

Krystle Scott's Coaching Journal

Collaborating Teacher: Mrs. Chelsea Helena, 5th grade Teacher

1st Session: (Oct. 21, 2013)

Strategies:

In this session, I opened with the strategy of IDENTIFICATION. According to Knight (2007), in the first meeting both parties share their goals of identifying which of the teaching practices the coach has to offer might be that most helpful to the teacher. (p. 99). I started by allowing Mrs. Helena explain what were her concerns and wants for implementing technology into her class. Mrs. Helena expressed, "I can really use all the help I can get and I am looking forward to learning about all the great innovations in educational technology today. I know that this area is a personal weakness of mine and I am unsure that if I even had more technology I would know how to use it. I have reached out for help before and I am excited that I am finally getting it." (personal communication, Oct. 21, 2013)

Based on Woodruff's Instructional Coaching Scale (2001), we would currently be rated at level "2". (p. 5). This level is called *Change Conversation*. Woodruff states, "At this level, conversation focuses on the new innovation, technique, or practice. The teacher may have questions or wish to know more about HOW to begin. The coach may hear "change talk" by the teacher. At this point, the teacher is contemplating changing what he or she is doing in the classroom and beginning to think about engaging in the new practice."(Woodruff, 2001, p. 5.)

I told Mrs. Helena that today I noticed that she still does not have much technology in her classroom. In order to incorporate new practices, she must have some resources. We decided that we should call client support to come out to fix the promethean board. A goal decided for the next session was to see that she includes the promethean board more in her instruction. After our session, we asked the secretary about whether there were more iPads in the building. He said we would be the first to know when they would come. I recommended that she uses iPads and computers for centers. She often uses her white board and copies during whole and small groups. Once I recommend the use of these items, Mrs. Helena asked what would be some suggestions that would be useful for her classroom. As I began to explain how I often use computers and iPads in my classroom, I suggested that she comes in to observe me in action with the use of technology in my classroom. We scheduled that she come in Wednesday during her planning period.

Skill and Affective Changes:

According to the LoTi Digital-Age Framework (2011), Mrs. Helena's LoTi Level is 0: Non-use, where the use of research-based best practices are evident, but her practices do not involve the use of digital tools and resources.. (p.1, LoTi, Inc.). We had a discussion about how all instructional materials appeared to be predominately text-based. Mrs. Helena shared that she has not had access to technology for so long that she has become dependent on using paper and it has just become a major part of her effective style of teaching. However, I now think Mrs. Helena understands that major changes have to occur in her classroom. I feel that by the end of this session, we have accom-

plished a lot. Client support scheduled an appointment to come into her classroom to fix her promethean board by the end of this week. Unfortunately, the computer is extremely obsolete and possibly will not be able to be repaired. A goal for the next session, after her observation in my classroom, Mrs. Helena plans to integrate technology through the use of the promethean board.

Reflection on Challenges and Solution:

I felt very excited after this coaching session. I felt like this experience would not only help Mrs. Helena, but it also would help me to improve on my teaching practices with integrating technology into my classroom. According to Knight (2007), "ICs who operate from the partnership principles enter relationships with teachers believing that the knowledge and expertise of teachers is as important as the knowledge and expertise of the coach." (p. 50). The challenges with this session included not having the resources available to implement technology. I feel this will be the struggle throughout my coaching process with Mrs. Helena. It is going to be extremely hard implementing technology without technology.

2nd Session: (Oct. 24, 2013)

Strategies:

Since the last session, Mrs. Helena came in to my classroom to observe my classroom with use of technology on Wednesday, Oct. 23, 2013. The strategy that I used was MODELING. Knight (2007) states, "one reason why IC's should consider including model lessons in their repertoire of coaching practice is that they provide a chance for teachers to learn many teaching techniques that are not written in teacher's manuals." (p. 119)

Mrs. Helena used an observation form that we briefly went over together the day before to use during the model lesson. Based on Woodruff's Instructional Coaching Scale (2001), we have reached levels "4" and "5". Level "4" is called *Pre-conference* and level "5" is *Modeling*. In the *Pre-conference* level, this is where the coach and collaborating teacher have a conversation to prepare for modeling or observing a specific practice. During this time frame, an observation form may be constructed. (Woodruff, p. 6). Within our form, I included questions from the LoTi "Sniff" Test. (2011, LoTi Inc). These questions included the following:

- Is technology being used?
- Is there evidence of content-related higher-order thinking by students?
- Is the learning experience student centered? Real world, applied learning?

- Is there 2-way collaboration with experts outside the classroom?
- Do students have unlimited access to technology during the school day?

