

ECGE7001P

Session 4 - Research Tools (Part 2)

Focus Group Interview – Pupil voice

A **focus group** is a form of qualitative research in which a group of children are asked about their perceptions, opinions, and attitudes towards a lesson section or teaching style.

Questions are asked in an interactive group setting where children are free to talk with other group members.

The interview is conducted in an informal and natural way where children are free to give views.

Group interviews and focus groups

- Keep in mind people behave differently in groups
- Understand why you are choosing a group of participants rather than individuals since responses may change – is it for a valid reason?
- The researcher will have a marginal role in focus group discussions
- Usually 6 - 8 participants

Focus group interview

<https://youtu.be/bPjJ6TPkLVM>

- What are your views of this interview with pupils?

Writing questions

- Use open-ended questions

What did you think of ...?

How did you feel about ...?

What do you like best about ...?

Be cautious of phrases such as "how satisfied" or "to what extent".

Writing questions

- Avoid dichotomous questions

These questions can be answered with a "yes" or "no"

Writing questions

- Use "think back" questions.

Take pupils back to an experience and not forward to the future.

Writing questions

- Use different types of questions

Don't be afraid to use questions that get participants involved, e.g. reflection, examples, choices, ranking, rating scales, drawings, etc.

Writing questions

- Avoid leading questions:

Don't you think...

Wouldn't you say that...

That must have been...

Don't you agree that...

Writing questions

- Focus the questions

Sequence that goes from general to specific

Writing questions

For example:

- *What did you learn during the lesson? How do you know?*
- *Do you know what you need to do, in order to further improve your learning?*
- *Which aspects of the teaching worked well for you and why?*
- *How do you think the lesson could be improved? Why?*

Collecting data – Systematic Analysis Process

While in the group:

- Listen for inconsistent comments and probe for understanding;
- Listen for vague or cryptic comments and probe for understanding;
- Consider asking each participant a final preference question;
- Offer a summary of key questions and seek confirmation.

Collecting data – Systematic Analysis Process

Immediately after the focus group:

- Draw a diagram of the seating arrangement;
- Spot check tape recording to ensure proper operation;
- Conduct debriefing (if your research partners have been present);
- Note themes, hunches, interpretations, and ideas;
- Label and file field notes, tapes and other materials.

Observation

- It is part of a teacher's role, and you have experience already
- You can see things in their natural context
- You can see things that may escape conscious awareness
- You can learn about things people may be unwilling to talk about
- It can be inconspicuous and part of normal classroom routine
- It can be the least intrusive of all methods
- You can be creative – flexibility to yield insight into new realities or new ways of looking at old realities

Research Evidence: Can observers spot good teaching?

- A number of research studies have looked at the reliability of classroom observation ratings; E.g. in the USA, the 'Measures of Effective Teaching Project'.
- Despite this, using Ofsted's categories, if a lesson is judged 'Outstanding' by one observer, the probability that a second observer would give a different judgement is between 51% and 78%.

Research Evidence: Can observers spot good teaching?

- Strong et al. (2011) used value-added scores to identify 'effective' and 'ineffective' teachers, showed videos of them teaching to observers and asked them to say which teachers were in which group.
- What did the figures show?

How can the research evidence be so out of line with our intuition?

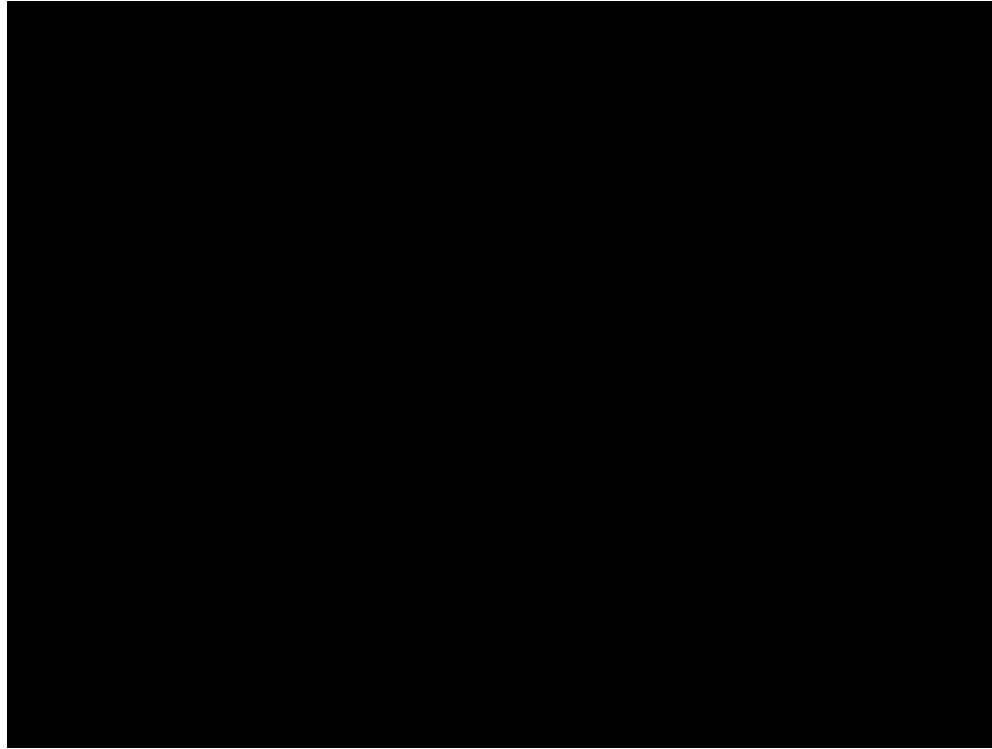
- Observation produces a strong emotional response
- Learning is invisible
- Accepted 'good practice' may be more fashionable than effective
- We assume that if you can do it you can spot it
- We don't believe observation can miss so much

