Coaching Journal

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Session 1

Time: February 19th, 2014 10:00-10:50 AM

Goals/Targets

1. Identify the stage/level of technology integration at which the teacher currently performs.

2. Identify the teacher's needs, specific area(s) for professional growth in regard to technology integration.

3. Practice implementing effective listening strategies and the partnership principles in a professional dialog.

Strategies

Before our first meeting, the teacher was asked to take the LoTi survey to help identify areas on which the further coaching process will focus. This strategy was selected as a pre-assessment and identification tool of the teacher's beliefs about the role of technology in her classroom and the stage of change described by Jim Knight (2007). The collaborative exploration of the data collected from the survey was another strategy utilized during Session 1. It was intentionally selected to practice the partnership approach to help build a trusting relationship with the teacher and develop a deep understanding of her professional needs.

Session 1 was conducted in a one-on-one interview setting. The results of the survey were discussed with a careful implementation of the partnership philosophy principles and strategies for effective listening suggested by Knight (2007). The teacher was asked to give additional examples of instructional strategies used in her classroom on a daily basis to help build an accurate understanding of the LoTi in her classroom. The questions posted in the dialog were also used to probe the Big Four (Knight 2007) in order to identify a focus for professional learning. Additional questions were directed to learn more about the classroom

management strategies used by the teacher, her understanding of the content, teaching practices, and formative assessments strategies.

Outcomes

The teacher's LoTi is Exploration (level 2) because all activities with technology integration described by the teacher focus on lower levels of cognitive processing and usually involve practicing a specific skill or concept (Learning Quest, 2013). Technology in this classroom is used to reinforce remembering and understanding of different concepts or to gather information from students on a specific topic as a formative assessment of their performance.

The Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge Model was used to identify the areas for professional growth (Roblyer & Doering, 2013). The teacher needs support in knowledge of pedagogy (PK), specifically in differentiating instruction for guided reading groups, and knowledge of technology (TK). The further coaching will focus on both areas simultaneously because technology integration will not be effective without strong pedagogical practices.

Implementation of strategies for an effective dialog allowed the teacher to feel comfortable speaking about her professional experiences. Collaborative exploration of data and professional dialog led to a mutual agreement about focusing on pedagogy of small-group reading instruction and scaffolding integration of technology to enhance such teaching and learning.

Reflection

The teacher is very comfortable using technology tools for personal use and professional planning and collaboration. At this point, she sees technology as a tool to reinforce basic skills such as math and reading fluency using different online software (Raz-kids, Moby Max, Math

Magician, IXL, etc.). She has chosen to learn how to integrate the 4Cs (critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity) in her daily instruction. Therefore, further coaching sessions will focus on reviewing her lesson plans for the following week and choosing at least one activity to increase the use of the 4Cs.

The focus for PK is to differentiate reading instruction in the classroom. The further coaching will involve allocating necessary resources for differentiation, modeling and co-teaching in the classroom, and collaboration on designing reading lessons. Technology tools to enhance differentiated instruction in small groups will be gradually introduced and modeled in the classroom.

The implementation of the partnership principles in the dialog with the teacher was not difficult. I made every effort to put aside my opinions and allow the teacher to describe her experiences and concerns. As the teacher described her reading lesson plans for the following week, I chose to point out the need for differentiation when teaching students in small reading groups. The teacher had different types of data about reading levels of her students (Fountas and Pinnel assessments, Raz-Kids progress monitoring, and AIMs reading fluency assessment), but she seemed to have difficulties relating the data to the instructional design of her lessons. The teacher expressed a need for help in finding appropriate reading resources (learning target was to learn about character traits while reading an informational text about Jackie Robinson).

Next Steps

1. Assist the teacher with locating appropriate reading passages about Jackie Robinson.

    Provide a list of online resources for future references.

2. Schedule specific times in the classroom to model technology tools for communication, collaboration, and critical thinking. Model and co-teach small groups during reading instruction on Tuesday-Friday next week from 12:50 to 1:30.

3. Paddlet or Lino It (pre-set, no student login required) will be used as a platform for students to think critically and communicate ideas about their reading and thinking. The online document will be embedded in tsLearning, on online management system, as an example of planning activities in an online environment.

Session 2

Time: February 25, 26, 27, 28 from 12:50 to 1:30 daily

Goals/Target

1. Model communication and collaboration strategies with integration of Lino It.

2. Introduce, model, and facilitate a writing activity with integration of an itsLearning discussion board, an online platform for students to communicate their ideas.

