

Cycle Phases 1 and 2

You may have seen similar cycles. There's lots of different formats out there. This is the one I put together for Texas, and we're going to go through—briefly—each phase of the cycle. Here's a great quote: "You develop the eyes to see children" when you do Lesson Study. It's very student-focused, and you really look at what students are doing and not so much on what the teacher's doing.

So the first piece is creating a research theme. This research theme is typically broad enough to include multiple grade levels and content areas. It can even be created campus-wide. The Lesson Study group, after they create norms, will create a research theme. If they'd like to use a campus mission statement and turn that into a research theme, they can do something like that as well. It's kind of this overarching goal that all Lesson Study groups on the campus can use the help guide they're planning.

The next step in Phase 1 is to identify a student expectation. Typically, I like to have the teachers start with looking at their scope and sequence and the timelines and where they'll be at for the teach and observe phase, and seeing which unit they'll be in and if they want to research something in that unit to kind of keep it within their current scope and sequence.

They'll also look at student data, whether it's STAAR™ data from previous years to see where students typically struggle, or it could be if they gave any beginning-of-the year placement tests, things like that, they can look at that data to see if there's any areas where students might be struggling. From there, they'll choose a standard from the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) to really dive deep into and investigate.

The next phase, Phase 2, is review and plan. In the review and plan stage, teachers can pull together instructional materials that they have on campus already. While we don't want them just using the textbook like a recipe book, it is a good jumping off point and a place to get teachers started. However, we encourage teachers to take a look at some of these research-based resources. I'm sure many of them looked at them in college and in their educator preparation programs; however, we want them to re-visit some of these great tools, and look at the research and see how they can compare it to what they currently do and what their textbooks might say, and think about what might be best for their students. They could also pull together student work for similar tasks if they're trying to figure out anticipated student responses.

They start building their lesson proposal. This will document their research and build the activities for the lesson observation.