***WHAT CAN BE OBSERVED ...**

The average time teachers give between asking a question and taking an answer is

Check out the clip below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uhiCFdWeQfA>



0.9 of a second!!!

What can be observed

- Human behaviour and physical actions
- Verbal behaviour
- Expressive behaviour
- Spatial relations and locations
- Temporal patterns
- Physical objects
- Verbal or pictorial records

***HOW CAN WE OBSERVE?**

Observational Situations – How we can observe

Situation

Example

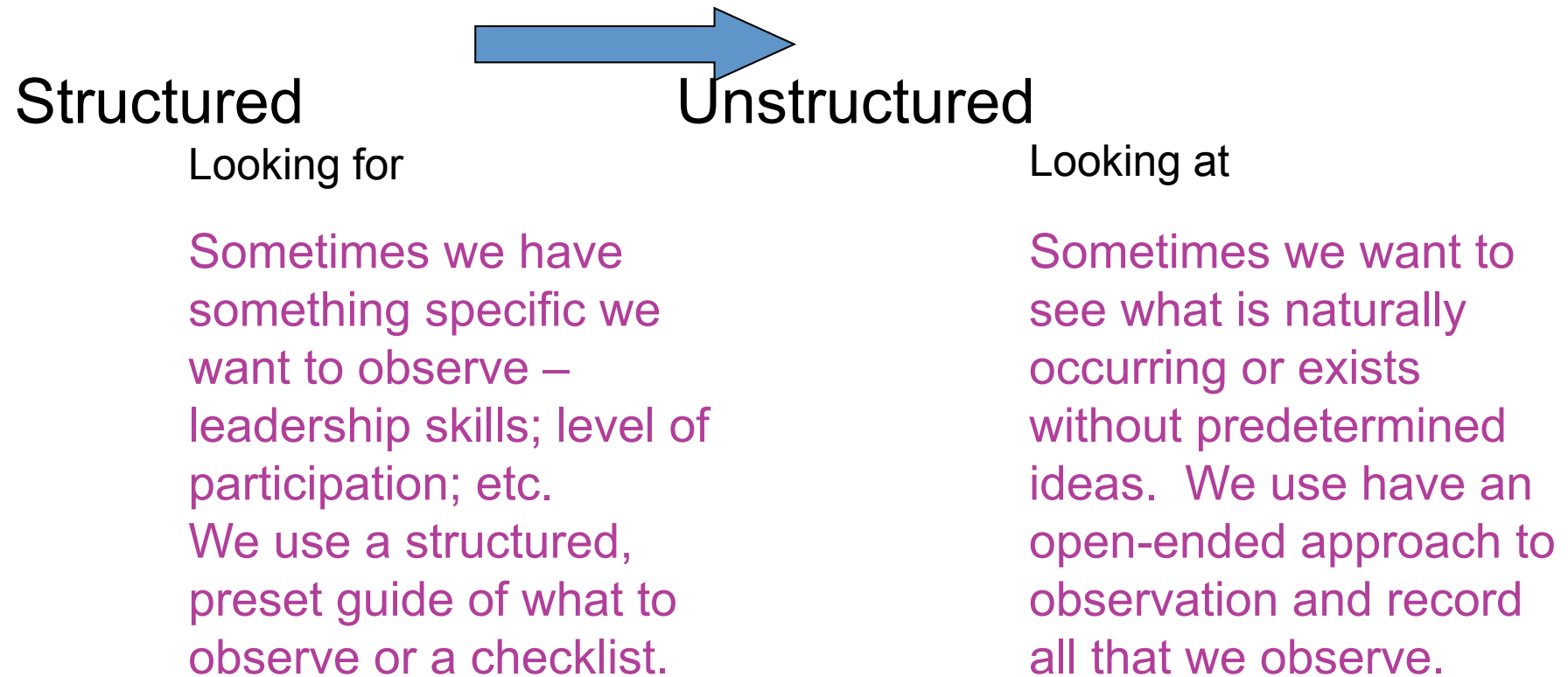
People watching people	Observers stationed in supermarkets watch consumers select frozen Mexican dinners. The purpose is to see how much comparison shopping people do at the point of purchase.
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People watching phenomena	Observer stationed at an intersection counts traffic moving in various directions.
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Machines watching people	Move or videotape cameras record behavior as in people-watching-people example.
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Machines watching flow.	Traffic-counting machines monitor traffic phenomena
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* Types of observation



Observing what does not happen may be as important as observing what does happen.