3. Collaboratively build an extension activity for the online discussion that will be carried over to the next week's lesson plans.

Strategies

Modeling was a strategy used during this week. "Modeling is where the rubber meets the road" (Knight, 2007, p. 109). The content, pedagogy, and technology aspects of the lesson were discussed and planned collaboratively in the previous week, and modeling of each allowed the teacher to see what they may look like in the classroom. This job-embedded learning design helped the teacher transfer newly-introduced tools and techniques to practice, which is an important component of the Learning Designs Standard of professional learning (The Professional Learning Association (n.d.).

A few suggestions for model lessons described by Knight (2007) were implemented during this time. Reviewing background thoroughly was simple because the lesson was built on specific texts about Jackie Robinson that students read previously during their guided reading, small-group lessons. Expectations for the outcome of the lesson were clearly stated and revisited multiple times during modeling. The focus was on the quality of the responses that students posted on Lino It, instead of technology tool itself. In addition, the teacher was able to observe implementation of differentiated instruction techniques.

The teacher decided to use a simple T-chart to record her thoughts during her observations. At the end of each lesson, a brief conversation took place in which the teacher's feedback was discussed and her questions were answered.

Outcomes

Students read differentiated texts about Jackie Robinson in small groups and then communicated his character traits with text evidence and personal connections in Lino It. This lesson was modeled for the teacher. [Here is the wall](#) students created.

A 3-step writing activity was planed and implemented with integration of a discussion board in itsLearning. The content created by students in Lino It was used as background knowledge for this writing exercise. This lesson was co-taught with the classroom teacher. Here is the screenshot of the discussion board in itsLearning:

Learning objectives: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.2.3, CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.2.6

You found many character traits of Jackie Robinson from different books and shared it with the class on Lino.

Step 1: Think about

1. What character traits from the list do *you* have that are similar to his? Give an example of a situation when you demonstrated it.
2. Describe *a character* from another book *or a real person* in your life who has a character trait from the list. Give specific examples when they demonstrated it.

Step 2: Wite about

1. Post at least 2 answers in the discussion threads.
2. You must use complete sentences and correct spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. Otherwise, your readers will not understand your thoughts.

Step 3: Read and Connect

1. Read responses of others. Which one reminds you of something that happened to you?
2. Share your connections in the discussion. Click "reply with a quote" and start with "Your example reminds me of...".
3. You must use complete sentences and correct spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. Otherwise, your readers will not understand your thoughts.

Subject	Started	Last post	Total	Unread
Angry	2/28/2014 9:40 AM by Alena Zink	3/1/2014 1:34 PM by Alena Zink	7	0
Confident	2/28/2014 9:33 AM by Alena Zink	3/1/2014 11:29 AM by Jessica Rogers	2	0
Brave	2/28/2014 9:39 AM by Alena Zink	3/1/2014 11:21 AM by Jessica Rogers	8	0
Hard-working	2/28/2014 9:39 AM by Alena Zink	3/1/2014 11:17 AM by Jessica Rogers	4	0
Athletic	2/28/2014 9:40 AM by Alena Zink	3/1/2014 11:15 AM by Jessica Rogers	7	7
Friendly	2/28/2014 9:38 AM by Alena Zink	3/1/2014 11:12 AM by Jessica Rogers	6	6
Respectful	2/28/2014 9:34 AM by Alena Zink	3/1/2014 11:10 AM by Jessica Rogers	4	4

Reflection

It was easy to work with the students because I have worked with this class before. Therefore, building connections and comfortable transitioning to me teaching a model lesson did not take long. I feel strongly about focusing on differentiating reading texts. The teacher observed that planning a differentiated lesson does not mean to plan 4-5 different lessons. The learning targets and expectations for the outcomes were the same, but the reading levels of texts and support provided to students were differentiated. My hope is that the teacher will make a conscious effort to plan similar guided reading instruction next week.

The teacher expressed her excitement about Lino It and was impressed with the thoughts her students shared in it. Therefore, modeling how student collaboration (they worked in pairs) can deepen and refine their thoughts before communicating them to the class was successful. Students with learning disabilities were prompted with guiding questions to articulate their

thoughts. Technology allowed everyone to be engaged in the activity and feel as contributors to the classroom community. This experience proved that teachers want to see what something we talk about looks like in a real classroom. Modeling is a powerful strategy to win teachers over and persuade them to carry on with the implementation. The teacher expressed her ideas about implementing Lino It into her math lessons, which makes me believe that she saw how this tool can enhance her lessons.

