I will talk about the importance of engagement in activity that draws learners into collaborative action through inquiry tasks. This is important for mathematical learners in classrooms. It is important for teachers learning more about what it means to teach and also for didacticians working with teachers to promote learning for both prospective teachers and practising teachers.

A key word here is “inquiry”. I will discuss inquiry as a theoretical construct that is both a tool to aid engagement and development, and also a way of being in practice. I will suggest that learning at all these levels is most fruitfully an inquiry-based process. The idea of inquiry community is rooted in sociocultural theory in which collaboration and dialogue across educational levels and critical questioning of existing practices promote new knowledge both in practice and in the academy.

I will refer to research projects in which I have been involved in the UK and in Norway. These demonstrate ways in which teachers and didacticians as partners have engaged together in research/inquiry to promote better opportunities for students to learn mathematics in school classrooms at all educational levels.

Papers which provide a background to this work are listed below:


** and * indicate the papers that I consider most valuable.

I attach pre-publication copies of papers [1] [2] [3]