

Alignment with AFT professional development guidelines

- Deepens and broadens knowledge of content
- Examines pedagogy
- Focuses on teaching and learning
- Uses and creates research
- Is aimed at improving learning
- Is intellectually engaging and addresses the complexity of teaching
- Helps teachers integrate new knowledge and skill into practice
- Is designed by teachers and supported by experts in the field
- Is job and site specific

Lesson study thrives in a collaborative atmosphere. It is crucial that study group members be released to observe and discuss the research lessons when they are taught. Some principals also can create time for groups to meet during the school day.

The AFT offers limited support to locals wishing to begin lesson study. The AFT can also put you in touch with active lesson study groups and experts.

Web Resources

Global Education Resources

<http://www.globaledresources.com>

Lesson Study Group at Mills College

<http://lessonresearch.net>

Lesson Study Research Group

<http://www.tc.edu/centers/lessonstudy>

Research for Better Schools

http://www.rbs.org/lesson_study



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Item No. 39-0271

5/05



LESSON STUDY

TEACHER-LED
PROFESSIONAL
LEARNING



What is Lesson Study?

The most frequent form of professional development in Japan is lesson study.

Groups of teachers meet for intensive planning and study of two or three publicly taught lessons a year. Observation and discussion of the collaboratively planned lessons lead to learning that is transferable to daily practice. Lesson study themes and topics in the U.S. often relate to state and local standards with which students are having difficulty.

During the lesson study process teachers

1. increase their knowledge of academic content;
2. explore ways to engage students; and
3. observe how students think about what they are learning.

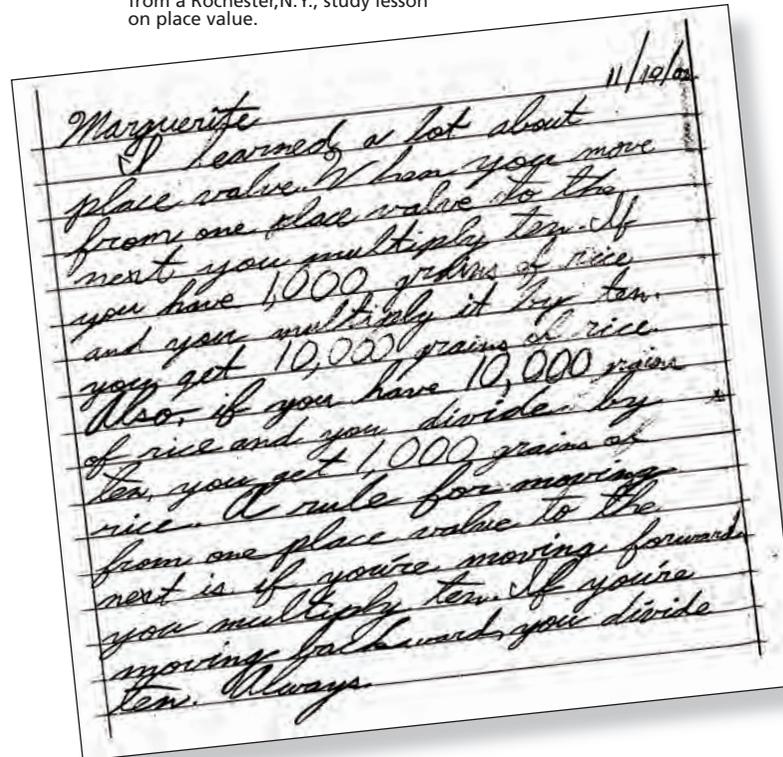
This contributes to deeper understanding by teachers and greater learning by students.

Lesson Study process

1. Select a theme and topic
2. Study materials and experiences related to the topic
3. Specify what students should know and be able to do related to the topic
4. Lay out a unit of study and decide which part to teach for the study lesson
5. Design the study lesson paying attention to:
 - a. engaging students
 - b. a question or task to provoke thinking
 - c. anticipation of student responses
 - d. how to address errors
 - e. how to close the lesson
 - f. points for evaluation
6. Teach the lesson as observers take notes
7. Hold a post-lesson discussion that includes comments by an expert in the field
8. Revise and reteach



Above, sixth graders formulate an analysis of their display data while an observer takes notes on their thinking. Below, an example of fourth-grade student work from a Rochester, N.Y., study lesson on place value.



Lesson Study content

Lesson study groups can be formed for any content area. Broad school goals, such as “Students will be able to justify their work” or “Students will develop perseverance with difficult tasks” can be incorporated into various content areas.

Most, although not all, lesson study groups are site based. Some are formed in grade levels or adjacent grade levels, some work across several grades or across schools. In secondary schools, groups may be department based.

A unique combination

The lesson study process incorporates:

- The standards-based instruction planning model
- Teacher inquiry and leadership
- Focus on students and how they think about a lesson
- Gathering and discussing evidence
- Post-lesson discussion centered on team-established goals
- Collaborative responsibility
- Expanded knowledge of how content develops across grades
- Linking to local standards, curricula and students
- Observation of teaching and students working

Uses of Lesson Study

- Follow-up support for new learning
- Gathering data to help shape classroom instruction
- Implementing standards-based instruction
- Integration of craft knowledge and research
- Deepening understanding of curriculum and learning trajectories
- Deepening understanding of lesson coherence and focus