The writing lesson in a discussion board was an opportunity for me to model how a new technology tool can be introduced to second graders. I also wanted to show how making clear expectations for the quality of student work may affect learning. The teacher was encouraged to read, comment, and post her own thoughts in the discussion board to model online communication. I was happy to see that the teacher posted her thoughts and replied to student work the very next day. I am, too, planning to take an active part in this online discussion. In addition, I will ask the instructional coach and our administrative team to participate in it. It will show students that their ideas are important to audience outside their classroom.

Next steps

1. Meet with the teacher to collaboratively work on ELA lesson plans for the following week.

2. Make sure the teacher follows the model of differentiation in her guided reading groups.

3. Continue with the discussion board activity, expand it (read, think, and comment on others' posts), and show how a new activity with different learning targets can be built upon work completed by students in previous lessons.

4. Ask the IC and administrators to participate in the discussion board activity.

Session 3

Time: February 28, 2014, 2:45-3:30

Goals/Targets

1. Introduce the Reflect to Act form. Reflect on the lessons from previous week and collaboratively evaluate ELA plans for the following week.

2. Plan an interactive activity for students to use on the ActivBoard during centers as a tool for differentiation.

3. Introduce the ABC format of commenting in a discussion board. Plan the implementation of this format in the classroom as a follow-up writing activity.

4. Develop one activity for Word Work during centers within itsLearning that would support the implementation of the 4Cs.

5. Discuss possibilities for formative assessment tools in itsLearning.

Strategies

So far, the enrollment and identification components of coaching described by Knight (2007) have been accomplished. The areas for professional learning have been identified, and the main strategy of explaining new tools and techniques to the teacher was used. The new information was intentionally broken down to simplify and scaffold the knowledge and skills needed for successful implementation. Ongoing support and communication via emails and short daily conversations are additional strategies used in the coaching process.

Once again, the listening strategies were carefully implemented and monitored to ensure that the professional dialog is effective. Collaboration was the main strategy utilized during this meeting to make sure professional learning goals were clear to all involved while the evaluation of ELA lesson plans took place.

Reflection is another strategy used during this session. The Reflect to Act form was introduced and filled out to facilitate the discussion about what worked well in the past week's lessons and what steps should be taken next. The form was created by the coach and influenced by the Coaching Project (The University of Kansas, n.d.).

Outcomes

The Act to Reflect form showed that teacher found new tools and strategies effective and engaging for students. She expressed her desire to continue learning about tools and strategies that allow students to think critically, collaborate, and communicate online. The teacher also noted the need in repetition and explicit vocabulary work in teaching guided reading groups.

The teachers will differentiate her grammar practice activities. Instead of using the flipchart to review the skill in a whole-group setting, only certain students will be using it on the ActivBoard during centers. Students will work in pairs and have an answer key to check their work.

The ABC format of commenting was introduced to the teacher. The teacher will introduce this format to students and facilitate their work throughout the week. The coach will observe the lessons and provide feedback.

The teacher learned how to set up notes and change their permission settings in itsLearning. This tool will be used by students for the Chain Story word activity during next week. The teacher will introduce the activity to students and facilitate their work online. The coach will observe lessons and provide feedback.

The teacher was introduced to the assessment tool in itsLearning. She expressed an interest in seeing what it would look like in her classroom. The coach will develop a grammar test in itsLearnig to assess the grammar skill that students will be working on all week. The implementation of the online test will be modeled by the coach at the end of the week.

Reflection

The teacher seems to be very eager to learn new tools and gets very excited about their implementation during ELA lessons. Her reflection on the Reflect to Act form shows that she has developed an understanding of what online communication and collaboration among students may look like in a 2nd grade classroom. I think it is extremely important for us to stay focused on the critical thinking skills to make sure essential questions of each activity and the purpose of technology integration support rigorous and differentiated learning. When planning such activities becomes habitual, the LoTi in this classroom will grow beyond level 2.

After evaluating the teacher's responses to the adopter survey developed in our PLN group, I certainly can place this teacher on the adoption level. She uses technology consistently in her personal and professional life. Her gap is in transforming student leaning with technology. She is afraid of letting go of control in the classroom and allowing students to work in pairs. She does not know many technology tools that would support the 4 Cs, but she expresses a high interest in learning and trying them out in her classroom. The teacher asks for support and loves to observe modeled lessons. She has started to make connections and transfer new knowledge and skills to other subject areas.

