



# Developing More Curious Minds

*John Barell*

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## **Developing More Curious Minds** John Barell

After the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, many people questioned why no one had anticipated the terrorists' acts, even when events and intelligence seemed to point toward them. John Barell wonders if the attacks speak to a greater societal problem of complacency. He believes many students have become too passive in their learning, accepting information and "facts" as presented in textbooks, classes, and the media. Drawing on anecdotes from educators and his own life, Barell describes practical strategies to spur students' ability and willingness to pose and answer their own questions. Antarctica expeditions, outer space discoveries, dinosaur fossils, literature, and more help define the importance of developing an inquisitive mind, using such practices as

- \* Maintaining journals on field trips,
- \* Using questioning frames and models when reading texts,
- \* Engaging in critical thinking and problem-based learning, and
- \* Integrating inquiry into curriculum development and the classroom culture. To become habits of mind, students' daily curiosities must be nurtured and supported. Barell draws a vivid map to guide readers to "an intelligent revolution" in which schools can become places where educators and students imagine and work together to become active citizens in their society.

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