*Your role in observation

A choice between:

- Non-participant observation. Researcher is not part of the activity taking place, but simply observes.
- Participant observer. Researcher takes part in community, organization, or activity. Researcher attempts to learn what it is like to be part of the community, organization, or participate in the activity.
- Overt / covert?

If you are an overt, non-participant observer (i.e. 'fly-on-the wall'), how will you deal with interested children?

Variations in Approaches to Observation

Role of the Observer			
Full-participant observation	Partial participation	Onlooker; observer is an outsider	
How the Observer Is Portrayed to Others			
Participants know that observations are being made and they know who is making them.	Some but not all of the participants know the observer.	Participants do not know that observations are being made or that there is someone observing them.	
How the Purpose of the Observation Is Portrayed to Others			
The purpose of the observation is fully explained to all involved.	The purpose of the observation is explained to some of the participants.	No explanation is given to any of the participants.	False explanations are given; participants are deceived about the purpose of the observation.
Duration of the Observations			
A single observation of limited duration (e.g., 30 minutes).		Multiple observations; long-term duration (e.g., months, even years).	
Focus of the Observations			
Narrow focus: Only a single element or characteristic is observed.		Broad focus: Holistic view of the activity or characteristic being observed and all of its elements is sought.	

***THINKING CRITICALLY**

Advantages of Observation Research

■ Advantages

- Observation research provides the researcher the opportunity to watch what people actually do rather than relying on reports of what they say they do.
- This approach can avoid much of the biasing factors caused by the interviewer and question structure associated with the survey approach.

Disadvantages

- Only behavior and physical personal characteristics can usually be examined. The researcher does not learn about motives, attitudes, intentions, or feelings.
- Observation research can be time consuming and costly if the observed behavior occurs rather infrequently.
- Interpretation of data may be a problem
- Possible invasion of privacy

 **LIMITATIONS – THE OBSERVER...**



* Observer Effect

- The presence of an observer can have a considerable effect on the behavior of those being observed.
- Explaining to a child what you are doing may affect their behaviour (Hawthorne effect, Roethlisberger and Dickson, 1939 – the mere presence of an observer increased productivity at the Hawthorne electrical works, Chicago).
- Behaviour or 'act'?
- Ethical dilemmas

* Observer Bias

- Certain attitudes may bias what you “see”
- Observer expectations
- Observer emotions
- Dissonance theory – strive towards consistency in what believe and what see – selective
- Congruity theory – if you perceive someone as good you attend to characteristics that confirm your initial perception
- Impression formation theory – some information is more important, and the order information is received in is important

* How well do you observe?

15 seconds...



* How well do you observe?



***WHAT NEXT?**

*Steps in planning for observation

- **WHO** Determine who will be observed.
- **WHY** Establish why they are selected
- **WHAT** Determine aspects that will be observed (characteristics, attributes, behaviours, etc.)
- **WHEN** Determine when observations will be made.
- **WHERE** Determine where observations will be made
- **HOW** Develop the observation guide
- **HOW** Pilot test the observation guide
- **HOW** Train the observers and have them practice.
- **DO** Conduct the observations
- **SO?** Analyse and interpret the collected information.
- **SHARE** Write up and use your findings.

* Checking in...

What do you think?

Answer **YES** or **NO** to each of the following

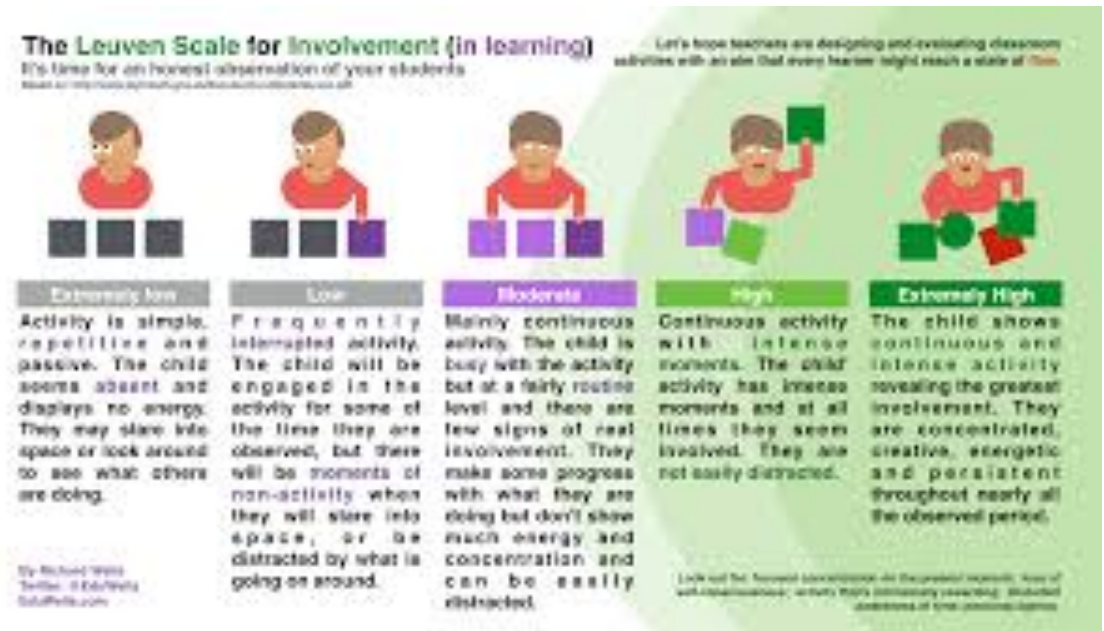
- 1.Observation involves “seeing” and “listening”
- 2.People may behave differently when they know they are being observed so it is better not to tell them
- 3.Structured observations provide more accurate and useful information
- 4.As long as you see it, it doesn’t matter if you record what you saw
- 5.You, as someone who “knows” the program and the participants, are best suited to conduct the observations
- 6.The same principles of sampling apply to observation as to other forms of data collection



