

Coaching Journal

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Session 1

Time: October 9th, 2015 11:00-12:00 PM

Goals/Targets

1. To identify current use of technology integration in the classroom.
2. To identify specific areas of need/growth for technology integration in the classroom.
3. To create a plan for the coaching sessions and establish norms.

Strategies

Mrs. S is a seventh grade social studies teacher at Dalton Middle School and she is in her twelfth year of teaching. She completed two surveys to assess her knowledge and familiarity with the Levels of Technology Integration (LoTi) and her comfortableness with adopting change. She has access to 1:1 devices, but was unsure of how to utilize them best and was seeking guidance. Using the surveys 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) through the adopter survey. The data was analyzed with the teacher to help incorporate her in the process of forming the coaching plan which follows the strategies associated with the partnership approach to help build a trusting relationship with the teacher.

This session was held in a one-on-one setting in the teacher's classroom to make her feel more comfortable and give me an idea of what her room was set-up like and to see the technology she had available. After we discussed her survey results, further questioning was done to get a better understanding and perception about the type of classroom she runs and how she envisions technology playing a part in that.

Outcomes

In the completion of a technology usage survey that focused on the Level of Technology Integration Framework Mrs. S showed evidence of currently belonging to Level 1 Awareness and Level 2 Exploration. These lower levels of LoTi show that she is aware of technology and is wanting to explore with it in the classroom, but it unable to take it beyond this stage. Mrs. S indicated that she is uncomfortable in using technology with her students to connect with other learners and experts outside of the school which is needed to reach a LoTi level 5. While she agreed that her students had equitable access to technology, which they do with the 1:1 devices provided to them, she felt clueless and unsure as to how to best use the technology to enhance her lessons with her students. While she utilized the technology in her classroom, she indicated that it was only once a month or once a semester so she felt the access to a technology coach would be beneficial to her in her implementation of technology integration in the classroom.

Moving Mrs. S from a LoTi level of 2 to a level 4 or higher and increasing her confidence and knowledge base of technology resources and tools are the primary goals that have been identified through the survey and interview data collection. To accomplish these goals, biweekly coaching sessions will take place on Monday and Wednesday of each week during common planning time with informal meetings also available if needed before or after school. A peer coaching approach is the plan to best prepare Mrs. S for becoming more confident. To make this happen opportunities will be available for her to observe the coach implementing different tools and techniques in their class (Knight, 2007). Mrs. S wants to walk away from this experience with a toolbox of tools that she is able to utilize in the classroom with her students. Mini-tutorials will be assembled for Mrs. S to explore on her own to identify a

handful of tools that she feels would best fit with her content. From those, a larger lesson will be designed together to incorporate a more technology and achieve a higher LoTi level.

Reflection

After sitting down and talking with the teacher, I am excited about working with her. She realizes that she has a great tool available to her with 1:1 devices and seems to really want to make the most out of it. It will be difficult to move her from a level 2 to a level 5 in the short time we have together, but she is excited to try and I am up for the challenge.

The teacher appears very comfortable in the use of technology, but is clueless with what tools and resources she should be using. I feel like getting her more comfortable with Canvas, the Learning Management System in our district, is the best option in moving forward. This allows for a chance to show her several tools like Padlet that can easily embed directly into the LMS as well as introduce her to the discussion and assessment features available to her with this resource.

Session 2

Time: October 12th, 2015 11:00-12:00 PM

Goals/Target

1. Discuss the theme chosen by the teacher and how we can build lessons around that theme using technology.
2. Introduce teacher to Padlet and show examples of how it has been used in the classroom.
3. Work collaboratively to design a starter activity for students using Padlet.

Strategies

Knight discusses the importance of open communication between a coach and a teacher (2007). At the beginning of this session, a dialogue took place to determine a theme to begin working with. I was able to introduce the teacher to Padlet and begin to work collaboratively in how to create an activity using Padlet. When a coach and a teacher are able to work in a partnership and collaborate, it will deepen the understanding and provide for better retention by the teacher (Knight, 2007). Using the information from the LoTi survey in the previous session, the session was discussed with a focus of improving the LoTi level of the teacher through the use of Padlet. The function of Padlet was modeled for the teacher, by providing an example of how it would be used in various class settings to help create the overall theme of the sessions and themes for the training.

The one-on-one method was used again for this session in the teacher's room to continue making her feel more comfortable. A teacher is more likely to be receptive to a new idea if they feel comfortable with the training as well as the use of the tool (Knight, 2007). This will remain a strategy throughout the training sessions, because the outcome is for the teacher to be comfortable with the use of Padlet with the hopes of incorporating it into her own curriculum.

