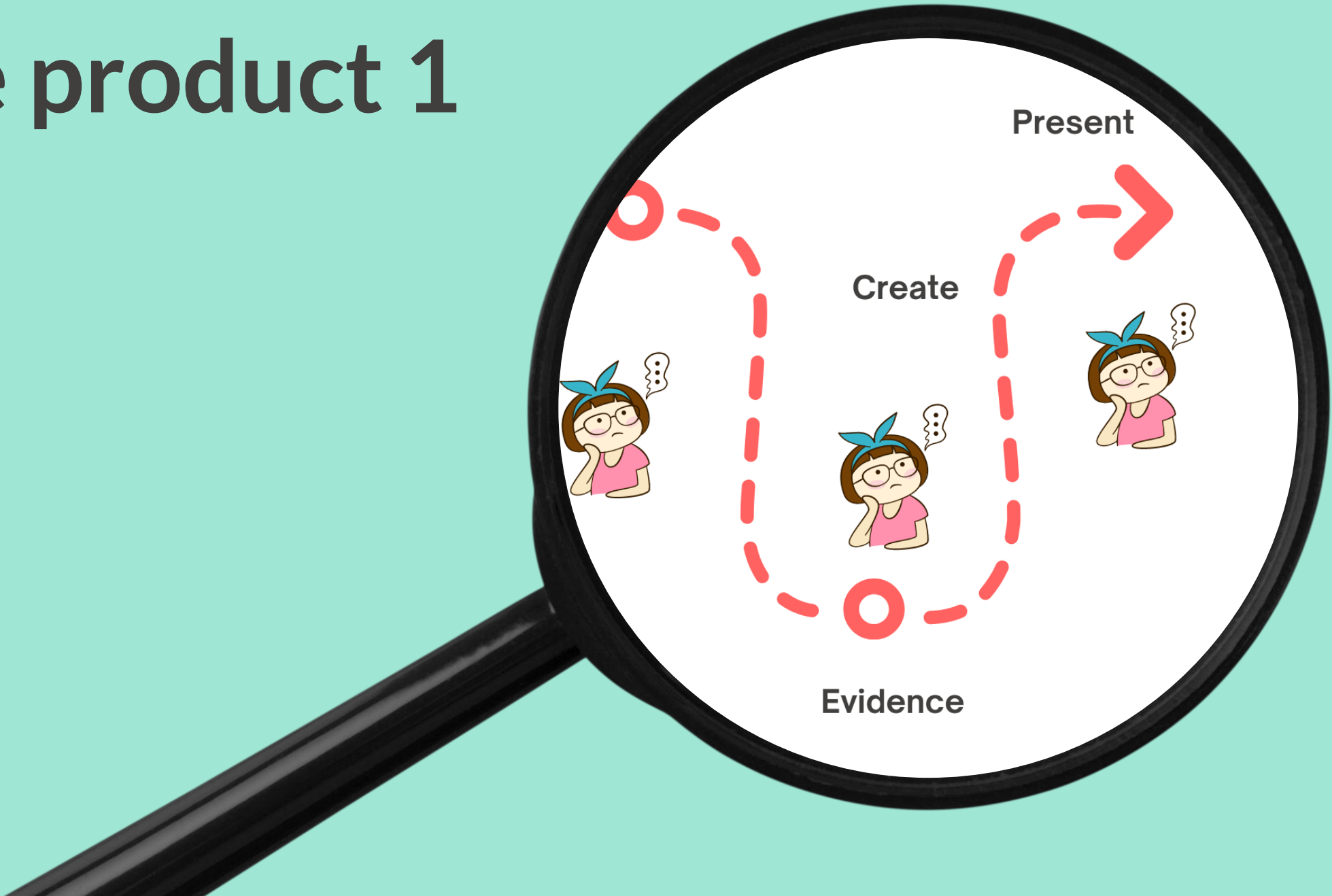
Learners compare different art that represent minibeasts with photos. How is the artwork different from reality? Then have students choose to draw a realistic or artistic version of a minibeast



The inquiry process



The product 1



The product 2





Benefits of inquiry-based learning

- learning is relevant
- language use is authentic
- based on learners' needs
- tailored to interests
- can be differentiated
- engaging

Part 2

The design process





1 Choose your topic



course book / syllabus

What topics are
in your current
course book or
syllabus?



1 Choose your topic



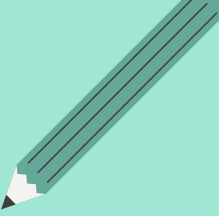
course book / syllabus

learner interests

What
interests your
students?



