

## Introduction

### Introduction: About T-SEDA

#### What is T-SEDA?

T-SEDA stands for Teacher Scheme for Educational Dialogue. It's a collection of tools and resources that will support you in promoting high quality dialogue in your learning setting. It will help you to carry out an inquiry to find out more about the dialogue in your setting and to make the changes that you want to see.

#### Who is T-SEDA for?

T-SEDA can be used by teachers of any age group, from early years to adult learners. It can be used in formal face-to-face or online learning settings such as school classrooms and university seminars, or in informal settings such as children's clubs. You'll see examples of how T-SEDA has been used throughout this resource pack.

#### How does T-SEDA work?

You can use T-SEDA to carry out an inquiry into dialogue in your learning setting. During this inquiry, you'll become more aware of what dialogue is like at the moment, find out what good quality dialogue is and how to listen for it, and decide what you want to find out about dialogue in your classroom. The T-SEDA pack has been designed to be both **supportive** and **flexible**. It's a step-by-step guide, but you can also adapt and add to any of the materials according to your own needs and interests.

#### What do I need to know?

You can find everything you need in this pack and on the T-SEDA website: <http://bit.ly/T-SEDA>. There are other resources to support you on this website: [www.edudialogue.org/](http://www.edudialogue.org/). Throughout the pack, there will be signposts to where you can find the information that you need.



[Video 5: The T-SEDA pack—welcome guide](#) is a useful overview of how to use the pack

## The T-SEDA Core Tools

There are three tools that will enable you to carry out your inquiry so that you can systematically identify what your students' dialogue and your own practice is currently like (Tool 1), how to use this as a starting point to develop an inquiry (Tool 2), and a dialogue coding scheme to help you to carry out an inquiry (Tool 3). The pack explains how you can use each of these tools. There is a range of observation tools and tips in Section 2-5 to aid with your inquiry.



### **Tool 1 Self-Audit Grid**

Start your T-SEDA journey by systematically reflecting on your current practice.

### **Tool 2 Reflective Cycle for Classroom Inquiry**

Use a step-by-step reflective cycle to transform your practice and keep a record of how this happens

### **Tool 3 Coding scheme to identify key dialogic features**

Identify moments of high quality dialogue in your classroom and the conditions that create these.

Good inquiries start off by identifying problematic, puzzling or interesting aspects of practice in your setting. Your self-audit will help you to do this and find out what you want to focus your inquiry on

This guide will take you through the process of setting up an inquiry into dialogue in your setting

The coding scheme identifies the kinds of things that you might hear that are examples of high quality dialogue. These will provide a focus for your classroom inquiry

## 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.

## Self-audit: How productive is the dialogue in my classroom? A self-audit for

### Your Self-Audit



Interests  
and aims

*Section of inquiry cycle*

Your self-audit<sup>1</sup> will help you to identify the characteristics of your current classroom practice. It will also help you to:

- start your reflective cycle by focusing on your interests and aims to start thinking about your inquiry.
- reflect and monitor what happens as you go along.
- see how dialogue in your classroom has changed by repeating the audit after your inquiry

You'll find the self audit on the next page, and a downloadable version is available on the T-SEDA website for you to complete.



[Video 6: Completing your self audit](#)

1. This self-audit builds on an original table authored by Diane Rawlins, one of our teacher co-researchers in Cambridge. (Economic and Social Research Council grant no. RES063270081).

2. This distinction between the three different layers and elements of classroom dialogue was highlighted in a large-scale mixed methods intervention study on classroom

Reflection point: In looking at each self-audit item, ask yourself:

- What do these mean in my practice and how do I know they are actually happening?
- To what extent is the ethos in my classroom supportive of dialogue for learning?
- What is the difference between the 'I' and the 'we' columns? Is there a difference between your planning and what happens in practice?

