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Teaching English

## Classroom action research

### What is classroom action research?

Classroom action research begins with a question or questions about classroom experiences, issues, or challenges. It is a reflective process which helps teachers to explore and examine aspects of teaching and learning and to take action to change and improve.

### Who is it for?

Any teacher who:

- ♦ wants to understand more about teaching and learning
- ♦ wants to develop teaching skills and knowledge
- ♦ wants to take action to improve student learning

### What are the benefits?

- ♦ provides a framework for trying out different approaches and ideas
- ♦ helps develop reflective practice
- ♦ enables teachers to make choices and decisions about their teaching styles
- ♦ helps develop confidence
- ♦ helps teachers improve student learning

### How to do ... Classroom action research

#### 1 Reflect

Consider your current classroom practice. Think about questions you have about teaching, topics you are interested in, problem areas, or aspects of teaching/learning you are unsure about. Make a list. From your list, decide what you would like to research. To help you decide, think about why you want to do it. What are the benefits to you and your learners? When you have decided, write a research question.

#### 2 Explore

Reflect on your research question. Where can you find information to help you plan your research? It may help you to discuss your question with colleagues. You may need to consult published materials or the Internet for information and ideas. Find out as much as you can about your question topic to help you plan how to do the research.

#### 3 Plan

Draw up an action research plan which states your question, how and why you are going to carry out the research. Things to think about: how long it will take? What tools will you use in your research? How will you record your research? There are different ways of doing research. It can be as simple as just writing down your own reflections after each lesson or it could include questionnaires, observations, audio recordings and so on.

#### 4 Research

Carry out your research using your chosen method. Some tools are:

- ♦ Peer observation
- ♦ Teacher diary
- ♦ Learner feedback
- ♦ Lesson evaluation
- ♦ Recording lessons
- ♦ Reflecting on learners' work
- ♦ Surveys

Choose the method which best suits your research question.

#### 5 Analyze

This stage helps you to make sense of the data you have collected in your research. It is a process of reflecting on, organizing and reviewing your data to help you answer your research question. What have you found out? What insights have you gained from the research? What does your research show you?

#### 6 Act

Reflect on your results. Look at your teaching practice - what changes will you make? Take action based on what you found out from your research.

#### 7 Review

When you have implemented changes, it is important to review. How successful were the changes? Do you need to take any follow-up action? Has your research indicated other areas you could explore? In other words, you begin a new reflective cycle.

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