Skill and Affective Changes:

In this session, I did not get to observe her so I did not actually see any changes in her teaching. However, I could see the excitement in her was different. She appeared to be motivated even more.

Reflection on Challenges and Solution:

I can tell that she was very excited about seeing my students' interaction with technology. Afterwards, we had a brief conversation about what she saw. She expressed how she could not wait until the new iPads were registered and ready to use in the school. She also stated that she feels like she had several ideas about where she would like begin even without having much technology. I did not give much feedback on where she should begin because I wanted to see her ideas in action. I did not want to tell her that this is what she needs to do. I want her to have her own choices in what she does and decide what she wants to do in her classroom. Knight (2002) states, "The trouble is that when you take away teachers' right to say no, their ability to choose, you are no longer treating them as professional partners, and you significantly decrease the likelihood that they will embrace what you propose." (p. 11). I want to provide my collaborative teacher with the opportunity to think critically about how she wants to use technology in her classroom. This will also give me the opportunity to observe what her ideas

are and how can we add to, change, or make improvements to her choices. I also feel that this will give her the feeling that her ideas are important as well.

3rd Session: (Oct. 28, 2013)

Strategies:

The strategies that I began using in this session were OBSERVATION and EXPLORATION OF DATA. We have made it to the stage where I come in to observe Mrs. Helena's progress of integrating technology into daily her instruction. In order for her to be able to use more technology in her classroom, we were able to get the IC tech support to come in and correct the issue with her promethean board. Mrs. Helena was also able to find an adapter that would allow her to sync her personal computer to the promethean board. At the end of the day, I scheduled a meeting with Mrs. Helena to discuss what I had observed. Knight states (2007), "the collaborative exploration of data taking place during this meeting is *not* an opportunity for the I to share his "expert" opinion on what the teachers did right or wrong. More than anything else, it is a learning conversation where both parties use data as a point of departure for dialogue." (p. 122). We began our discussion about the data that she gathered from her observation in my classroom and she wanted to use some of different strategies in her classroom. She talked about how she liked how I used my promethean board to display my lesson through powerpoint, flip charts, and interactive activities related to the content being taught. Therefore, that is what she focused on when she delivered her lesson. I observed her only using her board for her presentation. Mrs. Helena stated, "Our plan was for me to start using the board. I have been using it a lot more but it is clear that I am only scratching the surface of what is possible with this resource." (personal conversa-

tion, Oct. 28, 2013). I did suggest that the board be used doing whole group and also in centers. I later showed her a few websites and resources that have pre-made PowerPoints and activities for students to use themselves. Mrs. Helena commented, "I didn't think to have students be up front using the board because I felt it might be distracting for the other kids. I suppose if this is a center, then it might be okay amongst the other activities in the room. I am definitely aware of the benefit of using this as a center because there seems to be a lot of possibilities for differentiation." (personal conversation, Oct. 28, 2013). We also had a discussion about attempting to make the use of technology produce higher-order thinking by students.

Skill and Affective Changes:

During my observation, I noticed that Mrs. Helena has begun using her promethean board to write her notes as she delivers her lecture. She was using her promethean board in a grammar lesson where she and her students were completing an interactive activity together. The use of the promethean board was overall a major step for Mrs. Helena. Based on the LoTi Digital-Age Framework (2011), Mrs Helena moved from LoTi Level 0: Non-use to LoTi Level 1: Awareness. Within this level, the teacher begins to use technology for basic productivity or presentation, but the integration is usually teacher-centered. (2011, LoTi Inc. p. 1) Now, she has to learn how to expand the use for more than presentation.

Reflection on Challenges and Solution:

Overall, I feel that my coaching strategies for this session were effective. I do wish I had provided a more detailed conversation with my collaborative teacher about my model lesson and her notes from the observation prior to the delivery of her next lesson. This would have provided her with a clearer understanding of all of components of integrating technology in a classroom. It would have provided her with a better understanding of whether her strategies were teacher-centered or student-centered. I have realized that some misconceptions were formed. Knight states (2007), "By involving the teacher in creating the form, a coach gets better buy-in to the form, and can be more certain that the collaborating teacher understands all of the items listed on it." (p. 112). When I formed the observation form, I thought I was providing my collaborating teacher with ideas of what she should focus on related to technology. I did not realize that I was not giving my partner the opportunity to share her ideas. Therefore, my goal from now on is to consider my collaborating teacher in every decision because it is a partnership. However, with my approach, I did provide Mrs. Helena with the opportunity to build on her own choices. She was able to do what she wanted based off strategies she witnessed from my model lesson. According to Knight (2002), "If partners are equal, if they choose what they do and don't do, it stands to reason that they should be free to say what they think, and that their opinions count." (p.12).