### Self-Audit: Supporting development of dialogue in the classroom

Reflect on learning and teaching in your classroom and rate each statement using: (1) rarely (2) sometimes (3) usually

In my teaching, do I... ?	My rating	In our classroom, do we... ?	My rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• value student talk in my lessons and plan for it to take place in groups and whole-class situations</li> <li>• ensure that everyone participates sometimes in classroom dialogue, including myself</li> <li>• take account of children's individual needs and interests when developing dialogue</li> <li>• encourage children to be responsible for their own learning (individually and collectively)</li> <li>• invite children to build on their own and others' ideas</li> <li>• invite children to justify their ideas and opinions</li> <li>• invite children to ask each other challenging questions about their ideas</li> <li>• invite and encourage children to compare/coordinate different ideas</li> <li>• support children in a range of ways to enable them to share their ideas, views and feelings</li> <li>• build on children's contributions to advance the dialogue using my own subject knowledge and understanding</li> <li>• take risks and experiment by trying out new dialogic teaching approaches</li> <li>• listen to students, give feedback and respond in a constructive way</li> <li>• use classroom resources, including technology, in dialogic ways to help children in their learning</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• create an inclusive classroom conversation</li> <li>• trust and listen to each other</li> <li>• express a range of views</li> <li>• challenge each other respectfully</li> <li>• explain our reasoning clearly</li> <li>• ask questions to pursue inquiry</li> <li>• have the willingness to sometimes change our minds</li> <li>• sometimes come to agreement</li> <li>• help each other to understand things in a new way /to improve ideas together</li> <li>• extend and refine what we already know</li> <li>• continue a dialogue over time, from lesson to lesson</li> <li>• summarise what we have learned</li> <li>• realise what we still need or want to learn and how we might like to do it</li> </ul>	



## Reflective cycle for classroom inquiry

### Focusing on educational dialogue

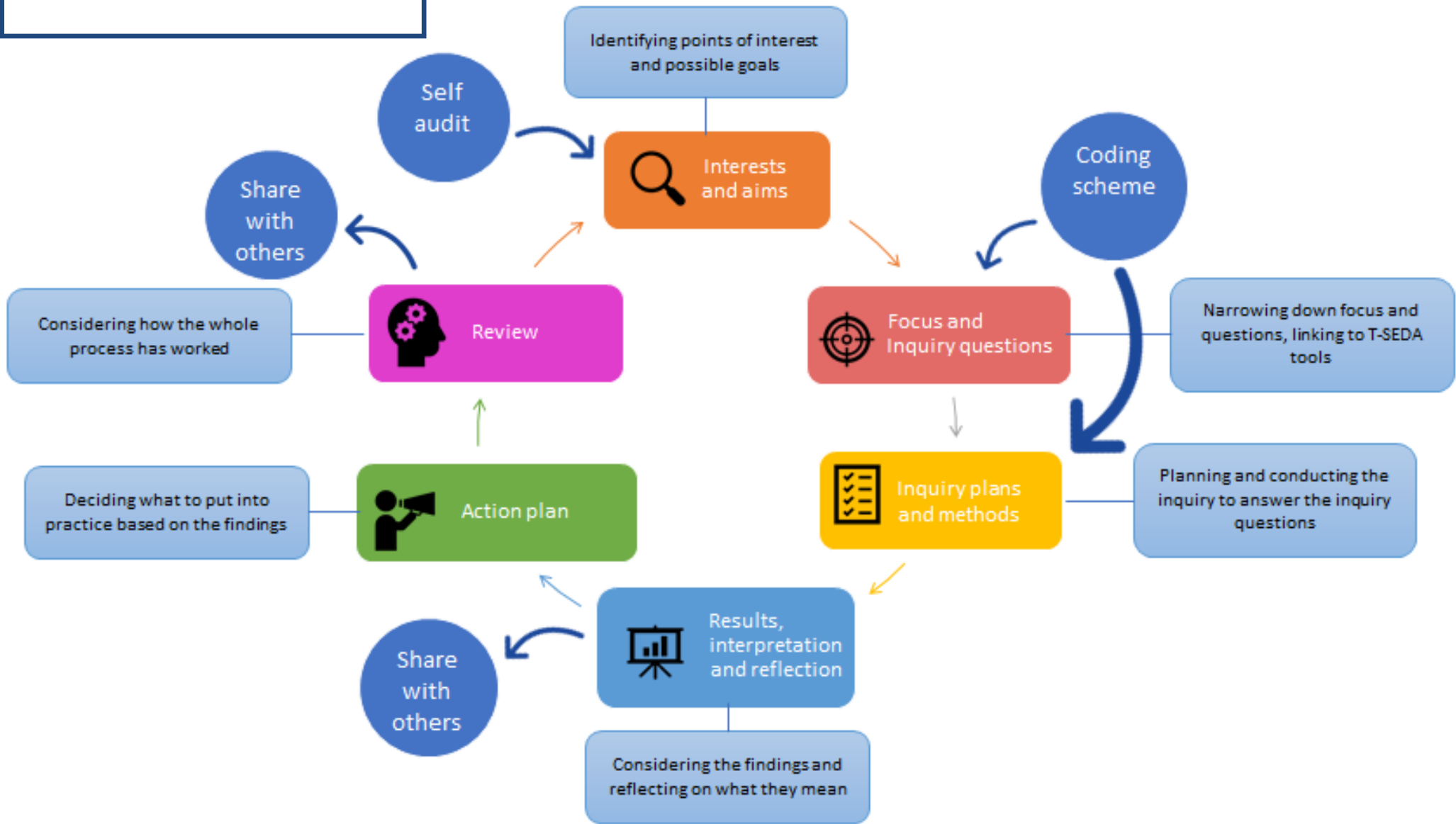
T-SEDA is particularly suited to situations when teachers have identified a **particular interest** in or **concern** about classroom talk and learning. At this point, you might have identified from your self-audit that you have a particular aim or goal for your setting, or you might have identified this during conversations with colleagues or even your students.

