

Improving Instruction through “Lesson Study”

Jennifer Lewis

Wayne State University

And Detroit Public Schools Community District

Teacher Forum, Brandeis University

Mandel Center for Studies in Jewish Education, the DeLet Alumni Network and
the Brandeis Education Program

21 October 2018

Overview of today's session

- The enduring challenge of improving teaching
- What is “lesson study”? A brief sketch
- What lesson study has to offer for improving instruction (where other efforts have failed)
- Where is lesson study problematic?

Point of Departure

**Consensus that we need to
improve learning and
achievement**

BUT HOW????

We would need...

- Teachers' deep content knowledge
- Teachers' pedagogical knowledge
 - Both necessary but not sufficient
- *Collective* work on teaching

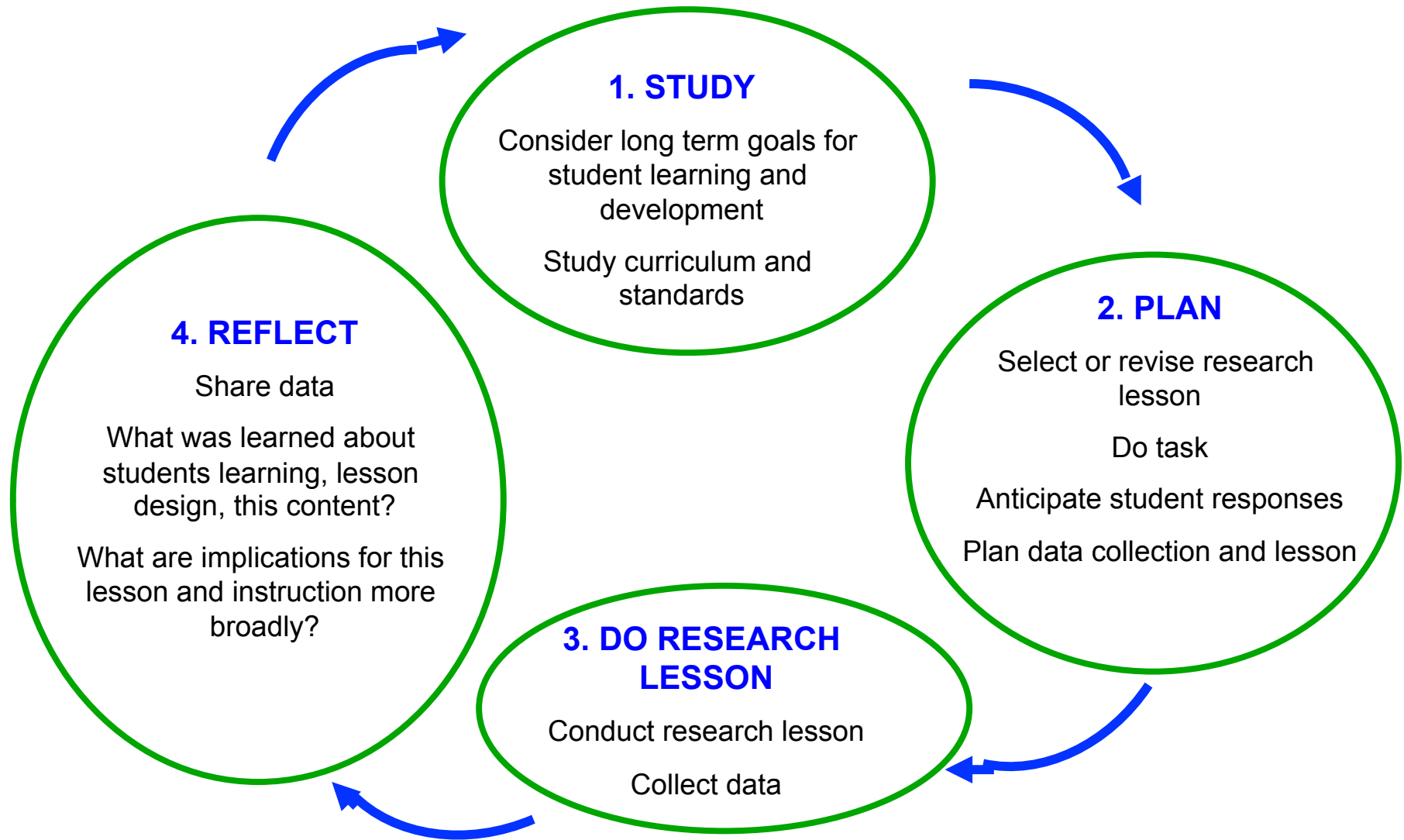
and this implies...