I have realized that this assignment is going to very difficult if we can not get the resources available in her classroom. I am not sure if she can progress much without the resources needed. She explained that based on my model lesson, she thought that student-centered strategies where provided mostly through the use of the computers and tablets. I completely understand Mrs. Helena's thoughts about student-centered strate-

gies. In attempt to get more technology, we went to speak with our secretary and our media specialist again. We are still waiting on the iPads in the building. Mrs. Miller, our media specialist, said that she would ask around the school to see if everyone was using their laptops in their classroom and would be willing to allow Mrs. Helena to use them since she does not have any computers that work. In Mrs. Helena's classroom, I also noticed she brought in her own personal iPad. However, during our meeting, Mrs. Helena shared that her iPad is an original iPad, in which current software updates are not compatible for it. Therefore, it is only useful as a timer. Hopefully, we will have some luck soon.

I would have to say that according to Woodruff's Instructional Coaching Scale (2007), we are at level "7". (p. 6). This level is Observation and Feedback Conversation with low fidelity. At this stage, my collaborating teacher is creating lesson for the coach to observe. According to Woodruff (2007), at the stage the coach has discussions with collaborating teacher to clear up any misconceptions.(p. 6). That is exactly what happened by the end of this meeting.

4th Session: (Oct 30, 2013)

Strategies:

The strategies that I began to use mostly in this session was SUPPORT. Knight states (2007), "The IC's job, in large part, is to make it as easy as possible for teachers to implement a new practice." (p. 32). In order for Mrs. Helena to use more technology in her classroom, we spoke with our media specialist about finding some laptops. She found one on Monday afternoon and found another by Tuesday morning. I was not quite sure how she would use them, however to my surprise Mrs. Helena had found several ways to integrate technology in to her classroom. When I came in, the students were broken off into small groups working in centers. Two groups were using the computers to create a Powerpoint related to the concept being taught in Social Studies. Mrs. Helena provided the most assistance with these groups for support on how to use the program. Another group was filming a short video of their written skit of the recent concept taught in class. After performance, each student gave their personal thoughts on the concepts and how would they would have felt if they lived in that time frame. For her last group, she allowed the students to use her personal computer that was connected to promethean board to play an online quiz that was also related to the same concept in Social Studies. I shared with Mrs. Helena that I was there to provide any assistance that she needed. She asked could I work with the group that was recording their skit and responses.

Once we had our meeting, I could tell that Mrs. Helena felt a lot more confident. She was very excited about how her lesson went. When asked what was supposed to happen, she stated, "The students were able to lead themselves and direct their own Social Studies projects according to what they had envisioned."(personal communication, Oct. 30, 2013). I noticed that the students already started their research and had written notes available. Some used their textbooks to research and I even saw some students with library books related to the content. The students appeared to be very comfortable with operating the video camera. During meeting, I found out that the students use have often used the camera for various projects in Social Studies. I expected this group to get completely off task.

Skill and Affective Changes:

I was very impressed with integration of technology that was happening and the creativity that the students were able to show in completing their projects. The students were very engaged. Most of students worked well together. I could tell that the students were used to working in groups. Her behavior management plan has always been effective. I think possibly a few students became so excited about the new technology that they had to be reminded of the expectations of working in groups. Mrs. Helena has never appeared to have a major problem with the "Big Four." The Big Four includes classroom management, knowing concept, instruction, and formative assessments. (Knight, 2007, p. 100). It has always just been a matter of integrating technology with her teaching. The only suggestion that I have is that she provide roles in centers for the sake of keeping students on task and completing expected assignments in given

amount of time. This is something that I would also like to incorporate in my classroom's centers. It is funny how you can make discoveries of new strategies that can be tried when you are watching and observing versus when you are in the act of teaching.

Since the last meeting, I saw major changes. I saw where Mrs. Helena used many of the suggested strategies that were discussed in the last meeting. She utilized the promethean board as a center. She used outside resources to find an interactive quiz where the students had to think critically to answer questions. Based on the LoTi Digital-Age Framework, Mrs Helena moved from LoTi Level 1: Awareness to LoTi Level 4a: Mechanical Integration. In this level, the teacher has integrated practices that encourages student centered learning. However, there are a few unresolved classroom management. (LoTi Inc., 2011, p. 2). Mrs. Helena has a few minor adjustments to make the centers run smoother with the new technology.