Outcomes

The teacher expressed an interest in developing lessons revolving around the geographic features of Africa that her students must learn and be able to locate on a map. It was determined that Padlet would be a good option for a starter because she could post a question as the starter and each child would have to quickly answer the question. The teacher was impressed with the

fact that the students could include text, pictures, or videos as part of their response. We worked together to create the Padlet for the next day to be utilized in her class and I would be there to monitor and make observations of how things went.

After the creation of the Padlet, I talked through the questions that the teacher had formulated about Canvas after watching the mini-tutorial I sent her and having an opportunity to explore it on her own first. She expressed a desire to want to learn how to post her notes and PowerPoints online so that her students could access them at any point. I modeled this for her and helped her to organize her work into a module that the students could easily follow.

Reflection

I was very impressed with how quickly Mrs. S responded to the mini-tutorial I sent her to watch on Canvas. She had taken notes and listed several questions she wanted me to answer. Before we even got back together for our second session she emailed me to brag about setting up her course and enrolling her students which was modeled in the video. This strategy of leaving her with video tutorials is one that has worked well and I definitely want to include it in future coaching sessions.

Modeling the Padlet for her went well and I am excited to see how it goes over in her classroom. She seemed confident in her understanding of how to use it but expressed concern with how to best explain it to the students. I will take careful observational notes on this to discuss with her in our post-conference session after class.

Session 3

Time: October 13th, 2015 10:00-10:20 & 11:00-11:45 PM

Goals/Targets

1. Observe the teacher using Padlet in the classroom and take observational notes.
2. Discuss the observation and next steps for teacher.

Strategies

The use of observational notes from the perspective of the coach is an important tool to use in a coaching session. For this session, it was determined that I would observe the Ms. S using Padlet in her own class and take notes during the lesson. These notes would allow for a more in depth conversation with the teacher after the lesson. The notes were not focused on where the use of Padlet was incorrect, but focused on how it was used. This allows for the conversation to be about the positives rather than the mistakes. This is done to continue the comfort between the coach and the teacher. When a coach takes notes, they must be careful to not be authoritative. Instead, the notes need to be uplifting and incorporate goods and areas to improve. This allows for the dialogue between the coach and teacher to be productive (Knight, 2007).

Observation and specific feedback are the strategies used during this session. An ability of the teacher to correctly set up this activity in Padlet. The strategies used to introduce and model the activity to students, and the actual implementation were the focus of this observation. During the observation of the lesson by the teacher the coach filled out an observation/reflection form and took detailed notes of the experience for the teacher. The form was created by the coach and influenced by the Coaching Project (The University of Kansas, n.d.).

Outcomes

During the observation, the coach noted that the teacher spent too long explaining how Padlet should work to the students. A starter that was intended to last 15-20 minutes ended up being a 35 minute activity because of a lengthy demonstration of the technology. I explained to the teacher the importance of highlighting briefly how it works and then allowing the students' time to explore it on their own. During the observation I noticed that several students had tuned out the teacher and had begun to figure out the program on their own and were quickly done with their post. It was then noted that these students could easily have become experts in the room to help other students who did not understand the technology freeing up the teacher to work with those student who did not understand the content.

To demonstrate my point, I showed the teacher how to use the discussion feature on Canvas and then had her not only respond to a discussion I had created, but then had her create one herself. Without giving away every step along the way, the teacher was able to quickly pick up on how the program worked and maneuver it on her own.

Reflection

I learned during my observational time in her classroom that Mrs. S. is enthusiastic with her students, but like to be in control. She wanted to show them every little detail first so that there would be no questions instead of letting them explore on their own. This is something I will have to work with her on in the future before we create a larger lesson with technology integrated throughout. In the next session I want to work to make her more comfortable with Canvas so she can begin uploading her assignment and assessments directly on the computer. This will get us closer to the end goal of creating a higher LoTi level lesson where students are in

control of the learning.

Session 4

Time: October 19th, 2015 11:00-12:00 PM

Goals/Targets

1. Discuss the video tutorials that the teacher watched regarding Canvas and how they can be included in her classroom.
2. Schedule a time for the teacher to observe other teachers utilizing Canvas in their classrooms.

Strategies

Modeling with observation will be used again, but this time it will be reversed. Instead of the coach observing the teacher, the teacher will observe other teachers along with the coach. This will happen after the Ms. S. has watched a video on how to use Canvas in the classroom. This follows what Knight refers to as the “I Do It, You Do It” phases (Knight, 2007). The hope is that, after the video and observation, the teacher will be able to learn and remember the use of Canvas from the other teachers and apply to her own class. I will be there to help along the way, coaching and providing insight as needed by the teacher. The hope is that in future sessions, the she will be able to move to the “You Do It” phase.