1 Choose your topic



course book / syllabus

learner interests

find an interesting angle



2 Plan & add objectives

vocabulary & structures



Sub questions & Learner questions



How many types of minibeasts can you find?

Where do they live?

What do they look like?

What can they do?

How do they behave?

How do they adapt?

How long do they live?

What dangers are there (in their lives)?

What do they need to survive?

How can we protect them?



2 Plan & add objectives

vocabulary & structures

receptive & productive skills

additional objectives (future skills & competencies)



Inspiring Inquiries

Resource Pack

FOOD



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ELT

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3 Design inquiry tasks

Find a pizza recipe. Identify ingredients. Are they from plants or animals?

Go to a supermarket. Where do (tomatoes) grow?

Use Google Maps. How far do they travel?



4 Source resources



5 Provide differentiation & scaffolding

levelled activities & questions

offer choice

consider success criteria

Option 1

Option 2

Option 3

Option 4

Part 3

Learner

autonomy



Go to www.menti.com and
type in the code **13 45 81 3**

<https://www.menti.com/alprdzf8pdmd>



Mentimeter poll

How autonomous are your learners?



They depend on me and need a highly structured lesson.

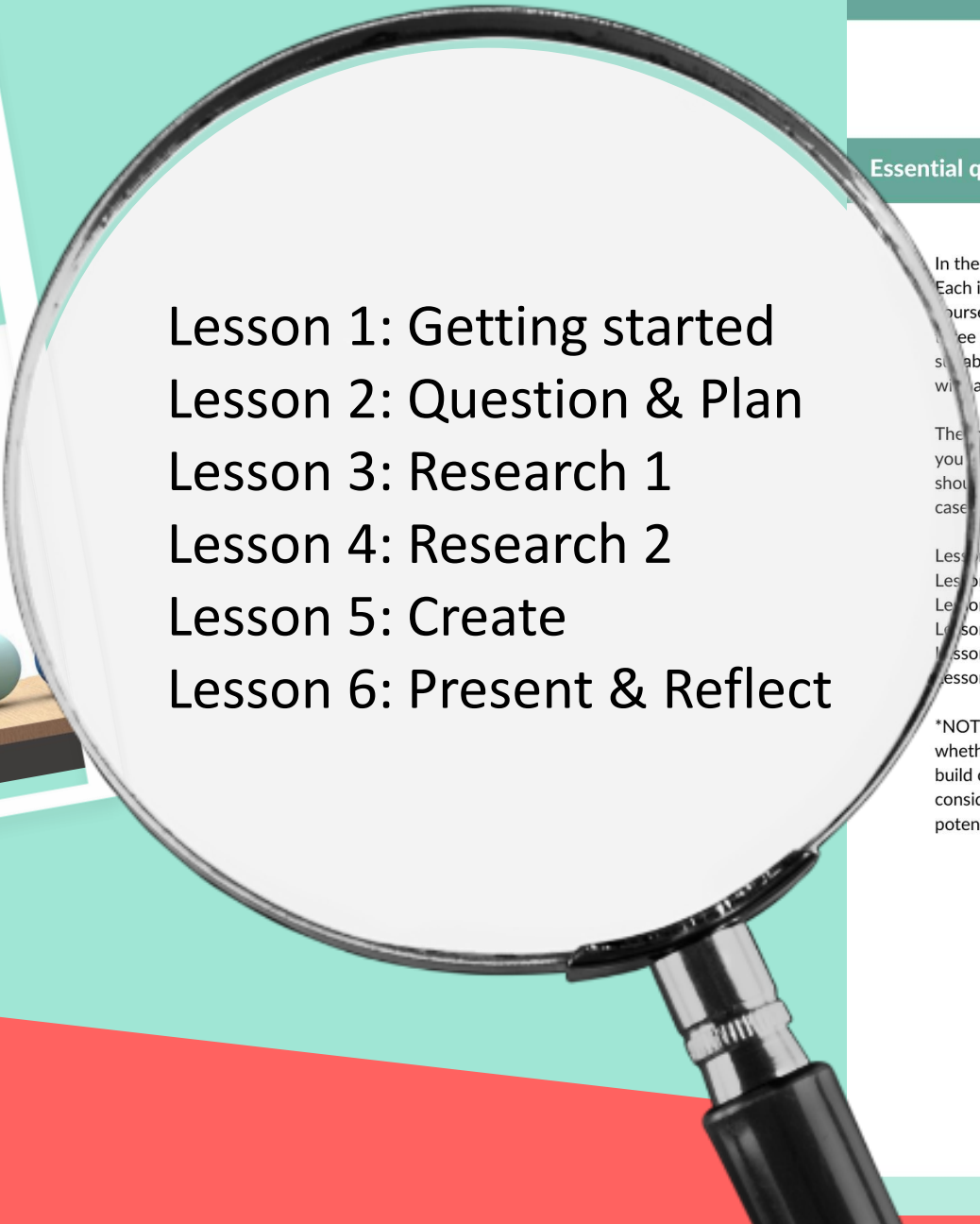
They sometimes work in pairs or groups but they need support and clear roles.

