It is crucial in action research to be analyzing the data while you are still collecting data. These analytic memos will help guide you in this early analysis. Each memo should be at least 2 pages in length (in standard-size font), and not more than 3 ½ pages in length.

You will turn in 3 memos; they are due: February 14th, March 14th, and April 18th. You will post these memos on Blackboard in the Action Research “Course” on the Discussion Board (it should be listed under “Organizations you are Participating in”).

Please name the files with your last name and which memo it is (i.e., SmithMemo2.doc). Please save your files either as (old) Word documents or as rich text (rtf) documents. Recall: Avoid using symbols, especially #, in your file names in Blackboard. Also recall: not all of your classmates have the capacity to open “new” Word files, so please save files to be compatible with older systems.

Guidelines for Writing Analytic Memo 1 (February 14)

An analytic memo is a device to pull yourself through the inductive process of action research. It is a weigh station, or rest area, on the analysis route. All action research involves some form of ongoing analysis, as part of the iterative process or returning to and reworking the data, to test out working hypotheses. Unlike the problem of practice statements and research questions, the memo is not an end in itself. It is provisional or tentative, making a stab at "what is going on.”

We would like you to use this simple format, using each as a heading:

1) IRB Consent Forms: Briefly summarize the status of your consent forms. Who is the person who has your consent forms? How many consent forms have been returned (you can know the total number, just not the specific students)? Is there anything else you could try to get more consent forms returned (that is not bribery)? Explain.

2) Data Collection:
   a. What data have you collected so far? What is the process of data collection like so far? What parts are easy and convenient to collect? Explain. What parts are inconvenient or seem like they will be challenging to collect? Explain. What have you done with this data? What data will you be collecting next?
   b. How is journal writing going? What processes or procedures have you put in place to support your journal writing?
   c. Who is in your research buddy? What plans have you put in place to check in with each other throughout the semester to hold each other accountable for journaling and data collection?

3) Make an ASSERTION, or claim for at least one of your research questions; an assertion is finding a pattern in your data (examples: students ask higher level questions when going over homework if the answers were provided with the assignment; working through problems first in small groups helps students better participate in later whole
class discussions; students strongly resist evaluating each other’s explanations--they want me to tell them when answers are correct), then

4) PROVIDE EVIDENCE to support each assertion (give an example, sample from interviews, journal, methods notebook, student work, etc.); you should have at least **three** forms of evidence to support an assertion, and then

5) a WORKING HYPOTHESIS about "what is going on here?" (thinking about the bigger picture directed toward the development of themes; some examples: students are uncomfortable sharing classroom authority because it goes against the normal school culture; providing students with homework answers helps focus attention more on the process of problem solving than on getting answers); you may have one hypothesis for each research question, or possibly a hypothesis that encompasses two or more of your research questions, which leads to

6) some commentary on WHAT YOU WILL NEED TO DO NEXT, what you will need to know and where you should look for it. I.e., what more do you need to get out of your data (and what you need to gather if you do not have it, e.g., questions you will ask in the next interview).

An analytic memo is a snapshot of where you are at certain points in time with your data collection. Certainly, with this first memo, you will not have collected very much data. But, you will have some data. It is vital to be looking at your data to see what you have, and then to decide what else you need to get. In May and June, it will be too late to collect more data from your students; this is why we are asking you to be thinking about your data while you collect it.
Guidelines for Writing Analytic Memo 2 (March 14) and Analytic Memo 3 (April 18)

Since you have more data now, these memos will each have two parts. An analytic memo is a device to pull yourself through the inductive process of action research. It is a weigh station, or rest area, on the analysis route. All action research involves some form of ongoing analysis, as part of the iterative process or returning to and reworking the data, to test out working hypotheses. Unlike the problem of practice statements and research questions, the memo is not an end in itself. It is provisional or tentative, making a stab at "what is going on."

We would like you to use this simple format, using each as a heading:

**Part I**

1) Look over your TEACHER JOURNAL ENTRIES so far (at least 6 for Memo 2, at least 10 for Memo 3). Is what you have written enough to tell a story of your teaching? Please explain. Use only your journals to describe a lesson in which you are trying to make changes for your research. What other sorts of details do you need to include in future journals to complete this picture of your teaching?

2) What sorts of TENSIONS have you been experiencing in your dual role as teacher and researcher? What has been going smoothly? What challenges are you experiencing? Please explain and be specific.

**Part II**

1) Make an ASSERTION, or claim for each of your research questions; an assertion is finding a pattern in your data (examples: students ask higher level questions when going over homework if the answers were provided with the assignment; working through problems first in small groups helps students better participate in later whole class discussions; students strongly resist evaluating each other’s explanations--they want me to tell them when answers are correct), then

2) PROVIDE EVIDENCE to support each assertion (give an example, sample from interviews, journal, methods notebook, student work, etc.); you should have at least THREE forms of evidence to support an assertion (three forms are not three different quotes from an interview, but could be an interview quote, a quote from your journal, and a piece of student work), and then

3) a WORKING HYPOTHESIS about "what is going on here?" (thinking about the bigger picture directed toward the development of themes; some examples: students are uncomfortable sharing classroom authority because it goes against the normal school culture; providing students with homework answers helps focus attention more on the process of problem solving than on getting answers); you may have one hypothesis for each research question, or possibly a hypothesis that encompasses two or more of your research questions, which leads to

4) some commentary on WHAT YOU WILL NEED TO DO NEXT, what you will need to know and where you should look for it. I.e., what more do you need to get out of your
data (and what you need to gather if you do not have it, e.g., questions you will ask in the next interview).

An analytic memo is a snapshot of where you are at certain points in time with your data collection. Certainly, with memo 2, you will not have collected all of your data. But, you will have some data. It is vital to be looking at your data to see what you have, and then to decide what else you need to get. In June, it will be too late to collect more data; this is why we are asking you to be thinking about your data while you collect it.