

OPTIONAL STUDENT ACTION PROJECT

Now that students have deepened their understanding of the issues, they are ready to take action in response to antisemitism or another form of bias in their community.

Begin by discussing—as a class or in small groups—issues that students have noticed and are concerned about. Generate a list of issues that are relevant and important to them. Form project groups of three to five students based on their interests.

Introduce Kath Murdoch’s model for inquiry. This inquiry cycle can be used as a guide to help students pace and organize their work. On the next page, the cycle’s steps have been clustered into three parts so that students can work on it progressively or in stages following each of the lessons in the Contemporary Antisemitism unit. Alternatively, it can be assigned all at once following the unit or as a stand-alone project. Additional class time will need to be provided on top of the time designated for lessons, or the project can be assigned as a homework or out-of-class project if appropriate.

The following handout is included to guide students’ work: Inquiry Cycle for Students.

As students delve into their research and plan for action, encourage them to consider an appropriate range of actions they might take. Highlight that small actions—such as writing a blog or organizing a lunchtime awareness session on an issue—can have a big impact on their community; actions don’t always have to be all-encompassing.

Make sure that students plan for ways to document their project and/or project results so that they can be shared with others. Designate a time or a process for final projects to be shared with the school community. For example, they may be shared with different audiences in the form of Ted Talks, written up for the school website or newspaper, or displayed gallery style on poster boards or the walls of the school.

Conclude the project by having students reflect on and evaluate their work. This can be done through group discussion, journaling and other forms of writing, or in dialogue with various constituents involved in the project. Encourage students to consider questions such as the following:

- Did the project achieve the objectives initially identified?
- Did it result in positive change?
- What unexpected challenges arose?
- What did you learn about yourself, your community, or the broader society through the project?
- What needs to be done next? How can the work be continued?

TEN WAYS TO TAKE ACTION

1. Start a book club focused on diversity topics
2. Hold an awareness raising workshop or event
3. Do fundraising to support a diversity issue
4. Write an article or blog for a school or community media outlet
5. Write a letter to an elected leader
6. Meet with school administration—present a solution to a problem or develop a bias response plan
7. Start a human rights or diversity club or affinity group
8. Create a support network for those who are the targets of bias or exclusion
9. Form a petition
10. Plan an anti-bias protest or rally

KATH MURDOCH'S INQUIRY CYCLE¹

STAGES 1 ("TUNING IN") AND 2 ("FINDING OUT")

Groups identify an issue they feel is relevant and important in their lives. They reflect on what they know and need to learn about the issue, identify sources of information and diverse perspectives, and research their issue.

Guiding Questions:

- What do we already know or think we know about the topic/issue?
- How do we feel about the issue and how have we come to these feelings?
- How is the issue relevant to our community?
- What more do we want to find out about this issue?
- What resources will help to answer our questions and where can we find them?
- How can we make sure the resources we use are valid and trustworthy?

STAGE 3 ("SORTING OUT")

Groups complete their research, then organize and analyze information in ways that will help them decide on a plan of action. They identify any additional information needed and begin a plan for carrying out their ideas.

Guiding Questions:

- What information helps to answer our questions? Have any new questions emerged?
- What patterns and connections are we noticing?
- Have all our questions been answered? Have all perspectives been considered?
- How can we "sort out," organize, or better understand the information we have gathered?
- How can we begin a plan to show the insights and connections we have uncovered?

STAGES 4 ("REFLECTING AND ACTING") AND 5 ("EVALUATING")

