

# Action Research Mentors

Title Slide: This presentation provides an introduction to the action process for Action Research Mentors.

## Slide Two: Review of AR's Purpose in EETT

It is important to address why we are using action research as part of the EETT statewide research effort. First, action research enables us to document the impact of EETT resources and equipment at a classroom level. Action research is a particularly useful strategy given the short time frame of the grant period, the diverse ways in which districts are implementing their projects and the wide range of outcomes possible when technology is used in classrooms. Second, action research enables us to elevate the voices of teachers to a statewide level. What teachers discover in their classroom and report via action research will be shared with legislators and policymakers. Third, action research provides a useful scaffold to help teachers intentionally study their own practice. Many teachers use this scaffolding to answer different questions in different contexts after the grant period. In essence, we are adding another tool to each teachers' professional development toolbox.

## Slide Three: AR Process

In this presentation we will briefly introduce the 5 steps of action research. We will go over each step in more detail in future presentations. The goal of this presentation is to ensure that each mentor has a basic understanding of the AR process as we will implement it for the EETT research.

## Slide Four: Identify the AR inquiry

The first step of the action research process is one of the most difficult. During this time teachers specify their inquiry. A good inquiry question typically includes three components: (1) the participants or group of students targeted in the inquiry, (2) the knowledge or skill to be measured (this may also be called the instructional goal or outcome) and (3) the intervention or the strategy used to meet the desired outcome.

## Slide Five: Identify the AR inquiry, Example

This is an example of an inquiry question. We will share more inquiry questions with you during the presentation that focuses on this step.

## Slide Six: AR Context

The AR Context step is very simple. Teachers will be asked to go into the online system (which will be presented in another presentation) and use radio boxes, checkboxes, drop-down menus and other simple input tools to share about the context in which they are conducting their inquiry. This simple step requires little oversight on the part of the mentor beyond ensuring each item is completed.

## Slide Seven: Data Collection

Once teachers have identified their inquiry question, they need to pick data collection strategies that will enable them to answer their question. A few of the many data collection strategies are listed on this slide.

#### Slide Eight: Data Collection

A primary responsibility of the AR mentor is to ensure that teachers make their data collection strategies a part of rather than apart from their normal classroom work. Most teachers will have more than enough data simply by intentionally collecting information about what already occurs in the classroom. Simply put, mentors must make sure teachers do not overtax themselves by adding too many additional data collection strategies into their already busy days. Asking teachers to keep a timeline is often a good strategy here. We will discuss this in subsequent presentations.

#### Slide Nine: Data Analysis

Data analysis is one of the most difficult parts of the AR process. In fact, we are confident saying that identifying a question and conducting the data analysis are the most difficult steps in the process. One challenge in the data analysis process rests in helping teachers mesh their “gut reactions” with their data.

#### Slide Ten: Data Analysis

Data analysis is an individual process but the steps on this screen provide a structure for you to help your teachers. We will devote an entire presentation to data analysis but for now, let’s move to some examples.

#### Slide Eleven: Example Finding 1

Here is a finding from a 2007-2008 EETT teacher working in a high-poverty school at the 5<sup>th</sup> grade level. The finding sounds great but, at this point, the statement is not supported by data.

#### Slide Twelve

Here is the data the teacher submitted to support her finding or claim. As you can see the data coupled with statement is much stronger than the statement by itself. In fact, each finding must be accompanied by supporting data.

#### Slide Thirteen: Example Finding 2

This finding statement or claim is from the same teacher. Without supporting data, it is really just a “gut reaction.” We have no doubt that the majority of gut reactions teachers have are accurate, however, without data, most legislators and policymakers will not listen.

#### Slide Fourteen

But, as you can see, this teacher systemically studied her students’ behavior. She determine what would be important indicators of the desired behavior and intentionally kept track of them. This is a great example of how a “gut reaction” becomes a data-based result.

#### Slide Fifteen: Example Finding 3

Here is one more example. As you have probably guessed, the associated data is presented on the next slide.

#### Slide Sixteen

This data is presented in a different format but still supports the statement or claim made in the finding.

#### Slide Seventeen: Implications and Actions

The last part of the AR process is where teachers have an opportunity to share how the EETT resources and equipment coupled with participation in the AR process have had a personal impact on them. Some teachers have provided school or district level professional development. Others have written articles, presented at conferences or secured grants. Many others have made permanent changes in their teaching practices and/or their beliefs about technology use.