The approaches outlined in the T-SEDA pack are grounded in the belief that **reflective inquiry** lies at the heart of teaching. Focusing **inquiry questions** and conducting a **short classroom investigation** can help to target attention, sharpen awareness and build understanding of what is **actually happening** in the fast-paced classroom setting. Reflecting on observational evidence and further discussion with colleagues supports subsequent decision making about setting priorities and deciding whether and how to intervene. This inquiry process resembles school-based action research, in which knowledge and understanding are developed through iterative cycles of planning, classroom trialling, observation, evaluation, and reflection and modification.

#### Reflection points:

1. Now that you've completed your self-audit, what are the things that you're most interested in carrying out an inquiry about? What do you want to find out or change about dialogue in your setting? Jot down some ideas for potential inquiry.
2. Go back and have a look at the T-SEDA coding scheme in Part b. Which of the codes do you think are most relevant for you? Write down the codes next to your ideas for potential inquiry.
3. You may also be interested in the other aspects of dialogue, such as the talk rules and/or overall levels of participation in a session (template 2F) or students' self-assessment of group work quality (template 2G)
4. Now look at the inquiry cycle on the next page. You've been working on the top section, Interests and Aims, for which you identified points of interest and possible goals. You've also started to think about the relevant T-SEDA codes from the scheme. The next section of the pack will help you to narrow down your focus so that you can plan your inquiry.