Modeling is such a strong strategy for a coach to use. It allows for the teacher to see a real usage of the skill or tool. This application allows for the Ms. S. to see the interactions with students and teachers and Canvas. The she will be familiar with the overall purpose of Canvas, so the modeling will be a next step to better understand how Canvas can be used to deepen a

students' learning and understanding. Modeling also provides for the conversation (Knight, 2007). Modeling while the teacher is observing, allows the teacher to step away from the lesson plan and see what impact is being made on the students. It allows the Ms. S. time to form the deeper, higher order questions to help facilitate learning for the teacher that will translate in to a better understanding of the tool and how to better use the tool within the classroom.

Outcomes

While the teacher watched the video tutorials about Canvas I had her fill out a notes/reflection sheet. She was asked to take notes of things as she watched the video and then go back and reflect in the next column about how she could use these things in her own classroom. She loved the idea of having students create a page in Canvas about each of the geographical locations in Africa they were studying. I suggested that she make it a partner project so they could have someone to work with and bounce ideas off of as they worked with the technology.

We set up a time for her to visit another 7th grade classroom and observe the teacher using Canvas in their lesson so she could see it first-hand. I would go with her to the observation so we could talk more about what she was seeing and how this might work in her classroom.

Reflection

The teacher is still seeming open to using the technology in her classroom and has great ideas for how it can be integrated. The actual implementation is the aspect that she is still worrisome about. I think seeing another teacher like her using Canvas in the classroom will help

her to see how easy it is for the students so that she does not feel compelled to spend her entire class teaching the tool.

As a coach, I am beginning to feel more confident in my abilities to relate with the teacher and show her things that she finds relevant to her own classroom. I wish I had taken her to see another classroom using Padlet early on, but I felt it was simple enough for me to just model for her. I know see that it means more coming from another teacher than just me talking and explaining it during our sessions together.

Session 5

Time: October 21st, 2015 11:00-12:00 PM

Goals/Targets

1. Discuss the observation of teacher using Canvas.
2. Collaborate with teacher to plan her implementation of her lesson idea regarding geographic locations in Africa.

Strategies

During the observation, Ms. S. was able to see firsthand how Canvas is used in a middle school classroom. She was also able to observe behavior and how the teacher interacted with students. This helped to generate questions and led to a deeper discussion of how to apply what was seen into her own classroom. After the observation, she and I were able to sit down and discuss how to begin creating and implementing her idea from the first lesson into one that incorporates Padlet and Canvas. Collaboration is a very powerful tool to help the teacher feel to have an equal stake in the creation of content (Knight, 2007). Because this is something new, it

is important that I work with Ms. S. to ensure that everything works out for her. The role of the coach at this point of the training is to facilitate, not be in charge. The lesson is ultimately Ms. S's, my role is to answer questions along the way as needed. By starting out with the discussion about the modeled lesson plan, the session moved to an application, rather than just how to make the page look like what was seen, the session was able to move deeper into applying the information to better help the students in her class.

Outcomes

We began this session by recapping what had been modeled for the teacher about Canvas. She was asked to share what she liked, what she would change, and specifically how she saw it going in her own classroom. She quickly described the way the teacher introduced the tool and then spent more time focusing on the content. We discussed the importance of this technique and why it was so important. She expressed that she was beginning to see how the technology was really meant to be used as a tool in the classroom and not just something that would take over all of your time. This discussion led to the conversation about how she envisioned her Canvas lesson looking in her classroom. We talked through the entire thing from start to finish and then ended by having her act as though I were a student who was in her class. Without much hesitation she was able to talk me through her introduction and gave me time to complete the steps given to check her pace and I in turn asked questions that I felt she might get from a student. She handled this calmly and was able to clearly answer each question that was thrown at her.

Reflection

As I finished this coaching session, I felt proud of the partnership that was created

between the teacher and I, and pleased with the lesson that the teacher was able to walk away with. Considering the fact that the teacher had no real understanding of Canvas and how it operated or what it could do before we started working together, I feel as though she is truly ready to implement her lesson effectively to benefit student learning in her classroom.

Both the teacher and I agreed that we are not to our goal yet of a LoTi level 5 lesson yet, but want to continue working together until she is able to design and implement one on her own. We foresee this process taking another three weeks or so and hope to have something ready for her to use when we return from Thanksgiving Break.

It is my goal to continue creating video tutorials for each element of Canvas and placing them in the Shared Folder where other teachers will have access to them at any point. This will allow those teachers who would like to continue watching and learning on their own work and give them a person to contact if they run into struggles or questions.

References

Knight, J. (2007). *Instructional coaching: A partnership approach to improving instruction*.

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