Shaping up colours

Annotation

Eamon can identify two variables (shape and colour) in a repeating pattern, and he is able to give the complete unit of repeat for each pattern ("triangle, circle" and "yellow, blue, red"). In solving the problem he works with both elements of the pattern separately and this enables him to identify and describe an unknown element in a given ordinal position.

Problem: Shaping up colours

The teacher places a card with this pattern in front of the student.

Then the teacher poses this problem:

What shape goes on number 14 in this pattern? What colour will it be? How do you know?

Student Response

Eamon:	A circle, and it will be blue.
Teacher:	Tell me how you know that.
Eamon:	Well, there are just two shapes, a triangle and a circle, so they go along in pairs. 10 is a circle, so 12 and 14 will be too. The yellow, blue and red colours go in threes. 10 is yellow, so 13 will be too, so that makes 14 blue.