Action Research Improving Schools and Empowering Educators 5th edition Mertler Test Bank

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Chapter 2: Overview of the Action Research Process
Test Bank

Multiple Choice

1. Which of the following is NOT part of the *planning* stage of action research design?
a. Gathering information
b. Implementing the plan and collecting data
c. Reviewing related literature
d. Developing a research plan
Ans: B
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: p. 35
Difficulty Level: Easy

2. Which of the following is part of the *acting* stage of action research design?
a. Analyzing the data
b. Reviewing related literature
c. Developing an action plan
d. Identifying and limiting the topic
Ans: A
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: p. 35
Difficulty Level: Easy

3. In which stage of the action research planning process does developing an action plan fall?
a. Stage 1: The planning stage
b. Stage 2: The acting stage
c. Stage 3: The developing stage
d. Stage 4: The reflecting stage
Ans: C
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: p. 36
Difficulty Level: Easy

4. Which of the following statements about action research is correct?
a. It is a linear process, proceeding clearly from a question to a conclusion.
b. Each stage in the action research process must be completed before the next can begin, and all stages must be completed in order.
c. Some stages in the action research process may be skipped, especially if time is a key limitation.
d. Action research is a cyclical process, one in which new insights help generate new questions, thus laying the groundwork for continued study of the problems of teaching.
Ans: D
Cognitive Domain: Comprehension
Answer Location: p. 36
Difficulty Level: Medium

5. Which statement below accurately captures the action research process, according to Parsons & Brown (2002)?
a. Observing-adjusting-observing-doing
b. Observing-doing-observing-adjusting
c. Observing-planning-adjusting-observing

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d. Observing-adjusting-observing-reflecting
Ans: B
Cognitive Domain: Comprehension
Answer Location: p. 36
Difficulty Level: Medium

6. Which of the following statements most accurately describes the key to successful action research projects?
a. They incorporate both qualitative and quantitative methods in equal measure.
b. They proceed through each step in the research process in successive order.
c. They rest on the questions addressed by the project itself and the extent to which the results are meaningful to the teacher conducting the project.
d. They only draw on qualitative methods.
Ans: C
Cognitive Domain: Comprehension
Answer Location: p. 37
Difficulty Level: Medium

7. When selecting a topic for an action research project, which of the following should be taken into consideration?
a. The topic should be manageable; the researcher should be able to bring the project to a conclusion.
b. The topic should address large-scale issues in education.
c. The topic should be complex and should cover sophisticated intellectual or epistemological territory.
d. The topic should involve the use and analysis of large amounts of data.
Ans: A
Cognitive Domain: Comprehension
Answer Location: p. 38
Difficulty Level: Medium

8. What is the term Mills (2011) uses to describe the preliminary process of information gathering that happens in the second phase of an action research project?
a. Reflection
b. Reflective analysis
c. Reconnaissance
d. Descriptive selection
Ans: C
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: p. 39
Difficulty Level: Easy

9. Activities undertaken in which of the following steps of the action research process provide the best opportunity for researchers to connect existing theory and research on education to actual classroom practice?
a. Step 1: Identifying a topic
b. Step 2: Gathering information
c. Step 3: Reviewing the related literature
d. Step 4: Developing a research plan
Ans: C
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: p. 39
Difficulty Level: Easy

10. A _____ is simply a specification of the expected answer—or a prediction, of sorts—to the research question posed in an action research study.
a. Research hypothesis
b. Variable

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c. Reflective analysis
d. Descriptive selection
Ans: A
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: p. 40
Difficulty Level: Easy

11. What is the term used to describe the moral aspects of conducting research, especially with regard to research involving human beings?
a. Research accountability
b. Research accuracy
c. Research variability
d. Research ethics
Ans: D
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: p. 40
Difficulty Level: Easy

12. Which of the following techniques or tools would be useful for an action researcher seeking to collect data from students or other individuals?
a. Interviews
b. Field notes
c. Surveys or other questionnaires
d. Researchers could consider collecting data from any of the following sources: interviews, field notes, and/or surveys and questionnaires.
Ans: D
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: p. 41
Difficulty Level: Easy

13. Which of the following is not typically viewed as a category of data that may be collected in an action research study?
a. Interviews
b. Imagined assessments that have not actually been given to students but could be given in the future
c. Field notes
d. Existing documents or records
Ans: B
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: p. 41
Difficulty Level: Easy

