

Lesson study to develop teaching approaches for pupils with special educational needs

Guidelines



Graduate School of Education

INTRODUCTION

Lesson Study (LS) is an approach originally developed in Japan with over a century of use in examining teaching practice to improve teaching and learning. LS is a form of professional learning through teacher enquiry in which teachers in small groups undertake collectively a cycle of 'study-plan-do-review' activities to improve pedagogy (knowledge and strategy) and so pupil learning and progress. One teacher in the team teaches a series of jointly designed **research lessons**, while the other teachers in the team observe the learning of specific pupils (**case pupils**). Pupil learning in the research lesson is then analysed in team meetings (**review and planning meetings**) to inform the planning of the next research lesson. As the figures below show, a lesson study can involve three or two iterations of this cycle of planning, teaching and reviewing, where the assessment of learning is used to refine teaching with the primary aim of finding out more about teaching and enabling improved pupil learning.

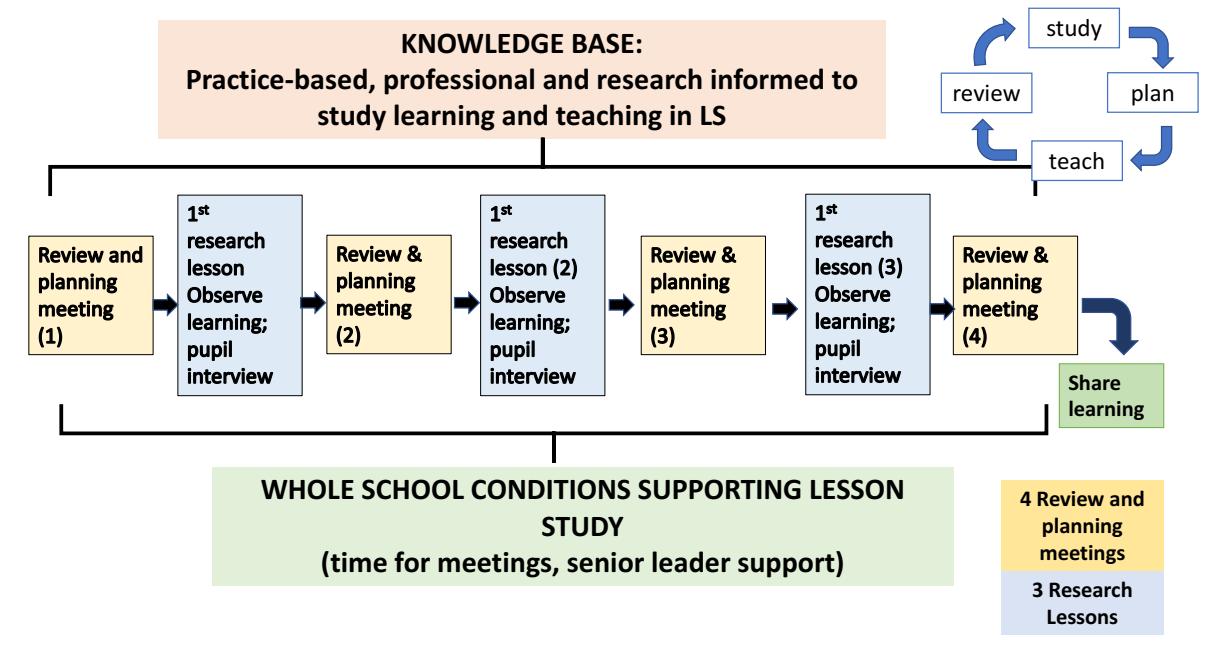
Lesson study has particular relevance to developing and adapting teaching for pupils with special educational needs in different settings, both ordinary and special settings. This is because of its review and planning focus on case pupils, enabling a fine grain on the learning and teaching needs of these case pupils. However, LS is not about perfecting specific lessons, it is about professional development and learning to enable more appropriate teaching of pupils with special educational needs.

This guidance takes you through this version of lesson study by introducing the key terms used, represents the process with flow diagrams and comments on each of the steps in the templates that are provided to guide teachers through the process and on which notes can be made of observations, points to recall and plans. Connected to this guidance is the set of templates that LS teams can use.