Reflection on Challenges and Solution:

I feel that my coaching strategies have been effective. One thing that I have learned is that just like teachers, coaches have to "go over and beyond" for their collaborating teachers. I wanted Mrs. Helena to have the best opportunity of learning of how to use technology in her classroom. Therefore, we had to really work hard to find some technology. We have been asking about the new iPads that are suppose to be in the building. However, we get the same response that they have to be tagged and registered before distribution. Since we were having such a hard time finding technology, I decided that we should write a grant. At the ending of this meeting, we wrote a grant using Donors' Choose. The grant was written to receive some new tablets her class. I decid-

ed until the school distributes the new iPads or her grant is fully funded, I would allow Mrs. Helena to use a few of my tablets in order to get in some practice.

I would have to say that according to Woodruff's Instructional Coaching Scale (2007), we achieve level "8". This level is Observation and Feedback Conversation with high fidelity. At this stage, the collaborating teacher continues to create lessons for the coach to observe. I would definitely that Mrs. Helena is performing with high fidelity. She appears to be very confident with her practices. Her approaches starting to appear natural and handled effortlessly.

5th Session: (Nov. 4, 2013)

Strategies:

In this session, I continued to use the strategies of SUPPORT and REFLECTION. After every observation, we set aside a time frame at the end of the day to reflect. This time was not just time for Mrs. Helena to reflect, but a time for both of us to think about our goals and if we obtained them. We also discussed how to use what was learned from the session in the future.

Mrs. Helena has gotten to the point where she is extremely excited about the integration of technology. When I came in to observe today, the students were using the laptops to edit the final draft of their ELA narratives. This was very impressive to see. The students were broken off into centers. It appeared that the students rotated every twenty minutes. Apparently, the students have been working on the rough drafts of their narratives in class since the week before. This was motivating for them to get through their drafts and carefully edit their work. From my observation, I could tell that the students had been practicing using the word processor. Once I had dialogue with Mrs. Helena, she expressed that she took her class to the computer lab on Friday to begin typing on these narratives. I thought that this showed determination on her behalf. Even though she may not have had much technology in her classroom, she was determined to provide her students with the exposure of technology in some way.

In our meeting, I encouraged Mrs. Helena to continue to think outside of the box for activities with technology, especially those that connect to the real world. I told her to push herself to incorporate it into more activities in the classroom as she gets more access to it.

Skill and Affective Changes:

It is so amazing to witness the amount of growth accomplished by my collaborating partner with the use of technology even with limited amount available. I can only imagine how much growth I will see in a few months from now. With the integration of laptops, tablets, promethean board and video camera, Mrs. Helena has changed her use of technology level from LoTi Level 0: Non-use to possibly LoTi Level 5: Expansion. According to LoTi Resource: LoTi Digital-Age Framework, at LoTi Level 5 (Expansion), students are completing products throughout the use of multiples technologies. Mrs. Helena is not only using technology in her classroom, she is applying it and teaching life long skills that her students need to survive in our technology-driven society. She stated, "I am happy that I now have computers to encourage them to use word processors, which is what they will be expected to do in middle school, high school, and college. I want them to be prepared with the basic technological skills they need to succeed in the real world." (personal communication, Nov. 4, 2013).

Reflection on Challenges and Solution:

Based on Woodruff's Instructional Coaching Scale (2001), we have reached Level "9". This level is called *Strategic Integration of Lesson*. At this level, the teacher begins to

fluently use old and new strategies and infused them in with the current curriculum and concepts being taught. They are strategically planning lessons accordingly and becoming comfortable with practices by analyzing what is required, determining content difficulties and difficulties that students may be having. (Woodruff, p. 6)

Once we started our meeting, I asked Mrs. Helena to explain how did she feel about her lesson and new experiences with integrating technology. Mrs. Helena stated, "I have been feeling much more comfortable using technology in the classroom and I am finding it much easier to design activities with this in mind. I was intimidated at first, but now that I'm trying to use it more, it is starting to become easier to plan for it." (personal communication, 2013.) This experience has made me extremely excited because I am assisting in helping a fellow co-worker explore and expand their knowledge in an area that they did not feel very comfortable with at all. As a coach, I feel like I was able to master building a rapport or relationship with my collaborating teacher. In the future with my coaching, I have to understand that change is not going to happen over night. I also realized that I have to improve on my expertise in technology. It is extremely hard trying to coach someone when my skills and knowledge are not close to "expert" level at all. I have to increase my knowledge about the practice through researching and reading. I also must continue to improve my craft by attending more professional learning for technology and applying those practices in my own classroom. Knight states (2007), "The reward ICs reap for adopting the partnership principles is that they are continually learning from their collaborating teachers." (p.51) I must say that I completely agree with that statement. This experience has even given me some insight on how to make some adjustments and improvement in my very own classroom. I am looking forward to

continuing my experience of helping others accomplish goals through the use of infusing new strategies into their classrooms.

References

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