14. Why is it important for practitioners engaged in action research to collect data through multiple means (e.g. interviews, surveys, etc.) when conducting a study?
a. Because collecting data in this way encourages the practitioner-researcher to polyangulate the data collected.
b. Because more is always better when it comes to conducting research.
c. Because research on action research has definitively proven that the best studies are those that involve this kind of data collection.
d. Because the action research code of ethics requires it.
Ans: A
Cognitive Domain: Comprehension
Answer Location: p. 42
Difficulty Level: Medium

15. At what point does data analysis occur in a traditional quantitative research study?
a. Before all data have been collected but not until after it has been summarized

b. As soon as the researcher sees fit to begin analysis
c. Only after the completion of all data collection
d. Data is typically analyzed in a continuous process even if data collection has not been completed
Ans: C
Cognitive Domain: Comprehension
Answer Location: p. 42
Difficulty Level: Medium

16. When does data analysis typically occur in a traditional qualitative research study?
a. Data analysis often begins during data collection in a recursive process, but it is not completed until after all data has been collected.
b. Data analysis never begins until after all data have been collected.
c. Data analysis begins before data collection begins.
d. There is no typical practice regarding data analysis in qualitative research design.
Ans: A
Cognitive Domain: Comprehension
Answer Location: p. 42
Difficulty Level: Medium

17. Which of the following statements would be a good piece of advice to give to an action researcher struggling with data analysis?
a. Sometimes you just have to grin and bear it: Accurate data analysis is not easy, but it is crucial to the success of your project.
b. Even if you have experienced stress, frustration, and confusion while conducting your study, try not to be overwhelmed in anticipation of the data analysis phase of your study because data analysis in action research studies is typically much less complex than data analysis in more formal research studies.
c. It is imperative that data analysis procedures be followed explicitly; take the time to ensure that your study meets the same standards as those to which a professional researcher's study might be held.
d. There's no need to worry about data analysis; even if you get it wrong, your study will still be okay.
Ans: B
Cognitive Domain: Application/analysis
Answer Location: p. 42
Difficulty Level: Medium

18. Once the data have been analyzed and the results of the analysis interpreted, the next step in the action research process is the development of a(n) _____.
a. Data analysis plan
b. Communication plan
c. Interpretation plan
d. Action plan
Ans: D
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: p. 43
Difficulty Level: Easy

19. Which of the following statements represents the best approach to presenting and sharing the results of an action research study?
a. Results should not be shared until they have been certified as valid and reliable.
b. Results should always be shared in a formal way, such as in a published journal article.
c. The presentation of results can take a variety of forms, and the most appreciative audience for presentation of action research findings can often be the researcher's own colleagues.
d. It's not important to share or disseminate the findings of an action research study; all that matters is that the researcher learned something new as a result of the process.
Ans: C
Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: p. 43
Difficulty Level: Medium

20. At what time is it *essential* for an action researcher to reflect on the action research process?
a. Before undertaking an action research project
b. At the end of each action research cycle
c. Only after the entire action research project has been completed
d. Just before data collection begins
Ans: B
Cognitive Domain: Comprehension
Answer Location: p. 44
Difficulty Level: Medium

21. Why is it important for action researchers to continuously reflect on their projects throughout the process of completing them?
a. Because, like teachers, action researchers need to be able to continuously examine their process and procedures throughout the teaching or research process.
b. Because action researchers who have not invested enough time in reflection are likely to have their studies invalidated by their peers.
c. Because continuous reflection increases the likelihood that findings will be more widely disseminated at the study's conclusion.
d. Because other researchers will only take the results of a study seriously if it has been properly reflected upon.
Ans: A
Cognitive Domain: Comprehension
Answer Location: p. 44
Difficulty Level: Medium

22. Which of the following would be an appropriate topic for an action research project?
a. A middle school science teacher is curious to know if laboratory exercises improve student comprehension of key concepts and ideas presented in class.
b. A high school history teacher wants to know if teaching history backward(i.e., starting from the present and teaching events in reverse chronological order) will improve student understanding of the past.
c. A high school literature teacher wants to know if students who enjoy reading poetry aloud are more likely to participate in class discussions.
d. Any of these topics would be appropriate to begin an action research project.
Ans: A
Cognitive Domain: Application/analysis
Answer Location: Ch. 2
Difficulty Level: Medium

