

Handout #1: Journaling Activity

1. Set a timer for 5 minutes.
2. Free-write continuously for the entire time about what is going well, what needs improvement, and what frustrates you in your teaching. Write without concern for errors, penmanship, etc. You are the only audience.
3. When the time is up, re-read your entry and circle the areas you have some control over.
4. Do every day habitually—re-read periodically.

What is going well
What needs improvement
What frustrates you

Handout #2: Activity: Starting Points worksheet—areas of interest and potential change¹

The Starting Points inventory and questions below will assist you in developing a research topic. As you answer the questions, be sure to be as detailed as possible.

Number your top three areas of interest² below:

I'm interested in:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increasing learner autonomy | <input type="checkbox"/> Making my class more communicative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Integrating language skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Finding new ways to do assessment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Focusing on language form | <input type="checkbox"/> Integrating technology into class |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increasing student engagement | <input type="checkbox"/> activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Developing writing skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Helping students to develop self- |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Promoting group work | study technique |

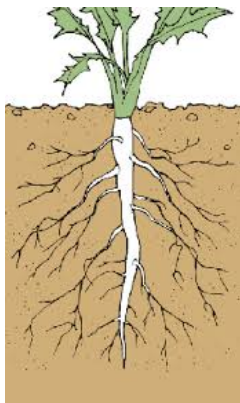
Answer these sentence stems:

.I would like to improve
I am frustrated by
Some of my students are unhappy about
I am really curious about
.I want to learn more about
Something I think would really make a difference in my class is
Something I would like to change is

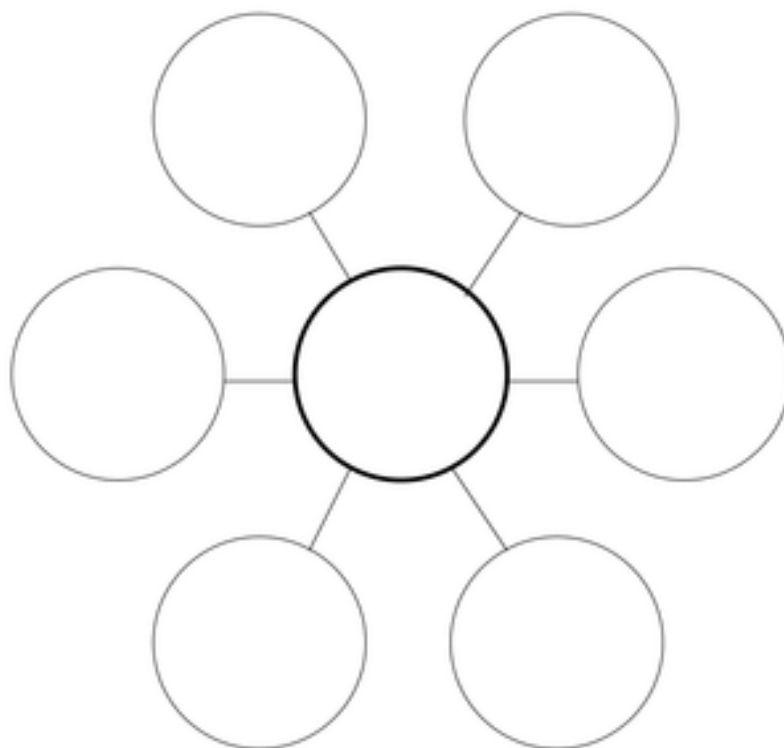
¹ Adapted from Caro-Bruce, C. (2000). *Action Research Facilitator's Handbook*. Oxford, Ohio: NSDC, 2000

² Adapted from Burns, A. (2010). *Doing action research in English language teaching: A guide for practitioners*. New York: Routledge.

Handout #3: Getting to the Root Activity








Start by writing your problem or complaint in the center of a mind map/idea web. Then ask what are potential causes? Write those down around the center problem. Keep going until you get to the root, or the real problem. Circle the causes you have control over. From this you can select the problem you want to address in your action research.



Handout #4: Five Why Process Activity³

“5 Why Process” for Problem Identification

	What specific problem have you observed?
	Why does/doesn't <i>this</i> happen?
	Why does/doesn't <i>this</i> happen?
	Why does/doesn't <i>this</i> happen?
	Why does/doesn't <i>this</i> happen?
	Why does/doesn't <i>this</i> happen?

Stop the “5 Why Process” when you believe you have identified the root cause of the original problem.

Mertler, C. (2014). *Action Research: Improving Schools and Empowering Educators*. London: Sage.

³ Mertler, C. (2014). *Action Research: Improving Schools and Empowering Educators*. London: Sage.