

## ACTIVITY 8.4: WRITE-UP TUTORIAL

*This tutorial was developed by Nancy Fichtman Dana and Rachel Wolkenhauer.*

*Using the template provided, produce an executive summary of your work by following the eight simple steps below:*

### Step 1: Background That Led to Your Inquiry

The best way to begin the process of capturing your work in writing is to begin at the beginning by sharing what led you to this particular inquiry. Write five to ten paragraphs that share

- your context,
- the issue/tension/dilemma/problem that led to your inquiry, and
- what you learned from the literature about the topic of your inquiry.

End your five to ten paragraphs with a purpose statement, which should be one sentence that summarizes the reason you set on this particular inquiry journey. Begin this sentence with the phrase,

- “Therefore, the purpose of my inquiry was to . . .”

If you completed an inquiry brief during the planning stages of your work (see Chapter 5), you likely already have written a paragraph or so about the background of your study. If so, simply cut and paste the beginning of your inquiry brief to start your work in this section. Once you cut and paste, read it over and edit/expand/update your background information as needed.

### Step 2: Statement of Your Wondering

This step is simple! Simply state your wondering(s) to complete the sentence, “With this purpose, I wondered . . .”

Again, it may be possible to simply cut and paste your wondering(s) from your inquiry brief if one was completed earlier in your work.

### Step 3: Methods/Procedures

In this step, simply share exactly what you did to conduct this inquiry, beginning by completing this sentence starter: “To gain insights into my wondering(s), I . . .” This sentence should include the following:

- An articulation of any change/intervention/innovation/procedures you introduced into your practice
- The ways you collected data to better understand your practice (i.e., student work, field notes, surveys, interviews, digital pictures, video, reflective journals/blogs, test scores and other quantitative measures of student achievement, Critical Friends Group feedback)
- The ways you analyzed your data

A good way to write this section is chronologically—what you did first, second, third, etc., ending with the “how” of data analysis. You should include such things as the timing and amount of data. For example, how long did it take you to collect data? How many students did you collect data on?, etc.

If you completed an inquiry brief during the planning stages of your work, you likely already have a start to this section. If so, simply cut and paste the methods/procedures part of your inquiry brief into your write-up. Once you cut and paste, read it over and edit/update your methods/procedures as needed.

#### **Step 4: Stating Your Learning**

In this step, begin by thinking about what you learned as a result of analyzing your data. Summarize this learning in succinct statements that illustrate the most important and critical facets of what you learned. Begin this section by inserting your statements into the following sentence started for this section:

As a result of analyzing my data, \_\_\_\_\_ (insert number of learning statements) important things I learned include

- Learning Statement One
- Learning Statement Two
- Learning Statement Three

#### **Step 5: Supporting the Statement of Your Learning With Data**

In this step, you will further explain what you learned by supporting each of your learning statements with evidence from your data (artifacts such as charts, graphs, pictures, excerpts from student work, survey results, excerpts from observational notes, etc.).

Why is this important? As Chapter 8 indicates, when you write, in essence you are building an argument that is not unlike a district attorney building a case to prosecute a defendant. In presenting and sharing findings, the teacher inquirer pieces together a string of evidence to support statements of learning. The case is stronger when evidence is provided from multiple sources.

In this section, for each learning statement

1. restate your learning statement by merely cutting and pasting it from Step 4; and
2. explain your learning statement (3–5 paragraphs), introducing salient excerpts from your data to support what you have learned. As you write the explanations of your learning statements, consider weaving some references into your explanation to connect what you learned to the literature (see Chapter 3).

## Step 6: Providing Concluding Thoughts

In this step, you will draw conclusions from your inquiry journey as a whole by writing approximately 3–5 paragraphs that accomplish the following:

- General reflection on the specific inquiry just completed. (Some questions to consider: What have you learned about yourself as a teacher? What have you learned about your students? What are the implications of your findings for the content you teach? What are the implications of what you have learned for your teaching?)
- Generation of directions for the future. (Some questions to consider: What changes will you make or have you made in your practice? What new wonderings do you have?)

As you write your concluding thoughts, once again consider weaving reference(s) to the literature you read into your conclusions to connect your conclusions to the field of education at large.

## Step 7: References

In this step, simply provide the bibliographic information for any references you cited in any of the previous steps in this tutorial. List your references in alphabetical order by author's last name. Follow this format (*Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, Sixth Edition) or another style guide to enter information about each of your references.

## Step 8: Titling Your Inquiry

In this step, consider everything you have entered in all of the previous steps. What might be a catchy title for your inquiry that will encapsulate what you did and what you learned as well as to communicate to others what your work is all about? Insert your title and your name (with any additional information you'd like to share about yourself) at the start of your write-up.

CONGRATULATIONS!!! By following these eight simple steps, you have produced a write-up of your inquiry work!

Read through your work as a whole to tweak certain areas, elaborate in others, smooth out transitions between sections, fix formatting where needed, and/or fine-tune the words you chose to describe your inquiry journey. Read, review, and edit your entire document in any way you wish!

You have now represented your inquiry journey in writing, and may share with your colleagues, share with your district, submit as the final paper for a teacher research class, share when you present your work, and even (with a little more work) consider submitting to one of the fine professional journals that publish inquiry!

## INQUIRY WRITE-UP TEMPLATE

**Title** (*Insert Last*)

Name

### Background and Purpose

*Insert 5–10 paragraphs here that describe what led you to your inquiry topic.*

Therefore, the purpose of my inquiry was to (*complete this sentence*).

With this purpose, I wondered (*complete this sentence*).

### Methods/Procedures

To gain insights into my wondering(s), I (*complete this sentence with several paragraphs describing any change/intervention/innovation you introduced into your practice, how you collected data, and how you analyzed it*).

### What I Learned

As a result of analyzing my data, \_\_\_\_\_ (*insert number of learning statements/claims*) important things I learned include (Add one-sentence statements/claims that succinctly capture your learning.)

- Learning Statement One:
- Learning Statement Two:
- Learning Statement Three: etc.

### Restate Learning Statement/Claim 1 Here

*Explain this learning statement/claim, introducing salient excerpts from your data to support what you have learned.*

### Restate Learning Statement/Claim 2 Here

*Explain this learning statement/claim, introducing salient excerpts from your data to support what you have learned.*

### Restate Learning Statement/Claim 3 Here

*Explain this learning statement/claim, introducing salient excerpts from your data to support what you have learned.*

### Conclusions

*Reflect on the inquiry cycle completed and what it will mean for your future teaching.*

### References

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Retrieved from the companion website for *The Reflective Educator's Guide to Classroom Research: Learning to Teach and Teaching to Learn Through Practitioner Inquiry* (4th ed.) by Nancy Fichtman Dana and Diane Yendol-Hoppey. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, www.corwin.com. Copyright © 2020 by Corwin. All rights reserved. Reproduction authorized for educational use by educators, local school sites, and/or noncommercial or nonprofit entities that have purchased the book.