- Serious content learning for teachers
- Linked to instruction
- Collaborative, on-going, long-term
- Broad view of authentic learning
- Takes school mandates seriously

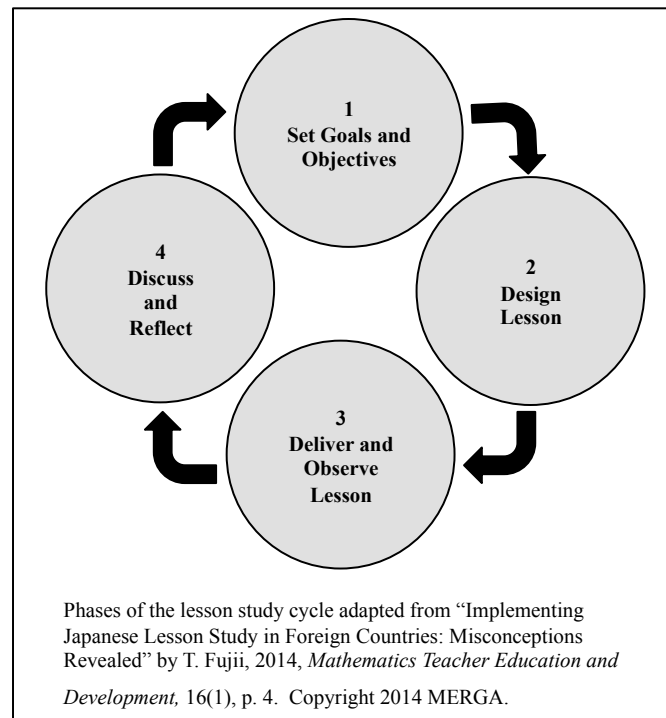
BUT... instructional improvement eludes us

- Lortie's "apprenticeship of observation": return to defaults
- Teaching is "women's work" and therefore not professional
- Short period of training
- Difficulty in measuring real success
- Isolated work rooms
- Practice is interactive, contingent, dynamic
- Lack of shared norms and professional language

Lesson Study Cycle



Lesson Study Cycle



Teachers Study Curriculum and Content



Co-Planning

Lesson Plan
Grade 5
 Designed by members of MTEI Cohort 6

Title of the lesson: Understanding God's Promise and Our Connection to the Land of Israel

Enduring understanding: "In multiple places, the Bible reports God's promise[s] of the Land of Israel to the Jewish people, which is a source of our connection to the Land of Israel [even today]." (adapted from CHAI curriculum)

* **Goals for this lesson: Students will:**

- read and interpret Biblical texts that describe God's promise of the Land of Israel to the Jewish people
- gain skills and qualities to work with a *hevruta* partner to understand text, hear another's voice, and develop self-knowledge
- formulate ideas and substantiate them with text and with personal experiences

<i>Instructional block</i> <i>Timing</i>	<i>Instructional tasks and questions</i> <i>Anticipated student responses</i>	<i>Observation notes</i>
Introduce ourselves 5 minutes 4:15 - 4:20	T: "My name is _____ and we are visiting your class so that we can learn more about how to teach in Jewish schools. We are all teachers and we are hoping you can help us learn about how to improve our teaching. We'll be making a video of the class today so that we can go back and see if what are trying is helping kids learn. We're not focusing on you even though we are very interested in the way you think, but we're trying to figure out if the way we designed this lesson helps kids learn. So the focus is on how we designed this lesson and how it gets taught. I really hope I can learn all your names today but you might have to remind me."	
Launch + pre-assessment question 9 minutes 4:20 - 4:29 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	Before we begin: We will pass out the pieces of Jerusalem stone for students to hold while they eat their snacks We will post a writing prompt on the white board: "When I think about the land of Israel, I feel...". Music will be playing on the computer and projected. T: "It's just been <i>Yom HaAtzmaut</i> and some of you have been on the walk for Israel. It seems like a great time to be talking about Israel."	

Co-Planning

L.L.C. ③ GROUP

Understand	<p>1. Understand the learning task</p> <p>Children are lined up in a straight line. Yoshiko is the 6th person from the front of the line and the 7th person from the back of the line. How many children are there altogether?</p>		
Examine	<p>2. Individual problem solving</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13 people ---- $6 + 7 = 13$ 12 people ----○○○○○●○○○○○ 	Blocks	
Deepen	<p>3. Share the solutions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop a sense of ownership of the problem, try to use a familiar situation in students' everyday lives as the setting of the problem. Make sure students can represent their reasoning using pictures, diagrams, math sentences, words, or manipulation of blocks. Make sure that students are sharing the rationale for their answers. Contrast the two answers (13 people vs. 12 people) and examine the pictures, diagrams, and math sentences carefully. 	Magnets (for black board)
Summarize	<p>4. Compare and critique the solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○○○○○●○○○○○ 1 2 3 4 5 6 5 4 3 2 1 There are 5 people in front of Yoshiko, 6 people behind her, and Yoshiko herself. --- $5 + 6 + 1 = 12$. There are 6 people in the front, including Yoshiko. There are 7 people in the back, including Yoshiko. Since Yoshiko is counted twice, we must subtract 1 from the sum. --- $6 + 7 - 1 = 12$. <p>5. Summarize in math journal entries.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the different ways of getting the answer of 12 people becomes the topic of discussion, make sure students can explain their reasoning explicitly, for example, "Yoshiko is the 6th person in the line" means..." Go back and forth between pictures/diagrams and math sentences in order to make the structure of the problem more explicit. <p>Can Ss represent the relationships in the problem situation with pictures, diagrams, math sentences and words?</p>	