Observation schedules

- Positives and negatives???

Leuven Scale

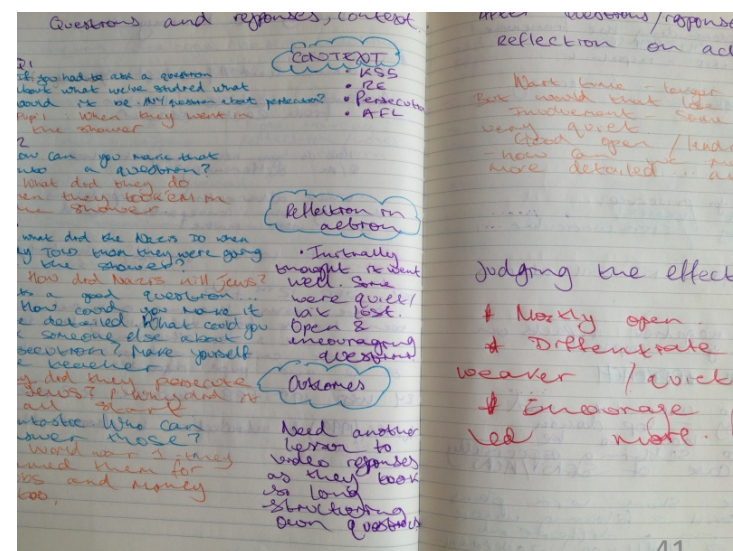
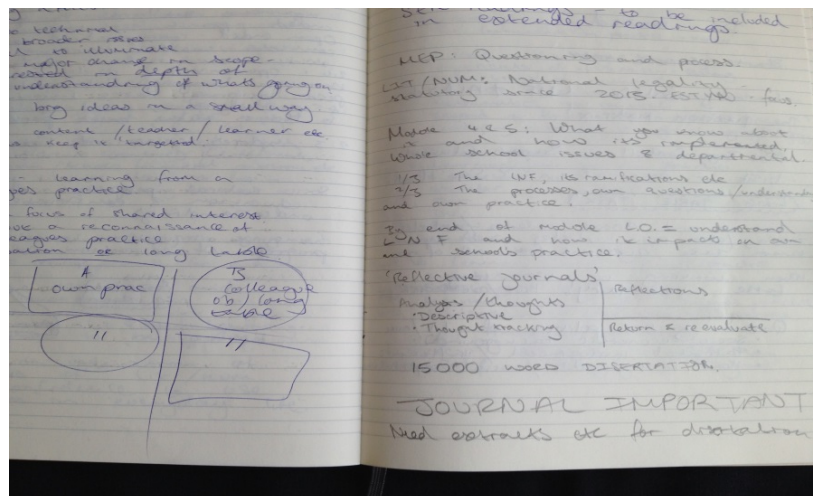
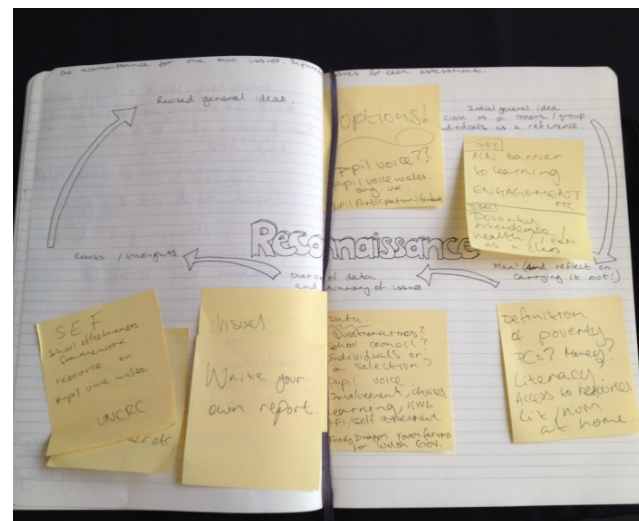
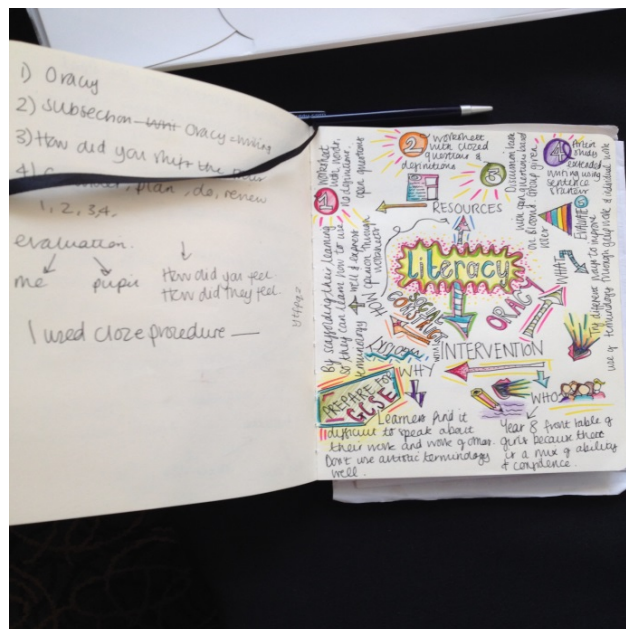