I have been intentionally monitoring my skills in effective listening while collaborating with the teacher. It helped us built professional trust faster, speak out our ideas, and evaluate each other's thoughts. My goal is to listen to her ideas and build upon them. I want to push the teacher just outside her comfort zone every time we plan a lesson to make sure she learns something new after each session.

Next steps

1. Observe the teacher introducing new tools and facilitating online learning activities with her students and provide feedback.

2. Continue monitoring online discussions and implementation of the ABC format for commenting.

3. Develop and online assessment and model its implementation in the classroom.

4. Set up a follow-up session to reflect on professional learning and plan ELA lesson for the following week.

Session 4

Time: March 5th, 12:50-1:30, and March 7th, 7:00 -7:30

Goals/Targets

1. Observe the teacher introducing the Chain Story activity to students. Take objective notes.

2. Meet with the teacher to collaboratively discuss the feedback on the lesson observed.

Strategies

Observation and specific feedback are the strategies used during this session. An ability of the teacher to correctly set up this activity in itsLearning, strategies used to introduce and model the activity to students, and the actual implementation were the focus of this observation. As Knight (2007) suggests, an intentional effort to remove personal judgment was made, and only specific evidence observed in the lesson were taken in consideration when providing feedback to the teacher. The "language of ongoing regard" with characteristics of feedback being direct, specific, and non-attributive was the center of the discussion during a face-to-face meeting with the teacher (Knight, 2007).

Outcomes

The teacher expressed an excitement about her ability to develop and correctly set up an activity in itsLearning. She was able to assign permissions and differentiate the work space for students.

After collaborative evaluation of the lesson, it was agreed to focus on specific strategies: giving precise directions and scaffolding integration, looking for signals to measure student engagement and focus during a lecture, and learning new tools in itsLearning to manage the

content within the course (lesson planner, assessments, and dashboard). These are the notes taken during the observation:

Time: February March 3, 12:50 -1:30 PM

Lesson: ELA, introducing the Chain Stories activity in itsLearning

What Went Well: A new center activity is introduced to the class in a whole-group setting. Every step and rule for the activity is modeled and explained by the teacher. A connection to kids' background knowledge is made effectively (conversation about what a chain is and what writing a chain story may be like). Every step is modeled on the ActiveBoard (visuals) to support different types of learners. Integration of technology allows students to communicate their ideas within the online learning platform. The communication and critical thinking are the main Cs addressed in this lesson. The atmosphere in the classroom is very friendly. Students are encouraged to speak out and share their thinking without being rushed by the teacher. A great classroom community is evident in the classroom.

Things to Ponder: The explanation/demonstration of the activity took 27 minutes. Students were losing focus after 12 minutes. One student said: "Can we start it now?" which should be a signal for the teacher to wrap up the conversation. Was it necessary to explain the rules of this game/activity on a flipchart? Did it help students make connections and clearly understand how to transfer it into itsLearning? Would it be more effective and efficient to use the actual note within itsLearning to introduce/model the activity? How do students know what to do after other students complete the task and the chain stories grow? Should the process and procedures for communication online be explained (reading previous posts, think about them, add a new post to grow the story)?

Suggestions to Consider: When showing how to do something in itsLearning, use specific terminology to name things. Instead of saying "click over here" and pointing to the folders in the course tree, say "click on the course tree and find the folder." Use the lesson planner to link specific activities for the day (chain story, discussion board, etc.). It will make it much easier for students to locate a specific folder and/or activity since it will be displayed on the dashboard of your course. As the course content grows and more folders are added, students will have a difficult time finding a specific activity in the tree independently.

Reflection

The experience from the observation and the process of providing feedback created a great opportunity for me to learn how to be objective and focus only on evidence observed when evaluating a lesson preformed by the teacher. As I was talking notes, I kept consciously asking myself if I judged or based my questioning on evidence. It was a challenge for me to leave my opinion out of it. I found it powerful to discuss my observation notes with the teacher in a one-on-one meeting. It was extremely helpful for me to hear what the teacher thought of the lesson before I would share my observations. It was interesting for me to find out that her reflection was very much similar to what I thought of the lesson. As I expressed my finding about the similarities, I felt the teacher relaxed and did not take it defensively. Instead, she opened up to suggestions and seemed to be eager to make changes to improve her teaching techniques. I have learned that discussions about observations must take place in a face-to-face format, and I will try to stay away from sending feedback via emails as I have done many times in the past.

