

Action Research

What is it?

Action research is inquiry or research focusing on one specific topic to improve the quality of an individual or team performance. The team approach is called collaborative *inquiry*. Action research is designed and conducted by educators who collect and analyze data as a means of improving their own practice.

Why is it important?

Action research provides the means through which educators can conduct research in their classroom or school on how instructional practices impact on student achievement.

When is it useful?

The action research process is helpful when educators need:

- The opportunity to assess and reflect on their teaching practices.
- To explore and test new ideas, materials and methods of teaching.
- To assess the effect of new practices on student achievement.
- To make decisions about which instruction, curriculum and assessment approaches to include as a school-wide practice.

How is it used?

Action research is implemented as a job-embedded practice in focusing on how instructional practices support student achievement.

The process involves:

1. Identifying a classroom based research question.
2. Developing a plan which includes:
 - a timeline
 - data to be collected
 - analysis of the data publication and explanation of the data.
3. Inviting colleagues to dialogue around refining the timeline, research question, data collection, data analysis and sharing of results.
4. Implementing the plan.
5. Publishing the action research report and sharing the findings with colleagues.