This lesson plan is originally written in Japanese and translated into English by the Global Education Resources for the Lesson Study Immersion Program in Japan, June 21- July 2, 2007.
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Peer Observation: The Research Lesson



Reflection: The Debrief



An example of student work

Benji

NAME:

Why do you think the Jewish people feel connected to the Land of Israel?

I think the Jewish people feel connected because they are Jews and Israelis their home and its where they pray to G-d

What does lesson study afford?
What is problematic?

Brings together teacher educators,
administrators, coaches, teachers
around instruction



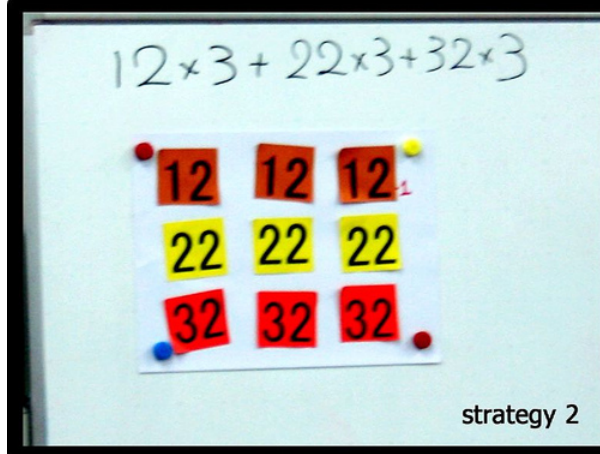
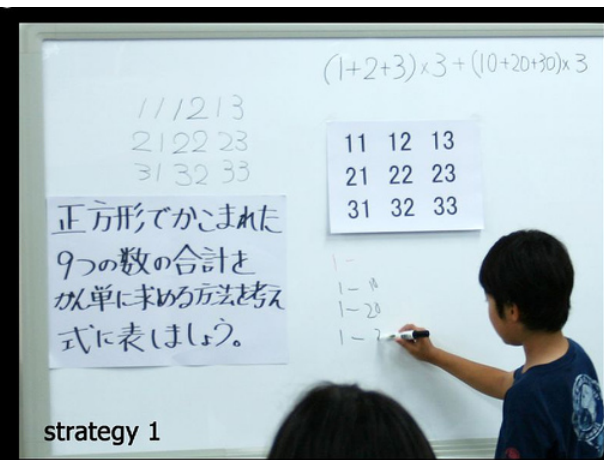
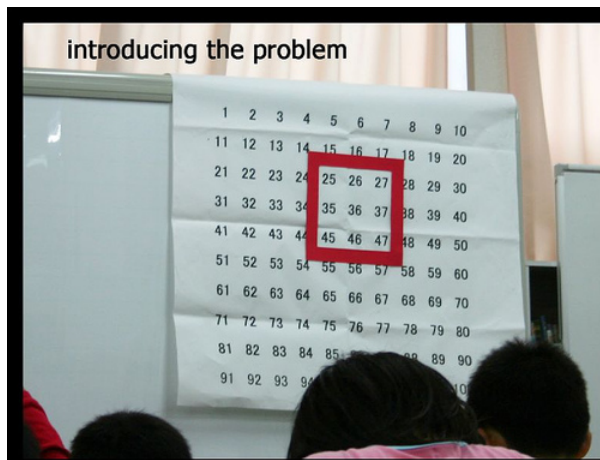
Brings together math educators,
administrators, coaches, teachers
around instruction



Evidence of children's learning in instruction is arbiter



Careful work on routine practice



Operationalizes teachers' learning *for* instruction



Problematics of lesson study



Problematics of lesson study

- Long-term effort
- Time-intensive
- (Overly?) focused on detail
- Culturally specific
- Requires unusual facilitation

What might lesson study produce?

- Polished lessons
- Collegial work on instruction
- Testing ideas in practice
- Teamwork on harder or novel ideas for teaching
- Sharpened vision to see student learning

What are teachers learning in lesson study?

- Shared language
- Networks of collegueship
- Interest and improvement in subject matter knowledge
- Collective tinkering with elements of practice
- “Eyes to see students, ears to hear them”
- School-wide capacity