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



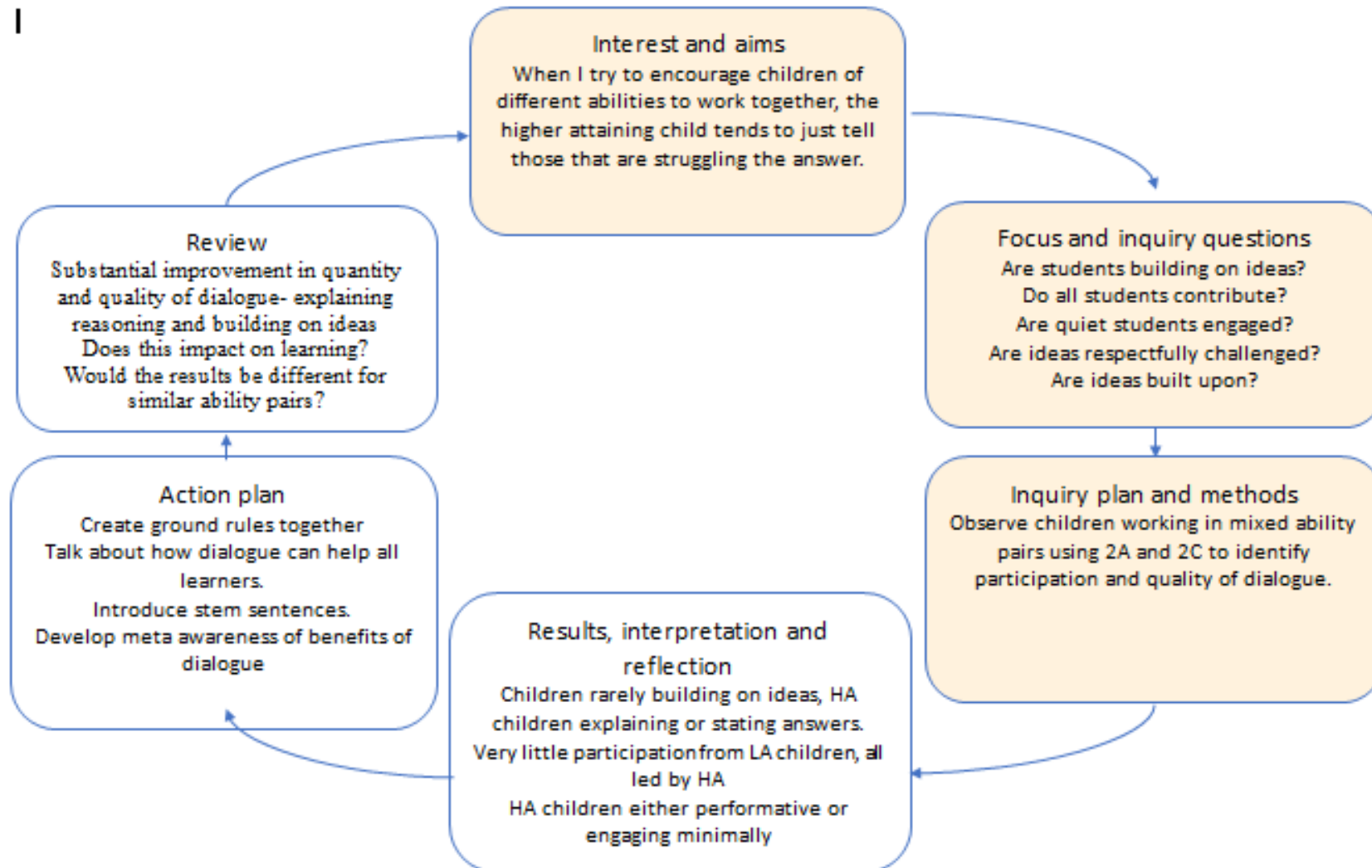


Here is an example of a completed inquiry cycle

## 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.



## Part f. Choosing an inquiry focus

### Generating an inquiry question



## Focus and Inquiry questions

*Section of inquiry*

Generating an inquiry question can be challenging because there is so much that *you could* do: a general rule of thumb for inquiry questions is to narrow your thinking down to something that you *can* do. You might have the overall aim that the students in your class will all participate, build on each other's ideas, and challenge each other, but that's a lot to focus on!

When thinking about what you *can* do, it can help to ask yourself 'How am I going to investigate my inquiry question?' in order to come up with an inquiry question that is manageable. Sections 1 and 2 of this pack give you examples of T-SEDA codes, observation techniques and templates: it's worth having a look through these as you plan your inquiry. You can also watch these videos:



[Video 7: Completing your reflective cycle](#)



[Video 10: Using the coding scheme \(part 1\)](#)



