



Teacher Leadership: Action Research

This activity is a continuation of the Distributive Leadership exercise performed previously. The Distributive Leadership exercise asked teachers to move away from their comfort zone (the classroom environment) and analyze school functions beyond the classroom. This exercise does much the same by asking teachers to commit to continuous improvement through experimentation or action research. Ash and Persall (2000) define action research as the “implementation of innovative practices coupled with an assessment of those practices on student learning” (p. 18). Teacher leaders work with their administrators to reduce the fear of change and implement organizational practices that encourage inventive practice like action research. As you look to grow, strengthen, and empower teacher leaders, identify a problem that you believe exists in your classroom (or classrooms) that merits further investigation. Go through the seven-step process below:

Steps	Notes
1. Select a focus – why does it merit further investigation?	
2. Clarify theories – what values, beliefs, and theoretical perspectives do researchers hold relating to your focus? This is similar to performing a short literature review. Select at least three sources.	
3. Identify research questions – select one or two research questions.	
4. Collect data – it is important here to use multiple sources of classroom data.	
5. Analyze data – answer the following questions, 1) what does the data say and 2) what is your interpretation of the data?	
6. Report results – this can be done informally with your colleagues (at lunch, during a PLC) or formally (with administration).	
7. Take informed action – explain how your research will inform your teaching.	

Ash, R. C., & Persall, J. M. (2000). The principal as chief learning officer: Developing teacher leaders. *NASSP Bulletin*, 84(616), 15-22.