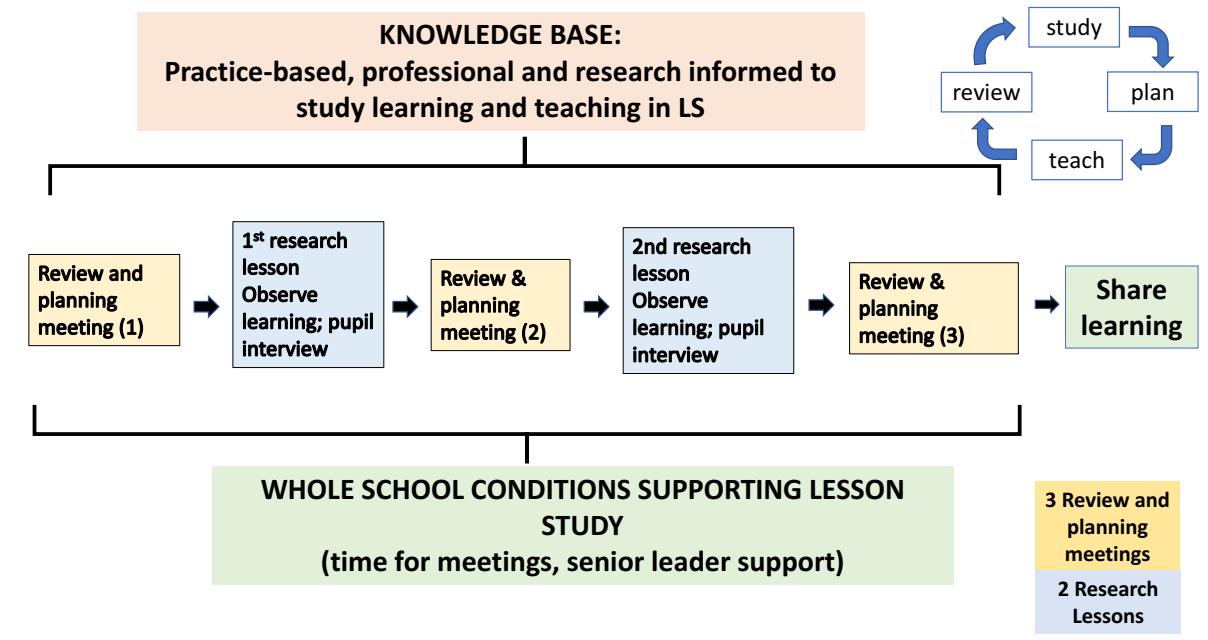
Key Language: as in models of lesson study below

Phrase	Description
Lesson Study	A sequence of 2 or 3 research lessons preceded and followed by 3 or 4 review and planning team meetings usually taking place over a period of time, e.g. 3 weeks or half a term
Research Lesson	A single research lesson forms part of the lesson study sequence. It is jointly planned, taught by one member of the team and then subsequently reviewed by the team.
Case pupils	These are the pupils who have been identified as the focus of the lesson study process – around whom the planning is done and whose learning is monitored and reviewed for subsequent research lessons. Usually 2-3 case pupils are identified for a lesson study
Review and planning meeting	The meetings in which the lesson study team jointly review and plan the focus of the lesson study. It is good practice for the second to the fourth meetings to take place soon after the research lessons.