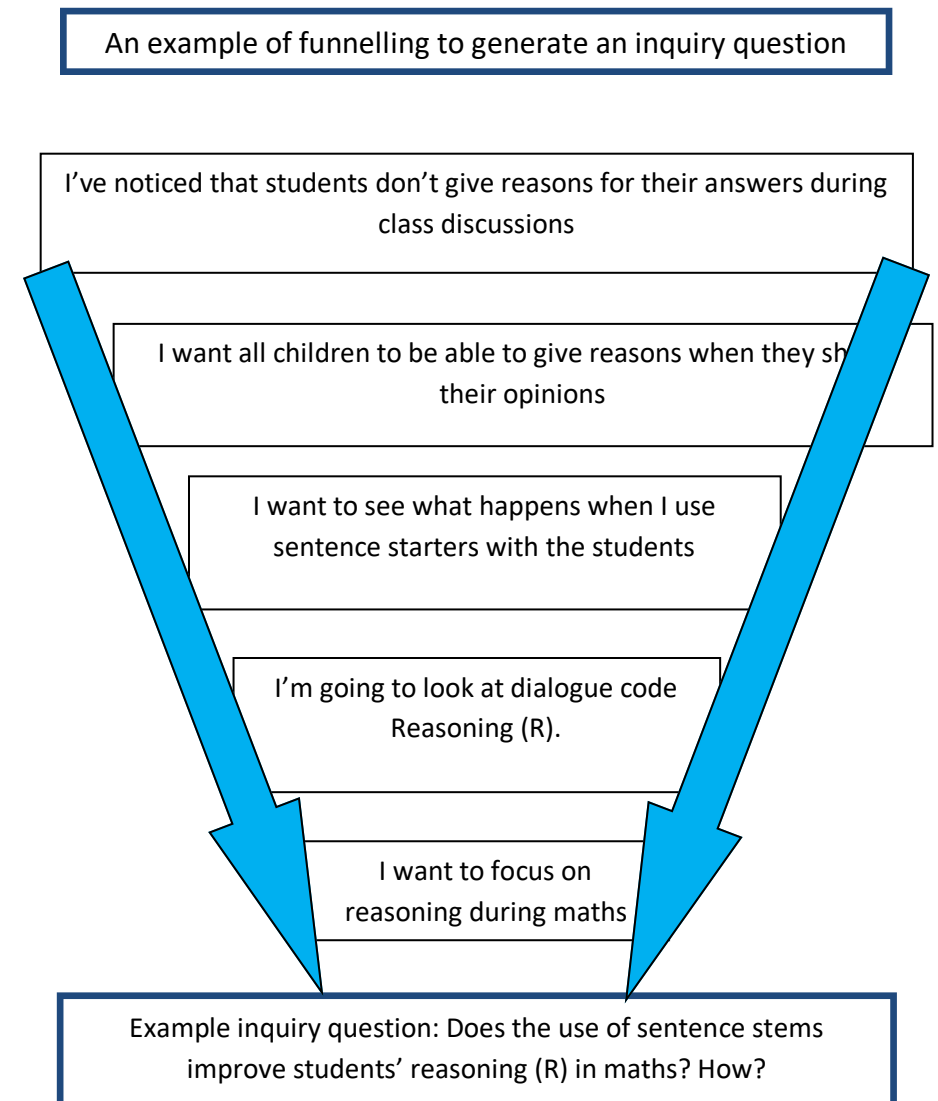
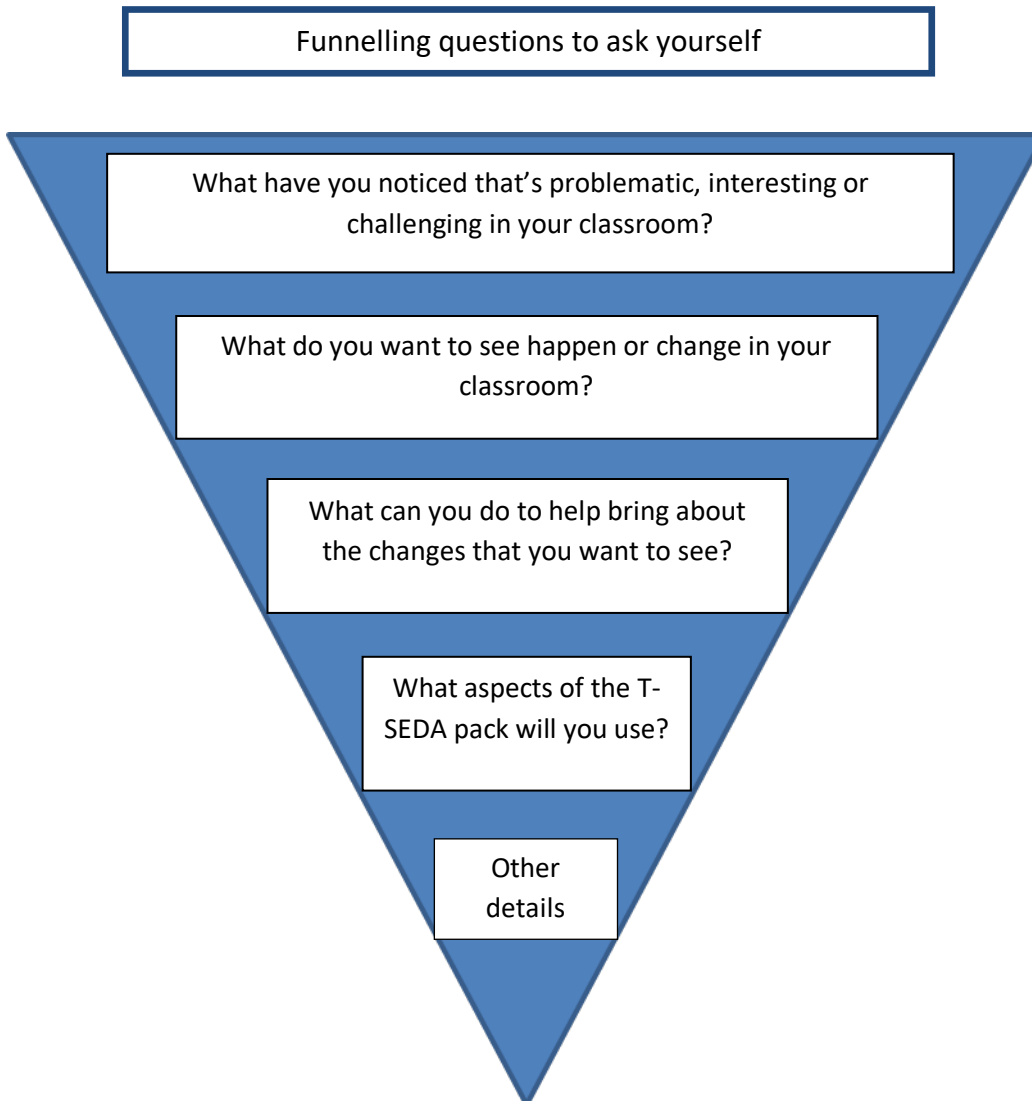
[Video 11: Using the coding scheme \(part 2\)](#)

