

DETAILED CONTENTS

Preface	xiii
Acknowledgments	xxi
PART I. "WHAT IS ACTION RESEARCH?"	1
1. Introduction to Action Research	3
Chapter 1 Organizer	3
What Is Action Research?	4
Introduction to Educational Research	5
Overview of Educational Research	7
Overview of Action Research	12
Models of Action Research	13
Characteristics of Action Research: What It Is and What It Is Not	18
The Importance of Action Research	19
Connecting Theory to Practice	20
Improvement of Educational Practice	21
Teacher Empowerment—Teacher as Decision Maker	21
Professional Growth	22
Applications of Action Research	22
Identifying Problems	22
Developing and Testing Solutions	22
Preservice Teacher Education	23
Inservice Professional Growth	24
"Rigor" in Action Research	24
Related Web Sites: What Is Action Research?	26
Summary	27
Questions and Activities	28
Web-Based Study Site	28
2. Overview of the Action Research Process	29
Chapter 2 Organizer	29
Step 1: Identifying and Limiting the Topic	32

Step 2: Gathering Information	33
Step 3: Reviewing the Related Literature	33
Step 4: Developing a Research Plan	33
Step 5: Implementing the Plan and Collecting Data	35
Step 6: Analyzing the Data	36
Step 7: Developing an Action Plan	36
Step 8: Sharing and Communicating the Results	37
Step 9: Reflecting on the Process	37
A Brief Example	38
Step 1: Identifying and Limiting the Topic	38
Step 2: Gathering Information	38
Step 3: Reviewing the Related Literature	39
Step 4: Developing a Research Plan	39
Step 5: Implementing the Plan and Collecting Data	39
Step 6: Analyzing the Data	39
Step 7: Developing an Action Plan	40
Step 8: Sharing and Communicating the Results	40
Step 9: Reflecting on the Process	40
Related Web Sites: The Action Research Process	40
Summary	41
Questions and Activities	41
Web-Based Study Site	42
PART II. "HOW DO I BEGIN MY ACTION RESEARCH STUDY?"	43
3. Planning for Action Research	45
Chapter 3 Organizer	45
Identifying a Topic for Research	46
Preliminary Considerations	48
Limiting a Topic	49
Gathering Preliminary Information	49
Reviewing the Related Literature	51
Sources for Related Literature	53
Searching the ERIC Database Online	55
Writing a Literature Review	57
Writing Up Action Research: Topics and Literature Reviews	60
Action Research Portrait 1	63
Action Research Portrait 2	64
Action Research Portrait 3	65
Related Web Sites: Sources for Research Topics and Related Information	66
Summary	67
Questions and Activities	68
Web-Based Study Site	69

4. Developing a Research Plan	71
Chapter 4 Organizer	71
Research Questions and Hypotheses	72
Basic Research Designs	78
Qualitative Research Designs	78
Quantitative Research Designs	82
Selecting a Research Design and Developing a Research Plan	89
Writing Up Action Research: The Research Plan	94
Action Research Portrait 1	95
Action Research Portrait 2	96
Action Research Portrait 3	97
Related Web Sites: Research Questions and Research Designs	99
Summary	99
Questions and Activities	100
Web-Based Study Site	101
PART III. "WHAT DO I DO WITH ALL THESE DATA?"	103
5. Collecting Data	105
Chapter 5 Organizer	105
Qualitative Data Collection Techniques	106
Observations	106
Interviews	108
Journals	112
Existing Documents and Records	114
Characteristics of Qualitative Data:	
Accuracy, Credibility, and Dependability	114
Quantitative Data Collection Techniques	116
Surveys, Questionnaires, and Rating Scales	117
Checklists	124
Tests and Other Formal Instruments	125
Characteristics of Quantitative Data: Validity and Reliability	125
Writing Up Action Research: Data Collection Methods	127
Action Research Portrait 1	130
Action Research Portrait 2	130
Action Research Portrait 3	132
Related Web Sites: Advice and Guidelines About Data Collection	134
Summary	135
Questions and Activities	136
Web-Based Study Site	137
6. Analyzing Data	139
Chapter 6 Organizer	139
Qualitative Data Analysis Techniques	140

Step 2	Inductive Analysis	140
Step 3	Using Computer Software to Assist With Qualitative Data Analysis	145
	Quantitative Data Analysis Techniques	145
Step 4	Using Descriptive Statistics	146
Step 5	Using Inferential Statistics	150
Step 6	Using Computer Software to Assist With Statistical Analysis	152
	Reporting the Results of Data Analysis	158
Step 7	Guidelines for Reporting the Results of Qualitative Data Analysis	158
	Guidelines for Reporting the Results of Quantitative Data Analysis	162
	Writing Up Action Research: Data Analysis	165
	Action Research Portrait 1	166
	Action Research Portrait 2	168
	Action Research Portrait 3	170
	Related Web Sites: Guidelines and Resources for Data Analysis	171
	Software Programs for Analyzing Qualitative Data	171
	Summary	173
	Questions and Activities	174
	Web-Based Study Site	175
	PART IV. "I'VE GOT RESULTS! . . . NOW WHAT?"	177
	7. Developing an Action Plan	179
	Chapter 7 Organizer	179
	Developing Action Plans	180
	Levels of Action Plans	182
	Individual	182
	Team	183
	School-Level or Districtwide	183
	Action Planning: A Time for Reflection	184
	Writing Up Action Research: Action Plans	185
	Action Research Portrait 1	186
	Action Research Portrait 2	188
	Action Research Portrait 3	189
	Related Web Site: Action Plans	189
	Summary	190
	Questions and Activities	190
	Web-Based Study Site	190
	8. Sharing and Reflecting	191
	Chapter 8 Organizer	191
	Communicating the Results of Action Research	192
	Locally	193
	Action Research Communities	195
	Professional Conferences	195
	Academic Journals	196
	Sharing Results Electronically	199

Reflecting on the Action Research Process	201
Writing Up Action Research: Reflecting on Research	201
Action Research Portrait 1	202
Action Research Portrait 2	203
Action Research Portrait 3	204
Related Web Sites: Communication and Discussion About Action Research	205
Action Research Web Sites	205
Action Research Electronic Journals	206
Action Research Electronic Mailing Lists	207
Summary	208
Questions and Activities	209
Web-Based Study Site	209
9. Writing Up Action Research	211
Chapter 9 Organizer	211
Conventions of Academic Writing	212
Titles of Reports	214
Person and Voice	214
Tense	216
Tentative Versus Definitive Statements	216
Clarity	217
Consistency	217
Simplicity of Language	218
Conventions of Format	218
Practical Guidelines for Writing	221
Related Web Sites: Writing Up the Results of Action Research	223
Still More Examples of Action Research Reports	224
Summary	224
Questions and Activities	225
Web-Based Study Site	226
Appendix A. Sample Action Research Report: The Effects of De-Emphasizing Grades on the Achievement and Stress Levels of Students in Health Class	227
Appendix B. Sample Action Research Report: Assessing the Assessments—What Really Works? An Action Research Report	233
Glossary	241
References	251
Credits	255
Index	257
About the Author	265