

The Action Research Plan

Ideally, your investment of time and energy in the reconnaissance and literature review stages will allow you to synthesize the related literature so that you can see your project more clearly. In addition, it may have helped you identify promising practices that can become an integral part of your ongoing action research efforts.

At this stage of the action research process, you should create an action plan. An action plan summarizes your action research thoughts in a plan that will guide you through your action research work and includes the following nine steps (Elliott, 1991; Kemmis, 1988):

1. Write an area-of-focus statement.
2. Define the variables.
3. Develop research questions.
4. Describe the intervention or innovations.
5. Describe the membership of the action research group.
6. Describe negotiations that need to be undertaken.
7. Develop a time line.
8. Develop a statement of resources.
9. Develop data collection ideas.

Write an Area-of-Focus Statement

An area of focus identifies the purpose of your study. To start, write a statement that completes the following sentence: “The purpose of this study is to . . .” For example:

- The purpose of this study is to describe the effects of an integrated problem-solving mathematics curriculum on student transfer of problem-solving skills and the retention of basic math facts and functions.
- The purpose of this study is to describe the impact of bringing audience members into an interactive relationship with teen theater productions on participants’ abilities to identify issues and incorporate solutions to similar problems in their own lives.
- The purpose of this study is to describe the effects of student-led conferences on parent and student satisfaction with the conferencing process.

Define the Variables

As part of the area-of-focus statement construction process, write definitions of what you will focus on in the study. These definitions should accurately represent what the factors, contexts, and variables *mean to you*. A variable is a