The books in this list can be helpful in planning ways to find out if your program is successful in meeting your goals and objectives. They describe various ways to conduct research, and it should be noted that research can be a bumpy road. As with any other endeavor in life, one becomes more proficient when one has time to practice. For someone who only occasionally seeks answers, it is helpful to carry out your research with guidance from someone whose main interest is conducting research. This person may be within your school district or may be a professor in a nearby college or university who would enjoy having the opportunity to carry out a research study in a local school district. School districts have become wary of having students “tested” outside of the required testing, and teachers have become less willing to respond to anyone unless they are obligated to do so.

This annotated list shares books that will be helpful as you begin your plans. They will reinforce things you learned in a research class you may have taken. These are listed in alphabetical order by author.


“What this does is put in one place, in your hands, an intensely practical evaluator’s kit with tools and plans. With this book you and your colleagues can examine individual projects and ongoing services. You can construct effective plans for keeping tabs on how your library is
doing. With this book and a general-purpose suite of office software, you can gather, analyze, and report your own evaluation data. You will know what tools are best for what data, and requiring what staff time and effort. You will be able to knowledgeably solicit assistance and employ consultants, advanced training, or more powerful software.” (p. viii)


This book covers the research process, content analysis, interviews and focus groups, observations, experimental research, bibliometrics, action research, and classroom research.


This practical book is written for the college librarian who wishes to evaluate classroom instruction with techniques that do not take time apart from actual instruction.

Douglas Cook and Lesley Farmer, eds. *Using qualitative methods in action research: How Librarians can get to the why of data.* (2011)

Written by academic librarians, this book covers mostly testing the results of teaching information literacy.


These authors present the components of the research study, the language of research, designing studies, collecting data, and reporting findings.

“The intended audience for this book is library directors and managers in all types of libraries who are interested in evaluating one or more services.” (p. xix) “The purpose of this book is to provide a set of tools that will assist any librarian in evaluating a particular library service, whether covered in this book or not. The goal is to remove some of the mysteries surrounding the process of evaluation so that many librarians will see the value of performing evaluation in their libraries.” (p. xx) Different areas of library service such as reference, electronic resources, and library instruction services are covered in individual chapters.


A basic reference and textbook to teach research methodology in schools of library and information science, Connaway and Radford cover all types of research and statistics to analyze findings. They also describe how to get results published, and for doctoral students, how to write a research proposal.


This is a workbook with space provided to take notes. A detailed section on tools for each step in the action research project features guiding questions for the reader to consider while conducting their own project. Five action research examples from the data collected are used to explain the process.

A basic textbook for research courses, it is also an excellent reference. A number of different authors discuss research questions, sampling, methods used to collect and analyze data, and report findings.