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Creator(s): Siddall, G., Rose, H. and MacLellan, F.

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Twitter: #RLrevolution

Reading list (R)evolution

Gillian Siddall, Fiona MacLellan and Hannah Rose

Transforming lives, inspiring change

Graphics by Stacey Jones 2012

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Session outline

- Context
- Discussion – what is the purpose of a reading list?
- Overview of research project
- Review of reading lists
- Summary of our research project findings
- Reflection– revolutionising reading lists …

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Context

- University of Northampton
- Foundation Degree students

Group discussion

1. What is the purpose of a reading list?

2. How do you expect students to use a reading list?

3. How useful do you think reading lists are?

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The research project

Library and Information Research Group research award 2011

An investigation into the use of reading lists as a pedagogical tool to support the development of information skills amongst Foundation Degree students.

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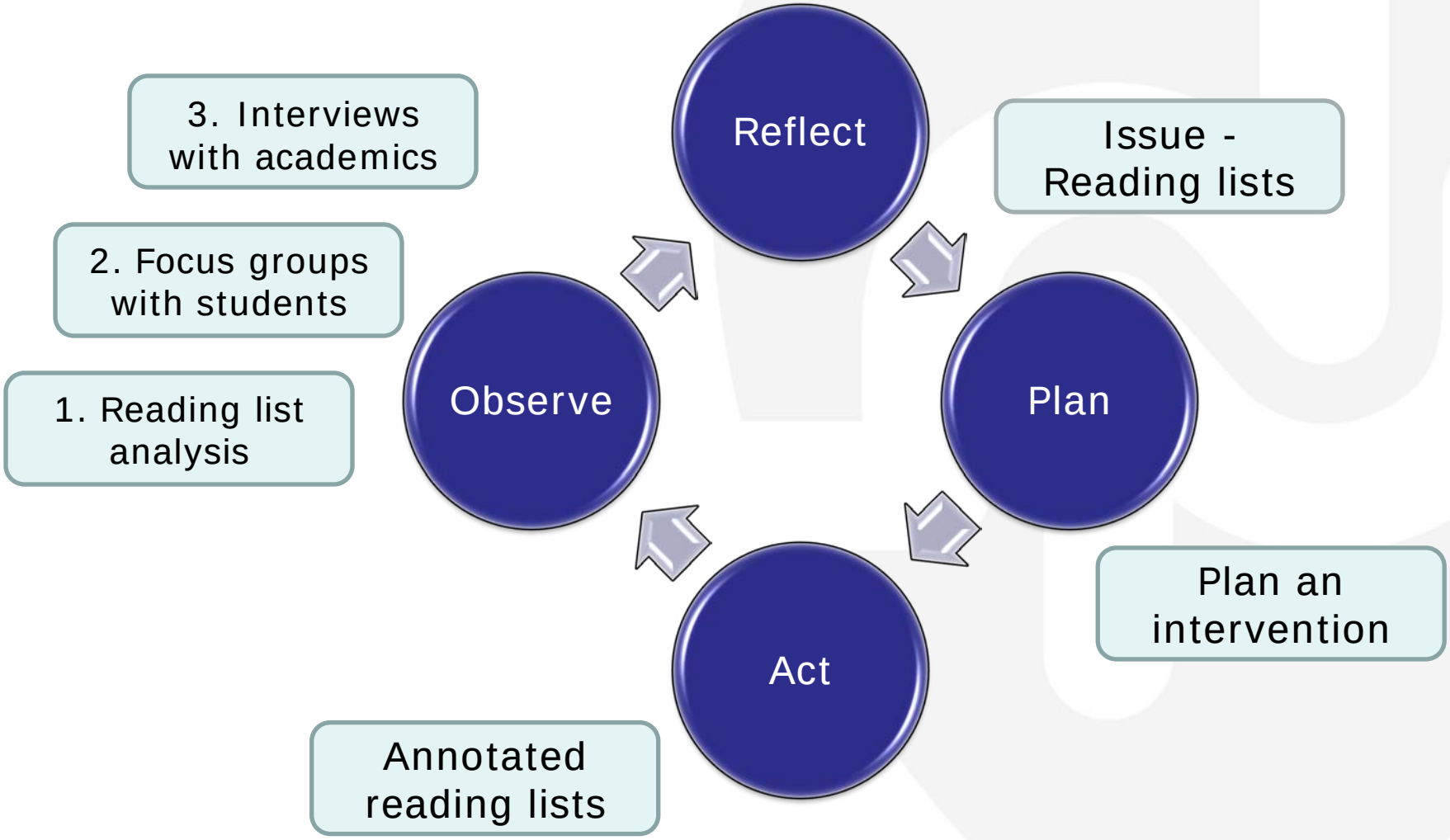
Action research



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Put yourself in the students' shoes

Think like a student

Transforming lives, inspiring change

Checklist

Things to think about when you are looking at the reading lists:

- ✓ **Number** and **type** of resources
- ✓ Use of **headings**: Core / Essential / Recommended / Other
- ✓ **Structure**: Divided by topic / subject / session / assignment
- ✓ **Accuracy** and **consistency** of referencing (Harvard)
- ✓ Is there any **guidance** for students on how they should use the reading list?

Reading list overview

Sample reading lists

- **42%** of information on reading lists is incorrect
- On average **23%** of the books on reading lists are out of date
- **25%** of books on reading lists are available as eBooks, but only **3%** are labelled as such
- On average, books make up **73%** of the sample reading lists
- The average number of sources on a reading list is **34.5** items, the most is **59**, the least is **22**

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Listening to the student voice ...

How do students use and value reading lists?

As a starting point ...

"... particularly with students that have been out of the education system for a number of years, styles of learning have changed dramatically from when I was at school. So reading this [list] gives me some **sort of idea as to where I can begin**, **where I can start**, even what things to look at..."

(Year 1 student)

To give direction …

"… the reading list … **points you in directions** and gives you a clue of what you're supposed to be doing."

(Year 1 student)

"…so if you know you need to use more journals you can look in the journal bit."

(Year 1 student)

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Life saving ...

"I think reading lists play an important role because it's like being thrown into a swimming pool with lead boots on and no **life saving device** ... I think particularly for new students the reading list is **absolutely invaluable**."

(Year 1 student)

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Modelling academic practice ...

"It does make me chuckle when I get the odd reading list and I look and I think: **typo, spelling mistake, error**, and then we get penalised!"
(Year 2 student)

"...if they expect you to reference in a certain way, as a university, the reading list should be **modelled**."
(Year 2 student)

Academic skills ...

"... if you're stuck what words to use in these search engines... **you look at the reading list and it speaks** a word 'manipulative' and you think well I'll try that and boom, boom, boom, you've got loads of words..."

(Year 2 student)

"If you find a core text and you do some work from it you'll find a reference in the book that leads you on."

(Year 1 student)

Reading lists for scaffolding ...

‘*An important aspect of scaffolding instruction is that the scaffolds are temporary. As the learner’s abilities increase the scaffolding provided by the more knowledgeable other is progressively withdrawn. Finally the learner is able to complete the task or master the concepts independently*.’

(Chang *et al.*, 2002. Cited in: Van Der Stuyf, 2002, p.2).

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How can we revolutionise reading lists to support students' skills development and enhance their learning?

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