The Inquiry Cycle

The inquiry cycle is at the heart of T-SEDA. Each section of the users' guide will help you to complete the phases of the inquiry cycle, providing you with useful information about classroom dialogue.

Video 7: Completing your reflective cycle gives more information about the reflective cycle and how to complete it

Examples of teacher's inquiries

Here are some examples of the ways in which teachers have used the T-SEDA pack to carry out their own classroom inquiries.

Gary's Inquiry:
Building dialogue in role play

I'm a reception teacher, and the role play area is an important part of the EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) classroom because we always link the activities in the role play area to the EYFS development framework. When I used the self-audit tool, I realised that because the class is in free-flow, I needed to find out exactly how the children were using the area, particularly how they responded to each other.

I decided to observe children playing in the role play area to see how they **built on each other's ideas**, as the foundation of dialogue between them. I used templates 2C and 2D to live code, and discovered that some children developed their creative expression in their talk with others, incorporating new ideas into their play. However, other children mostly played on their own and didn't listen or respond to other children.

After this, I decided to ask children if they wanted to play in the role play area in pairs, and to share ideas about how to play. I found that children would only respond to each other's ideas if they were excited about them – but also that children did become aware of a wider circle of play partners than their usual few friends, which meant that they were hearing a range of different ideas.

Kiran's Inquiry:
Interrogating each other's ideas in history

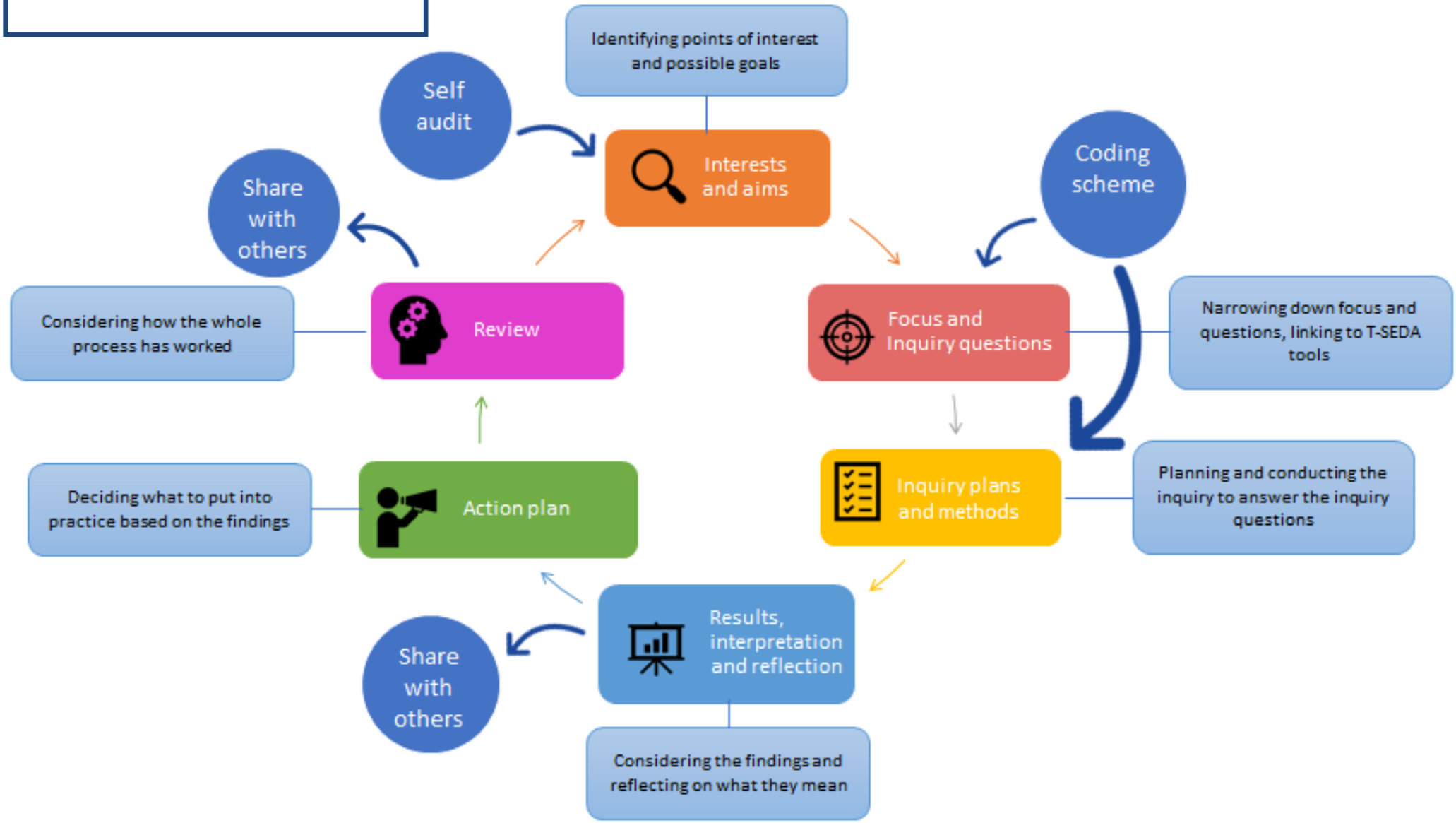
I'm a secondary history teacher and, using the self-audit tool, I wondered if my students understood how to interrogate each other's ideas about sources. I decided to observe how much **challenging of each other's ideas** was happening when the students were looking at sources in pairs. Not only this, I wanted the students themselves to become aware of how important it is to challenge each other's ideas – because some sources can be deliberately misleading.

While some students were working in pairs, I asked others to make a tally of how many times each student in the pair queried or challenged over a period of 10 minutes. Afterwards, these students gave feedback to the class about their observations. This led to a really productive class discussion about challenging each other ideas and the source itself, so that the students were reflecting on their learning as well as gaining a deeper understanding of using sources in history.

Lily's Inquiry:
Developing reasoning in science group work

I'm a year 5 teacher and I was concerned that there wasn't enough **reasoning** happening in my classroom, after using the self-audit tool. I felt that this was particularly the case in science, where not all children were demonstrating their reasoning, for example by applying their knowledge to make predictions, etc.
I decided to use the T-SEDA coding scheme to find out how often reasoning took place in children's group work during a unit of science lessons. I did live observations of certain groups using the time sampling tool, template 2B, and recorded instances of reasoning. I found that some children contributed their reasoning quite often, but others didn't reason at all (or at least not verbally).
Having completed these observations, I realised that I needed to structure group work activities so that all children were encouraged and given the opportunity to share their reasoning within the group.

This page shows the inquiry cycle with additional information about each stage in order to help you to fill out your own inquiry cycle



Here is an example of a completed inquiry cycle

Reflective Cycle of Inquiry

Name: Julia

Fill in the blank box for each step, describing your plans. Use the statements and questions that appear in the original reflective cycle to guide your decisions. Complete the shaded boxes to start with.