The following pages offer guidance for different ways to generate an inquiry question, and it's good to remember that there's no one right way to do it. However, there are some principles to keep in mind when coming up with an inquiry question:

- It should be based on a real issue that you have noticed in your classroom so that the inquiry is meaningful to you.
- Discussing your thoughts with other colleagues can really help you to come up with a question – for example, you might realise that all of the teachers in your team have noticed the same issue
- It should be manageable for you in your classroom (based on the time you have and if there are other adults to help, for example)
- It should lead to understanding practice, taking an action, trying something out, and/or to improving a teaching/learning situation
- It should not lead to a simple 'yes' or 'no' answer. Good research questions start with words like 'How..?'; 'What happens when...'. They are genuinely open to different answers emerging.

## Funnelling your thoughts into an inquiry question

One way of generating an inquiry question is to think of it as a funnelling process in which you start off with a problem and then narrow down your focus, until you get to an inquiry question.



The diagrams on these pages might give you some more ideas about what you want to focus on and how to shape your question



I want to focus on student dialogue.  
I want to...

Help students to give reasons for their ideas (Make reasoning explicit, R)

In Computer Studies, when coding in pairs, how often do students give reasons for their decisions?  
To what extent do students give reasons when they're making predications in science?

Help students to question and challenge each other's ideas (Challenge, CH)