Three Research Lesson Model



Two Research Lesson model



Step	Activity	What is involved?
1	DECIDE ON PEDAGOGIC FOCUS AND CASE PUPILS	What will be the teaching and learning focus of the lesson study? (area of learning and / or learning behaviours) Which two pupils will represent the pedagogic focus of the lesson study? What outcomes do you as teachers intend to gain from LS process?
2	ARRANGE WHO WILL BE IN THE LS TEAM; DECIDE ON ROLES & HOW THE TEAM WILL FUNCTION.	Who is in team? Why these people? Have you discussed different roles? Will someone chair / coordinate the meetings?
3	DECIDE ON THE WHAT KNOWLEDGE BASE TO INFORM THE PEDAGOGIC FOCUS	What knowledge will the team use that can inform the lesson study focus: Practice—professional knowledge and / or research-theory informed knowledge?
4	DECIDE ON RESEARCH QUESTIONS RELEVANT TO THE 2 CASE PUPILS.	Using information about the case pupils and the LS focus, what questions do you want to answer in the lesson study cycle?
5	DECIDE ON TIMELINE AND HOW THIS CAN BE ARRANGED	What arrangements are needed to make time to do the lesson study? When will the review and planning meetings and research lessons will take place?
6.	1 st REVIEW AND PLANNING MEETING (RP1):	What is your summary review of the case pupils' past learning and needs? How does this review inform the planning of the 1 st research lesson so that it answers your research questions?
7.	TEACHING 1 ST RESEARCH LESSON (RL1), JOINT OBSERVING AND ASSESS THE LEARNING OF CASE PUPILS	How will you organise the teaching of RL1? How will the case pupils' learning be observed? How will case pupils' learning be videoed or photographed? Who will interview the case pupils about their learning and how?
8	2 nd REVIEW AND PLANNING MEETING (RP2):	How will you use the evidence collected to review the case pupils' learning? What are implications for planning the next research lesson (RL2)? What knowledge will be used to make sense of learning and teaching to plan the next research lesson?
9	TEACHING 2nd RESEARCH LESSON (RL3), JOINT OBSERVING AND ASSESS THE LEARNING OF CASE PUPILS	How will you organise the teaching of RL2? How will the case pupils' learning be observed? How will case pupils' learning be videoed or photographed? Who will interview the case pupils about their learning and how?
10	DECIDE HOW TO PROCEED: IF TWO RL MODEL: RP3: FINAL REVIEW OF THE ACHIEVED OUTCOMES. EVALUATING LS AND COMMUNICATING OUTCOMES IF THREE RL MODEL: GO TO STEP 9 FOR RL3 AND STEP 10 FOR RP4	How will you use the evidence collected from RL2 to review the case pupils' learning? What knowledge will be used to make sense of learning and teaching to plan the next research lesson? How review case pupils' learning to answer initial research question?
11	SUMMARISE FINDINGS AND COMMUNICATE	What are the key points of learning from the LS? Have you completed the summary template How will you communicate to other in your school?

TEMPLATES TO GUIDE EACH STEP OF LESSON STUDY: TO BE USED TO RECORD ANALYSES AND DECISIONS

Steps 1 to 5 are about the preparations for the lesson study

COMMENTARY

STEP 1: CASE PUPILS, LESSON STUDY FOCUS and GOALS OF LESSON STUDY	
CASE PUPILS Who will be case pupils and why?	<i>You identify case pupils in this kind of LS whose learning is a source of concern to enhance their learning through trying a different approach to teaching.</i>
Case pupil 1 Male / female: Age / class: Reason chosen:	<i>You can identify 1 or 2 pupils depending on your interests.</i>
Case pupil 2 Male / female: Age / class: Reason chosen:	<i>Record their gender, age/class and reason for selecting them.</i>
WHAT IS FOCUS OF LESSON STUDY? Subject area of learning? Learning behaviours?	<i>Record the subject area of learning and / or the learning behaviours you are interested to find out more about.</i>
WHAT EXPECT TO GAIN FROM LS – up to three intended outcomes express as know-how and know-that goals for the LS team 1. 2. 3.	<i>Put into words briefly what your lesson study team expect to get out of the lesson study.</i>

Step 2: WHO IS IN THE LESSON STUDY TEAM	
Name school role	LS roles:

You identify case pupils in this kind of LS whose learning is a source of concern to enhance their learning through trying a different approach to teaching.

You can identify 1 or 2 pupils depending on your interests.

Record their gender, age/class and reason for selecting them.

Record the subject area of learning and / or the learning behaviours you are interested to find out more about.

Put into words briefly what your lesson study team expect to get out of the lesson study.

These are your goals as teachers (not for the pupils) to express in terms of teaching methods (KNOW-HOW) and teacher knowledge and understanding about teaching (KNOW-THEM) goals.

Record the names of people in the team and consider the various roles required in the LS and agree who will carry out these roles

Key Lesson Study roles:

- LS Coordinator: will there be one?
- Teach the research lessons
- Observe research lesson live
- Interview case pupils at end of research lesson
- Video and/or photo the case pupil learning
- View video / see photos before review/planning meetings
- Record team meeting deliberations/ decisions

Step 3: DECIDE ON THE WHAT KNOWLEDGE BASE WILL INFORM THE LESSON STUDY PROCESS

What Curriculum Programmes

What Pedagogic Practice

What Learning or other theory relevant to learning

This is a crucial step in the LS process and the conclusions are to be summarised in the template for this step.