<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WwUCufOeOdE>

Diaries

- Making a record of thoughts, feelings, actions, responses, conversations or producing a more structured record of specific activities or observations
- Divided into three types:
 - Interval-contingent
 - Signal-contingent
 - Event-contingent
- Write in diary immediately after field for interpretive studies

Recording 'field notes' in a journal



Reflection

Reflective thinking involves essentially three processes:

- experiencing something
- thinking (reflecting) on the experience
- learning from the experience.

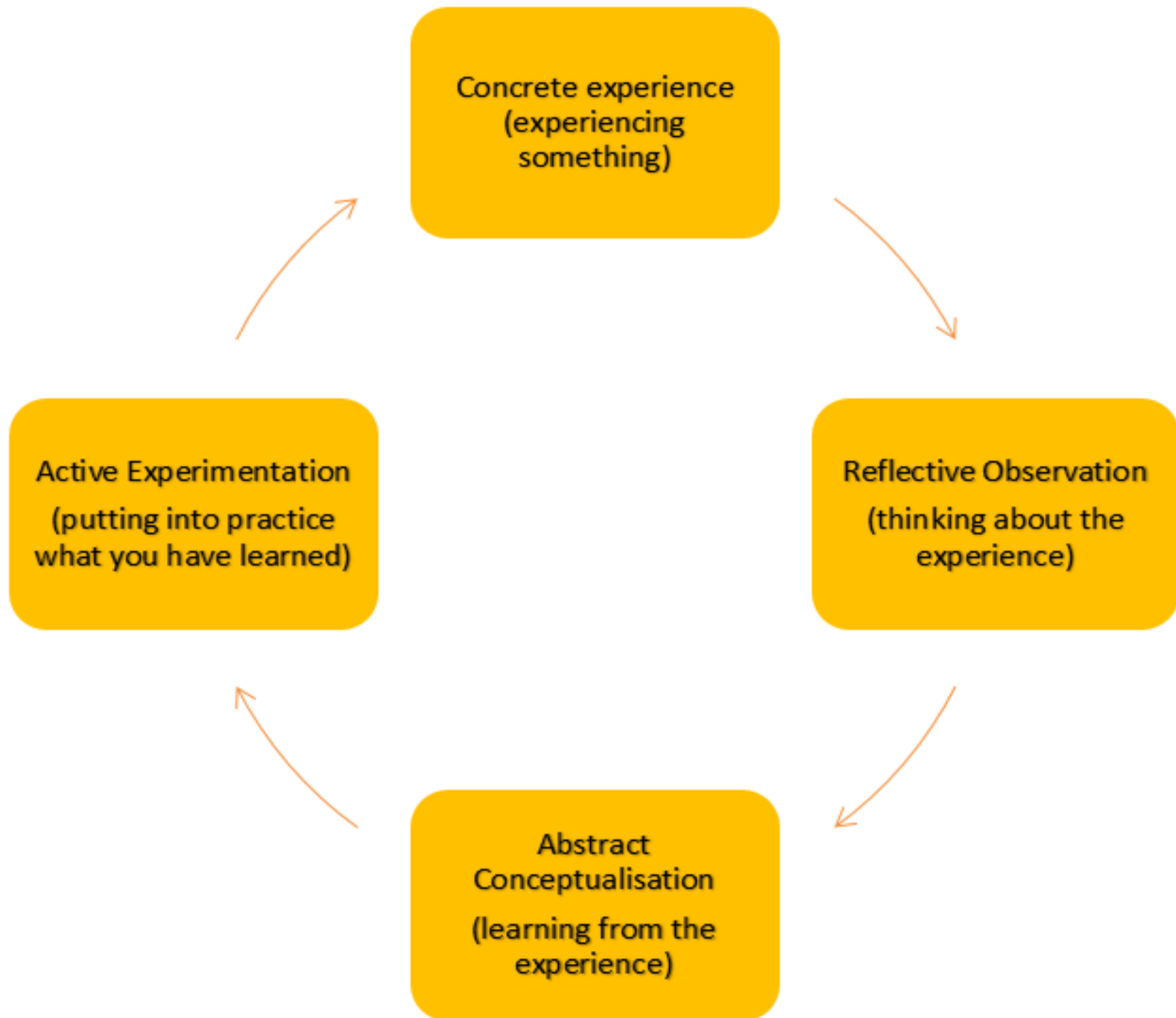
Models of reflective practice

- The following models of reflective practice can allow you to construct a greater depth of reflection than the experience (1), think (2), learn (3) model.

Models of reflective practice: Kolb, 1975 & 1984

- The Learning Cycle emphasises reflective observation as a way to analyse and draw conclusions from an experience. The aim is to take this learning into new experiences, completing the cycle.

