

The purpose of this assignment was to assess the use of technology in a colleague's classroom. The person that I assessed was Mrs. Chelsea Helena. She is a fifth grade teacher at Fickett Elementary. With this assignment, two surveys were given to Mrs. Helena. Both surveys were developed by the Elementary PLC group. The two surveys were the LoTi Questionnaire and the Adopter Category survey as described by Rogers' Change theory. I also took a tour of her classroom to observe the use and availability of technology with her class.

One question assessed in the LoTi Questionnaire was "How comfortable do you feel about using technology in your classroom?" Mrs. Helena rated herself with the score of 1, which indicates that she is not very comfortable with using technology. During my tour within the classroom, I noticed that she might not be very comfortable with infusing technology within her lessons. I did not see any use of technology. The assignments were completed on mostly on chart paper, sticky notes, and graphic organizers.

According to the questionnaire, Mrs. Helena's students apply their classroom content learning to real world problems with the local or global community using digital tools at least once a week. The next question asked was, "What are some ways that you allow your students to use digital tools to showcase their understanding of concepts taught?" Mrs. Helena stated, "They can use technology to create power points and conduct research. We also type and edit essays on computers. They also make movies using an iPhone camera." (Personal communication, Oct. 11, 2013)

Another question asked on the LoTi questionnaire was “How can you publish student work online while maintaining the students security and safety from the outside school world?” Helena stated, “Kidblog.com is a safe place for students to put work online and comment on each other's work. Also Edmodo is a safe place for publication and student interaction.” (Personal communication, Oct. 11, 2013). Helena stated that she does not use technology for the purpose of getting parents involved. According the survey, software or online system that she finds helpful in tracking student growth is Engrade.com and her DRA tracker is on Excel. (Personal communication, Oct. 2013). Helena states that she never uses technology to improve classroom management. I observed that she uses a class points system for her classroom management system. All students appeared to be very responsive to the system that is in place. According to the LoTi questionnaire, Helena never tests her students’ proficiency in using technology. She also replied that she never incorporate technology components into her classroom assessments. Helena states that she allows students to use technology for research and other classroom projects once a month. (Personal communication, Oct. 11, 2013)

I observed Mrs. Helena’s classroom before receiving her responses to the surveys. Based on my tour of her classroom, there were many findings that were consistent and would explain with her responses to both surveys. Mrs. Helena teaches 5th grade Social Studies and Reading/ELA. With these subjects, I noticed that she has a text-enriched classroom. I noticed that she did not use technology much at all. She likes to use much paper including graphic organizers, chart paper, sticky notes, textbooks, library books, novels, and other resources. Within her classroom, she has

only one computer and it does not work. She has a Promethean board, however she does not use it much. She explained to me that she has technical issues out of it often. In the Adopter Category survey, Mrs. Helena stated, "I wish I had more computers in my classroom. I allow them to use computers for research and for making PowerPoints, but that involves taking class time to go to the lab and it means that all students have to do their projects using the computers. If I had more computers in the classroom, that would allow for more student choice. I also would like to use my Promethean board more effectively, but I pretty much only know how to use it as a projector." (Personal communication, Oct. 11, 2013). It has to be hard to infuse technology into the classroom without the proper resources. However, if she was a teacher that used technology heavily, I am sure that she would make complaints more often to client support to ensure that the small amount of technology that she has available works properly. According to Helena's responses in the Adopter Category survey, she has taken steps to improve technology integrations in the classroom. Helena stated, "I borrowed laptops from the media center and allow students to use them for projects. I allow students to go to the lab to make PowerPoints and conduct research and I allow them to record videos and plays on my camera." (Personal communication, Oct. 11, 2013).

Per conversation with Mrs. Helena, she is willing and ready to learn more about technology. When asked thoughts on the necessity of technology in instructional practices, within the Adopter Category survey, she stated, "The world is becoming more and more technology-heavy. It is more necessary these days for kids in the real world to

know how to type than to hand write something. Kids don't really need to use dictionaries and encyclopedias as long as they can use the internet. Sending an email is more common than sending a letter. I want to prepare my kids for the real world and that means giving them several meaningful opportunities to access technology.”

(Personal communication, Oct. 11, 2013) Helena was also asked in the survey whether she feels professional development in technology would be beneficial. She states, “I wish I knew more about how and when to use technology in my classroom. I have never been very good with it and I feel that it would seem awkward or forced if I tried to integrate it without having learned it thoroughly myself.” (Personal communication, Oct. 11, 2013).

Within the Adopter Category survey, there were a few questions asked about professional development. These questions will help to understand teachers' feelings about the effectiveness of professional learning. To improve in any aspect in the field of education, we constantly engage in professional learning. Professional learning is often determined based off the needs and goals of the school or district. Professional learning is offered for entire district, schools, and also individually. When asked whether all teachers and staff members should receive the same professional development or should it be catered to each individuals needs, Helena stated, “I think professional development should definitely be individualized. We do that for our students and teachers require the same degree of specialized help. To ask a teacher to sit through something they do not need wastes time and to neglect to help teachers who have expressed needs or concerns about their practice also wastes valuable instructional

time.” (Personal communication, Oct. 11, 2013). Another question asked about one’s thoughts about outsiders coming in to conduct professional development. Helena expressed, “I don’t mind as long as the information is relevant to me and they know what they are talking about. You can always improve as a teacher, and I like hearing about new things I can try. What I don’t like is when professional development is seen as some kind of silver bullet to fixing what’s wrong with teachers or students. There is not one method that works for every teacher or every student. I also don’t like sitting through a training I have already received or don’t feel relates to what I personally need.” (Personal communication, Oct. 11, 2013).

Last three questions were about new products shown or offered. These questions helped me to get to know my colleague’s personality a little more. I gathered that Helena likes to form her own opinion about a product. She likes to test them out, research information about the product, and then form her opinion about it. She likes to become familiar with the product. Helena states, “Limitless resources mean nothing if we don’t know what they are or how to use them.”

Based on the two surveys, conversations, and tour of the classroom, infusing technology within Mrs. Helena’s classroom is a must. She has expressed to me that she need helps and would love any suggestions and coaching that she can receive that will help her with integrating technology within her classroom. I plan to meet with Mrs. Helena at least once or twice a week to discuss what can we do to infuse technology more within her lesson. I plan to report to her class on Mondays and Fridays. Fridays are at the end of the week where I will be able to observe and determine suggestions to

help plan for the next week and Mondays are good to observe whether our plan worked. These are the two days that I do not have meetings during my planning time. During these time, I will be about to observe and devise a plan to on how to implement technology for that concept. We will have discussion about my observations during lunchtime. Fifth grade lunch starts 15 minutes after my lunch period. This will give us 15 minutes to discuss our plans, recommendation, strengths, weaknesses, and/or concerns.

The first concern that needs to be addressed is how to get the technology that is available in her room fixed. I plan for us to discuss calling Client Support to file a report to have tech support to come out to the school to fix her promethean board and maybe replace the computer. We also have to inform the media specialist that she only has one computer in her classroom and it is not working properly. Our media specialist is awesome with keeping in contact with technical support about technology issues at the school. Until we get some these problems corrected, I will discuss with Mrs. Helena about have a discussion with our media specialist about available technology in the building and schedule training if needed. According to the surveys, Mrs. Helena likes to become familiar with a product before exposing it to her students. Integrating technology within Mrs. Helena is not going to be an overnight situation due to lack of resources; however, with my coaching and her commitment, we will be working hard to see major improvement by the end of the school year.