You may want to:

- try a different curriculum programme and approach
- A teaching strategy from a practice handbook or from some other teaching source
- An approach that is research-informed

Step 4: DECIDE ON RESEARCH QUESTIONS RELEVANT TO THE CASE PUPILS

LS research questions for case pupils (1-2 questions)

Pupil 1:

1. What teaching can enable P1 to...
2. How teaching can enable P1 to...

Pupil 2:

1. What teaching can enable P2 to...
2. What teaching can enable P2 to...

Research question example:

'What teaching can enable P1 to engage more frequently in group activity when using key maths vocabulary?'

QUESTIONS HAVE 2 ELEMENTS:

*i. **do something***

specify in terms of one or more of these e.g. engage in activity, understand concept, know something etc.

*ii. **under some conditions***

specify learning conditions, e.g. individually, in group, using some materials etc.

Step 5: TIMING: Decide on timeline	
LESSON STUDY ACTIVITIES	DATE SET
1 st review and planning meeting RP1	
1st research lesson RL1	
RP2	
RL2	
RP3	
RL3 (if planned)	
RP4 (if planned)	

You need to schedule the times of the team meetings and the research lessons. This is a critical step that requires the support and backing of senior management.

Ensure that review/planning meetings are within a day after the research lessons. This makes it easier to recall what went on in the research lesson and the case pupils' responses

LS CYCLE STARTS WITH A SEQUENCE OF REVIEW AND PLANNING MEETINGS AND RESEARCH LESSONS.

Steps 6 parts I and II are to be completed in the 1st review and planning meeting. Step 6 part 1 is about lesson planning; Step 6 part II is setting expectations for the case pupils that are used for observation of learning in the 1 research lesson

Step 6 part I: 1 st Review and Planning meeting			
The subject area and key stage			
The curriculum topic			
Intended learning outcomes (class)			
lesson context (e.g. ability grouping)			
Intended learning outcomes (targets) for case pupils:			
Case pupil 1			
Case pupil 2			
Teaching activities / strategies and rationale			
Materials and resources			
Detailed planned sequence of activities during research lesson			
Research lesson timing	Teaching activity (if stages)	Student activity	Observation focus

In the 1st Review and planning meeting you need to plan the 1st research lesson study by being clear about the intended learning outcomes for all the class as the context for your focus on the case pupils.

In this context you need to then work out the intended learning outcomes (targets) for the case pupils that are relevant to addressing your research questions for these case pupils.

Next, consider the planned teaching activities and the materials and resources you will use. This is something that all in the LS team jointly discusses and agrees on.

Finally, it will be useful to consider in detail the stages of the planned lesson, the timing for each stage and what the team members who are observing the case pupils' learning will focus on. These can be recorded in this template

Step 6 part II: Research lesson expect and observe template			
Stage of lesson	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
Case pupil 1			
How expected to respond			
How observed to respond			
Case pupil 2			
How expected to respond			
How observed to respond			

During the review and planning meeting complete the HOW EXPECTED TO RESPOND rows for the case pupils.

It is crucial to be clear about the observation focus. during the research lesson. The HOW OBSERVED TO RESPOND rows will be completed during the 1st research lesson.

TAKE THIS TEMPLATE INTO THE RESEARCH LESSON.

Step 7 involves teaching the 1st research lesson. One person teaches the research lesson, and the others jointly observe and assess the learning of case pupils.

Step 7: Research lesson: pupil interview	
1. What did you enjoy most about that lesson?	To gather evidence about how the case pupils learning during the research lesson, you need to use the Step 6 part II: Research lesson expect and observe template to provide the focus of the observations. The observations are recorded in the template (as above)
2. What did you learn? (What can you do now that you could not do before?)	The case pupils' learning will also be videoed using a camcorder, ipad or mobile phone. Photos of key aspects of learning might also be taken as a less obtrusive approach.
3. What can you do to improve?	These recordings are for viewing in the next review and planning meeting.
4. What aspect of the teaching worked best for you?	In addition to the observation notes and any video/picture evidence, one of the observing LS team members will also interview case pupils briefly at the end of the research lesson, using a template like this one.
5. If the same lesson is being taught to another group, what would you change? Why would you change that aspect?	The wording of the interview question need to be adapted to the characteristics of the case pupils in advance.