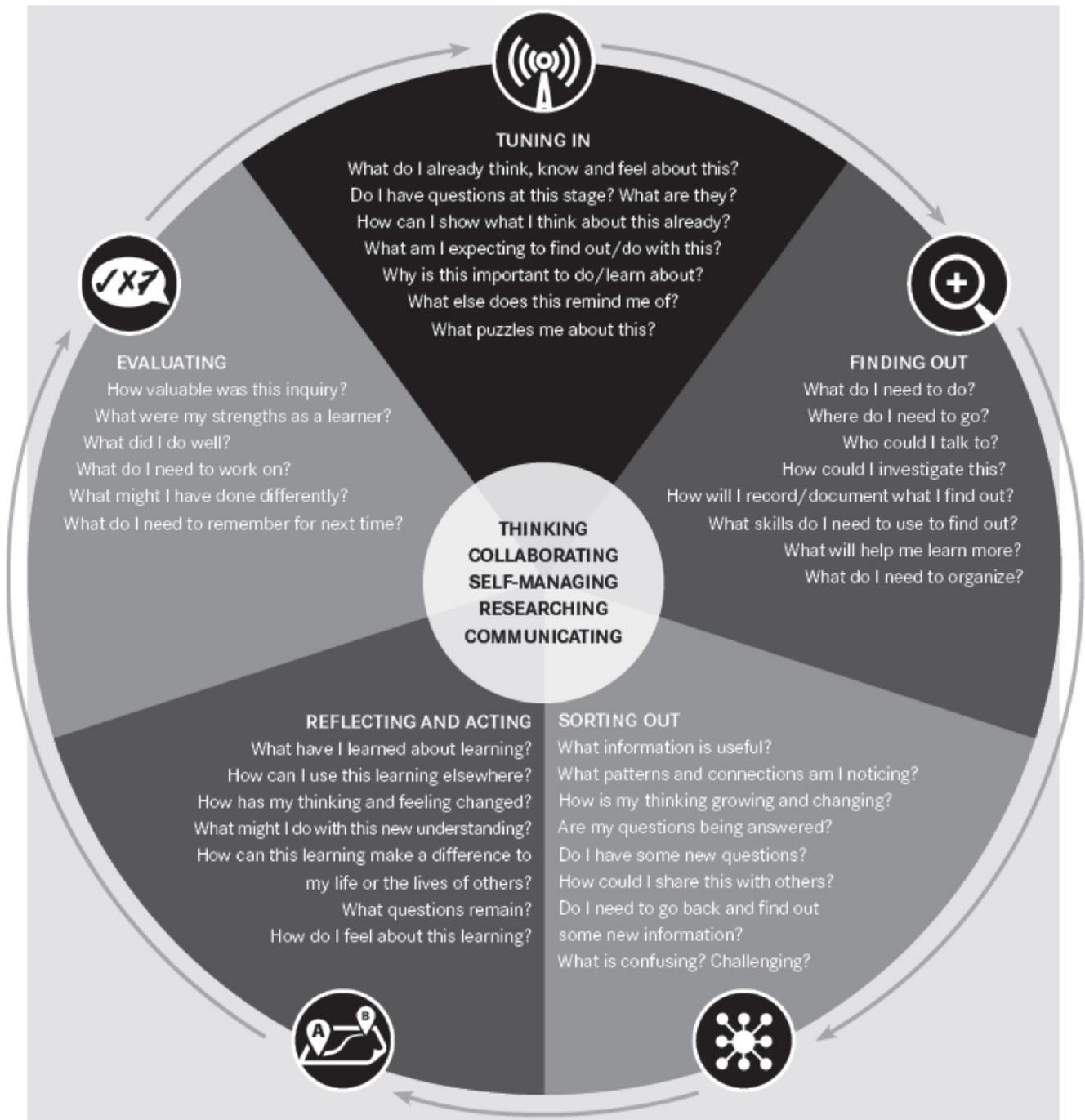
Groups identify insights and major take-aways from their research, design a plan of action for applying their ideas, and ultimately implement and evaluate their plan.

Guiding Questions:

- What are the major take-aways and insights we have gained from our inquiry?
- How can we apply what we have learned to help others?
- What kind of plan can we put in place to carry out our ideas?
- What tools and resources will we need to implement and evaluate our plan?
- What questions remain for future investigation and action?

¹ Source: Murdoch, Kath M. (2015) The Power of Inquiry. New York: Seastar Publishing.

INQUIRY CYCLE FOR STUDENTS



¹ Source: Murdoch, Kath M. (2015) The Power of Inquiry. New York: Seastar Publishing.