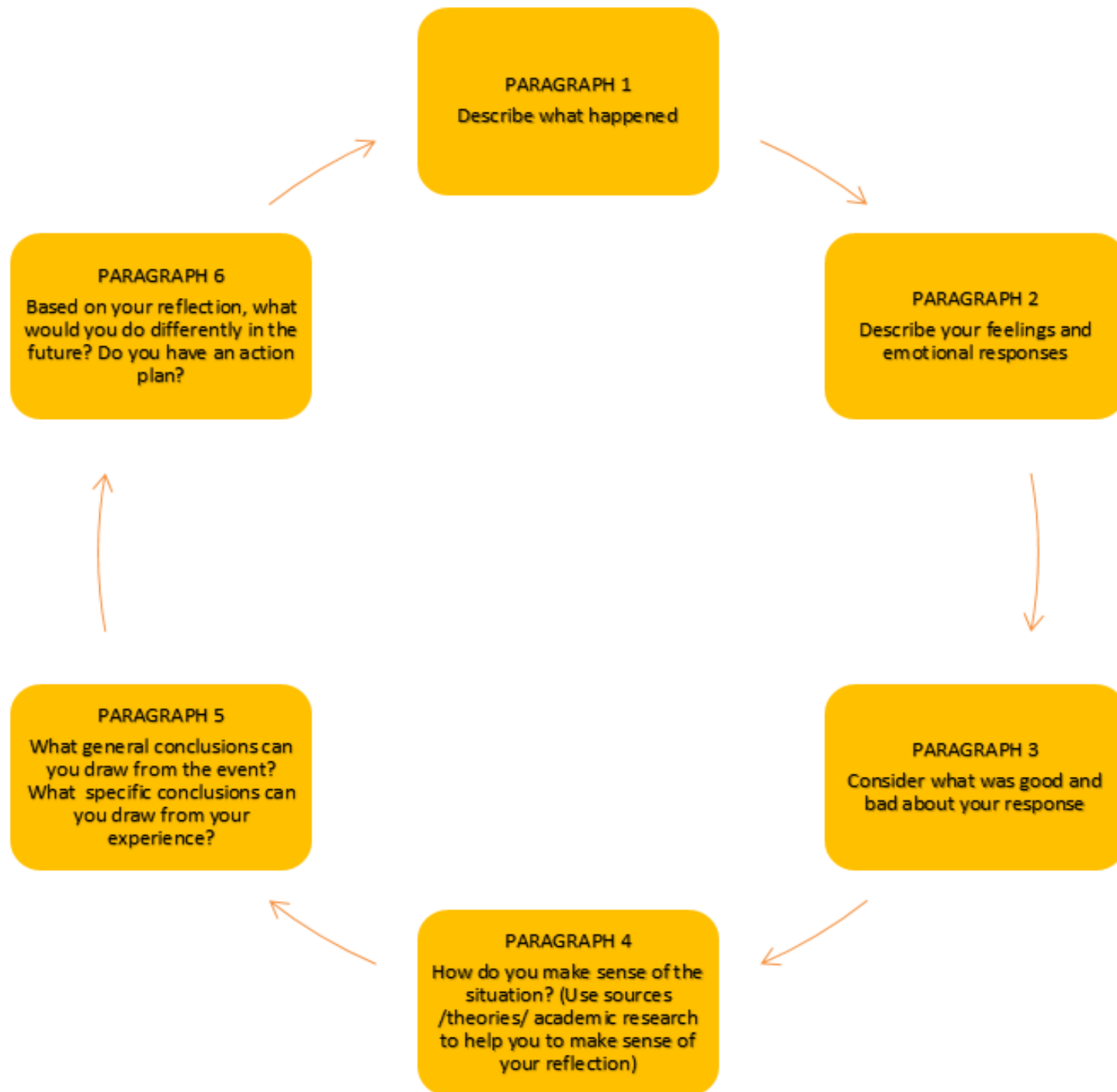




Models of reflective practice: Gibbs, 1988

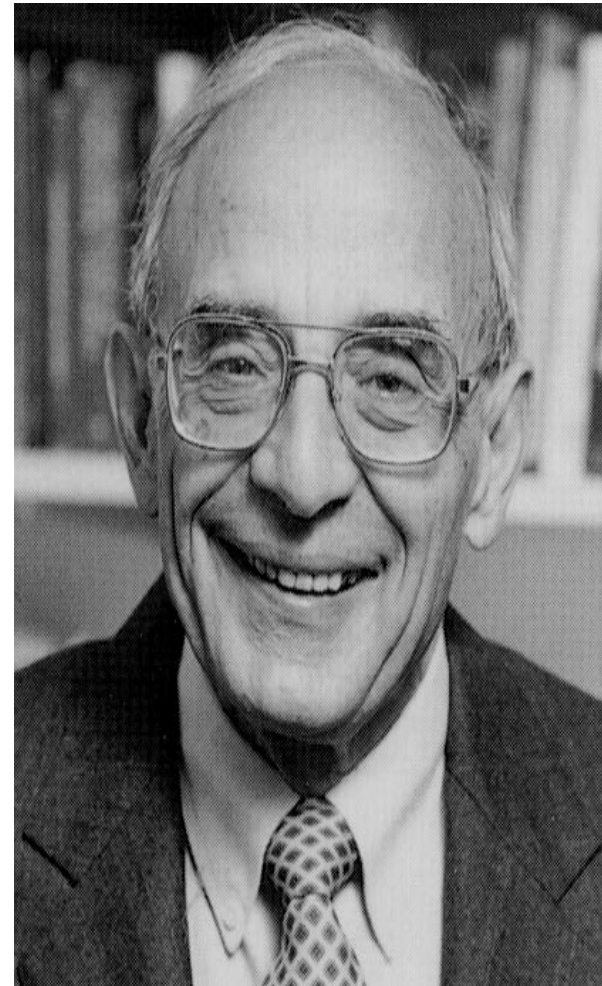
- The Reflective Cycle has six distinctive stages, leading from a description of the event/experience through to conclusions and consideration for future events.





Models of reflective practice: Schön, 1978

- This model has the strength of considering reflection in action (during an event/ experience) with those that happen in hindsight (after the event).



Reflection in action (at the time the event is happening)

- The experience itself
- Thinking about it during the event
- Deciding how to act at the time
- Acting immediately

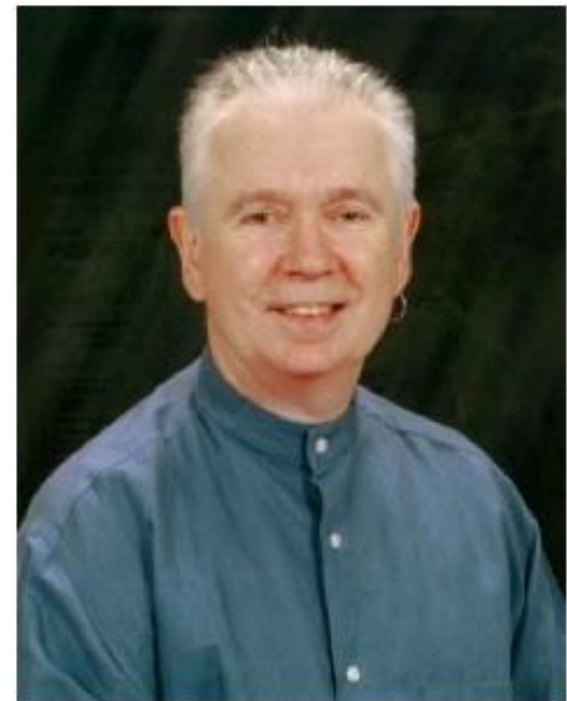
Reflection on action (after the event)

- Reflecting on something that has happened
- Thinking about what you might do differently if it happened again
- New information gained and/or theoretical perspectives from study that inform the reflector's experience are used to process feelings and actions

Models of reflective practice: Brookfield, 1998 & 2005

- This model proposes four lenses that can be engaged by teachers in a process of critical reflection: (1) the autobiographical, (2) the students' eyes, (3) our colleagues' experiences, and (4) theoretical literature.

(Brookfield's Lenses)



Our
autobiographies
as learners

SELF

Our students'
eyes

STUDENTS

Our colleagues'
experiences

PEERS

Theoretical
Literature

SCHOLARSHIP

Document interrogation

- Make sure you find the right/appropriate documents
- Create a criteria for assessing the relevance of documents and their arguments/policies
- Learn digital key shortcuts to make interrogating documents easier and faster (EBSCO)
- Can use social media to gather 'word-based' information and collaborate with other researchers and participants

Lesson Study

Lesson Study is a model for collaborative classroom professional learning where:

- two or more teachers work together, developing practice in the classroom, focusing on the needs and learning of real pupils and trying to solve a teaching- or learning-based problem which is affecting pupils' progress;

Lesson Study

- teachers are engaged in developing a teaching technique which is designed to improve a specific aspect of learning for identified pupils;
- teachers keep a record of what they learn and pass on the practice knowledge which they gain to others.