Step 8; The 2nd review and planning meeting has 3 parts, i. the review of the case pupil learning in RL1 and ii. the implications for planning the next research lesson & iii. specify how case pupil are expected to respond

Step 8 Part I: Summarising and analysing evidence collected in 1st research	
Summary of key aspects of case pupil learning	
What were case pupils able to do? What learning progress was made? What difficulties and obstacles became evident?	
Case pupil 1	
Case pupil 2	
Further analysis	
What further knowledge and understanding might be relevant to make sense of what we found out?	
What changes to the learning objectives and teaching approaches might be made? And why?	
Step part ii	
Intended learning outcomes (targets) for case pupils:	
Case pupil 1	
Case pupil 2	
Teaching activities / strategies and rationale	
Materials and resources	
Detailed planned sequence of activities during research lesson	
Research lesson timing	Teaching activity (if stages)

In the first part of the meeting, review what was learned about the case pupils from the perspective of the research questions about them. Summarise this in the template.

Consider what further knowledge and understanding might help to make better sense of what happened.

Consider the changes to how you might change the research lesson objectives and teaching approaches

In step 8 ii the changes in the planned 2nd research lesson can be recorded in this part of the template.

Step 8 part III: Research lesson expect and observe template			
Stage of lesson	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
Case pupil 1			
How expected to respond			
How observed to respond			
Case pupil 2			
How expected to respond			
How observed to respond			

During the review and planning meeting complete the HOW EXPECTED TO RESPOND rows for the case pupils.

It is crucial to be clear about the observation focus. during the research lesson. The HOW OBSERVED TO RESPOND rows will be completed during the 1st research lesson.

TAKE THIS TEMPLATE INTO THE RESEARCH LESSON.

Step 9 involves teaching the 1st research lesson. One person teaches the research lesson while the others jointly observe and assess the learning of case pupils.

Step 9: Research lesson: pupil interview	
6. What did you enjoy most about that lesson?	To gather evidence about how the case pupils learning during the research lesson, you need to use the Step 8 part III: Research lesson expect and observe template to provide the focus of the observations. The observations are recorded in the template (as above)
7. What did you learn? (What can you do now that you could not do before?)	The case pupils' learning will also be videoed using a camcorder, ipad or mobile phone. Photos of key aspects of learning might also be taken as a less obtrusive approach.
8. What can you do to improve?	These recordings are for viewing in the next review and planning meeting.
9. What aspect of the teaching worked best for you?	In addition to the observation notes and any video/picture evidence, one of the observing LS team members will also interview case pupils briefly at the end of the research lesson, using a template like this one.
10. If the same lesson is being taught to another group, what would you change? Why would you change that aspect?	The wording of the interview question need to be adapted to the characteristics of the case pupils in advance.

Step 10: DECIDE HOW TO PROCEED

If you decide as a team at this step that you have learned enough from the lesson study, then you can use the **TWO RL MODEL**.

The 3rd and final Review and planning meeting will now focus on reviewing the achieved outcomes of the LS and planning how to communicate the findings. **Go to step 11 now.**

If you decide as a team that you want to try another round of planning and teaching as there is more to learn as a team, then you can use the **THREE RL MODEL**.

The 3rd Review and planning meeting will be like the 2nd one, so follow step 8 followed by step 9 for the 3rd research lesson.

Then go onto the final step 11 – the 4th Review and planning meeting - to review the achieved outcomes of the LS and planning how to communicate the findings

Step 11: SUMMARISE AND COMMUNICATE FINDINGS

In this concluding step you answer these questions in the final review and planning meeting:

- **What are the key points of learning from the LS?**
- **How will you communicate to other in your school?**

Step 11: Evaluating Lesson Study
What was learned about pupil learning? What was Impact on pupil learning and progress?
What was learned about teaching? What was impact on teaching practice and future teaching
Reflections about lesson study
How will the team communicate and disseminate the LS outcomes.

In the final review and planning meeting, the team draws on its analyses of the evidence from the previous research lessons to draw conclusions about professional learning, pupil learning, implications for future practice and how conclusions are to be shared with other teachers.

References:

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