23. Which of the following steps should a teacher follow FIRST if he or she wishes to create an action research project exploring the potential effect of teaching American history backward to his or her students?
a. Develop a research plan
b. Review related literature on the effectiveness of this teaching approach
c. Establish a working hypothesis or research question
d. Implement a plan and begin data collection
Ans: B
Cognitive Domain: Application/analysis
Answer Location: p. 46
Difficulty Level: Medium

24. Which of the following would be an appropriate action plan for applying the results of an action research project?

a. Encourage district-level personnel to consider rewriting the curriculum for a course based on the results of the study.
b. Restart the action research cycle to ensure that findings collected are valid and reliable indicators of conclusions drawn.
c. Write an op-ed in a local newspaper to share the results of the project or study and encourage the development of a consensus around key issues raised.
d. Any of these action plans would be appropriate.
Ans: D
Cognitive Domain: Application/analysis
Answer Location: p. 46
Difficulty Level: Medium

25. Which of the following questions would an action research team NOT be likely to ask while reflecting on the results of a project?
a. How well did the process work?
b. Are we sure the data we collected were appropriate for the research question we asked?
c. Will the results of this project improve our chances for promotion or other incentives provided to teacher researchers?
d. Were there other types or forms of data that could have or should have been included in the data collection?
Ans: C
Cognitive Domain: Application/analysis
Answer Location: p. 47
Difficulty Level: Medium

26. What is the typical order in which the four stages of action research occur?
a. Acting—planning—developing—reflecting
b. Planning—reflecting—developing—acting
c. Planning—acting—developing—reflecting
d. Developing—acting—planning—reflecting
Ans: C
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: p. 49
Difficulty Level: Easy

27. Which of the following steps in the action research process is NOT part of the planning stage?
a. Developing an action plan
b. Identifying and limiting a topic
c. Reviewing related literature
d. Gathering information about a proposed topic
Ans: A
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: p. 49
Difficulty Level: Medium

28. When might it be appropriate to state additional or subordinate research questions in an action research study?
a. When a practitioner-researcher prefers to add additional complexity to an action research project to make the results more generalizable.
b. When the practitioner-researcher has enough previous experience with a topic to state subquestions as a means of clarifying the problem.
c. It is always best for a practitioner-researcher to make a research project as complex as possible.
d. It is never appropriate to add subquestions to an action research project.
Ans: B
Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: p. 40
Difficulty Level: Hard

29. In which of the following scenarios might a researcher be concerned about a possible breach of ethics having occurred while conducting an action research study?
a. An action researcher designs a project that includes interviews of students under the age of 18 but receives informed consent from parents to include students in the study.
b. An action researcher recognizes that students who are given exams that are more difficult than exams given to other participants in a research project should not have the examinations affect the students' final grades in the course.
c. An action researcher video-records herself leading a class discussion in which many students are participants. She plans to share her video publicly as part of a research presentation, but she is not able to obtain consent from the parents of two students who appear in the video but do not say anything.
d. An action researcher discusses her plans for conducting research with district-level personnel, although she knows they may object to her plans to study her teaching.
Ans: C
Cognitive Domain: Application/analysis
Answer Location: pp. 40-41
Difficulty Level: Medium

True/False

1. The key to worthwhile teacher-conducted action research rests in the questions addressed by the project and the extent to which the results are meaningful and important to *that* teacher.
Ans: True
Cognitive Domain: Comprehension
Answer Location: p. 37
Difficulty Level: Easy

2. The key to worthwhile teacher-conducted action research rests in the questions addressed by the project and the extent to which the results are meaningful and important to the professional research community.
Ans: False
Cognitive Domain: Comprehension
Answer Location: p. 37
Difficulty Level: Easy

3. It is not necessary to limit the topic of an action research project; anything and everything is appropriate.
Ans: False
Cognitive Domain: Comprehension
Answer Location: p. 36
Difficulty Level: Medium

4. The acting stage always occurs before the planning stage in an action research project.
Ans: False
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: pp. 35-36
Difficulty Level: Easy

5. It is very likely that an action research project will need to go through more than one cycle before the findings of a project can be finalized.
Ans: True
Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

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Answer Location: p. 36
Difficulty Level: Medium

6. Whereas action research has a clear beginning it does not have a clearly defined endpoint.
Ans: True
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: p. 36
Difficulty Level: Easy

7. The steps to be followed in an action research project are cast in stone; that is, they must be followed in the correct order for the results of a study to be valid.
Ans: False
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: p. 36
Difficulty Level: Easy