It is built on the premise that the best way to improve education is to "*get teachers together to study the processes of teaching and learning in classrooms, and then devise ways to improve them*" (Fernandes & Yoshida, 2004).

The process was developed in Japan.



Lesson Study

1. Plan

- **Plan** a lesson together.
- Address each activity to your enquiry question and **predict** how pupils will react and how you will assess this.
- Pick 3 **case pupils**.

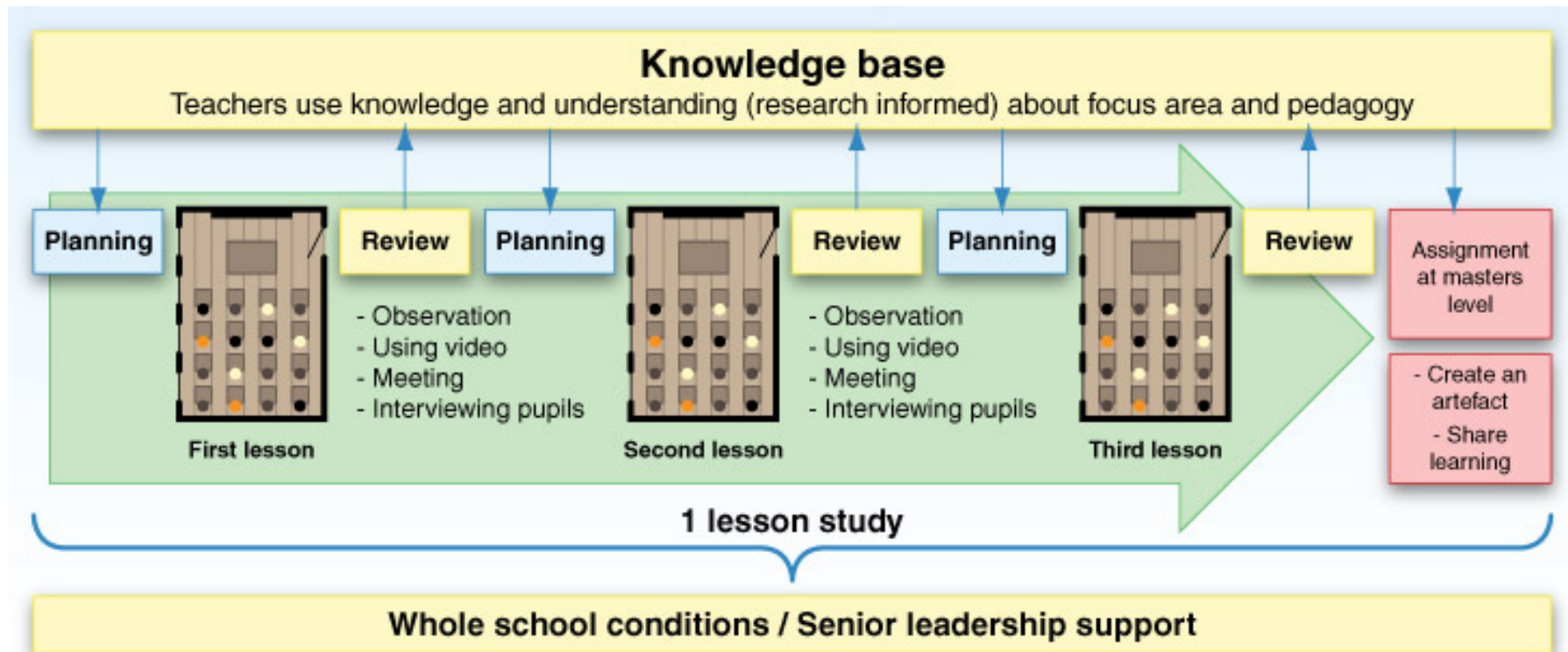
2. Observe

- **Teach** the lesson with your colleagues observing.
- Pay particular attention to the **case pupils**.
- Conduct any **assessments** and/or **interviews** during & after.

3. Reflect & Plan

- As soon after the lesson as possible, **reflect** how each activity elicited the sought-after change. Were your **predictions** correct? Why?

Lesson Study



Lesson Study

- <http://lessonstudy.co.uk/what-is-lesson-study/>

Background to lesson study: Peter Dudley

- <http://lessonstudy.co.uk/2014/09/lesson-study-professional-learning-for-our-time-read-pete-dudleys-resume-of-the-case-for-lesson-study-made-in-his-new-book-out-on-10-september-which-can-be-ordered-at-httpwww-routledge-comb/>

Question formation

How can we improve.....through.....in a FP/
KS2 classroom?



e.g. pupil response time
lollypop sticks



e.g. use of

Consider:

- What are you going to measure?
- How might you measure it?

Some examples:

- How can we improve involvement through the use of differentiated questioning in KS2 English lessons?
- How can we improve pupils' learning through peer assessment?
- How can we support learners to achieve the lesson's learning objective by using differentiated criteria checklists?
- How can mini plenaries influence pupils' understanding of the learning objective?