Next steps

1. Continue meeting weekly to collaborate on the following week's ELA lesson plans to ensure differentiation and the 4Cs are fully implemented.

2. Model the assessment tool in itsLearning in the classroom. The assessment will focus on CC2ELAR2f standard: expending, connecting, and rearranging words in sentences.

Session 5

Time: March 14th, 12:50-1:30 and 2:30 - 3:00

Goals/Targets

1. Model implementation of the online assessment tool in itsLearning.

2. Meet with the teacher to collaboratively discuss the observed implementation of the online assessment.

3. Coach how to set up and view results of the assessments in itsLearning.

Strategies

Once again, modeling was a strategy used during this week (Knight, 2007). The content, pedagogy, and technology aspects of the lesson were discussed and planned collaboratively in the previous week, and modeling of each allowed the teacher to see what they may look like in the classroom. The teacher was able to observe management strategies for online testing in a classroom where not every student has a device. School desktops, laptops, and student personal devices were used in this lesson. The teacher observed troubleshooting techniques for various devices as well.

Scaffolding, braking down information, and guided learning took place after the assessment lesson was observed by the teacher. The learning outcomes were reviewed and evaluated in a collaborative setting. At this time, the teacher was shown how to set up an

assignment within the online platform and practice creating a new test for her next unit. In

addition, exploration of the assessment reports and their connection to each student' progress

monitoring report in the course allowed the teachers to see the "big" picture of the personalized

learning approach.

Outcomes

The online assessment was developed and given to students by the coach to model how

the tool works and what management strategies may be used in a classroom.

Met with the teacher to discuss the modeled lesson and learn how to set up and access

assessments reports in itsLearning . Each step of the process was modeled first, and then the

teacher practiced developing another assessment independently. The itsLearning note with a

screen cast and step-by-step directions was developed for further references.
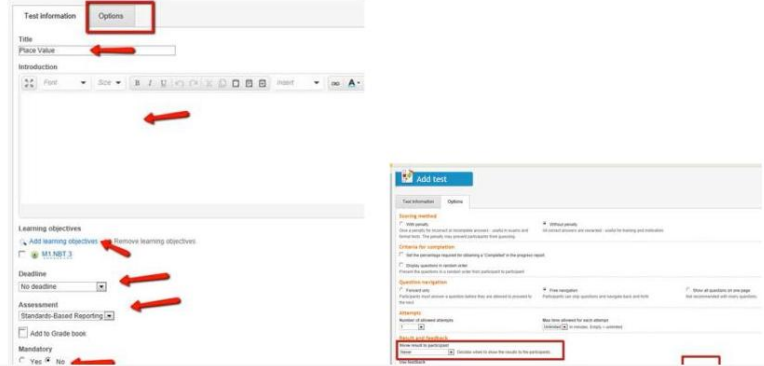
Reflection

After our coaching sessions, I felt as the teacher was able to experience different aspects of lesson planning and teaching with technology integration. The main focus on the pedagogy of each activity helped the teacher think about all learners in her classroom when planning instructional activities with technology integration to differentiate learning.

The 4Cs of a 21st century classroom were weaved in every coaching session to increase communication and collaboration among students. The teacher and I were presently surprised to discover that second graders may be very successful learning in an online environment. Developing appropriate management strategies and scaffolding instruction (pedagogy) made it possible for students to understand the technology tool and effectively participate in discussion

boards, online collaborative activities, and online assessments. It was certainly a learning experience for me as an instructional technology specialist to experiment with the online tools to determine what tools in the newly adopted online platform may work effectively and efficiently in primary grades.

I believe the most powerful learning experience for the teacher was specific feedback on a lessons observed by me. Notes from the observations and the teacher's own reflections opened the door to a transparent conversation in which two professionals trusted each other, respected opinions, and learned from one another. As a coach, I was able to become a better listener and learner. I practiced the strategies for effective listening and learned to be flexible with my opinions and made-up decisions. In doing so, I have found the coaching experience a great opportunity for me to be better at what I do on a daily basis.

The teacher and I have both agreed to continue on with one-on-one coaching until the end of the school year, even though it is not a requirement for this course. The fact that the teacher asked me to continue working with her students and help her develop new knowledge and techniques for technology integration is the best reward for me as a coach. Now, I am sure that this teacher will continue to be a constant learner and feel more comfortable trying new initiatives in her classroom.

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