

# SAMPLE ACTION RESEARCH CONVERSATION

	During a Planning Conference	Action Research Themes Within the Coaching Cycle
<b>Coach</b>	<i>So, what will you be looking for in students' behavior to let you know your strategy is working?</i>	<b>Select a focus; determine success; indicators</b>
<b>Teacher</b>	I'll be observing their participation. By that I mean their excitement, their involvement, the questions they ask and the responses they give.	
<b>Coach</b>	<i>How would you want that data recorded?</i>	<b>Collect data</b>
<b>Teacher</b>	I'll give you a seating chart, and I'd like you to keep track of not only who responds but also record the key ideas of what they say.	
<b>Coach</b>	<i>How will you use these data when we analyze them in the post-conference?</i>	<b>Analyze data</b>
<b>Teacher</b>	I'll be able to tell if my strategy was successful. I'm hoping that all of the students are involved and that their responses to my questions cause them to hypothesize, speculate, and theorize.	
During a Reflecting Conversation		
<b>Coach</b>	<i>How do you think the lesson went?</i>	<b>Summarize impressions</b>
<b>Teacher</b>	Well, there were parts that went well, and there were other parts that didn't go so well.	
<b>Coach</b>	<i>Say more.</i>	<b>Probe</b>
<b>Teacher</b>	I thought that some students really didn't listen to each other's ideas. They almost always repeated what the previous students said. Mark's response was almost the same as Eric's. Danielle just repeated Elena's comments.	
<b>Coach</b>	<i>What hunches do you have to explain this behavior?</i>	<b>Clarify theories</b>
<b>Teacher</b>	I suppose there could be lots of reasons. These kids come to me with years of trying to get right answers. They've been rewarded for giving the answer the teacher was looking for. They've never been encouraged to take risks and to venture forth with a new, divergent idea. I also think that the tests we give signal them to be satisfied with and to only want the "right answer." I often have students who say, "Just tell us the right answer!" or "Aren't you going to tell us when we're right?" They seem to feel safe in knowing their answer is "the correct one."	
<b>Coach</b>	[Notice that the coach enters the planning map at this point.] <i>What did you want from them?</i>	<b>Clarify goals</b>

<b>Teacher</b>	Well, I had hoped for more creative, divergent responses, not just repeating what the previous speaker said or what's in the book or what I've said.	
<b>Coach</b>	<i>So, what might you do to cause more students to give original ideas rather than merely repeating or giving similar strategies, decisions, and ideas as the previous speaker?</i>	<b>Establish action plan; anticipate approaches and how to monitor</b>
<b>Teacher</b>	Hmm. I guess I could put them into groups of three or four and have them generate as many hypotheses as possible. Then, I could have each group share their answers and they couldn't repeat. They'd have to state a hypothesis that had not been given before. I could also make sure that they realize that what I want is a creative answer, not necessarily a "safe" answer.	
<b>Coach</b>	<i>So your hypothesis is that if you structured the groups and told them they had to generate and share many hypotheses without repetition, you'd get more variety and less "parroting" of each other's ideas?</i>	<b>Paraphrase the teacher's hypothesis; identify research questions</b>
<b>Teacher</b>	Exactly!	
<b>Coach</b>	<i>You place great value on students thinking for themselves rather than depending on others for ideas.</i>	<b>Paraphrase; infer values</b>
<b>Teacher</b>	Yes. I want students to be creative, to think for themselves, to take risks, and to support their hypotheses with a rationale or data.	<b>Select a focus</b>
<b>Coach</b>	<i>How would you know that students are getting better at thinking for themselves and taking risks as a result of your teaching? Over time, what would you look for as indicators that students were growing in their risk-taking abilities?</i>	<b>Collect data</b>
<b>Teacher</b>	Well, I'd see it in their writing. They'd ask less about "What do you want me to write about?" They'd volunteer what they want to write about. During classroom discussions, they'd state their own ideas, give their opinions rather than ask me if that was the right answer.	
<b>Coach</b>	<i>How would you collect such data?</i>	<b>Collect data</b>
<b>Teacher</b>	Well, I could-no, students could collect examples. I'd need to tell them that risk taking is a goal for our class and school. I could tell stories about athletes and scientists so they would see how taking risks causes great achievement. We could talk about when they take risks when they shouldn't take risks, and what risk taking does for us. They could describe their risk taking in their journals. Then, over the year, we could add entries. Through sharing the entries, we could determine if students not only value taking risks but also become more inclined to do so.	
<b>Coach</b>	<i>And what will you do to make all this happen?</i>	<b>Design action plans</b>