They enjoy working independently and take responsibility for their learning.

Tips for fostering autonomy

- Start with a whole class inquiry.
- Come up with questions together.
- Plan a series of activities and create a lesson sequence.





- Lesson 1: Getting started
- Lesson 2: Question & Plan
- Lesson 3: Research 1
- Lesson 4: Research 2
- Lesson 5: Create
- Lesson 6: Present & Reflect

INQUIRY PLAN

Essential question: What's the best planet to live on?

In the following sections you will find a suggested inquiry plan for a structured inquiry. Each inquiry has been divided into six 'lessons'. If you're using the inquiry to supplement a course book or other materials, each lesson might take several lessons. I have chosen three research activities for this lesson sequence. Please choose whichever activities are suitable for your class. You could extend the inquiry plan by repeating Lessons 3 and 4 with additional research activities.

The inquiry is designed to be completed over a period of three to six weeks, assuming that you have two or three hours' class time per week. However, be mindful that an inquiry should always be flexible and some stages may take more than one lesson, or in some cases less.

- Lesson 1: Getting started
- Lesson 2: Question & Plan
- Lesson 3: Research 1
- Lesson 4: Research 2
- Lesson 5: Create
- Lesson 6: Present & Reflect

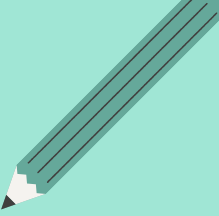
*NOTE: You may like to discuss the ethical implications of space exploration, including whether we have the right to settle on other planets. Is it okay to take land we find and build on it? How might this affect any life that already exists on the planet? Other considerations might be the carbon footprint of spacecraft launches on Earth and potential pollution of space and other planets.

Tips for fostering autonomy



- Offer limited choices: type of product, roles, provide three option
- Gradually offer more choices, e.g. questions, resources
- Encourage extra exploration

When you're ready...



... plan your own inquiry

Inspiring Inquiries

Resource Pack

HOME



Michelle Worgan
ELT

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INQUIRY IDEAS

... that are relevant for your learners' age, level and interests. ... you may want to teach relevant vocabulary and structures. You will find ... low.

... present a range of different homes including those in less-affluent areas and ... of the world. It's important to show that a good home is not tied to ...

... of fiction or non- ... topic of houses ... ude stories where a ... rk. Have learners ... ad them with the ... on the homes ... ke them good

Home shopping

Show learners adverts from online estate agencies (real estate), if possible with a virtual tour. Invite learners to tell a partner what they like about each area of the home. If possible, choose a variety of different types of homes in different parts of the world.

Language areas: rooms and furniture, adjectives, I like/don't like/love...

... iture, family, ... re/isn't/aren't

Amazing homes

Show learners clips from TV shows about interesting homes, e.g. tiny homes, container homes, floating homes, tree houses, mobile homes. Encourage learners to think about the benefits of living in each type of home.

... ilms where a ... usual ... e film Up! ... e and

Language areas: rooms, daily routine, adjectives, In this home, you can ... If you live here, you can ...

... There ... gectives

Online search

Do an online search (as a class or in groups) using [Kiddle - visual search engine for kids](#). You may wish to visit the encyclopaedia page [House Facts for Kids \(kiddle.co\)](#). Another possible search could be homes of the future.

Language areas: types of home, materials, sustainability, present passive (are built)

Part 4 Summary



Steps for designing an inquiry

1. Choose a topic & language objectives
2. Come up with an essential question
3. Develop guiding or sub questions
4. Plan differentiated research activities
5. Think of possible options for product choices
6. Formulate success criteria / evaluation format



Thank you for coming!



www.michelleworgan.com
michelle@michelleworgan.com