8. Sharing and communication of results typically occur during the acting stage of the action research process.
Ans: False
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: p. 37
Difficulty Level: Easy

9. Data collection and analysis typically occurs during the planning stage of an action research project.
Ans: False
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: p. 37
Difficulty Level: Easy

10. Data analysis typically occurs during the acting stage of the action research process.
Ans: True
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: p. 37
Difficulty Level: Easy

11. Reflection is the step that usually initiates the continuation of the action research process in a new cycle of inquiry.
Ans: True
Cognitive Domain: Comprehension
Answer Location: p. 38
Difficulty Level: Medium

12. Because the goal of any action research project is to improve teaching practice, care should be taken to identify and limit topics to ensure the effectiveness of the study undertaken.
Ans: True
Cognitive Domain: Comprehension
Answer Location: p. 38
Difficulty Level: Medium

13. Action researchers often refer to the act of collecting information after identifying and limiting a topic as “reconnaissance.”
Ans: True
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: p. 39
Difficulty Level: Easy

14. Action researchers often refer to the act of collecting information after identifying and limiting a topic as “reflection.”
Ans: False
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: p. 39
Difficulty Level: Easy

15. The fundamental question inherent in a research problem is known as the research question.
Ans: True
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: p. 39
Difficulty Level: Easy

Essay

1. Action research is often described as cyclical in nature. Why do researchers see it this way?
Ans: Action research has a clear beginning but does not have a clear endpoint, and often action research projects have to be repeated multiple times once findings have been reflected upon to ensure that appropriate changes are made to teaching practice. Indeed, a teacher may go through several cycle of implementation, evaluation, and revision before completing a single project.
Cognitive Domain: Comprehension
Answer Location: p. 36
Difficulty Level: Medium

2. Why is it important for practitioner-researchers to limit the topic of study in an action research project?
Ans: One of the most important steps in conducting any research project is not only to identify a suitable topic but to *limit* the focus of that topic so as to make the research study feasible. Since literally any topic could be suitable for investigation, the best research studies are those that carefully narrow the topic chosen to a researchable question—one that will yield valuable, actionable insights that lead to substantive changes in educational practice.
Cognitive Domain: Comprehension
Answer Location: p. 38
Difficulty Level: Medium

3. Explain why a researcher attempting to understand the impact of learning addition and subtraction facts might develop a research question focused on the “*accuracy* of applying addition and subtraction facts” rather than on student “*understanding* of addition and subtraction facts.” How are these two ways of framing the problem different, and why is “accuracy” more useful than “understanding”?
Ans: “Accuracy” is preferred here because it is easier to measure accurate responses to addition and subtraction problems than it is to measure student “understanding,” which is a more ambiguous concept (noting here, however, that a researcher could define understanding in a specific way and then use understanding as a variable in an effective research study). It is critical that variables be observable and measurable, as this is what enables researchers to specify findings at the conclusion of a research project.
Cognitive Domain: Application/analysis
Answer Location: p. 40
Difficulty Level: Medium

4. Describe any two instruments or data collection techniques that a researcher might use in an action research study. How and why would each instrument or technique be useful to an action researcher?
Ans: Possible responses could include field notes, interviews, existing documents or records, checklists, rating scales, or tests and other assessments. For each source selected, a description should be provided of how that instrument or technique might be used in an actual action research study.
Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: pp. 41-42
Difficulty Level: Medium

5. Johnson (2008) has suggested that action researchers consider analyzing their data both during data collection and after data collection has been completed. Why is it important for someone conducting an action research study or project to analyze data in this way?
Ans: As Johnson (2008) has put it, researchers should, as they collect data, “analyze them by looking for themes, categories, or patterns that emerge” because this analysis will “influence further data collection [and analysis] by helping you know what to look for.” In other words, data should be evaluated even as they are being collected—not just after it has been collected—because this kind of ongoing analysis helps researchers identify which data still need to be collected to ensure that a strong study has been conducted.
Cognitive Domain: Comprehension
Answer Location: p. 42
Difficulty Level: Hard

6. Describe some ways that an action researcher might share and communicate the results of his or her research. What methods of communication do you think would be most beneficial for a teacher conducting action research?
Ans: Presentation of results can take many forms, including published articles, public presentations, portfolio entries, faculty meetings or inservice sessions, and even simply personal dialogue with another teacher. Responses should indicate why the communication methods selected here were chosen.
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: pp. 43-44
Difficulty Level: Easy

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