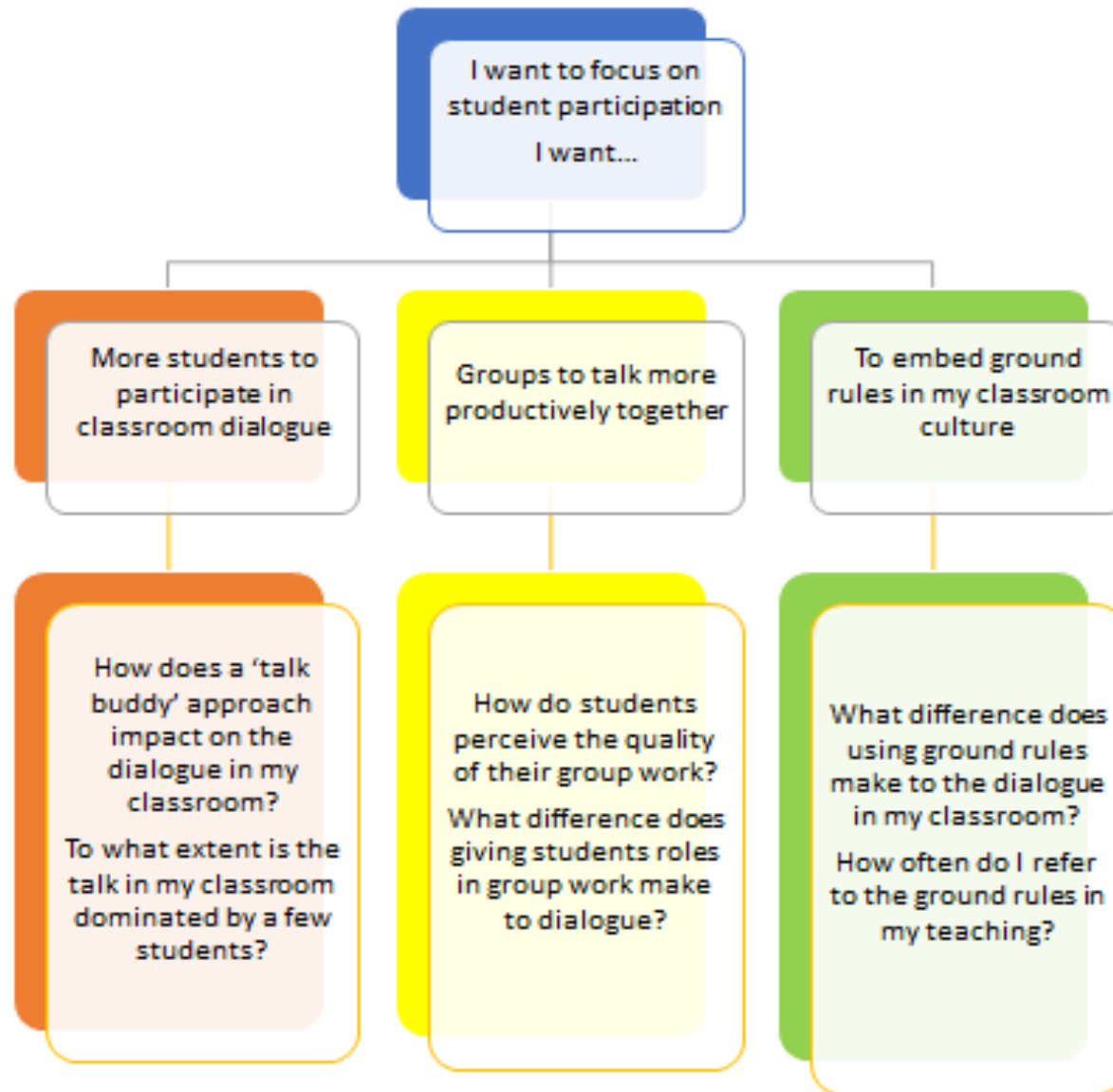
To what extent do my students challenge each other's ideas when they examine sources in history?  
On their media and gender module (Sociology BA), how well do my students evaluate different critical theories during discussion?

Help students to build on each other's ideas (B)

To what extent do my early years students build on each other's ideas during small world play?  
How well do students deepen their understanding by building on each other's ideas?

Help students to make connections in a sequence of learning (Connect, c)

In RE, how much do students bring their own experiences into classroom discussion?  
To what extent can my students make connections to the Russian Revolution when we're discussing Animal Farm?



**Reflection point:** At this point, you should have an idea about what you want your research question(s) to be. If not, have another look at your self-audit and the guidance on generating a research question. You could also look for inspiration in Part H, which explains how to code and analyse dialogue in your classroom. Or you could discuss your thoughts with a colleague to help your thinking.



## Possible uses of the T-SEDA pack

How you use the pack will depend on what you're interested in, but it will also depend on what kind of opportunities you have as well. Here are some suggestions about extended ways in which you could use these resources:

- If you have a teaching assistant in your setting you could ask for help in videoing or doing live observations. Or you could ask them to video you if you wanted to focus on your own practice
- If there are several teachers doing T-SEDA inquiries in your school you could collaborate to share your findings and consider how you could embed whole-school practices
- You could ask other colleagues to observe you, or you could observe them, having learning conversations together
- Depending on the age of your students, you could get their input as you're planning your inquiry and sharing your findings with them, or involve them in formulating your action plan
- You could consider how to integrate technology into your inquiry and how this impacts on dialogue
- Sections 1-5 of the pack will give you some more ideas about what you could do

